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**Apology Strategies Produced by Basic Nonnative
Language Learners of English**

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Languages for the Degree of
LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS**

By:

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**APOLOGY STRATEGIES PRODUCED BY BASIC NONNATIVE LANGUAGE
LEARNERS OF ENGLISH**

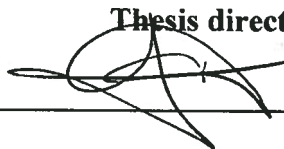
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**The jury members considered thesis should be accepted as it meets one of the
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DEDICATION

To my beloved mom and husband
as well as those teachers who left their mark.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Problem

The knowledge a native speaker of a language as well as a learner possess, develop, acquire, use or lose, is what in the linguistic field is known as communicative competence. This term is mainly associated with Chomsky, who considered it as “the native speaker’s knowledge of his own language” (Paultston, 1992, p. 39). It is the internalized set of rules or the system that enables the speaker the creation of new grammatical sentences and the understanding of the sentences addressed to him, in which an individual performs the speech act based on the knowledge he already possess and is able to communicate not in a proper but in an understandable way. Taking into account this, linguistic competence is the ability to perform, understand and being understandable. According to Hymes, who did not only added other points to Chomskian conception of competence, but contradicted Chomsky’s position, communicative competence “is the knowledge of what is possible, feasible, appropriate and actually done” (Johnson, K. & Johnson, H, 1998, p. 62). It is more than grammatical competence, but also it is the ability to use language in a variety of communicative situations. In other words, he referred to the many different ways of communication speakers used by not only paying attention to the fact of being precise but intelligible. As a result of this, other kinds of competences were considered.

One of the issues that conforms communicative competence is pragmatics, which based on Levinson (1983) “is the study of language from a functional perspective” For having a better idea, this is the study of communicative actions in its sociocultural context. This means, the study of the utterances stated by a speaker taking into account the context

in which those ones are performed. By communicative action, it can be understood speech acts, which following Searle's definition (1969) "are the semantic rules for the use of linguistic devices". These are utterances performed in order to express certain actions such as requesting, commanding, questioning or informing, as well as participation and interaction in the conversation. Speech acts take part of the illocutionary competence. This means, the knowledge of communicative action and how to carry it out. Taking this into account, pragmatic competence is the ability to communicate in a successful way depending on the context the speech acts are performed.

As it was mentioned before, there can be uttered different kind of speech acts, but the main interest of this paper is to observe how apologies are performed by Mexican speakers of English as L2 in a basic level, and how the acquisition process is developed.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This research looks for finding out what types of strategies are used when apologizing, in which situations, following what kind of structures, based on which context and the way in which those ones are uttered by learners of English as L2. This paper will be focused on Mexican speakers of English language as target language in a basic level. Following this, the interest of this project can be understood by Abdoulaye Mbaye (2005, *The Pragmatics of Public Apologies*) that "are a variety of reasons for apologizing but mostly to make a repair for an offense and to maintain good relations with the addressee". For that, is important to be aware of the different kind of processes involved in the speech act of apologizing and observe how it is carry out by foreign language learners.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the characteristics of apologies performed by basic language learners?
2. What are the apology strategies used by basic language learners?

1.4 Significance of the study

This research will show the different strategies for apologizing used and applied by Mexican speakers of English language in order to realize the process in which basic level speakers are situated and to measure the communicative competence.

1.5 Key Terms

Addressee: It refers to the person who receipt the determine speech performed by the speaker (Horn & Ward, 2004, p. xvi).

Communicative Competence: It is the capability to communicate what is wanted in a successful way more than in an appropriated one and the ability to understand what is heard (Paulston. B, 1992, p. 37-38).

Conversational Implicature: It is when the meaning of an utterance is not exactly implied in the performance and speaker has to “guess” based on the context, tone of voice and background to understand the real meaning (Levinson, 2000, p. 11).

Entailments: It is about logical or necessary corollaries of an utterance, in order to arrive to an idea through the obvious following questions (Yule, 1996, p. 57).

Felicity Conditions: Are those conditions necessary for succeed in a speech act, and are carried out by certain people with certain power (Yule, 1996, p. 50).

Illocutionary Act: This determines words in order to produce particular effects on the receipt (Searle, 1969, p. 22).

Maxims: It is specific rules to follow when talking and that are necessary to adhere to in order to do it in a properly way. However, the violation of the same does not stop the communication (Wierzbicka, 1991, p. 392).

Perlocutionary Act: This produces an effect intended or not which is planned being achieved in the addressee by the speaker through precise utterances, for instance: persuading, conceiving, scaring, insulting and getting the addressee to do something (Searle, 1969, p. 25).

Pragmalinguistics: It is the study of how non-native speakers understand and perform linguistic actions and how is conceived the language by them (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989, p. 3).

Pragmatic Competence: It is the ability to perform determined speech acts and understand what is performed by others but based on the context the speech is carried out (Yule, 1999, p. 4).

Pragmatics: It is the use of language based on the context in which this one takes place (Yule, 1996, p. 7).

Sincerity Conditions: This requires the speaker being sincere on what is saying, for example when promising or apologizing. The speaker must try to convince the addressee (Cruse, 2006, p. 62).

Sociolinguistic Competence: It means being aware of the context in which sociolinguistic rules take part (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Sociopragmatics: It is about the participants' social perceptions, interpretations and the performance of communicative action (Leech, 1983, p. 10).

Speech Acts: It is the basic unit of language, which is used to express meanings and intentions (Searle cited by Dore, J., 1975, p. 21).

Utterance: This is saying something and simultaneously doing something (Searle, 1969, p. 23).

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Communicative competence

In order to understand what communicative competence is, it is first important to provide a definition. Competence as term, is mainly supported with reference from Chomsky (1965, p. 4), according with his researches, there is a classic distinction between *competence* (the monolingual speaker-listener's knowledge of language) and *performance* (the actual use of language in real situations). Consequently, as these two concepts were arranged, communicative view in applied linguistics is promoted by Chomsky (1965, cited by Bagarić V., 2007, p. 95), this consisted in the combination of two words, which means «competence to communicate». Later, it is added and redefined, that communicative competence “is not only as an inherent grammatical competence but also the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations” Hymes (1972). It meant, that there are another kind of components that are necessary to consider in order to quantify how much competent a speaker of a determine language is. As it can be seen, communicative competence is more than being able to communicate in a successful way. It is to use the knowledge possessed by the speaker in the appropriate context. This is the main issue in pragmatic competence, which is a term that takes part in the communicative competence concept.

2.1.1 Pragmatic competence

In a similar way, as it was explained previously, a definition of the term is necessary for a better understanding. Pragmatics, as a branch of linguistics consisted on “the study of relationships between linguistics forms and the users of those forms” (Yule, 1996, p. 4). It

means, the communicative action in its sociocultural context according with Leech (1983). In other words, pragmatics are the choices users make, how language is used in social interaction, and the effect the use of language has on other participants (Crystal, 1985, p. 240). “Pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on others.” According with Keith (1994) it is all about the meanings between the lexis, the grammar and the phonology, “meanings are implied and the rules being followed are unspoken or unwritten ones.” It deals on how people comprehend and produce a *communicative act* or *speech act* in a concrete speech situation which is usually a conversation (Kasper, 1997, cited by Liu, 1999).

It also allows investigating how the “meaning beyond the words” can be understood without ambiguity. The extra meaning is implicit because certain contextual knowledge is shared with the speaker (Sperber and Wilson, 1986).

2.1.2 Pragmalinguistics

In the point of view of Blum- Kulka, House & Kasper (1989) pragmalinguistic as branch of second language research is conceived as the study of how non-native speakers understand and carry out linguistic actions in a determined target language, and how L2 pragmatic knowledge is acquired. “It focuses primarily (though not exclusively) on the study of linguistic phenomena, from the point of view of their usage” (Verschueren, 1999). In a wider explanation, it combines knowledge of linguistic and civilization. It is concerned with the pragmatism of speech acts (i.e., cited by University of Kentucky in 2009, perform request, apologies, compliments and so on), which calls for knowledge of the relationship between one linguistic element and the persons producing, using and receiving it during the

communicative situation (Dressler, 1972, p. 14). Thus, it is the relation person-language-knowledge.

2.1.3 Sociopragmatics

Another aspect to consider in the performance of linguistic forms is sociopragmatics, a label described by Leech (1983, p. 10) as “the sociological interface of pragmatics, it is referring to the social perceptions under laying participants, interpretation and performance of communicative action”. More supported is added by Takahashi & Beebe (1993), Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989) and Olshtain (1989) when saying that sociopragmatics is about speech communities that differ in their assessment of speaker’s and hearer’s social distance and social power. Moreover, it implies the rights and obligations, and the degree imposition involved in a particular communicative act.

Basically, there are values of context factor that are negotiable; it means that they can be changed through the dynamics of conversational interaction (Fraser, 1990). So as its names stated, social issue has a lot of to deal with it. Since the language here is observed from the perspective of social aspects and based on this is how language is carried out in a determine way by the speaker. In other words it is the ability to adjust speech strategies appropriately according to different social variables in communication.

2.1.4 Communicative action

It is defined as the situational ability to establish realistic and well based goals in order to maximize their achievement, by using the self, other and contextual knowledge (Friedrich, 1994). Furthermore, it is stated as “the capability to interact well with other”. For well it is understood certain aspects enlisted by Spitzberg (1988, p.68), those are

accuracy, clarity, comprehensibility, coherence, expertise, effectiveness and appropriateness. So it has to deal with grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology as well as the social one about how and when use utterances in a suitable way (Hymes, 1966).

2.1.5 Sociolinguistic competence

It was defined as involved knowledge of the sociocultural rules of language and discourse (Canale & Swain, 1980). It implies being aware of the context in which sociolinguistic rules take part, interpret social meanings and the disposition to develop a conversation (Holmes & Brown/1976, p.423). On the other hand, making reference to an article founded in The National Capital Language Resource Center (Washington, DC, 2003) says that sociolinguistic is “knowing how to use and correspond language” but in this case adding not only with suitability, but also with the topic and the relationships among the people communicating. Therefore sociolinguistic competence is the ability to utter any statement and interpretation meanings but using culture and rules as reference.

2.2 Speech acts

As it was previously explained, speech acts are elements of pragmalinguistics; hence this has to deal with the understanding of linguistic actions. According to Searle (cited by Dore J., 1975, p. 2, 21-40), the speech act is a basic unit of language, which is used for expressing meanings and intentions in the utterances performed. Generally speech acts are sentences, but there can be also words and phrases, always those follow the set up rules in order to get an intention. While speaking a speech act is performed, but it is not just saying by saying, it implies an action as soon as the speech act is uttered, and it is stressed

with determine intention. Retaking what does Searle (1969) said, “understanding the speaker’s intention is essential to capture the meaning”. Thus, “without the speaker’s intention it is impossible to understand words as a speech act”.

Furthermore, there are four specific types of speech acts that is needed to mention: utterance acts, propositional (referring is a type of propositional acts) acts, illocutionary acts (promises, questions and commands) and perlocutionary act, which ones are performed by the speaker through the indication of specific rules that are based on the creation of new forms of behaviors and the rules that *govern* certain rules that already exist (Dore J., 1975, p. 2, 21-40).

2.2.1 Illocutionary act

As part of a speech act, this is the utterance of determine words (utterance acts) in order to produce particular effects on the addressee. It submits to making reference (propositional acts) to a particular intention (Searle, 1969 p. 22-25). As “the act of saying something in the full normal sense”, is using a referring and a predicating expression in order to express a proposition, which can be expressed directly or implied (Austin, 1962). Moreover to accomplish something in the act of speaking while trying to make clearer the meaning or sense to other person.

2.2.2 Perlocutionary act

Based on Searle (1969, p. 25), “It is a speech act that produces an effect, intended or not” which is planned being achieved in the addressee by the speaker through precise utterances, for instance: persuading, conceiving, scaring, insulting and getting the addressee to do something. It is saying something that speaker at the moment of utter, already knows

what kind of effect is going to be produced, but it can be the speaker non-expressed intention too. In other words, it is the using of the covert strategic actions (Skjei, 1985, p. 88). In addition, it depends on the hearer's cooperation, for being successful, since the interpretation in the situation in which the act is performed is important for the understanding of every speech act (Kurzon, 1998).

2.2.2.1 Illocutionary and perlocutionary points

The first point to talk about is assertives, which are statements that may be judged true or false because they aim to describe a state of affairs in the world. Directives statements are the following ones and its aim is attempt to make the other person's actions fit the propositional content. As in the previous one, commissives are statements which are based in the propositional content but only to describe how the speaker commit to a course of action. Expressives are statements used to express the “sincerity condition of the speech act”. Finally *declaratives* are statements that effort to change the world by “representing it as having been changed” (Searle, 1969).

2.2.3 Propositional act

It is carried out by referring to entities and predicating states and actions (Searle, 1969). This means the speech act that is performed when referring or predicting in an utterance, despite the different illocutionary acts. In other words, this is used to refer individuals and to predicate the action situation (Yule, 1996, p. 48-49). In itself, the performatives can be found, based on the felicitous or infelicitous conditions (Austin, 1962).

The following utterances all have the same propositional act despite their different illocutionary acts, utterance acts, and perlocutionary acts:

- You go home.
- Do you go home?
- Go home!
- How I wish you'd go home!

2.2.4 Utterance act

As a part of the performance of a speech act it involves: the utterance of morphemes, words and sentences. This is saying something and simultaneously doing something. Consists of "the verbal employment of units of expressions such as words or sentences" (Searle, 1969, p. 23-25) that are bounded by the speaker's silence and which do not have precise linguistic definition. It means, each turn made by the speaker while talking, and which one is considered as an utterance (Yule, 1996, p. 48).

2.3 Performatives

The term of performative utterances, was mainly introduced by Austin (1962). According to his original conception, it is a sentence which is not true or false but 'happy' or 'unhappy', and which is uttered in the performance of an illocutionary act. The uttering of a performative is part of the doing of a certain kind of action, the performance of which, again, would not normally be described as just "saying" or "describing" something (Austin 1962, p. 5).

For example, when somebody says "I promise to wash the dishes" in an appropriate context then he thereby does not just say something, and in particular he does not just describe what he is doing; rather, in making the utterance he performs the promise. If

somebody utters the sentence without the intention to keep the promise, or if eventually he does not keep it, then although something is not in order with the utterance, the problem is not that the sentence is false: it is rather "unhappy", or "infelicitous". In the absence of any such flaw, on the other hand, the utterance is to be assessed as "happy" or "felicitous" rather than as "true".

2.3.1 Felicity conditions

“These are necessary to succeed of a speech act and needed for success or achievement of a performative” (Yule, 1996, p. 50). Felicity conditions must be uttered by certain people with determine power to do it, in order to have an impact, or what is declared being real and recognized by others. For example, only certain people are qualified to declare war, baptize people or sentence convicted felons (Jaszcolt, K., 2002, p. 296). In some cases, the speaker must be sincere (as in apologizing or vowing). And external circumstances must be suitable, if not the purpose of the utterance is not successful, and in this case the purpose is infelicitous. “Can you give me a lift?” requires that the hearer has a motor vehicle, is able to drive it somewhere and that the speaker has a reason for the request. It may be that the utterance is meant as a joke or sarcasm, in which case a different interpretation is in order. Loosely speaking, felicity conditions are of three kinds: preparatory conditions, conditions for execution and sincerity conditions.

2.3.2 Preparatory conditions

Preparatory conditions refer to the status or authority of the speaker to perform the speech act, the situation of other parties and so on. So, in order to confirm a candidate, the speaker must be a bishop; but a mere priest can baptize people, while various ministers of

religion and registrars may solemnize marriages (in England). In the case of marrying, there are other conditions - that neither of the couple is already married, that they make their own speech acts, and so on.

2.3.3 Conditions for execution

These conditions for execution can assume an exaggerated importance. It is so used to a ritual or ceremonial action accompanying the speech act that we believe the act is invalidated, if the action is lacking. Some examples of this are when a referee cautions a player, he should take the player's name, number and note the team for which he plays and may also display a yellow card, which not necessary must be used, since it is just an aim for a better communication. Another example is in the act of knighting someone. English monarchs traditionally touch the recipient of the honor on both shoulders with the flat side of a sword blade. But this is not necessary to the performance of the speech act.

2.3.4 Sincerity conditions

At a simple level, these show that the speaker must really intend what he says. In the case of apologizing or promising, it may be impossible for others to know how sincere the speaker is. Moreover sincerity is no assurance that the apologetic attitude will last, or that the promise will be kept. Even there are some speech acts (such as plighting one's troth or taking an oath) where this sincerity is determined by the presence of witnesses. The one making the promise will not be able later to argue that he or she did not really mean it. (Cruse, 2006, p. 62)

2.4 Conversational implicature

The aim in this issue is the message that is not found in the simple sense of the sentence, if not that the speaker implies it and the hearer is able to infer, work out or read it between the lines, by engaging the rules that govern successful conversational interaction (Levinson, 2000, p. 11). It is where the speaker really wants the hearer to understand the meaning. Grice (1989) proposed that implicatures can be calculated from the first, by understanding three things. Mainly, the usual linguistic meaning of what is said, secondly, contextual information, which is that one shared, or general knowledge and finally the assumption that the speaker is obeying what Grice calls the cooperative principle.

“Have you got any cash on you?”

The sentences above, is a clear example of conversational implicature, since with that information the addressee may guess what is the purpose or intention of the speaker, and the speaker on the other side, is preparing the addressee for what is coming.

2.4.1 Cooperative principle

It is the way in which people try to make conversations work. And for being successful in a conversation depends upon the various speakers' approach to the interaction. We can understand it partly by noting those people who are exceptions to the rule, and are not capable of making the conversation work. We may also, sometimes, find it useful deliberately to infringe or disregard it - as when we receive an unwelcome call from a telephone salesperson, or where we are being interviewed by a police officer on suspicion of some terrible crime. There have been proposed that in ordinary conversation, speakers

and hearers share a cooperative principle. Speakers shape their utterances to be understood by hearers. The principle can be explained by four underlying rules or maxims.

2.4.2 Conversational maxims

According with Wierzbicka (1991), it is not prescribed the use of such maxims nor it is suggested the use of them in an artificial way in order to construct conversations. But they are useful for analyzing and interpreting conversation, and may reveal purposes of which as speaker as listener were not previously aware. Very often, it is communicated particular non-literal meanings by appearing to “violate” or “flout” these maxims. There are four different maxims, each one with its different and specific details, and in order to understand better all of them a brief explanation about them is going to be given. The first one is *quality*, in which speakers should be truthful, this means that they should not say what they think is false, or make statements for which they have no evidence; the following one is *quantity*, in it a contribution should be as informative as is required for the conversation to proceed, in other words, it should be neither too little, nor too much (Green, 1996, p. 101). However, a specific quantity of information that satisfies the maxim is not clear, so it depends on the context and on what it is said. Thirdly, *relevance* is speakers' contributions that should relate clearly to the purpose of the exchange. Finally, manner which is done by speakers' contributions that should be perspicuous that means clear, orderly and brief, avoiding obscurity and ambiguity. (Yule, 1996, p. 37)

There are also another kind of maxims according with Leech own perception of the speech act. Tact maxim, it is used in directives (impositives) and commissives and these minimize cost to other or maximize benefit to other. Generosity maxim, it is used in

directives and commissives, this minimize benefit to self or maximize cost to self. Approbation maxim, it is used in expressives and representatives (assertives), it minimize dispraise of other or maximize praise of other. Modesty maxim, it is used in expressives and representatives, and minimize praise of self or maximize dispraise of self. Agreement maxim, it is used in representatives, this minimize disagreement between self and other or maximize agreement between self and other. And finally, sympathy maxim it is used in representatives, this minimize antipathy between self and other or maximize sympathy between self and other.

2.4.4 Relevance

Assuming that the cooperative principle is at work in most conversations, it can be seen how hearers will try to find meaning in utterances that seem meaningless or irrelevant and how it is assumed that there must be a reason for these (Jackson H., Stockwell P., 1996, p. 142). For instance, in the sentence - Are you going to the party?- the answer given is - I fail the exam-. As it can be observed, there is no any coherence between answer-question, but even so the asker keep satisfied with the answer even though some other people could not understand it.

This is because as the speaker as “the addressee possess a previous knowledge” or information about the topic and for that reason it can be understood what the other person is saying, and if one of the people involved in the communication act has no any idea of what the other is talking about, the relevance is started to be used and the speaker need to think in the possible reasons for what the addressee cannot going to the party (Mey, 2001, p. 84).

And according with the answer provided, it can be infer that may be the addressee needed to pass the exam in order to have permission to going out. So here the relevance comes out, it is not important that the addressee wants or not going out if not that he or she cannot because a determine reason. This is analyzing utterances, it means searching for relevance, and there a hierarchy of propositions is used; those might be asserted, presupposed, entailed or inferred from any utterance.

2.4.4.1 Assertion

It is, “what is asserted is the obvious, plain or surface meaning of the utterance (though many utterances are not assertions of anything)” (Yule, 1996, p. 47).

2.4.4.2 Presupposition

According with Yule (1996) it is understood for what is taken for granted in the utterance. For instance, “I saw the Mona Lisa in the Louvre” presupposes that the Mona Lisa is in the Louvre.

2.4.4.3 Entailments

It is about “logical or necessary corollaries of an utterance” (Yule, 1996, p. 49), in order to arrive to an idea trough the obvious following questions thus, the example entails:

-I saw something in the Louvre, so I saw something somewhere, so something was seen, so there is a Louvre, so there is a Mona Lisa, and so on.

2.4.4.4 Inferences

Following Yule definition (1996), these are interpretations that other people draw from the utterance, for which we cannot always directly account. From the example above, someone might infer, rationally, that the Mona Lisa is, or was recently, on show to the public. They might infer, less rationally, that the speaker has been to France recently because if the statement were about something from years ago, he or she would have said so.

2.5 The given/new distinction

In conveying a message, there is more than thinks about “who did what to whom”. There must be taken into account and to keep in mind what the listeners already know, and how to present the message in an intelligible and coherent manner. The most common error is assuming the listeners have particular knowledge. Even if the speaker is sure that listener has certain knowledge of something about which we wish to speak, it is necessary to introduce it, or recall what they already know (Yule, 1996, 83).

In the same way, there should not be introduction familiar things as if those things were new, since this may seem patronizing, but can also be confusing, because our listeners may try to find a new interpretation to match our implication of novelty. For that, one of the ways in which that information can be shown is by using nouns like “this” or “it”.

2.5.1 Names and addresses

In certain languages there are different forms to address people; it can be through determined ways, such as determine pronouns or specific names to refer to particular addressees. There are two types:

2.5.1.1 T and V pronouns

It refers to “tu/vous” which means “you” in English as in the second person of singular, as to address somebody in a polite way. “You” in English is used to indicate certain level of respect or to mark the difference to the addressee (Yule, 1996, p. 84). These may originally have indicated number used for plural forms, but now a day, it shows different levels of formality, in order to be more familiar or more polite. These forms may also be a marker of status, with the V form used to superiors and the T form to equals or inferiors. T forms are also used to express solidarity or intimacy, indeed, a king is “your majesty”.

2.5.1.2 Titles and names

“In every language there is a way to express status and attitude through titles, first names and last names”. Titles are such things as Professor, Dr, Sir, Dame, Fr., Mr., Mrs., Miss, Rabbi, Sr. However, these abbreviations are made in writing, not in speaking, for example it is written “Mr.” but it is said “mister”. Another exemplification can be seen with first names such as Fred or Susan but sometimes it includes epithets such as chief, guy, mate, man, pal. But it is also used to mark a status in some contexts like public schools or the armed forces, since those are norms, and depending on their use it can be known the importance of the person, based on Levinson perspective (2000).

In English avoidance of address is often acceptable - thus where French speakers say “Bonsoir, Monsieur”, English speakers may say merely, “Good evening” (Omitting the address in France would seem impolite.)

2.6 The politeness principle

The politeness principle is a series of maxims, which Geoff Leech has proposed as a way to explain how politeness operates in conversational exchanges. It is defined as politeness as “forms of behavior that establish and maintain comity” (Leech, 1983, p. 70). That is, the ability of participants in a social interaction to engage an atmosphere of relative harmony. In stating his maxims Leech uses his own terms for two kinds of illocutionary acts. He calls representatives “assertives”, and calls directives “impositives”.

Note also that speakers may adhere to more than one maxim of politeness at the same time. Often one maxim is on the forefront of the utterance, with a second maxim being invoked by implication.

2.6.1 Face and politeness strategies

By face, it can be understood a speaker's sense of linguistic and social identity (Yule, 1996, p. 61). Any speech act may impose on this sense, and is therefore face threatening. And speakers have strategies for lessening the threat. Positive politeness means being complimentary and gracious to the addressee (but if this is overdone, the speaker may alienate the other party). Negative politeness is found in ways of mitigating the imposition. For instance:

Hedging: Err... could you... err... perhaps... close the... um... window?

Pessimism: I don't suppose you could close the window, could you?

Indicating deference: Excuse me, sir, would you mind if I asked you to close the window?

Apologizing: I'm terribly sorry to put you out, but could you close the window?

Impersonalizing: The management requires all windows to be closed.

So the basic model of the theory is “face” and the fact that the approach of politeness is derived from more fundamental notions. “Face” is defined as “the public self-image that every member of society wants to claim for himself”. In the framework, face consists of two related aspects. One is negative face, or the rights to territories, freedom of action and freedom from imposition, wanting your actions not to be constrained or inhibited by others. The other is positive face, it is the positive consistent self-image that people have and their desire to be appreciated and approved of by at least some other people.

The rational actions people take to preserve both kinds of face, for themselves and the people they interact with, add up to politeness. Brown and Levinson also argue that in human communication, either spoken or written, people tend to maintain one another's face continuously.

According with Verschuren, J. (1999), in everyday conversation, we adapt our conversation to different situations. Among friends we take liberties or say things that would seem discourteous among strangers. And we avoid over-formality with friends. In both situations we try to avoid making the hearer embarrassed or uncomfortable. Face-threatening acts (FTAs) are acts that infringe on the hearers' need to maintain his/her self-esteem, and be respected. Politeness strategies are developed for the main purpose of dealing with these FTAs.

The information provided previously is of significant importance in this research, since throughout the definitions and terms is possible to establish a patron to be analyzed. To set the information to be examined in the results obtained make easier what is to be looked for. It is important to remark that every single feature takes an important part of the whole research as function of the pragmatics of the apology.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology used is described as well as introduce the subjects involved in the research, the instrument applied and the procedure of how it was carried out and the data analysis of the results. First of all, it is important to mention that the purpose of this research was observed and stated the different strategies used by Mexican learners of English at a basic level used when they performed an apology This paper uses descriptive research, since the results obtained only provide extra information about how this process is carried out by following already existent steps.

3.1 Subjects

This research took part on the facilities of the Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas BUAP (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla). The place was selected based on their strategic location and also because of the accessibility and the practicality. There the population, were selected following the criteria of the proficiency level were possessed by them according to the stage they were, which was basic. It is also needed to mention that students are learning English to be teachers. Twenty Mexican learners of English at a basic level participated in this study. Even though gender was not important for this study, it is interesting to mention that 13 women and 7 males participated in the study.

3.2 Samples

The number of population chosen was of twenty subjects from one hundred available in the basic level. It was no any particular reason to select this number more than the decision to facilitate the management of the results. Since this research at being descriptive needs register through transcriptions every single result obtained from the

instrument, act that requires a considerable amount of time in when making the analysis of it. So considering this and taking into account this research is part of a joint project with two more colleagues directed by Dr. Elizabeth Flores Salgado.

3.3 Instrument

This research methodology involves collecting information. Data was gathered through the employment of Cartoon Oral Production Task (COPT) which is a questionnaire developed by Flores Salgado 2011. It contains descriptions of a specific social context in which utter a determine speech act and the entire description of each situation is in Spanish in order to facilitate the understanding of the subjects. The participants were instructed about the way the answer must be given, those ones in English. After this part is done, it must be recorded in order to transcript the information later for being analyzed.

3.4 Procedures

First of all, the analysis used in this research was qualitative, since it is importance to know, more than the frequency or the number of times, what is said. For achieving, was designed an instrument, which was firstly validated by checking that it could really fit the standards and examine that it could show the results necessities to reach the purpose of the study. Once this step was arranged, the instrument was administered to every one of the subjects mentioned previously, and their answer it according to their own perspective in each situation. Afterwards, the information obtained was collected and transcribed in order to analyze the data that was processed by using a coding scheme designed specifically for this purpose. This coding scheme was proposed by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989). It consists of five strategies: IFID (illocutionary force indicating device) it is the

combination of the illocutionary point (the purpose of the speaker) of an utterance and particular presuppositions; taking responsibility, it is the awareness of the violation committed and the response for that action; explanation or account, it is the reason given for the violation done; offer of repair, it refers to a proposal for mending the fault; promise of forbearance, it is to assure the violation will not be repeated. It is important to remark that an apology can contain more than one of these strategies.

Finally, a raw number was completed in order to find the percentage of the coincidences and the range forms occur, to see how and what to extent the pragmalinguistic behavior were showed on those forms presented by using a rule of three.

In addition, the average of words in the utterance of performing an apology was estimated. The verbosity was an issue that was not considered enough in the research but it gained importance once it was realized that it could be a trace of speakers' performance. The different discourse structures of the performance were observed, in the same way the pre-sequences and post-sequences accompanying each apology. The information obtained from Mexican speakers was analyzed in order to find some differences or similarities by using a code scheme designed exclusively to analyze COPT results.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

4.1 Overview

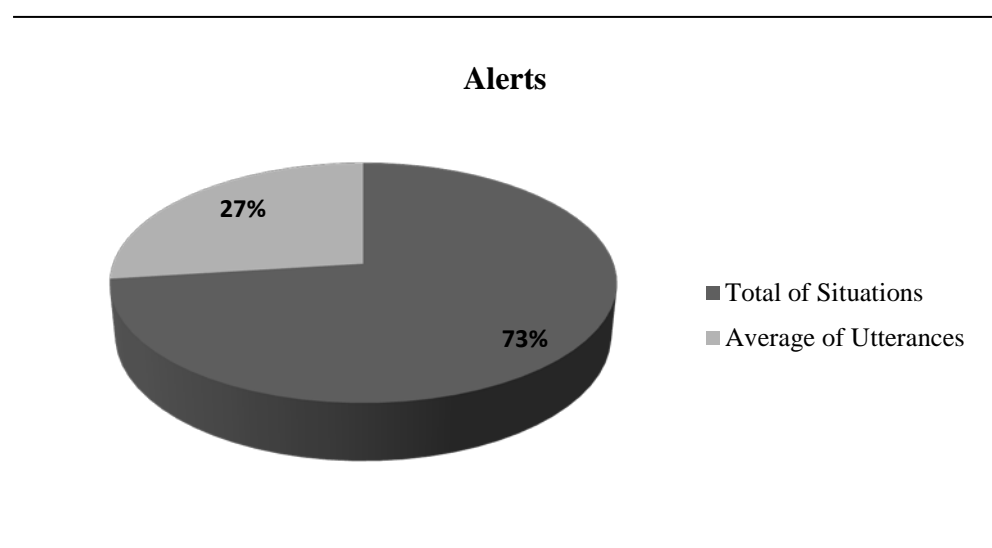
In this chapter, the answers of the questionnaires that were firstly applied to nonnative speakers and then collected are evaluated and presented. The results are discussed and the answers given by appliers in the research questions are provided as well as a study based on the responses obtained. The recorders were transcribed and every sentence obtained was isolated for making the correspondent analysis following the model (COPT) that was modified by Flores (2011). After this, the frequencies were taken following a rule of three and only analyzing apology factor presented in order to observe how and in which cases it was performed.

4.2 Alert

It is the hesitation uttered in a sentence. It is an exclamation that might express surprise, embarrassment or bewilderment. It is sometimes used to gain time while thinking on the answer that is going to be given. Its use it is not conditioned and does not affect the act of apologizing. It means, that uttered or not in the statement, it does not change the entire apology. Based on Flores' definition (2011), "an alert is an opening element preceding the actual apology"; it is categorized as follows: title/role, this refers to the use of a word that determines the position or the relationship between hearer-speaker; surname, first name, nickname, endearment term that refers to the use of words denoting affection; offensive term that is the employment of insulting words; pronoun and attention getter that is the use of determine words that the speaker knows are going to catch the attention of the hearer on what he or she is saying. It must be said that in the performance

of an apology, there might be perceived the use of one or more of the categories of alerts stated above. Finally, to conclude, its use lets know to the hearer the concern of the speaker about the fault committed.

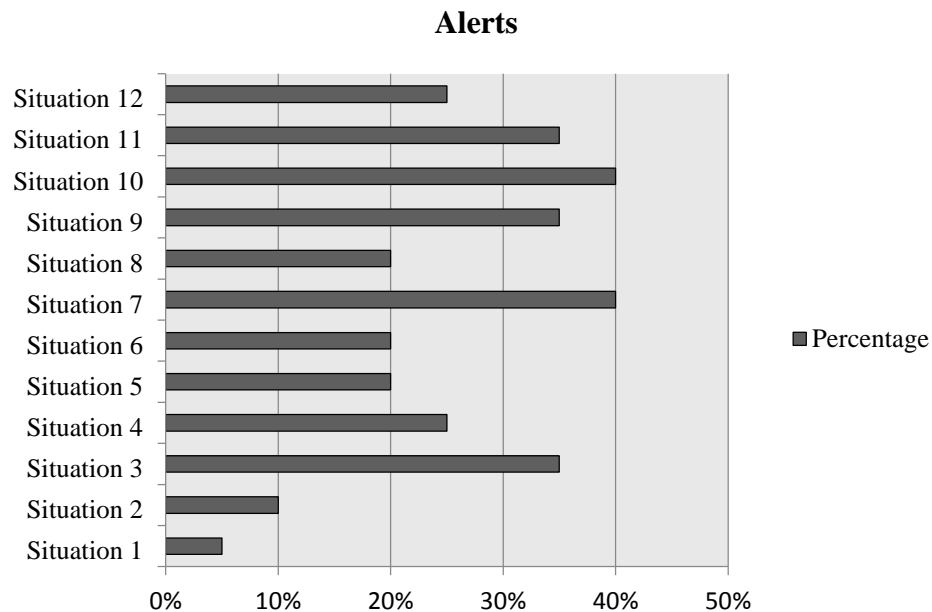
Figure 1. Average of Alerts Performed



It is noticed in Figure 1, the general percentages of the use of *alerts* made by the speakers in the 12 conditions. In a 27% of the situations, it was stated an alert. The omission of the use of any alert was a 73%. So, in other words, this strategy in which the speaker announce its apology by expressing a hesitation or expression of emotion in order to prepare the hearer for the apology utterance was not used with a high recurrence.

In Figure 2 below, as it is seen, the situations with the highest recurrence in the employment of alerts were situations 7 and 10 with a 40% of usage. In the same way, situations 11, 9 and 3 indicate a 35% of appliance. The lowest usage was presented in situation 1 with a 5%. It must be said that in situation 7 as well as in 10, the speaker was the direct person who committed the error.

Figure 2. Percentage of Alerts Uttered in Each Situation



Despite the fact that in situation 7 the speaker has no relation with the hearer, an *alert* was shown; in most of the cases it was uttered a hesitation since the speaker did not expect the situation and made use of an *alert* to think what to say. In Situation 10, there was a working relationship with the hearer and the speaker was the direct guilty. In this case it was seen most expressions of emotion and surprise. In Situations 3, there was a close relation of friendship with the hearer, meanwhile in situation 9 the hearer was a kid and in situation 11 the hearer was an unknown person for the speaker. So, considering this, it is concluded that alerts may vary its usage not only depending on the context but on what the speaker is trying to say or to express.

(1) *Oh! Excuse me! Play with us.* (B1, 12)

In the example number 1 provided above, an alert is declared in the apology. The classification of the *alert* is *emotion expression/exclamation*. It means that the utterance of

the exclamation *oh!* indicates that the speaker is surprised or concerned about what happened.

(2) *Hey brother! I won't go with you tomorrow because I have to go to the university.*

(B12, 3)

In the example number 2 another type of alert is shown. It is used *hey brother!*; this is classified as *attention getter*. The classification corresponds to the fact that the speaker makes use of this type of *alert* when he is trying to catch the attention of the hearer. It must be stated that in both examples presented, the use of any *alert* does not change the type or condition of the apology itself. In other words, *alerts* used did not change the impact or the way in which an apology is performed.

Table 1: Percentages and Raw Frequencies of the Six Apology Strategies

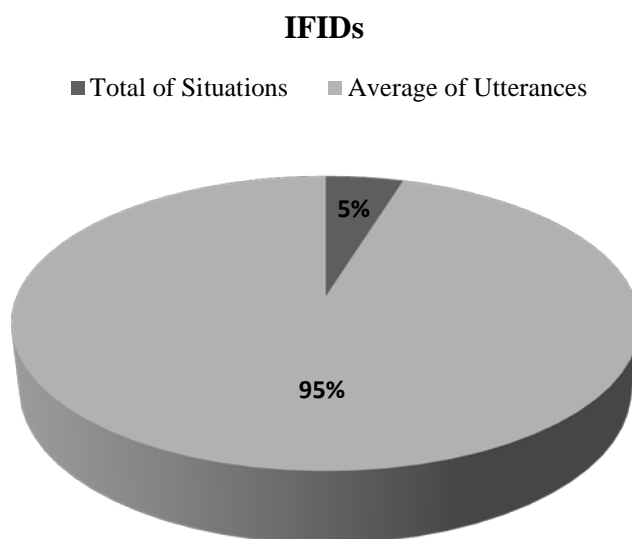
Apology Strategies	Average of Use
<i>IFID</i>	95% (230)
<i>Taking on Responsibility</i>	53% (129)
<i>Explanation or Account</i>	30% (74)
<i>Offer of Repair</i>	27% (65)
<i>Distracting from the Offense</i>	10% (25)
<i>Promise of Forbearance</i>	7% (17)

Above in Table 1 is appreciated the frequency of every single strategy settle down in this research. It is shows the average of utterances made in the 240 illocutions by the twenty speakers.

4.3 IFIDs

According to Yule (1996, p. 49) the Illocutionary Force Indicating Device or IFID is an expression of an utterance “where there is a slot for a verb that explicitly names the illocutionary act being performed”. The verb involved in the statement shows an illocutionary force, which is the signal of what kind of speech act is being performed, in this case an apology. This verb (performative verb) is which introduces to the hearer to the apology expected. This means that communicative force used by a speaker under the proper circumstances. That force, in the case of an apology, refers to the intention of the utterer to offer a repair.

Figure 3. Average of IFIDs Performed

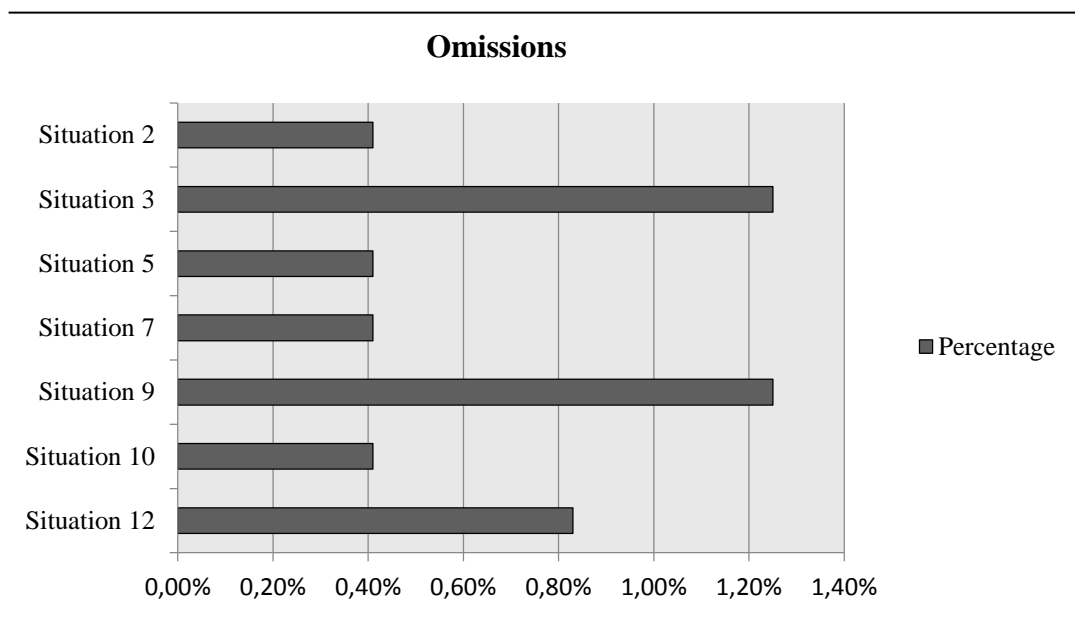


Based on the data obtained from Figure 3, the 95% of the speakers used an IFID in every situation. It is observable that almost every subject performed an apology in each condition. So, this is appreciated as a high usage of performative verbs to apologize.

However there was an average of 5% in which any apology was outspoken. The situations in which the use of IFIDs was omitted are presented below in Figure 4.

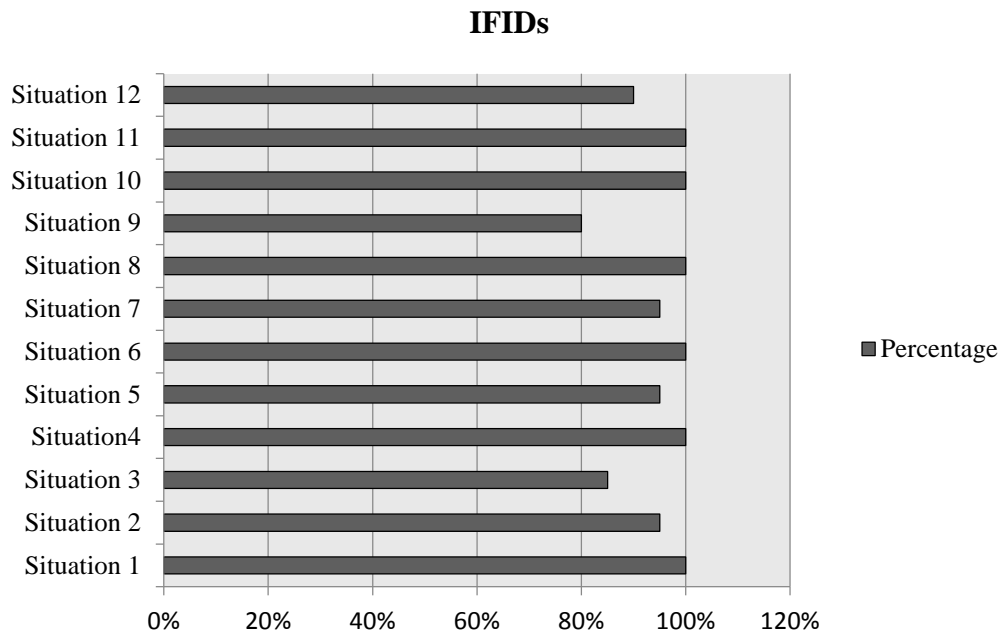
According on the information obtained from Figure 4, it is evident that the omissions in the use of an IFID are very low. In general, the speakers avoid employing an IFID in with a 5% of recurrence. The avoidance was seen mainly in situations 3 and 9 with a 1.25% of omission. In the rest of the situations showed in the table below (situations 2, 5, 7 and 10, the omission displayed the same percentage that was a 0.41%.

Figure 4. Percentage of Omissions Made in the Correspondent Situations



Simultaneously, founded on Figure 5 below, an IFID was uttered every time by the speakers in situations 1, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 11. In the rest of the situations, the speakers made use of a verb for apologizing with a 95% of recurrence in situations 2, 5 and 7. The situations with the less use of a performative verb were the numbers 3 and 9 with an 85% and 80% of employment.

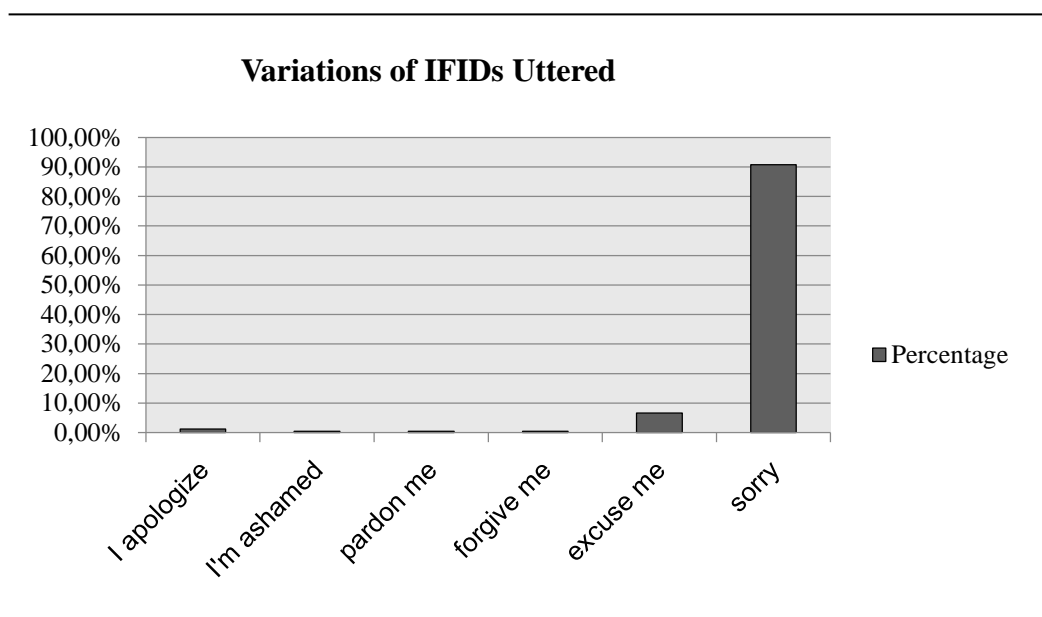
Figure 5. Percentage of IFIDs Uttered in each Situation



As shown in Figure 6, 90% of the IFIDs employed *sorry* and 6% of them used *excuse me*. The expressions *I apologize*, *I'm ashamed*, *pardon me* and *forgive me* were only used .41%. It will allow perceiving the lack of variation in the usage of verbs or expressions to apologize. It is important to remark the differences because the verb *sorry* is more impersonal than the use of structures like *pardon me*, and in fact the subjects used those expressions in that way.

Only in the situations that represented seriousness or importance to the speaker they make use of the expression *excuse me* in order to bring more politeness to their performance. Also it is important to consider that any other word was chosen because the subject has not got the level to use variety in the vocabulary employed to offer an apology.

Figure 6. Average of Variations of IFIDs Uttered



(3) *I'm sorry friend, if you want... maybe another day I'll show you the city.* (B3, 3)*

In the example above (3), it is noted the use of an IFID; in this case the word used to make the apology was *sorry*. This indicates to the hearer that the speaker was aware about his mistake and that the word *sorry* might proceed to a well-elaborated apology in order to mend the mistake. The word *friend* is used as a title, this in order to show respectfulness or to mark a hierarchy. Also there is given an offer, *maybe another day I'll show you the city*, with the purpose of mending the fault.

(4) *Excuse me! Sorry... I'm sorry. I... I just... it... it... it was an accident!* (B10, 11)*

Following the statement number 4, there is appreciable the use of more than one IFID. The verbs employed are *excuse* and *sorry*, this one applied twice. The utterance of two or more IFIDs, brings to the apology a truly sense of regretful. So, in a way, as much is

the use of performative verbs in the statement, it might determine the impact of the apology.

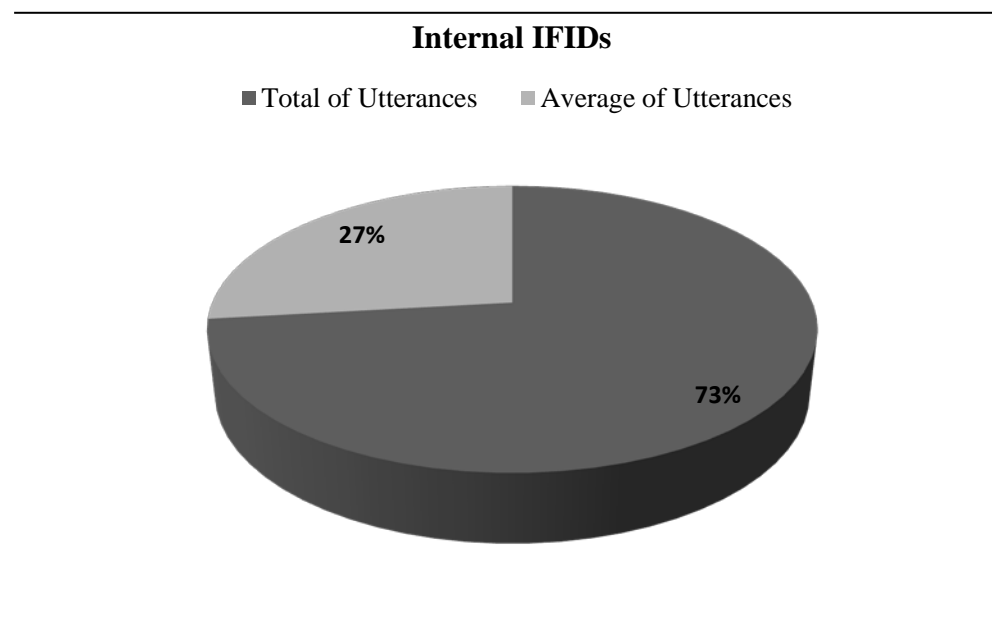
(5) *I will do it at the weekend because I have homework to do.* (B4, 5)*

Based on the illustration number 5, it is noticed that the speaker did not use any verb to express regret. It was not used any IFID, which means that any apology was uttered. However, the speaker is conscious about the fault since he makes an offer but letting the hearer know that the offer might be carried out depending on external circumstances.

4.3.1 Internal IFIDs

Founded on Trosborg (1995) there are intensifiers of the apology, called internal IFIDs. These are factors that help speakers to manage a speech act in a convenient way for themselves. It is an internal modifier to emphasize the IFID used, and in this way obtain a more accurate and sincere apology.

Figure 7. Percentage of Internal IFIDS Uttered



According on the information obtained from Figure 7, it is concluded that the percentage of speakers who made use of *internal IFIDs* is a 27% from a total of 240 situations. So, despite the fact that the use of IFIDs was very high, the intensifiers or internal IFIDs were not used with the same range. It must be mentioned that the internal IFIDs used the most by speaker were intensifying adverbials as well as double intensifier or repetition of intensifying adverbial.

(6) *I'm very sorry teacher... err... thank you teacher.* (B2, 2)*

Following the structure of the exemplification 6, it is noticeable the use of an internal IFID. In the sentence *I'm very sorry teacher*, the performative verb stated (*sorry*) is intensified by the internal IFID *very*, which according to the classification specified above, it belongs to the category intensifying adverbials.

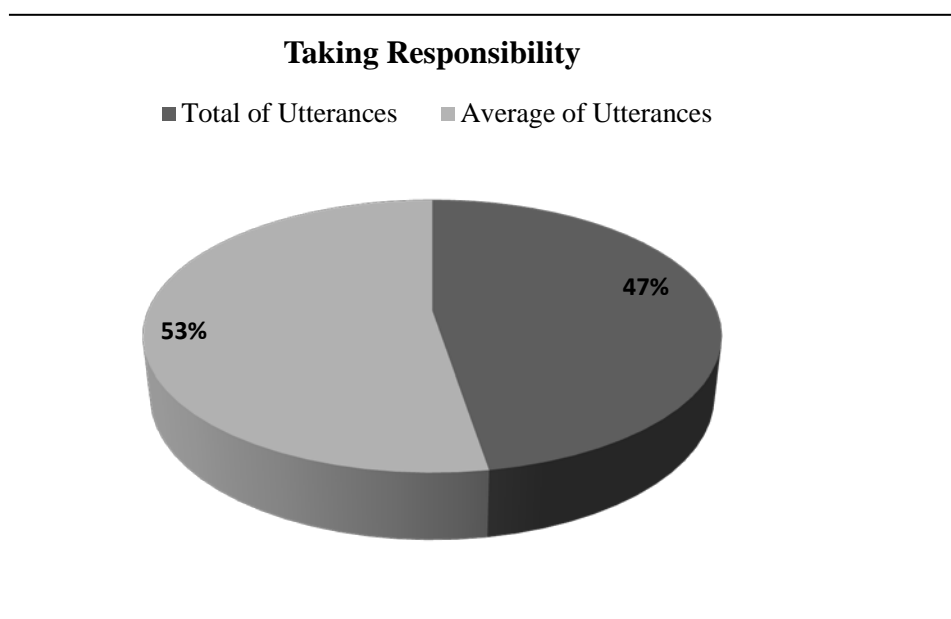
(7) *I'm sorry teacher. I couldn't come to the class... but... and I know that I can do the presentation now... but I still want to say sorry.* (B1, 2)*

In example 7 it is recognizable the use of the internal IFID *expressions marked for register*. It is implied in the sentence *I still want to say sorry*. This sentence is seen at the end of the main statement; yet, in this one the speaker marked his sense of sorrow after an explanation of the facts and even though it was stated previously in the first utterance stated that was *I'm sorry teacher*. As a conclusion, it is deducted by the hearer that the speaker is really disturbed about the offense and she tries to let the hearer be conscious of it.

4.4 Taking Responsibility

This strategy refers to the issue of admitting to have committed an error; to be aware that it implies a consequence and in some cases, the acceptance of guiltiness. The speaker is willing to assume his or her blame to concede the error a responsibility for the violation committed to reestablish the harmony (Wipprecht, 2007, p.5). It might be one of the most relevant strategies, since once it is outspoken, it leads a space open for the use of a second strategy. Even though taking responsibility was not always used by speakers in the different twelve situations, it was the most used by them as it can be noted below (Figure 8).

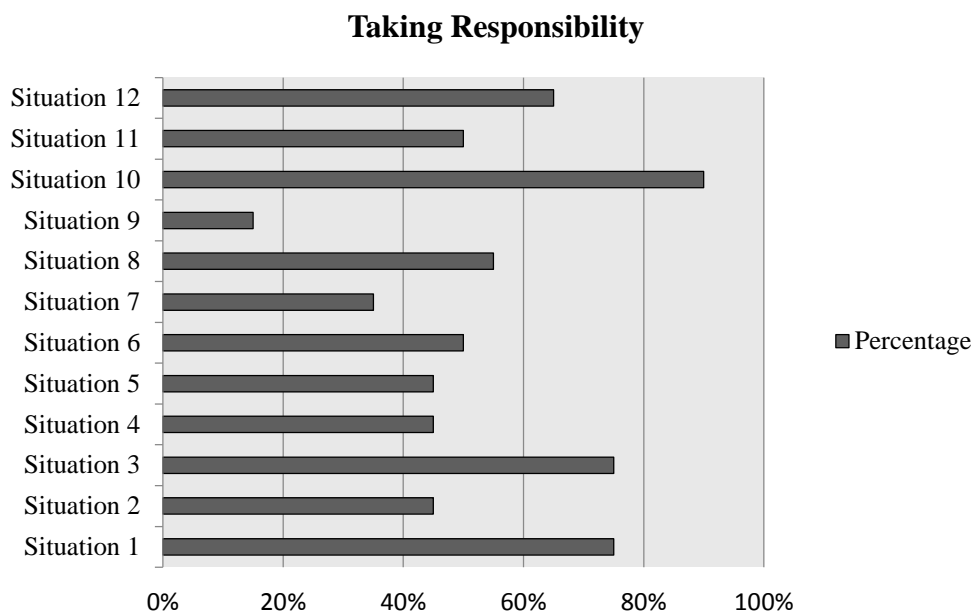
Figure 8. Average of Taking Responsibility Strategy Performed



In Figure 8, it is observable the general production of the strategy *taking responsibility* carried out in the 240 illocutions. A total of 53% uttered it as strategy to apologize. It must be said that every speakers made use of this strategy, but not with the same frequency in the twelve situations settle down.

As seen in Figure 9, this strategy was frequently used by speakers. The situation 10 is the one with the highest level of utterances, a 90%. Sequentially, situations 3 and 1 showed a 75% of employment. The situation 9 displayed the less frequency of usage with a 15% of statements.

Figure 9. Percentage of Taking Responsibility Strategy Uttered in each Situation



(8) *Sorry kids.*

*I thought it was mine. Is my fault. Here you have your paint kids. (B7, 9)**

In the example above (8) is noticeable the use of the strategy of taking responsibility. The phrase *is my fault* explicitly shows the admission of the facts and it let sees that the speaker is concern about the circumstance and aware about the fault. Despite the fact that the offended is a kid (Situation 9), a well-elaborated apology is performed so as to ensure that the harmony is restored.

4.4.1 Taking Responsibility Sub-Strategies.

Taking responsibility is divided into five sub-strategies that deny or strongly affirm the concern of the fault made. At the head of the list is admission of facts but not of responsibility, which means that although the mistake is accepted by the speakers, the consequence of the act is not conceded. In other words, despite of the fact that the subject recognizes the error, he or she does not consider himself or herself as guilty of the fault.

Moreover, there are strategies that indicate determined self-consciousness of the action. For example, when the subject completely assumes the responsibility for what was done and a sense of obligation and blame may be perceived; this is classified in explicit self-blame sub strategy. In the same vein, expression of embarrassment is found, but in this case a shameful feeling is shown more than the sense of accountability with the hearer.

On the other hand, an opposite response is identified in denial of responsibility feature. No culpability is appreciated and no sense of shame or obligation is demonstrated for the fault done. In some cases the speaker not only refutes being accused but pretends to be insulted by the situation in a way to prove to the addressee the contrary, this sub-strategy receives the name of pretend to be offended. As shown in Table 2, taking responsibility is divided into five sub-strategies.

Table 2: Percentages and Raw Frequencies of the Five Sub Strategies

Sub Strategies	Average of Use
Admission of Facts but not of Responsibility	27% (67)
Explicit Self-Blame	17% (43)
Expression of Embarrassment	4.1 % (10)
Denial of Responsibility	1.6% (4)
Pretend to be Offended	.41% (1)

The percentage of each strategy applied varied. The one used the most was admission of facts but not of responsibility with a total of 27%, explicit self-blame with a 17% was the second strategy most used in the study. The less common were expression of embarrassment, denial of responsibility and pretend to be offended with a 4.1%, 1.6% and 0.41% respectively.

(9) *Err... sorry... I marked other number... sorry... my mistake.* (B13, 7)

Focused on the example (9) the sub-strategy used by the speaker in the apology is *explicit self-blame*. It is clearly seen in the statement *my mistake*. This shows that the speaker is aware about his fault and expresses it to the hearer.

(10) *Come on mom! You know I'm different... please... I'm sorry!* (B15, 5)

In the next example (10) is recognized the sub-strategy pretend to be offended. The apology utterance starts with the statement *come on mom!*, showing in this way annoyance for being questioned. Even though the speaker apologizes, he shows he feels insulted.

(11) *I'm so sorry! How embarrassing! Is my fault.* (B12, 6)*

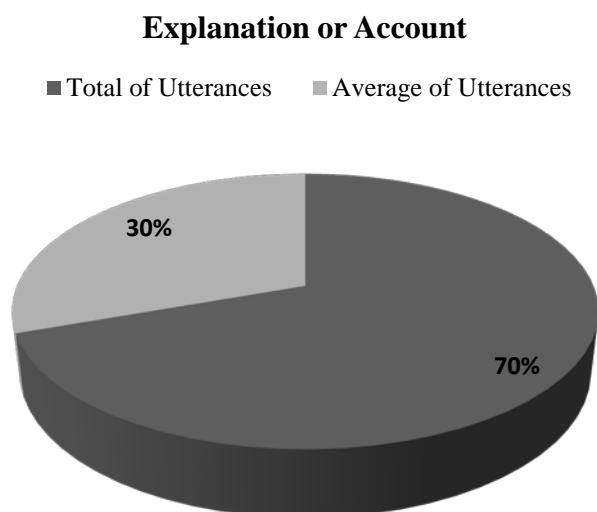
According to the example above, the speaker makes use of two sub strategies: expression of embarrassment and explicit self-blame. The speaker is aware of the situation and is consternated and ashamed by the events, while admitting his mistake to pronounce *is my fault*. This makes it clear to the listener that the speaker not only admits the facts, but also shows sorry for what happened.

4.5 Explanation or Account

Olshtain's category of explanation or account is defined as "situation-specific" and semantically reflecting the content of the situation (cited by Ogiermann, 2009, p. 136). By saying semantically it means that the reflection is meaningful, so the speaker is conscious on the offense. According to Ogiermann (2009) it supposes certain degree of responsibility

and acceptance. On the other hand, it may be seen as a “self-justification”. This, due to an explaining given that might be taken as an evasion from speaker to express that the mistake was made by external causes or reasons beyond to him or her, over which he or she had no control (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984).

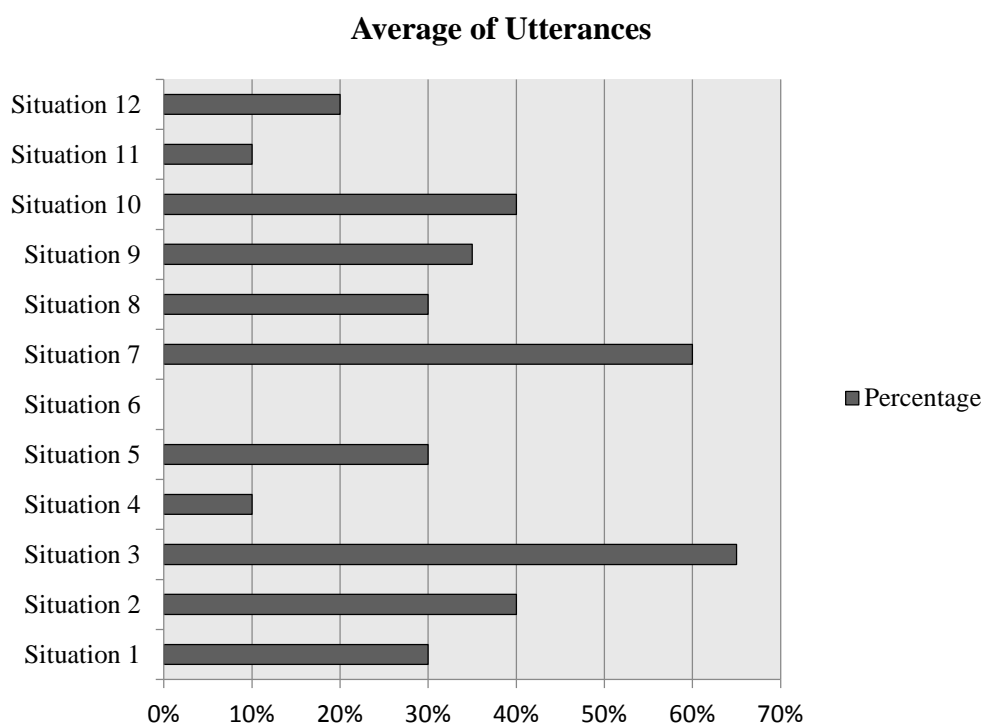
Figure 10. Percentage of Explanation or Account Strategy Uttered



It is manifested in Figure 10 the use of the strategy explanation or account. The average varied overly with every participant; in some cases the average was high, but in others the utterances of the strategy were to low or any approach was used. The percentage of the speakers who took the strategy explanation or account was 95%. Of this, only one person used the strategy in 75% of situations. In the rest of the population the mean provided many variations, from 58% used by a speaker, an 8.3% practiced by a 15% of the speakers, including a speaker who omitted any statement in reference to this strategy.

As established in figure 11, an explanation or account was stated in the apology with higher recurrence in situation 3, presenting a 65% of usage. In the same way in situation 7 the frequency of recurrence was of a 60%, meanwhile in situations 2 and 10 the average was the same, a 40%. Subsequently situation 9 with a 35%, in situations 8, 5 and 1 the percentage was 30%, a 20% of statements were declared in situation 12, in situations 4 and 11 a 10% was presented. Finally, it is remarkable that any statement was uttered in situation 6. The total of utterances outspoken using this strategy was a 37%.

Figure 11. Percentage of Explanation or Account Strategy Uttered in each Situation



Focusing on the percentages shown, it can be concluded that explanations or accounts were given the most in situations in which ones the speaker has certain type of relation with the hearer or a lower hierarchy. For example, in situation three, the offended

was a closer friend of the speaker. The speaker had other activities to do that implied he would not have time to spend with his friend. In this case, the speakers felt a sense of responsibility even though they had no control on the violation. This, in order to keep the atmosphere of harmony, this strategy was used following the politeness principle. On the other hand, there was not any relation between the hearer and the speaker; however the speaker considered clarifying the situation of the mistake committed indicating that the utterer gave an explanation or account maybe because of compromise and to keep the peacefulness by showing a positive face on its discourse. Lastly, in situation 6 any statement was uttered, the condition implies a lower hierarchy in the speaker and it might be concluded that any utterance was performed due to the fact that the level possessed by the speaker of the language was low and the resources needed to give an explanation were not the required.

(12) *I'm sorry, but I lost your notebook. I forgotten in the coffee shop and I couldn't find it. I want to apologize and I will help you to get them back.* (B1, 1)*

In the example (12) the speaker is offering an explanation about the accident without evading the responsibility of his actions since the speaker also uttered the sentence *I couldn't find it*. This is not only to give accounts of what happened, but to admit it was his fault.

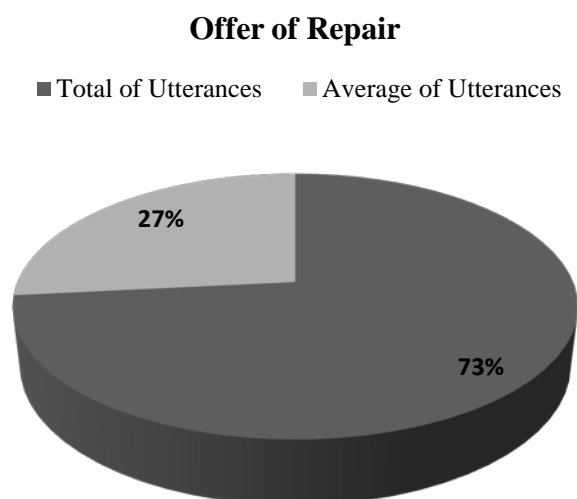
(13) *Huh... teacher. I am so sorry because I can't come yesterday to give my presentation. Please give me other opportunity.* (B16, 2)*

In the example (13) is observed that the speaker is offering an explanation of his apology but not explaining how the facts happened. However, to explain why he is apologizing might result as an honest and truly sincere apology.

4.6 Offer of Repair

In some cases there is a way to repair the mistake done, if the speaker has an intention to mend the fault, an offer of repair might be stated in order to make up the situation between the offended and the speaker. “In situations where the damage or inconvenience which affected to the hearer can be compensated for, the speaker can choose to offer repair in a specified or general manner, intending this as an apology.” (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984, p. 208) Repair may be offered in its literal sense or as an offer to compensate for the harm, the second one being relevant in situations in which actual repair is not possible or not wanted (Trosborg, 1987, p.152).

Figure 12. Average of Offer of Repair Strategy Performed

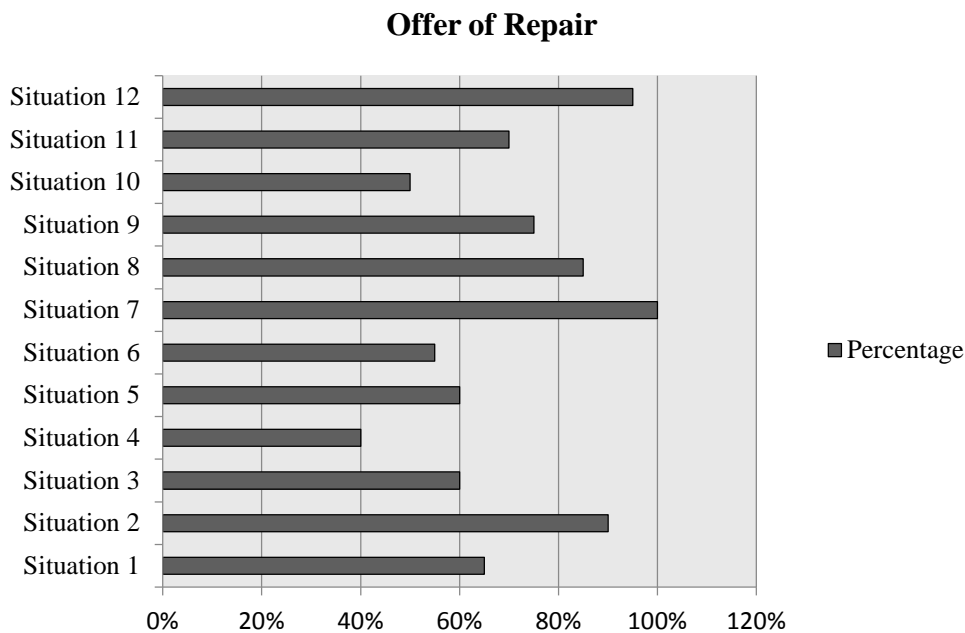


At first sight, it may be perceived in Figure 12 that the use of the strategy offer of repair was not used as frequently as other previously displayed. The highest percentage was 58% and was established only by a speaker; that means that he only used a little over half of the situations. The lowest percentage was 8.3% settled for 10% of the speakers. In addition, 25% of the speakers applied the strategy in 41% of the times, as well as 5 speakers who did so on 25% of the circumstances. The 33% of times the strategy was performed by three speakers, meanwhile 15% of the population did it in the 16% of states. And eventually, a speaker made use of this approach in intervals of 58%. Any performance was uttered by the 5% of the speakers in any situation.

To start with the description of the table below (Figure 13), it is essential to mention that the achievement of this strategy was of a 33%, so the average was low. A sense to offer a repair was performed, even though when in most of the cases the admission of the fault was denied. So, the speaker shows a strong feeling of responsibility due to an offer was stated in order to restore the harmony with the addressee.

In the conditions in which this strategy was used the most were on the situation 4. There the hypothetical circumstance indicates there was not any indirect relation with the hearer, and the speaker committed the fault accidentally in front of the addressee, for this reason the utterer had the necessity to express a mending statement by putting in action an illocutionary act. Based on the analysis of the words uttered, it was perceived the practice of sincerity conditions in order to convince the addressee.

Figure 13. Percentage of Offer of Repair Strategy Uttered in each Situation



In situation 6, it was seen a 50% of recurrence in the use of the strategy offer of repair. In this circumstance, there was an indirect relation between the speaker and the hearer, and even though the fault committed could not be repair, the speakers uttered and offer.

The next situation with a high average over the rest was the number 5 with a 45% of usage. In this case the relation with the hearers is closely direct. Therefore, at being addressees which one the contact is continuous is important for the speaker to maintain courtesy.

The following percentages are presented successively. Situations 3 and 1 with a 35%, situations 9 and 11 indicate a 30% of appliance. In situation 8 it was observable a 20% of statement. Situations 2 and 10 generates a 10% of performances each one. Situation 12 was used the less with a 5% of recurrence. To conclude, in situation 7 any declaration

was achieved, probably due to the fact that there was not any link between the speaker and the addressee. Moreover, the situation itself was not face to face if not by phone. The speech act was carried out during a phone call. So, at not seeing to the offended and taking into account that it was an unknown person, there was not any relation or harmony to keep.

(14) *Sorry. I forget your copies in the... if you want I pay you... tell me what can I do for you?* (B18, 1)*

In the example (14) the speaker offers a solution to mend her mistake committed by utter the statement *if you want I pay you*, to let the hearer see she will take the responsibility of her actions and finishes the apology by saying *what can I do for you?*, giving the chance to the hearer to take the best decision about how to mend the error.

(15) *I'm sorry. I don't pay attention. Let me help you.* (B6, 4)*

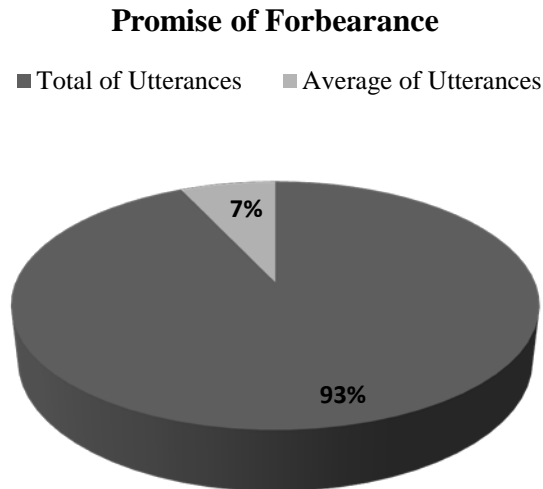
In example number 15 is observable the use of an offer. The statement *let me help you* makes the hearer is aware that the speaker recognizes his mistake and offers help to repair the error.

4.7 Promise of Forbearance

This is defined as the part of the apology in which the speaker declares he promises that the violation committed will not be repeated in the future; it would be also taken as admitting the facts but without saying it explicitly according to Blum.Kulka, House & Kasper (1989). The promise of forbearance strategy is defined by Ogiermann (2009) with the following words “is directed to both interlocutors’ positive face” this, due to the interest of the speaker to maintain the good relationship with the addressee. This strategy, also

might be taken as not only as an apology strategy (Bielski, 1992), but as a form of external intensification (CCSARP, 1989).

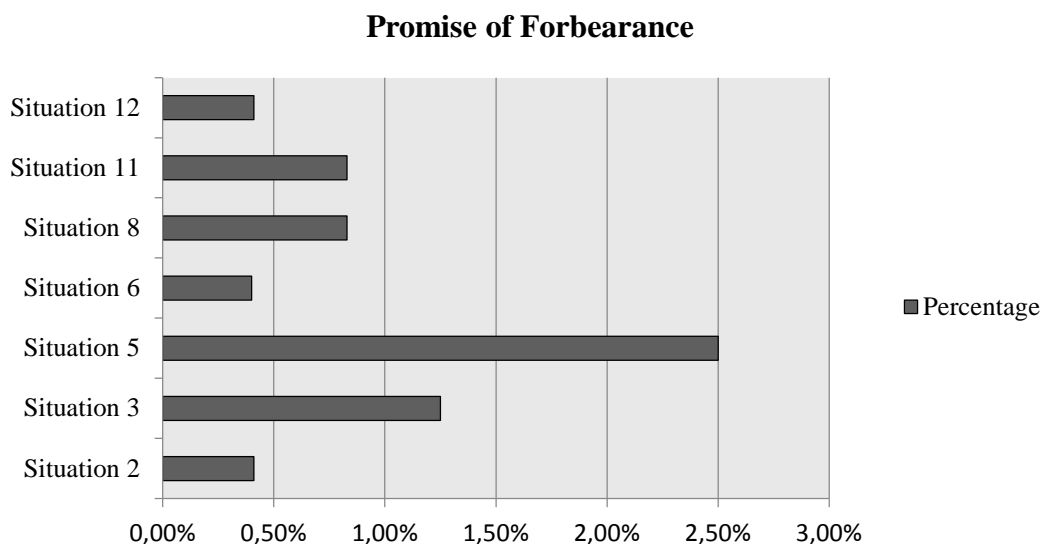
Figure 14. Average of Promise of Forbearance Strategy Performed



Referring to Figure 14, it is marked the very low use of this strategy by speakers when apologizing. Promise of forbearance was employed only 7%. Based on this, it is noticeable that promises of forbearance were not used as a strategy when apologizing by the majority of the speakers.

Following the Figure 15, it can be seen the situations in which a *promise of forbearance* was uttered. From a total of twelve situations, only in seven was applied this strategy. Situation 5 displayed the highest level of recurrence with a 2.5%. The following situation in which the strategy was used the most is number 3 with a 1.25%. Subsequently, situations 8 and 11 showed a .83% of usage, meanwhile situations 2 and 12 it was seen a .41%.

Figure 15. Percentage of Promise of Forbearance Strategy Uttered in each Situation



(16) *I'm sorry. I promise wake up early every day and I will clean all the house. Err... sorry... I... I... err... sorry is not my intention. (B2, 5)**

In the example number 16, a promise of forbearance is clearly stated in the apology. The utterance *I promise wake up early every day* employs the use of the verb *promise*, which lets the hearer to know that the speaker compromises to do not commit the same fault again.

(17) *I'm sorry teacher. I will never do it again. (B7, 2)**

In this example (17) even though a promise of forbearance is stated, the sentence uttered does not contains the verb *promise*, but the sentence itself is clear about a promise The speaker declares he *will never do it again*. So, this is a promise of a change in the future that the mistake will not be repeated.

4.8 Distracting from the Offense

According to Flores (2011), distracting from the offense is the “tactical moves by which the speaker tries to divert the hearer’s attention from his or her own responsibility for the offence”. In other words, it implies the statements produced by the speaker in order to direct the attention to another direction to make the hearer concern about something else but the offense. There are five sub-strategies used: query precondition, act innocently/pretend not to notice the offense, future/task oriented remark, humor, and appear.

As it is settle down in the Figure 16, only in a 10% of the cases, it was seen the use of this strategy. With a 90% of avoidance, this is the strategy with one of the strategies less used by the speakers when apologizing.

Figure 16. Average of Distracting from the Offense Strategy Performed

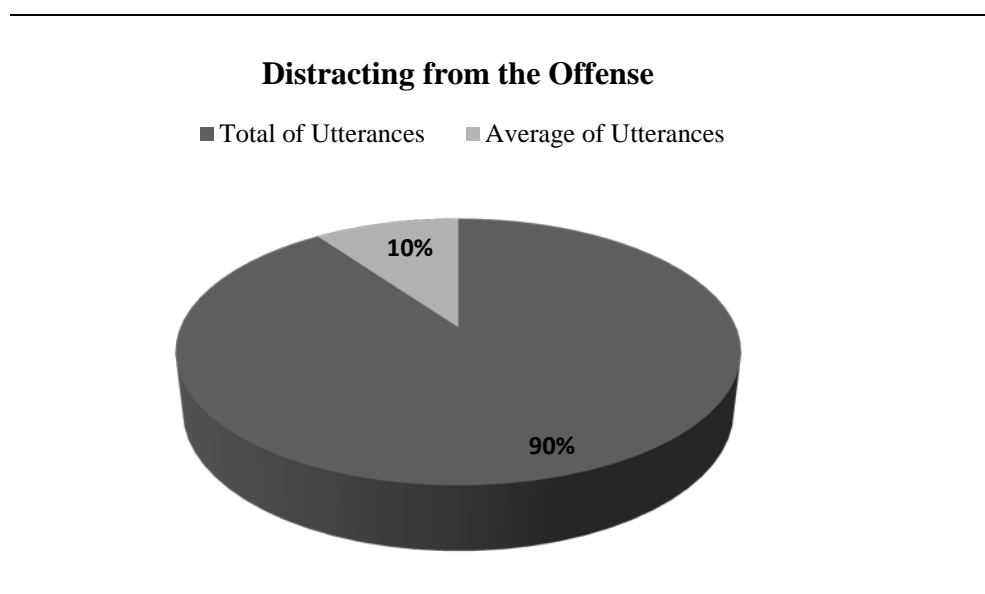
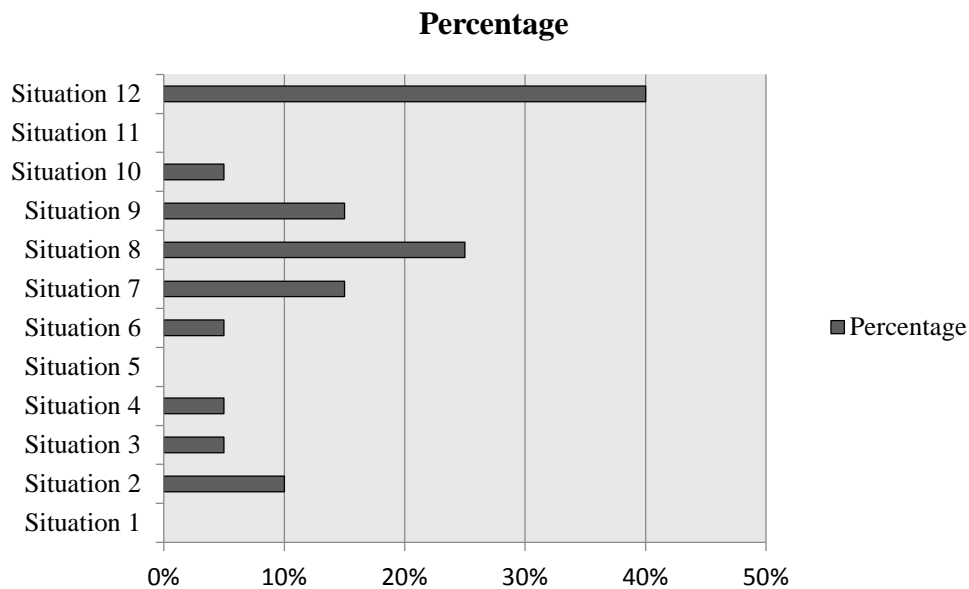


Figure 17. Percentage of Distracting from then Offense Strategy Uttered in each Situation



In Figure 17, it is recognizable the use of the strategy uttered by the speakers. According with the table above, in situation 12 it was gotten the highest recurrence with a 40%. Afterwards, in situation 8, the recurrence of usage was a 25%; in situation 9 and 7 the percentage perceived was a 15% in both cases. Finally, in situations 11, 5 and 1 it was omitted any utterance.

(18) *Excuse me. I didn't know... err... come and join us.* (B19, 12)*

The example (18) shows the use of *appear* as strategy to distract from the offense. The offense was the speaker did not realize the presence of a new guy in the basketball team. So, after ask for an apology and give an explanation, the speaker directs the attention to the fact *come and join us*.

(19) *I'm sorry. I thought you... you was my friend... hum... bye... is late!* (B11, 7)*

In the example (19), it is seen the use of a distractor which might be considered in the category of humor. Firstly, the speaker apologizes and then offers an explanation about how she thought the things were and finally as she does not know how to conclude or state that she has nothing more to say, she only expressed *bye... is late!*. In this way the speaker is directing the attention of the hearer to the fact that she has to go because is late, this said with a sense of humor, and no to the mistake committed.

4.9 Length of Apology

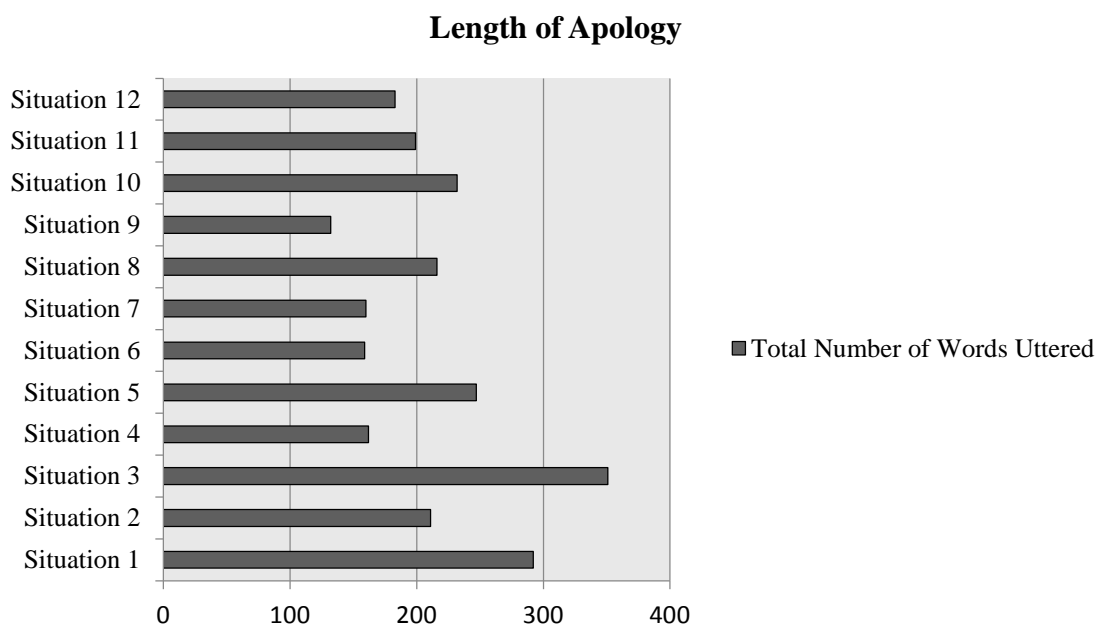
In this section, it is shown the number of words used by speakers to apologize. It is vital to have notion of the length of the apology offered, because in this way it can be determined the level of the language possessed by the learners.

Based on the information obtained from Figure 18, it is clearly seen the total number of words used by the participants in each situation. Situation 3 was in which one the length of the apology was more common than the rest with 351 words uttered by the 20 subjects.

In this situation, the length of words employed by the speakers varied. Situation 1 with a total of 292 words uttered were the second situation with the most extensive usage or words. It is observable that the hypothetical conditions stated in these situations implied to cancel a commitment with a friend. So, based on this, speakers uttered more words in this situation due to the fact that the offended was a person with a direct and close relation with them and because the speakers realize that despite the fact they had no control over the circumstances that make them unavailable to spend time with their friend, the speakers performed a well-elaborated apology which in most of the cases included an explanation

that showed concern from their part. All of this only let know to the hearer that they were really worry about it.

Figure 18. Number of Words Used in the Apology in Each Situation



The following situation was the number 5 with 247 and situations 10, 8, 2, and 11 with 232, 216, 211 and 199 subsequently. In all of these situations, the direct guilty of the fault or offense carried out were the speakers, so is understandable they used more words in order to apologize. In addition, in the conditions established on those situations, the speaker has not any relation or a least an indirect relation with the hearer. So, the reason of extensive use of words is that they were trying to maintain backward harmony with listeners by not only expressing their sense of embarrassment, but addressing them respecting their hierarchy.

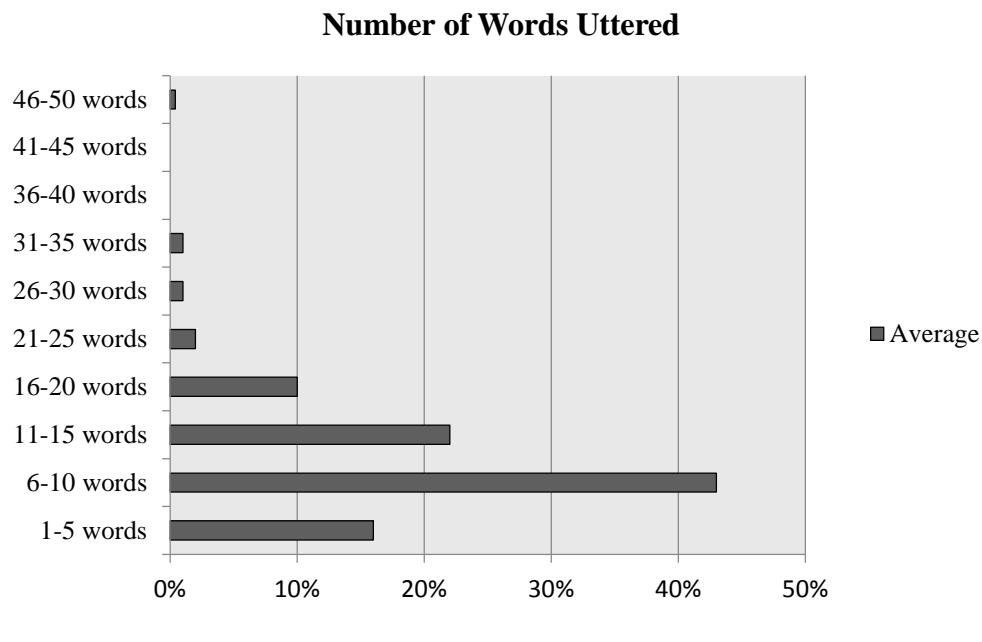
Situations 12, 4, 7 and 6 yielded the following result: 183, 162, 160 and 159 words successively. In situation 12, the speaker committed an omission, since he did not realize

about a new guy in the basketball team, so in this case there was no any relationship but even though, the speaker tried to keep a positive politeness. In situations 7 and 4, the speaker has not got any relation with the offended, but as the speaker is the direct guilty of the mistake committed, he or she offers an apology as well as a *repair to the offense*. The number obtained in situation 6 was a total of 211 words uttered by the twelve speakers. In this one, the offended has an indirect relation with the speaker (in the hypothetical situation it is about the mother of a friend) but a person who is likely to continue frequenting, perhaps for this reason the speakers used a considerable range of words to apologize and also tried to amend the offense.

To conclude, situation 9 yielded the lowest use of words. With a total of 132 performed by the speakers, it is the situation in which less strategies to apologize were applied. This, due to the fact that the offended was a child and the fault committed, according to the circumstances settle down, had been a mistake. Also as in this case the most important hierarchy belonged to the speaker, he or she felt that there was not any reason to apologize for.

In addition, according to the results, it was established a standard which determines the number of words were used more frequently in an apology. Based on Figure 19, it is seen that the most frequent range of words used was 6-10 words, with a percentage of 43% recurrence of a total of 240 situations. The following range was 11-15 words with a 22%. The subsequent range of words employed was 1-5 and 16-20 with 16% and 10% respectively. Finally, it was noticed that the higher the number words, the lower the frequency with which students employ them. This is proven in the consequent percentages: 21-25 words, 2%; and lastly 26-30 and 31-45 with 1%.

Figure 19: Average of Words Uttered in the Apology



(20) *I'm really sorry for the mess, but I've been very busy to fix it. (B17, 5)**

In the example 19 displayed above, the speaker is very concise with his entire apology. He uttered and *IFID* (sorry) and emphasized it by intensifying adverbials (really). He also offers an explanation and at the same time he admitted his fault by expressing *I've been very busy to fix it*. However, he does not show any offer of repair to mend the action. It must be said that offended ones are supposed to be his parents. The total of words uttered in this statement was 13.

(21) *Err... come... err... oh! Sorry I can't go for you but if you want you can stay in my house and... I have a trouble but when I back in my house, I promise you that we will to the... to the... walk around the city. Thank you. (B2, 2)**

Centered on the example 21, it is evident the length of the apology. It is extremely wide. The speaker uttered 46 words. However, it is perceived hesitations and doubts while talking. The speaker performed an IFID (sorry) and provided a quite long explanation about the reasons of the fault. Also it is seen the use of the strategy offer of repair and finally, she stated a distracting from the offense by saying *thank you* and using the strategy appear.

It is evident the use of each of the strategies mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Their usage depended on the situation settle down as well as on the knowledge of L2 in each student, showing in this way the communicative competence developed by them and in this way letting see the different types of resources used by them in a situation that requires a complex thought process, since speakers must know what to say and how to say it using all the tools available for them in following their understanding of L2. The conclusions of this research will be discussed in chapter five.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter the analysis of the result obtained is presented based on the objective of this research, which was to know the strategies used by nonnative speakers when perform an apology. For that is it mainly important described what was found.

5.1 Conclusions

The questions set out at the beginning of this project, will be cited in order to respond to each of them.

1. *What are the characteristics of apologies performed by basic language learners?*

The characteristics of the apologies expressed were:

-The utterance of one or more IFIDs when the speaker intends to bring an apology regardless of the circumstances.

-Internal IFIDs are produced when the speakers admit the facts but not in the same way the responsibility of their acts.

-Explanations or accounts and offer of repair were stated in the same circumstances. These are given when the speaker is in a position of lower hierarchy and when it is noticeable he or she is the direct guilty of the offense.

-Very few speakers pronounced a promise of forbearance. In the cases in which it is performed, the speaker has a close relation with the hearer and in situations in which he or she has no control over the situation such as an accident.

-Meanwhile lower is the knowledge of the grammatical structure of L2; the statements used for distracting from the offense are lower too.

-The largest number of words employed when apologizing not always belongs to the best apology given. For example, an apology may have 41 words stated by the speaker, but some of those words are only words repeated or redundant. So the coherence in the syntax is not proper at all. Meanwhile there could be a sentence with only 6 words, but those words are precise and concise. In this case the accuracy and the coherence are reached.

2. What are the apology strategies used by basic language learners?

The entire strategies were used, but the ones used the most when apologizing were:

-IFIDs: used to perform the act of apologizing.

-Internal IFIDs: used to emphasize the sense of sorrow.

-Taking Responsibility: used to show empathy to the hearer.

-Explanation or Account: used when trying to state whether the fault of the speaker is directly or due to external causes.

Referring about the apologies stated, it was found that those ones were based on speech acts and on what it involves; using the tone of voice was another strategy as well as internal IFIDs. Also each statement was based on positive and negative politeness. It was explained before how these ones were used in each situation and the characteristics contained by each one. Emphasizing, people with higher hierarchy that have no a strong relation with speaker, received a wider explanation and offers to repair the damage as well as an elaborated apology. Referring about people with high hierarchy but with a close

relation with the speaker is was completely the opposite the only point in common was the use of names. Talking about characteristics on each strategy, those ones were based on communicative competence principle following no any grammatical or syntactical rule but communicating.

In order to clarify in which way the results were obtained, it is going to be explained what was the objective of the instrument applied. The instrument worked with, settled up twelve different situations in which the subject must react as they would do it in a real situation and expressing themselves by using the vocabulary and the knowledge of the language possessed. What was obtained was that behind of sentences uttered, there was a specific intention, like minimizing the impact of the act by using particular words that in spontaneous talking would be difficult to identify. But following COPT instrument, it was possible to get into those words.

For example, most of the subjects showed a strong feeling of blame when they were the ones who committed an error, by omission or intentionally and there was a truly sense of shame in order to mend the offense, for that, it was used a long well elaborated explanation in order to sympathize with the offended; offering were made so as to negotiate a forgiveness. IFIDs were performed more than once in the same situation. But it was not the same with those ones subjects felt they did not have a close relation with or someone has no certain importance for them because those were unknown people for the hearer or just because the circumstance implied a kid as the offended, as it was established in situation 9. There, the frequency of apologies uttered decreased considerably, explanations were not given nor any offer to repair the act.

Positive politeness indeed was shown the most when apologizing with people relatively important for the speaker meanwhile negative was performed with irrelevant addressee for the subject. The first one was carried out in this way since the subjects wanted to demonstrate to the hearer they were truly sorry in order to obtain the absolution expected, for that they had to show certain 'face' to convince the offended that they really meant it. On the other hand in the second situation, subjects were not worried to prejudice their image, since the addressee seemed to be unimportant for them. With respect to titles and names were used the most with relevant people for showing respectfulness and to demonstrate hierarchy. The ones that were presented the most were *teacher*, *miss* and *sir* and sometimes, words according to the role of the hearer as well as names such as *friend*, *dude*, *Beto* or *Iriandi* were given to the fictional characters. It must be mentioned that it was not used as much as it would have been expected.

5.2 Discussion

Based on the analysis made, the conclusions obtained were, first of all, that nonnative speakers of English basic level faced some difficulties when apologizing, this due to the language level of the subjects. This level did not allow them to use other kind of apology strategies. For example, it was noticed that it was only used five different performative verbs when offering an apology; those words were *sorry*, *excuse*, *forgive*, *pardon*, *ashamed* and *apologize*; the first one with a 90%.

Following Hymes proposal theory of communicative competence, this was carried out successfully. The use of the communicative actions were observed yet not in an accurate way due to the speakers performances. Although the subjects transmitted a good

communication, the coherence and the accuracy were not always perceived in their utterances. This resulted, as consequence of the low knowledge of syntax, morphology and phonology, owing to the fact that subjects are Basic English level speakers. Referring about speech acts, each one of all of them was used as assertive, directive, commissives, expressive, declarative as well as performatives that showed a happy or unhappy condition. However, even though participants did not possess a grammatical competence in the L2, a communicative competence was possible even though they did not use the L2 grammar accurately. In some cases, the communication was very basic, which shows that the speaker's process of acquisition of a language was in the earliest stages. It means that they were acquiring the structure of L2. So, taking into consideration this, there was not a properly production in each statement uttered by speakers but the communicative purpose was achieved. Since, despite the fact that statements performed were not grammatically correct, those showed what the speaker intended to communicate, that was to apologize.

Another important point to mention is that the frequency of IFIDs uttered varied considerably according on the situation and on the person that received the apology. For instance, people with determined hierarchy such as a teacher or a boss, got the highest level of IFIDs received. It was not the same with parents, which despite having a position of relevance and speakers have a close relation with, the average of IFIDs directed to them, were uttered with a lower recurrence. On the other hand, it was found that unknown people not only received a sorry but a quite well-elaborated structure that provided an explanation about the facts as well as a truly sense of blame was seen. On the other hand, when the one who received the apology was a kid this decreased. So, it means that subjects did not feel any sense of responsibility about their acts with a person they consider with a lower

hierarchy, speakers did not care about the image projected. In this case a negative face was shown the most

In this way, the average of words used by nonnative speakers when apologizing to people with a higher hierarchy make them use a proper language, a well elaborated but short apology in their performance; the frequency of IFIDs increased and titles and names are used in order to show respectfulness. However with people that possessed a high hierarchy but that have a close relationship with the speaker, a simple apology was uttered. Titles were not used but names or nicknames, the frequency of IFIDs was reduced and sense of blame is not sincere at all since speakers show not too much importance because they did not feel a strong sense of responsibility or because they knew their image could not be damaged, since the offense was made with people who knew them well.

Referring about unknown people for the speakers, there was seen that the apologies performed to them were long and with the use of more than one strategy. There was seen responsibility of acts when the speaker was truly convinced he or she was aware of his or her fault.

5.3 Limitations

Referring about limitations found on this research, it was the issue to know with certainty in which way the length of words performed in an apology by a male vary from one stated by a female. I think this is important, because it would let know if there is a real differentiation in the use of language according to the gender. In order to carry this out, it would be possible to isolate the sentences based on the gender and analyzing the strategies used, this would allow to identify the usage of specific words that would denote the inner

thinking of each gender, as well as to recognize the slight variations that establish what strategies are used and with what intent.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the limitations observed in this research, it is recommended the use of an instrument that provides and determines the differentiation in the use of language according to the gender, and in this way identifies the real variations in a speech act. I propose the design of an instrument that would allow for the recognition of the contrast not only in the length of words in an apology uttered, but in the specific strategies used by each gender. An instrument that establishes situations that both men and women can face in real life and then analyzed the content of each apology that corroborate the intention, the use of the performative verbs applied, the strategies chosen and the circumstances under in which the speech act is carried out.

It is also strongly recommended another study with more 'naturalistic' samples. In other words, the design of an instrument that allows to perceive the real language production carried out by subjects without any hypothetical situation establish to them, since to be known as part of an investigation, referred certain situations that allow the desired response, the response obtained by them is not entirely natural. This does not allow the actual language of each individual, the language used if really faced situations in a real context, is studied.

5.5 Pedagogical Implications

Even considering Kasper's (1997) statement that communicative competence cannot be taught, this research has a number of important pedagogical implications. For

example, this investigation shows the importance of focusing on communication, information that is useful when it is applied to students of English as foreign language. It is important to realize how relevant is communication and all its implications when learning a new language in order to promote it in the appropriate way or at least in a successful one.

Being a teacher and to be aware about the sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistic 'derivations' is very important and convenient since in this way students can be prevented from committing them and allows to use the proper teaching techniques. Another implication is that this lets consider ways to introduce pragmatic elements in classroom activities.

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APPENDIX I: TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Average of Alerts Performed

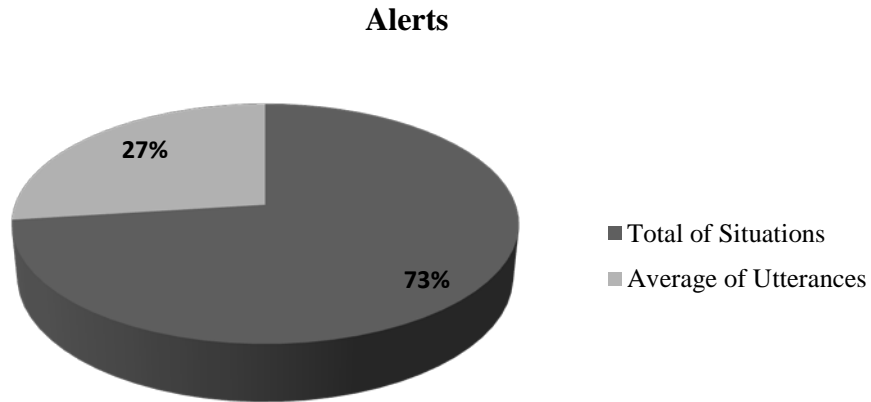


Figure 2. Percentage of Alerts Uttered in Each Situation

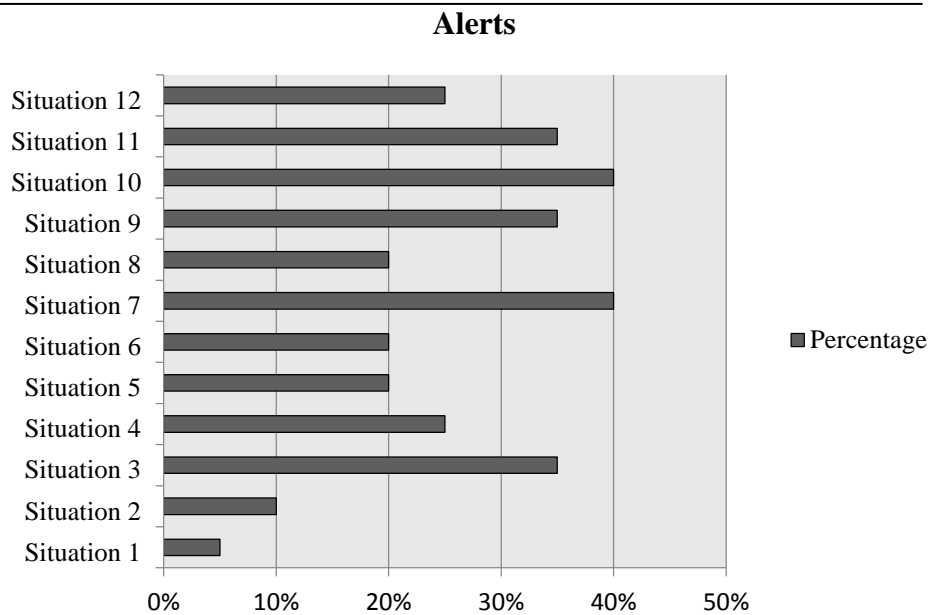


Figure 3. Average of IFIDs Performed

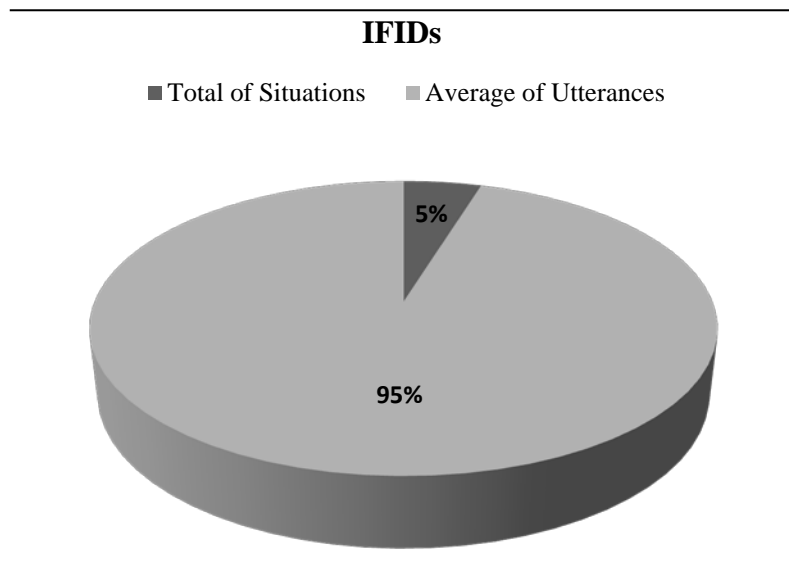


Figure 4. Percentage of Omissions Made in the Correspondent Situations

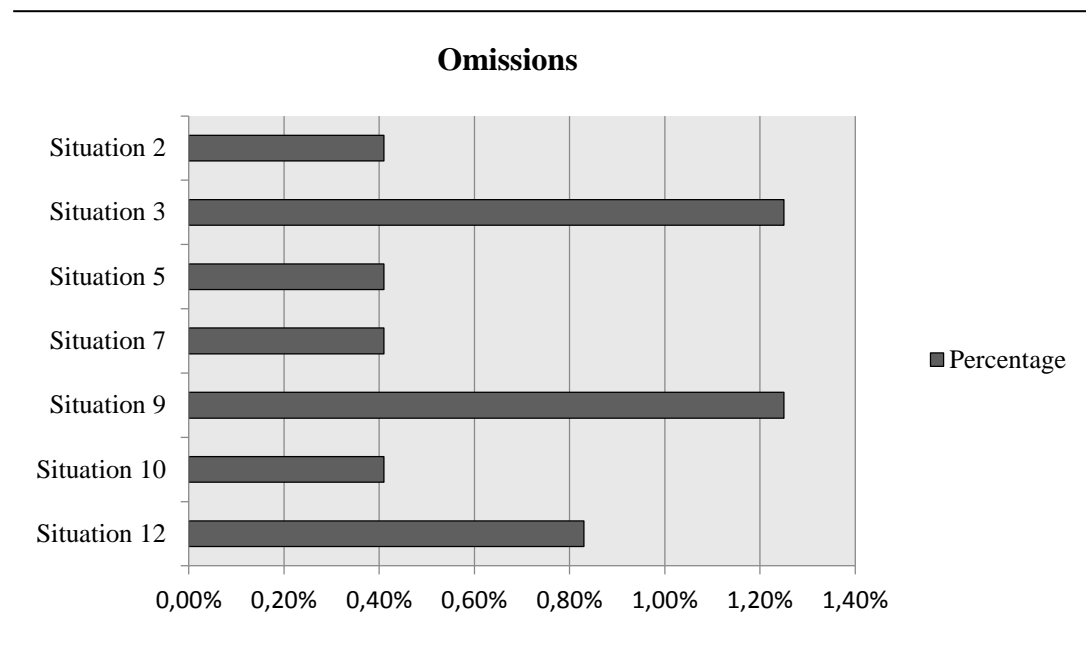


Figure 5. Percentage of IFIDs Uttered in each Situation

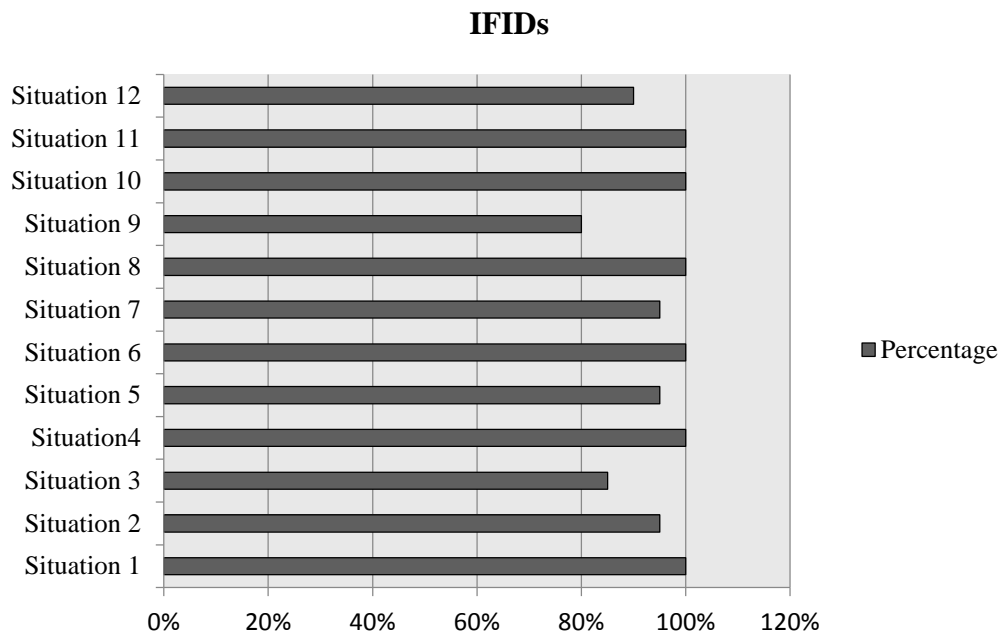


Figure 6. Average of Variations of IFIDs Uttered

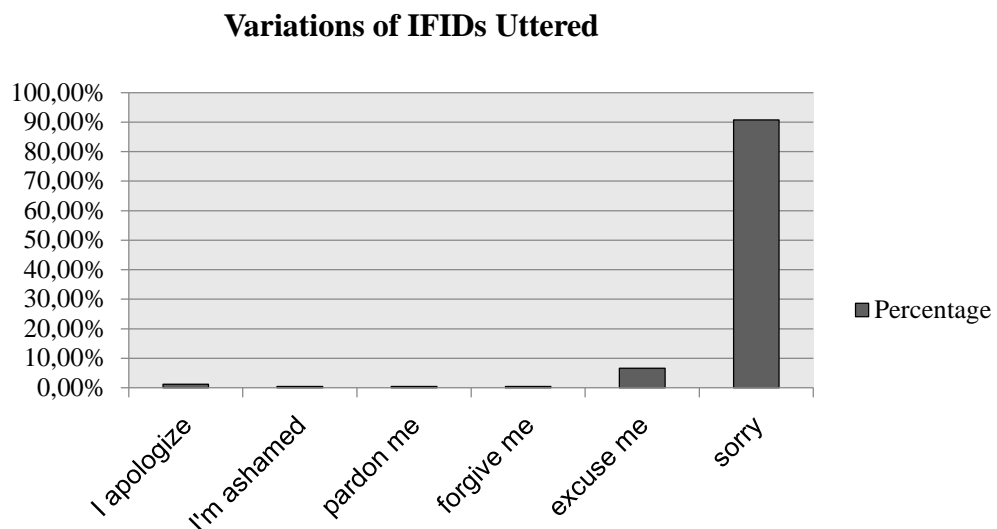


Figure 7. Percentage of Internal IFIDS Uttered

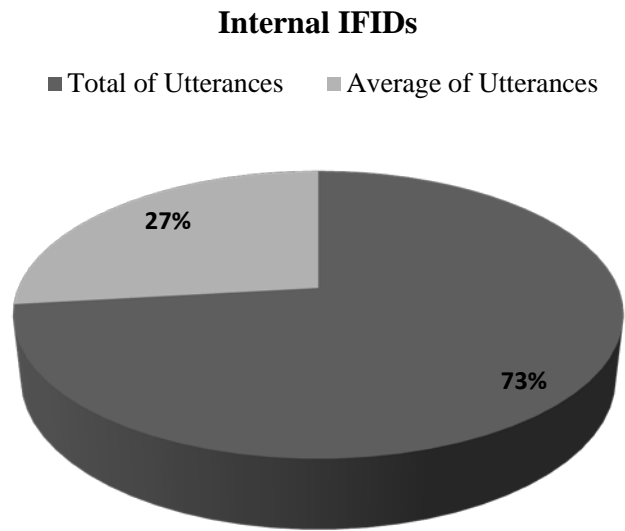


Figure 8. Average of Taking Responsibility Strategy Performed

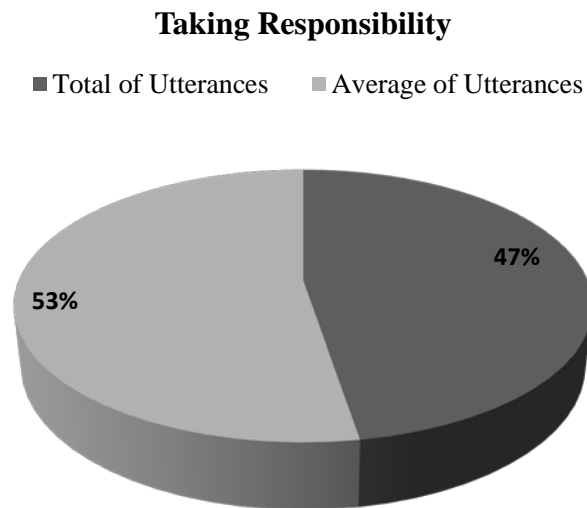


Figure 9. Percentage of Taking Responsibility Strategy Uttered in each Situation

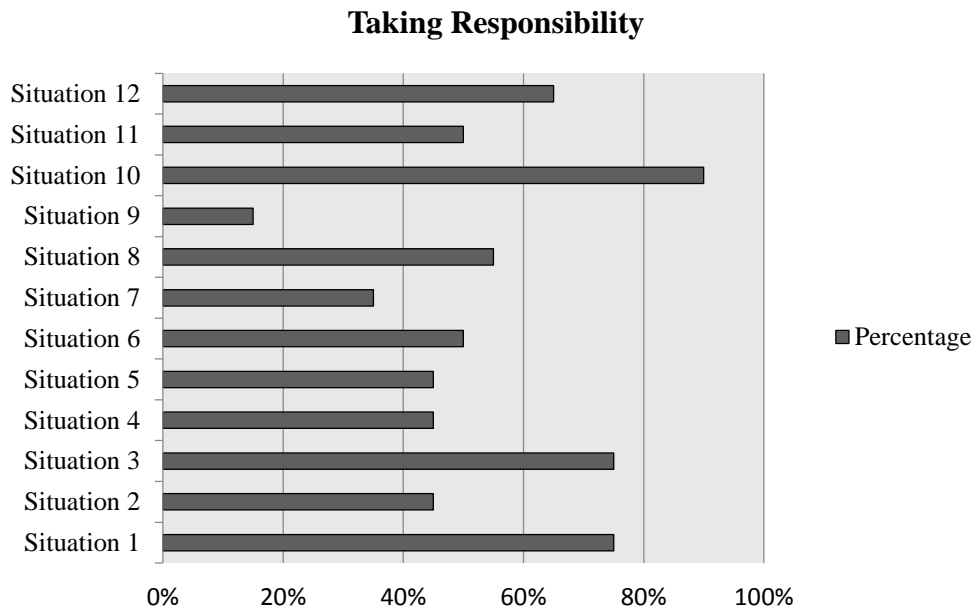


Figure 10. Percentage of Explanation or Account Strategy Uttered

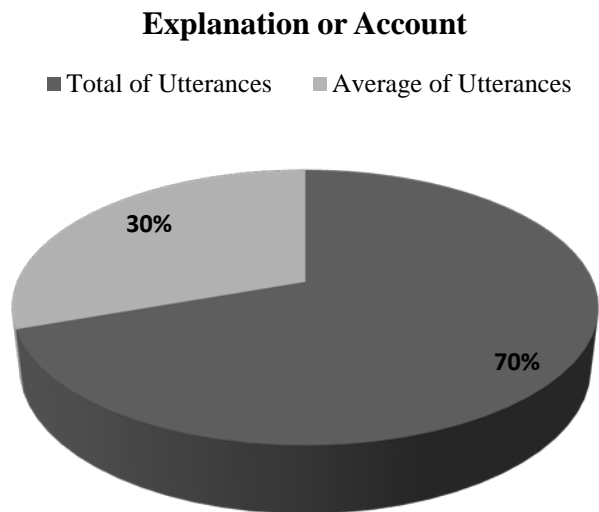


Figure 11. Percentage of Explanation or Account Strategy Uttered in each Situation

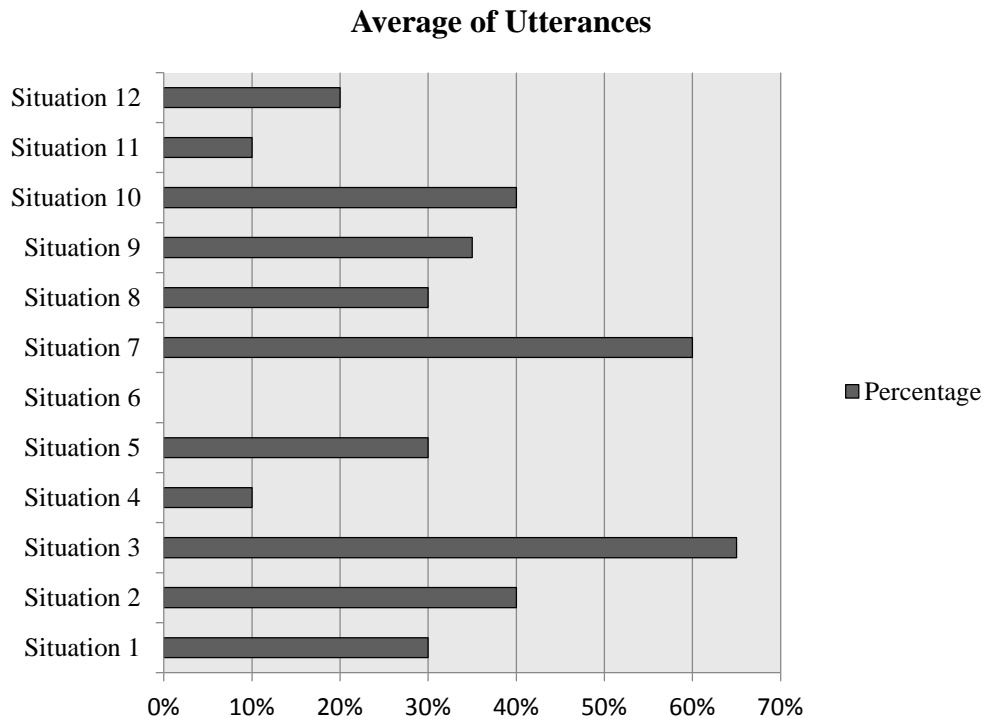


Figure 12. Average of Offer of Repair Strategy Performed

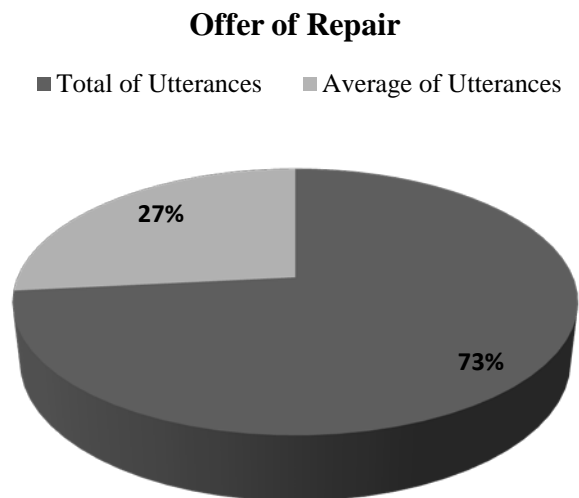


Figure 13. Percentage of Offer of Repair Strategy Uttered in each Situation

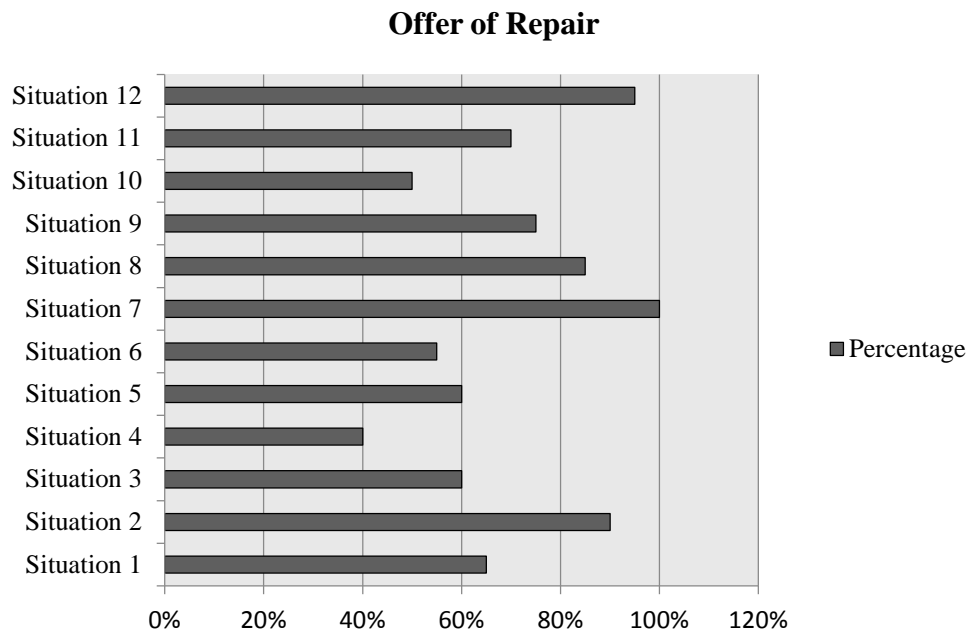


Figure 14. Average of Promise of Forbearance Strategy Performed

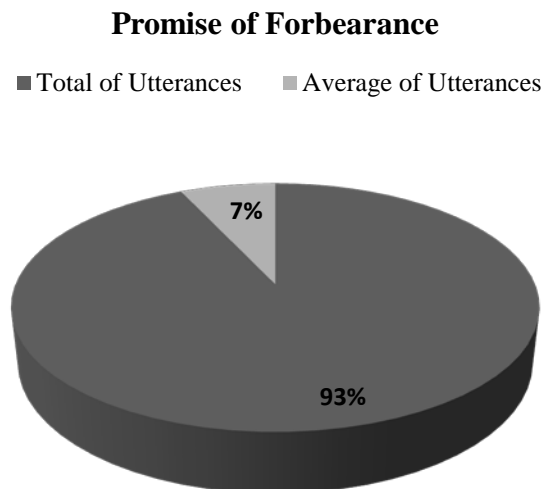


Figure 15. Percentage of Promise of Forbearance Strategy Uttered in each Situation

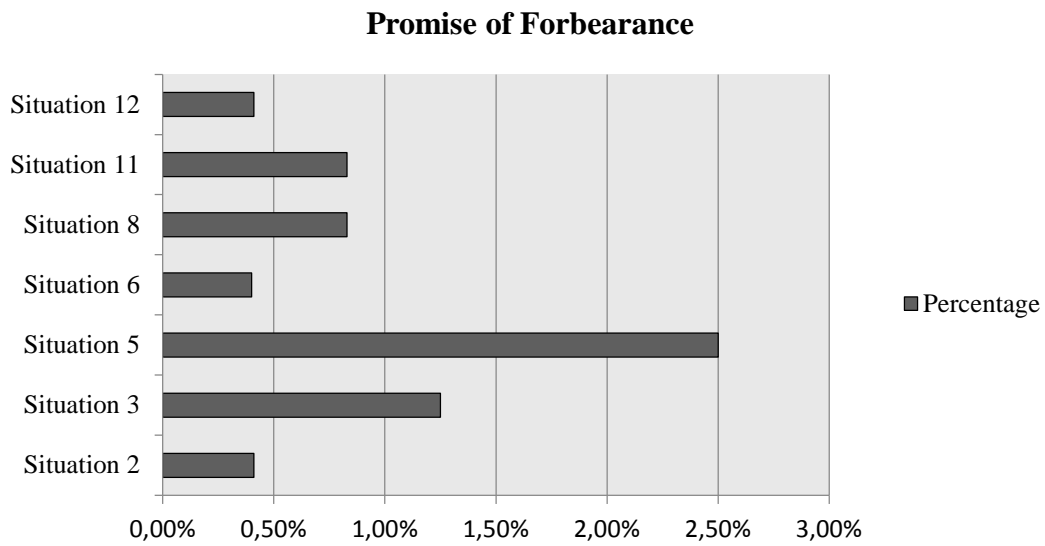


Figure 16. Average of Distracting from the Offense Strategy Performed

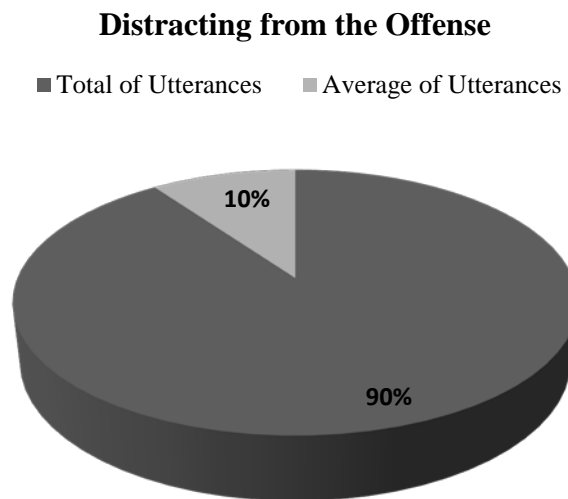


Figure 17. Percentage of Distracting from then Offense Strategy Uttered in each Situation

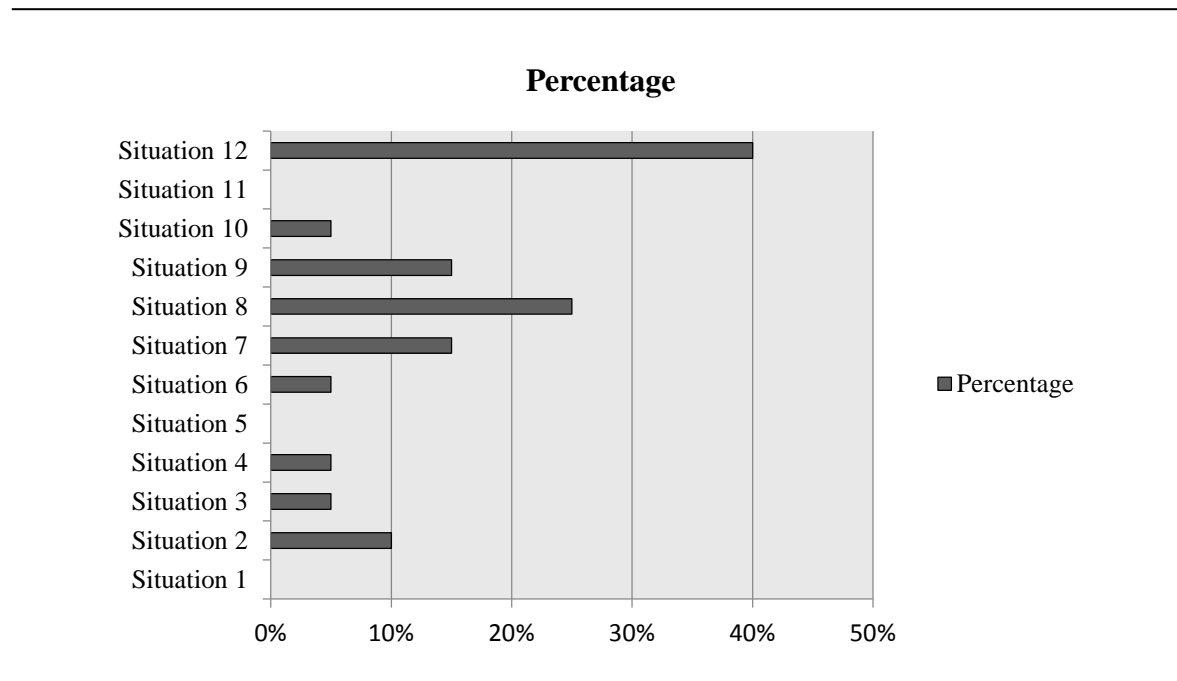


Figure 18. Number of Words Used in the Apology in Each Situation

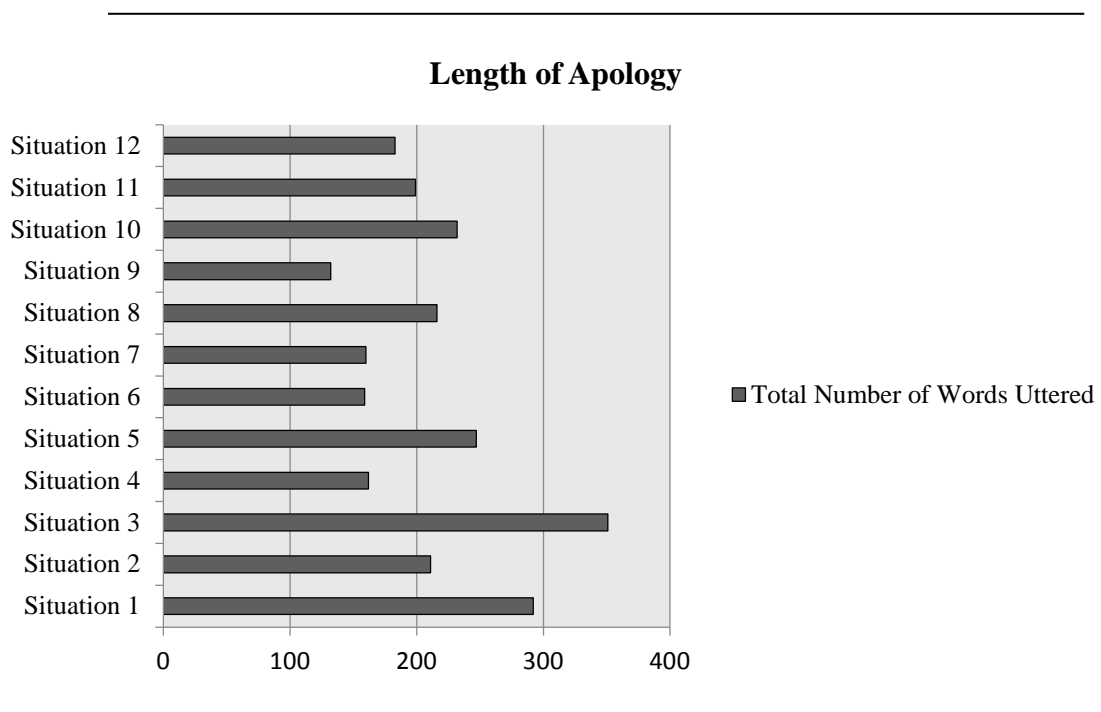
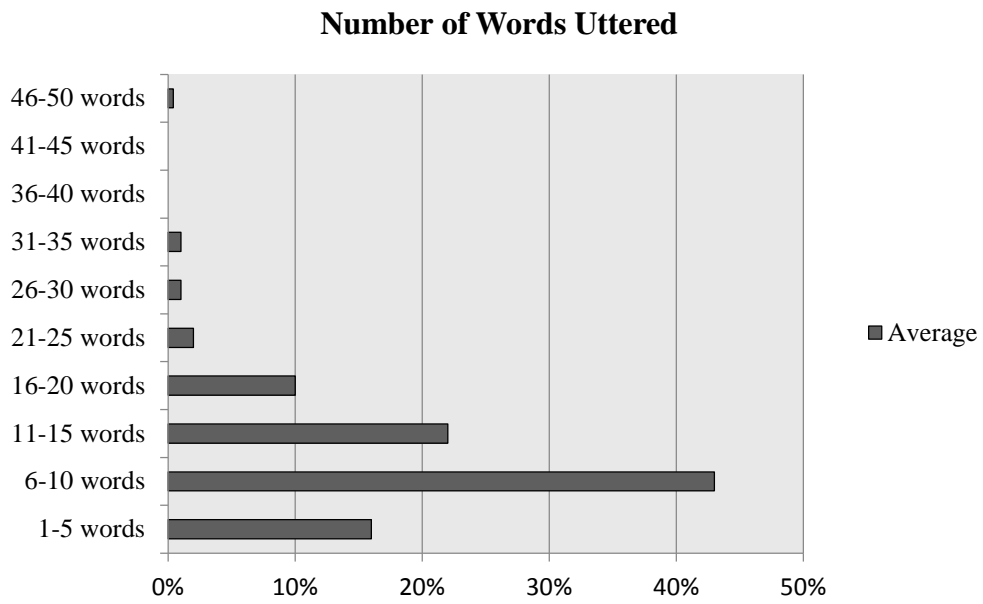


Figure 19: Average of Words Uttered in the Apology



APPENDIX II: TABLE OF TABLES

Table 1: Percentages and Raw Frequencies of the Six Apology Strategies.

Apology Strategies	Average of Use
<i>IFID</i>	95% (230)
<i>Taking on Responsibility</i>	53% (129)
<i>Explanation or Account</i>	30% (74)
<i>Offer of Repair</i>	27% (65)
<i>Distracting from the Offense</i>	10% (25)
<i>Promise of Forbearance</i>	7% (17)

Table 2: Percentages and Raw Frequencies of the Five Sub Strategies.

Sub Strategies	Average of Use
Admission of Facts but not of Responsibility	27% (67)
Explicit Self-Blame	17% (43)
Expression of Embarrassment	4.1 % (10)
Denial of Responsibility	1.6% (4)
Pretend to be Offended	.41% (1)
