

## “Sorry, Darling”: Apologizing in *The Crown* TV Series

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### ABSTRACT

The present research investigates the realization of apologies in the TV series entitled *The Crown*. In doing so, the study attempts to identify and classify apology strategies employed by the characters in the series using the taxonomy proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). The collection of the apology data was done through observation of the series, starting from the first episode in the first season to the twentieth episode in the second season. The investigation has successfully identified and classified 45 apologies. From a total of 45 apologies found, 33 (73.4%) were classified as direct realizations (27 or 60% as standalone IFIDs and 6 or 13.3% as IFID combinations). Indirect apology realizations, however, were relatively rare with only 12 (26.6%) occurrences in total. The explanation of situation was found to be the most commonly used indirect strategy with six (13.3%) instances. The results seem to suggest that the characters in the series prefer direct strategies in apologizing in English.

**Keywords:** *apology, apology strategies, direct apology, speech act, The Crown.*

### INTRODUCTION

People express their ideas and opinions by means of communication. It is understood as an exchange of information and message between two parties through verbal or non-verbal means. In this sense, the mutual exchange is reflected when the addressing party presents information or sends message to the receiving party. However, it is not a rare occasion when an utterance or action by one party results in an offense to the other in the process. The situation prompts the offender to take a remedial action through an apology. For Olshtain

(1989), an apology is defined as “a speech act which provides support for the hearer who is mal-affected by a violation” (p. 156). An apology can be expressed in a number of ways. The most common way to produce an apology involves the use of formulaic expressions such as “sorry” and “apologize”, whereas other apologetic statements include various forms of expressions, such as promises and explanations, which represent the speaker’s remorse. Regardless of the way an apology is produced, the offender aims to concede the mistake and accept the responsibility in order to re-

establish harmony with the offended (Chaemsaitong, 2009).

Apologies are closely connected to the concept of social differences. In the words of Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), the realization of an apology speech act is contingent upon social factors embedded in the situation. Furthermore, over the last two decades, many researchers have been investigating apology and social differences extensively to explore new findings. A great number of researchers have combined the production of apologies across different languages with social parameters as the foundation in their investigations. Retrospectively, the popularity has been set by the very existence of the seminal works of Olshtain and Cohen (1983), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), and Brown and Levinson (1987), which provide a firm basis for the subsequent studies to date. However, the majority of these studies have investigated apology through discourse-completion test, a pre-scripted instrument which involves a situational role play. It is considerably rare to find apology studies that utilize other approach. Meanwhile, judging from the general conclusions, the potential influence of social power and distance on the realization and sincerity of apology is also little known. Instead, the researchers generally highlight gender-related aspects in their conclusions.

The lack of studies examining the potential effect of social variables on the realization of apology is worth-mentioning. The general procedure of collecting apology strategies through methods under pre-scripted conditions such as DCT and questionnaire appears to be a major limitation to apology studies as well. Therefore, the present research attempts to fill in the gap by offering different approach in analyzing apology. The present research investigates the realization of apologies in a TV series entitled *The Crown* as an attempt to provide new findings on apology studies, in particular the potential influence of social distance and power on the realization and sincerity of apologetic behavior. *The Crown* is chosen due to the specific needs and emphasis of the research on social differences.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the last two decades, there have been numerous studies done by researchers from various perspectives which investigate the use of apology. Different findings, methods, and approaches are reflected in these studies. Recently, Uгла and Jafre (2016) explore the apology strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners, both in English and Iraqi Arabic. The collection of the data is done through a DCT and an interview. All of the 55 participants are Iraqis chosen randomly from two universities in Iraq, namely Al-Yarmouk University and University of Diyala. The data are analyzed with the taxonomy suggested by Holmes (1990). The participants are placed in fourteen different situations, and thus contribute to the variation in using the apology strategies. In line with the finding, the authors highlight the awareness of the participants in meeting the requirements of using the appropriate strategies, both in English and Iraqi Arabic. Another result from the study shows that most participants prefer not to translate their apology strategies from Iraqi Arabic to English, which means that they have already understood how to use the conventionalized strategies in English appropriately.

Darwish (2014) investigates gender differences in the production of apology strategies. In his study, he aims to reveal the similarities and differences in the act of apologizing between male and female students from various private schools in Amman, Jordan. The data are collected by distributing questionnaire consisting of 15 questions and 14 different situations which prompt a respondent to apologize. The questionnaire is equally distributed to 30 male and 30 female students who are English native speakers. Because of the variety of the responses, the data from the respondents are then analyzed using the combinations of coding scheme provided by seven researchers, namely Fraser (1981), Olshtain and Cohen (1983), Owen (1983), Trosborg (1987), Holmes (1990), and Aijmer (1996). From the results, it is revealed that male speakers relatively adopt more strategies (6) in apologizing than their female counterparts (5). In their apologetic behavior, male

speakers tend to be more direct due to the fact that they use explicit apology strategy more frequently.

Majeed and Janjua (2014) from National University of Modern Languages Islamabad also examine the correlation between the use of apology speech act and gender. The study aims to determine the difference of reaction between the two genders given a variety of different situations which create the need to apologize. In doing so, the research covers the strategies produced by Urdu speakers. All of the 15 male and 10 female participants are students from different departments in National University of Modern Languages Islamabad. The data are collected through an open questionnaire similar to DCT and analyzed using the taxonomy provided by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989). The questionnaire illustrates 10 different situations to which a respondent should react. The findings of the study reveal that most participants tend to use IFID and Explanation of an Account more than any other strategies. It also suggests that participants from both groups have a tendency to express non-formulaic strategies when they apologize in Urdu. However, it is revealed that female participants are more likely to use English formulaic expressions, constituting a higher percentage (56.56%) when compared to their male counterparts (40.41%).

Another study of apology speech act is conducted by Aydin (2013) from Minnesota State University. Investigating from cross-cultural perspective, he aims to identify and compare the apology strategies used by Turkish, American-English, and advanced non-native English speakers in Turkey. The collection of the data incorporates DCT method and the three different groups of participants are given the same situations. The data analysis is based upon the classification model suggested by Olshtain and Cohen (1983). The results of the study reveal that Turkish speakers tend to use indirect realization of apology more frequently than the American participants. However, it is also revealed that American participants employ intensifiers more frequently than the two other groups. On the other hand, the advanced non-native participants generally show similar pattern with one another in using apology strategies.

Shahrokhi (2012) from Islamic Azad University has conducted a study on the apology

strategies used by Persian male native speakers and its intensification methods from politeness perspective. The data are collected through the utilization of a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) which contains 12 different situations. The identification is based upon Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper's taxonomy (1989), with the addition of newly-found and modified strategies employed in Afghari (2007). The results of the research indicate that Persian male speakers tend to use culture-specific strategies in relation to the assessment of contextual variables such as social distance, power distance, and severity of the offense. Contextual variables inherently influence the use of specific intensifiers by the speakers to appease the hearer. Offer for Repair and Statement of Offence are revealed to be the two most frequently-used intensifiers.

Unlike previous apology studies, the present research reflects different approaches, aims, and methods. Considering that the aforementioned studies have utilized DCT and questionnaire as data collecting method, the present research hence makes a distinctive move by collecting apology utterances occurring in a TV series. The present study focuses on the realization of apologies by all of the characters in Netflix series entitled *The Crown*. The data are collected from an observation of the whole series in chronological order. For the classification scheme, the present research employs Blum-Kulka and Olshtain's taxonomy (1984), which consists of five potential semantic formulae: Illocutionary Force Indicating Device, Accepting the Responsibility, Offer of Repair, Promise of Forbearance, and Explanation of Situation. The study also places more emphasis on the potential influence of social power and distance between the characters on the realization and sincerity of apology strategies.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Speech Acts

A speech act is a linguistic unit in pragmatics that deals with the role of words not only to present information but also to carry out actions. It aims to

explain the language exchange in terms of the effects on both the speaker and the hearer. Austin (1975, p. 6) first introduced the concept of speech act as a performative utterance, which indicated that “the issuing of an utterance is the performing of an action”. Austin (1962) classified speech acts into three levels of separate acts, namely locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. Locutionary act is the basic act of producing meaningful expression, while illocutionary act can be defined as the act performed through the communicative force of an utterance. Perlocutionary act is understood as the actual effect of the utterance on the hearer (Cutting, 2002).

In order to be felicitous, a speech act needs to fulfill certain preconditions, namely felicity conditions (Cutting, 2002). Austin (1962, p. 14-15) mentioned that in felicity conditions, a certain procedure with a certain conventional effect should exist. The procedure includes the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances. The circumstances and the participants must be appropriate, as specified in the procedure. The procedure must be executed correctly and completely by the participants. Searle (1969) gives more detailed rules concerning the felicity conditions for speech act to occur. Searle (1969) describes that there are general conditions for all speech act to be felicitous, that the hearer must hear and understand the language used, and the speaker must not be pretending in using the language. Specifically, Searle’s rules (1969) for felicity conditions are propositional content, preparatory condition, sincerity condition, and essential condition.

- a. Propositional content condition is the condition which specifies the features of the semantic content of the utterance. In the case of apology, it mostly refers to the actions committed in the past.
- b. Preparatory condition is the condition that specifies the contextual features of the performed act, which means that the speech act must have clear purposes. For apology, there is an assumption that some offense has been committed.
- c. Sincerity condition is the condition that specifies the speaker’s wants and beliefs. For

example, in the case of apology, it is an understanding that certain offence has been committed and recognized as such by the hearer.

- d. Essential Condition is the condition that specifies an attempt to get the hearer to perform the desired actions. In apology, the act of forgiving shows the fulfillment of the condition.

Many linguistic researchers have developed different taxonomies of speech acts. Approaches to speech act theory mostly categorize speech acts based on what they communicate to the hearer. Searle (1976) classified speech acts based on their illocutionary force into the following classes:

1. Representative: A representative speech act refers to the act used to state something that the speaker believes to be certifiable or true. It includes the act of criticizing, complaining, claiming, and describing
2. Commissive: A commissive speech act can be understood as the act used by the speakers as an attempt to commit themselves to future actions. It encompasses the act of promising, offering, and volunteering.
3. Directive: A directive speech act can be defined as the act which attempts to get the hearer to perform some actions. Giving orders, suggesting, requesting, commanding, and forbidding are the examples of directives.
4. Expressive: An expressive speech act is an act used to convey the feeling of the speaker. The utterance includes the act of apologizing, complementing, praising, and congratulating.
5. Declarative: A declarative speech act is understood as an attempt to declare information. It can be defined as the act which can change the world in an immediate way. Declaring, dismissing, approving, resigning, and baptizing are the examples of declaratives.

### **Apology Speech Act**

An apology speech act exhibits a number of defining characteristics and major traits. According to Searle’s (1976) taxonomy, apologies fall under the expressive category, whose function is to convey the

feelings and the emotions of the speakers. An apology occurs between two participants, with one participant expecting a compensation for the violation committed by the other (Cohen and Olshtain, 1983). When rendering an apology, the speaker should be willing to humble himself/herself to take the responsibility for the offense committed, in order to maintain a harmonious relationship with the interlocutor (Chaemsaitong, 2009). Thus, apology plays a crucial role in communication as a remedial speech act.

Regarding its nature as an attempt of rectifying situation, apology has been defined by experts coming from various field of study. A frequently-cited definition is probably that of Olshtain (1989). She defines an apology as “a speech act which intends to provide support for the hearer who is mal-affected by a violation” (1989, p. 156). In the words of Cody and McLaughlin (1987), apology is defined as a verbal act that attempts to explain the wrongful behavior so that it becomes acceptable. Bergman and Kasper (1993, p. 82) defines an apology as “compensatory action to an offense in the doing of which S was casually involved and which is costly to H”. These concepts are in line with Goffman’s (1971), who views apology as remedial interchanges which serve to re-establish social harmony.

The time reference of apology exchanges has also become the subject of discussion among researchers. For Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984, p. 206), apology generally refers to post-event act. Interestingly, Kador (2009, p. 132) additionally postulates pre-event time reference with the likes of pre-emptive apologetic remarks, which he refers to as “damage control before the victim is aware of the offense”. Given this understanding, an apology exchange may occur either in the time prior to the committing of the potential offense or after the victim’s recognition of the offense.

In addition to the definitions of apology, there are numerous classifications of apology strategies. One of the most recognized classification schemes is provided by the seminal work of Olshtain and Cohen (1983). Olshtain and Cohen (1983, p. 22) viewed that an apology can be realized through five semantic formulae, which are: (1) an expression of an apology, (2) an explanation or account of the

situation, (3) an acknowledgement of responsibility, (4) an offer of repair, and (5) a promise of forbearance. Another even more contributive taxonomy is that of Blum-Kulka and Olshtain’s (1984), who based their model on Olshtain and Cohen’s (1983). Blum-Kulka and Olshtain’s (1984) taxonomy is quite similar to the classification model of Olshtain and Cohen (1983) in many aspects. However, the strategies within the model can be used either by themselves, or even in any combination. To distinguish the performance of each apology, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984, p. 206) reorganize the strategies based on the level of directness, which will be elaborated in detail below.

### 1. Direct Realization (Direct Apology)

According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), a direct realization of an apology can be done through explicit Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID), which employs a formulaic expression of regret and apology. Illocutionary Force Indicating Device is considered the primary direct remedial moves in Blum-Kulka and Olshtain’s (1984) taxonomy. The strategy can be characterized by the use of performative verbs such as: (be) sorry, apologize, excuse, regret, forgive, and pardon. In other words, IFID incorporates routinized and formulaic expressions of apology, which are used as the primary means of signalling regret for the violation committed (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984).

### 2. Indirect Realization (Indirect Apology)

According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984, p. 207), the general procedure for coding other apology strategies, aside from explicit IFID, is based upon these series of questions: “(a) does it contain an explanation? (b) does it express S’s responsibility? (c) does it convey an offer of repair? or (d) does it contain a promise of forbearance?”. Utterances that affirmatively conform to any of these criteria would then be regarded as the indirect realization of apology. Thus, this potential range of apologies would be recognized as an explanation or account of cause, an accepting the responsibility, an offer of repair, and a promise of forbearance. The following is the elaborated details of indirect apology strategies.

#### a. Explanation or Account of Situation

The performing of this strategy is inherently dependent on situations and varies according to the context. According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), the strategy is used when the speaker intends to compensate the violation resulting from any external mitigating circumstances, over which the speaker does not have any control. Such explanation to the offense can be either explicitly-related or implicitly-related (Blum Kulka and Olshtain, 1984 p. 208). For instance, the speaker is unable to attend the meeting held in his/her office on time. The speaker then explains that “I had a problem this morning. The taxi was late”. Thus, the expression “*The taxi was late*” shows explicit relation to the offense, whereas the expression “*I had a problem this morning*” indicates implicit relation.

#### b. Accepting the Responsibility

The strategy is used as an attempt to placate the hearer by the accepting the responsibility for the offense, which creates the need to apologize (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984). In the strategy, the speaker has to acknowledge that the offense is face-threatening to him/her, so that he/she will accept the blame and takes the responsibility in order to appease the hearer (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984).

#### c. Offer of Repair

In performing the strategy, the speaker offers a way to repair the offense. This formula occurs only in certain contexts, where the speaker acknowledges that the damage and inconvenience which affect the hearer can be compensated for (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984). Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) stated that the strategy can be realized through either specified act of repair or general/unspecified act of repair. For instance, the speaker accidentally rams his/her motorbike into a stationary car belonging to one of the neighbors. The speaker may respond to this situation by offering specified repair to the hearer, using the expression “*I’ll pay for the damage*”. The expression shows that the speaker acknowledges the damage that he/she has inflicted, and thus he/she willingly pays for it. On the other hand, the speaker is also able to respond to the situation by offering unspecified act of repair, using the expression “*I’ll see what I can do*”. By using this utterance, the speaker intends to repair the damage.

However, it indicates that the repair for the damage inflicted is still unspecified, as it is still unclear what kind of repair the speaker will offer.

#### d. Promise of Forbearance

Promise of Forbearance, besides Offer of Repair, is a strategy that also relates to future acts. The strategy expects the speaker to behave in a consistent manner, not to repeat the offense for which he/she apologizes (Owen, 1983). The speaker can either promise not to do the same violation again in the future or promise to improve their behavior in a number of ways (Trosborg, 1995). By using the strategy, the speaker also admits the responsibility without necessarily stating it explicitly (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984). For instance, the speaker forgets to bring the book he borrowed from the hearer. The speaker then implicitly admits that he/she is responsible for the offense and promises not to repeat it again, by saying “*I promise I won’t do that again*”. The expression shows that the speaker will improve his/her behavior by promising that he/she “won’t do that again”.

## METHODS

As the primary data for the research are apology utterances transcribed from the subtitles of the series, we need to understand the definition of utterance. An utterance can be defined as any stretch of talk by one person on a special occasion that involves a sequence of sentences, single phrase, or even a single word (Hurford, Hearsey, & Smith, 2007, p. 16). Several steps had been taken as the procedure of collecting the apology utterances. In more general terms, the series was observed in chronological order, starting from the first episode in the first season (*Wolferton Splash*) until the twentieth episode (*Mystery Man*) in the second season, to obtain the proper contextual information, which contributed greatly to the analyzing process, as well as to avoid any possible misinterpretation. The viewing process would involve careful listening to the utterances spoken by the characters and reading along of the subtitles at the same time. If the subtitles were different from the audio recordings, corrections for the subtitles were made accordingly to equate with the audio recordings.

The audio recordings were significantly clear to listen to and therefore the viewing process rarely came across such difficulties. In the next step, when the possible apology expressions appeared, the episode was paused and the expressions as well as their contextual information were noted down. The information included the character uttering the expression, additional contextual information, as well as the time in which the expression appeared in the movie. The time was marked from the start until the end of the dialogue.

In analyzing the data, the research incorporated careful classifying of the chosen utterances into the category of apology strategies by the seminal work of Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). The model was adopted because of its use in a variety of observations concerning apology strategies. This model was also universally more applicable, due to its flexibility to be used in many languages. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) give a comprehensive list of strategies that contains reference to apology, whose basis of the categorization is predominantly characterized by different level of directness. Generally, as stated by Blum Kulka and Olshtain (1984), apology strategies are classified into two major types: direct apology and indirect apology. These strategies were categorized as follows:

1. **Direct Apology**, which covers direct and explicit statements of apology. This level of apology includes only the **Illocutionary Force Indicating Device** (IFID) (e.g. *I apologize or I am sorry*).
2. **Indirect Apology**, which covers several indirect statements of remorse: (a) **Accepting the responsibility**, which includes the stating of remorse by accepting the responsibility for the offense committed (e.g. *It was my fault*). (b) **Explanation of situation**, which is characterized by the explanations of any external mitigating circumstances related to the offense (e.g. *The traffic was terrible*). (c) **Offer of repair**, which includes the stating of remorse by offering a way to repair the offense (e.g. *I'll pay for the damage*). (d) **Promise of forbearance**, which contains pledge not to commit the same offense in the future (e.g. *I will never do that again*).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section specifically presents the results from the identification and the classification of apology strategies occurring in all of the 20 episodes of *The Crown*. The apologies are classified based on the taxonomy proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), which consists of five different formulae. The overall results reflect two general findings, namely the types of strategies used by the characters and the strategy that occurs most often in the whole series.

**Table 1. Frequency of Apology Strategies in *The Crown* TV Series**

No	Apology Type	N	%
1.	Direct Apology	33	73.4
2.	Indirect Apology	12	26.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Through the process of identification and classification, a total of 45 apology strategies were found. From the overall results, a great disparity between the frequencies of direct strategies and indirect strategies can be clearly noticed. As displayed on Table 1, direct apologies, which consist of self-contained IFID expressions and combinations of IFID and other intensifying strategies, occur far more frequently in the series than indirect apologies. Constituting up to 73.4 percent in total, direct apology is produced 33 times, 27(60%) of which are self-contained IFID expressions while the remaining 6 (13.4%) are combinations involving IFID and other intensifiers. The total percentage of the latter is registered by varying forms of combination, ranging from 2 IFID + *Explanation of Situation* (4.5%), 1 IFID + *Accepting the Responsibility* (2.2%), 1 IFID + *Offer of Repair* (2.2%), and 2 *Explanation of Situation* + IFID (4.5%). On the other hand, the figures reveal that indirect apologies are used less frequently in the series with only 12 occurrences, or 26.6% in total. *Explanation of Situation* (ES), which makes up half of the total percentage (13.3%), is the most frequently used indirect apology with 6 occurrences. The strategy is then followed by *Offer of Repair* (OR), which is employed two times in the

series (4.5%). Other self-contained expressions of indirect apology, such as *Accepting the Responsibility* (AR) and *Promise of Forbearance* (PF), as well as two combinations, namely ES + OR and AR + OR, each occurs once and accounts for 2.2%. Therefore, direct/explicit apologies are more preferred by the characters in the series. The following paragraphs provide a detailed discussion of each of the strategies.

### Direct Apologies

Direct apologies are the most commonly used strategy in the series with a total of 33 occurrences (73.4%). In regard to the frequency of realization, self-contained IFID expressions are employed more frequently (27 times) than combinations of IFID and other intensifying strategies (6 times).

### *Illocutionary Force Indicating Device*

The characters in *The Crown* TV series generally employ self-contained IFID strategies as a means to express apologies, as proven by their total percentage (60%). However, it is quite expectable to see the frequent production of IFIDs considering the characters' emphasis on the sincerity of the apology in situations where they commit offenses to others. In the series, the production of self-contained IFIDs can be reflected by the use of formulaic expressions such as "sorry", "apologize", "regret", "forgive", and "excuse". From the investigated and identified IFIDs, "sorry" is the most commonly used expression, featuring in the majority of the IFIDs. In order to show the production of self-contained IFID strategies in the series, an example is presented below.

(1) 00:30:01 → 00:30:06 TC01.E08.IFID (SD-P=)

**Context:** *The royal couple is getting ready for an event in Jamaica. Philip asks why Elizabeth looks a bit upset. Elizabeth then hands her husband a newspaper, with Margaret on the front page. Earlier that night Margaret made an adventurous move on her welcoming speech for the ambassadors in place of the Queen. Elizabeth is a bit upset yet jealous of her sister getting the spotlight. She then talks in quite rude tone to Philip. Philip reckons that his*

*wife needs to calm down, saying that it is a bit unusual of her to act and say things in such manner.*

Philip: That's unlike you.

Elizabeth: **I am sorry.**

The example above reflects the production of self-contained IFID strategy. The expression "I am sorry" refers to the explicit use of IFID. In the situation, Elizabeth talks in quite rude tone to her husband, Philip. The way Elizabeth talks really offends Philip, who as a husband demands respect from his own wife. Even though issues from external factors play a role in affecting Elizabeth's talking tone, such action is not acceptable under any circumstances. The recognition of the need to apologize is triggered by the expression "That's unlike you". Elizabeth realizes greatly the cost resulting from the offense, and thus decides to apologize. To show her profound regret and apologetic stance, she expresses a direct IFID apology. Since there are no other succeeding apologetic statements, the apology is therefore considered a self-contained expression.

### *Combinations of IFID and Other Intensifying Strategies*

Combinations differ in terms of linguistic realization, as they consist of more than one apology formula. Out of the 33 IFID strategies found, there are only 6 combinations of IFID and other intensifiers, accounting for 13.4%. The total percentage and frequency suggest the occasional production of the strategy in the series. The realization of IFID combinations in the series generally begins with the production of an IFID followed by other indirect formulae as intensifiers, as can be seen from the realization of IFID + ES (2), IFID + AR (1), and IFID + OR (1). Interestingly, however, an IFID combination with inverted realization was also found, as proven by the production of ES + IFID which occurs 2 times. Another worth-mentioning finding is the general formation demonstrated by the realization, as each discovered set of combination contains only two apology formulae. An illustration of IFID strategy as combination is discussed in the following paragraph.



(2) 00:03:17→00:03:31TC01.E06.IFID + ES  
(SD-P>)

*Context:* At the BBC Office, Bill, a content writer asks a permission to put a news lead about the royal family on the front page. The report will cover the forbidden relationship between Princess Margaret and Philip Townsend, a comptroller of Royal family. The Princess has been spotted leaving the coronation, only to indulge herself in a romantic affair with her comptroller. It becomes a tradition within the royal family that any member, under any circumstances, shall not have a relationship with a divorcee whose ex-partner is still alive. In this case, Philip is a divorcee and his former wife is still alive. Bill is eager to write and decide to ask if the news can be put on the front page. The chief editor, however, refuses to approve, since he considers the topic trivial.

Bill: Picking fluff off a man's jacket that's a gesture as intimate as a kiss, more intimate, since it suggests the kiss has already happened.

Chief Editor: **No. I'm sorry, Bill. I can't hold the front page for a bit of fluff.**

The production of the combination apology presented above contains two different formulae, namely IFID and ES. The combination begins with the expression “No. I am sorry, Bill”, which represents direct IFID apology. The succeeding expression can be acknowledged as the intensifier, which reflects an Explanation of Situation (ES) strategy. Example (2) shows that not all apologies are produced after the recognition of an offense. The apology is made prior to the potential offense, which is rejecting an offer. Since the chief editor is going to decline the potential headline, he responds by sincerely apologizing in advance, using the formulaic expression “sorry”. The explanation “I can't hold the front page for a bit of fluff” suggests an explicit relation to the offense, because the trivial nature of “picking fluff off a man's jacket” does not meet the desirable criteria of a good headline for the Chief Editor accordingly.

### Indirect Apologies

Generally speaking, indirect apologies occurred less frequently with only 12 cases observed (26.6%). The

infrequent use of the strategy is linked with the characters' preference to express “routinized” apologies, which causally can be equated with the inclination towards direct apology strategies. From a total of 12 instances, *Explanation of Situation* (ES) is employed most frequently with 6 occurrences, constituting half of the total percentage (13.4%). Subsequently, *Offer of Repair* constitutes the second highest frequency with 2 instances (4.5%). *Accepting the Responsibility* (AR) and *Promise of Forbearance* (PF) are observed only in 1 situation each (2.2%). Similar frequency and percentage are also reflected in the combinations of ES + OR and AR + OR with 1 production each (2.2%).

### Explanation of Situation

The realization of the strategy can be observed when the speaker provides an explanation or account to the offense. As has been mentioned earlier, however, not all explanation can be analyzed as Explanation of Situation (ES) strategy. According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984, p. 208), the explanations should be either explicitly-related or implicitly-related to the offense committed. To show the realization of explicitly-related ES strategy, below is an example.

## (3) 00:16:55→00:17:04TC01.E04.ES (SD+P&lt;)

*Context:* The scene shows heavy smog affecting all over the country in early morning. Elizabeth is still in her office not aware of the hazard. However, she has made an appointment to see her grandmother, so she asks a royal chauffeur to take her there. The chauffeur surely refuses the request and politely explains the current situation out there that makes it impossible to drive.

Royal Chauffeur: **I am afraid the visibility is too poor to drive, Ma'am. It's been judged too hazardous.**

Elizabeth: It's what? 200 yard?

The expression produced by the royal chauffeur contains a reference to the explanation strategy that shows explicit relation to the offense. In the situation, Elizabeth requests the chauffeur to drive her to Queen Mary's house for an appointment. However, the chauffeur surely rejects the request, judging from the current condition of

the streets outside which are heavily affected by the smog. The refusal of the request is made specifically for the well-being of the Queen, who is still unaware of the danger. To reduce the impact of the potential offense, the chauffeur provides an account that “The visibility is too poor to drive” and “It’s been judged too hazardous”, which show explicit cause of the refusal. The explanation also helps convey the chauffeur’s regretful and apologetic stance, even though it does not contain direct apology expression. Hence, the expression above is best identified as *Explanation of Situation* strategy.

### *Offer of Repair*

Despite having occurred in only two cases, *Offer of Repair* constitutes the second highest frequency among the category of indirect apology strategies. The realization of the strategy contains an announcement of reparation for the damage inflicted. Essentially, the speaker attempts to mend and ease the suffering of the affected in two different ways, namely by specified reparation and unspecified reparation. The former is revealed through mentioning specifically the form of repair to the damage, while the latter is done by stating the type of reparation in more general way. Below is an example.

#### (4) 00:31:26→00:31.52TC02.E03.OR (SD-P<)

**Context:** *Things just got worse back in the UK. The media coverage on Parkers’ divorce has just gotten out of control. The news itself has reached the Buckingham Palace, and in indirect manner, will affect Philip and Elizabeth’s royal marriage. Philip blames Mike, for he is the root of all of these problems. Mike attempts to console Philip by offering his resignation as Philip’s private secretary if the news keeps circulating.*

Philip Mountbatten: I've had my own telegram from London. I hope you're not going to make this next step difficult for me.

Mike Parker: **No. You have my resignation the first thing.**

The highlighted expression above can be identified as specified *Offer of Repair* strategy. The resignation is offered as an attempt to console Philip and repair the damage. From the observation and

analysis of the context and the expression, Mike has violated the rules of the royal tour for communicating with Baron Nahum through letters about the misconduct they have done, including committing adultery. Mike’s wife somehow finds out and decides to initiate a divorce proceeding. The news circulates quickly, reaching Buckingham Palace and eventually gets back to Philip and Mike. The infringement of the rules can be perceived as an offense to Philip, who bears a responsibility over everything that happens within the royal tour. Mike, who consciously realizes the great cost resulted from the violation, offers specifically his resignation as Philip’s private secretary to mend the damage.

### *Accepting the Responsibility*

The production of *Accepting the Responsibility* is extremely rare in the series. From 45 analyzed apology cases, the strategy occurs only in 1 situation where the issuing of *Denial of Fault* is discovered. The investigation finds no match for other two subcategories (*Explicit Self-Blame* and *Expressing Trait of Self-Deficiency*). An example is shown below.

#### (5) 00:11:09→00:11:37TC01.E06.AR (SD-P=)

**Context:** *Philip is having a quality time lunching together with his male friends in Soho. There, he talks about women and sex with the other guys. After having a lunch together, Philip gets home a little bit drunk. He tells the royal servants jokingly not to mention to his wife that he’s been out with the boys drinking and talking about girls. Elizabeth, who’s been watching Philip stealthily from the windows, confronts him about his improper behavior as a part of royal family.*

Philip: With just men

Elizabeth: Talking about women

Philip: No. Talking about Egypt if you must know and the revolution that's just taken place there. Along with the unrest in Croatia, Albania, Montenegro, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Italy. Please take note. **Yes, a little bit about the fairer sex over coffee and the odd brandy. What do you expect? It's a gentlemen's lunch club.**

The example above reflects a production of *Denial of Fault*, a subcategory under the major *Accepting the Responsibility* strategy. Deustmann (2003) states that the subcategory involves partial or total rejection to apologize (p. 83). The rejection to apologize is reflected by the expression “What do you expect? It’s a gentlemen’s lunch club”, which appears to indicate no remorse for the hearer. However, the expression that precedes the strategy shows that Philip takes responsibility for the mistake, since he admits that he talks “a little bit about the fairer sex over coffee and the odd brandy”. Interestingly, the nature of the subformula which is conflicting with the characteristics of typical apology has become the subject of reviews for many linguists. This particular strategy has been criticized and questioned specifically by Meier (1998), who points out the lack of consistency within CCSARP taxonomy when comparing findings with other studies (p. 222). However, as the present research relies primarily on CCSARP’s coding scheme, the investigation proceeds to identify the highlighted expression as an indirect apology, specifically *Accepting the Responsibility* (AR), as suggested by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984).

### ***Promise of Forbearance***

Out of the 45 apology strategies found, only one production of *Promise of Forbearance* strategy can be observed. This specific strategy contains a reference to future improvement of the speaker’s behavior and conveys a message that the same offense will not be repeated in the future. Such reparatory actions generally include future promises made by the speaker as an attempt to maintain harmony. The example below exhibits the key attributes of the strategy.

(6) 00:22:54→00:23:14TC02.E07. PF (SD-P>)

**Context:** *Margaret announces her marriage with Tony to Elizabeth. Since Tony is a single man who has never married before, Margaret wants her sister assurance that this time there won’t be any obstacles that prevent her from marrying Tony. Elizabeth wants Margaret to forget everything in the past, as she promises that she will not prevent them from getting married.*

Margaret: Be good enough to give me that assurance again, nice and audibly, so we’re both quite clear.

Elizabeth: **Margaret, I promise that I will never do anything to block any marriage of yours ever again.**

Margaret: Thank you.

The highlighted expression above conforms fully with the characteristics of PF strategy, as it contains a promise for not committing the same mistake in the future. The expression “I promise that I will never do anything to block any marriage of yours ever again” is a confirmatory evidence for classifying the strategy as such. In the context earlier, Elizabeth made some mistakes in the past for interfering Margaret’s planned marriage. Even though Elizabeth had the support from the government and the Church, Margaret could not tolerate such intervention, because earlier in the story Elizabeth had promised that Margaret could marry Peter. However, Margaret’s plan disintegrated since Elizabeth broke her own words by banning the marriage. Contemplating retrospectively, Margaret thus wants Elizabeth’s reassurance that she can now be allowed to marry Tony, a single man who has never married anyone before. Elizabeth, who realizes her past mistakes, makes a remedial promise that she will not interfere in Margaret’s marriage again. The promise can convey two potential hints, the first being the assurance not to do the same mistake again, as suggested by “I will never do anything to block any marriage of yours ever again”. The second possible hint is the improvement of speaker’s behavior, which can be realized if Elizabeth fulfills her promise.

### ***Combinations of Indirect Apology Strategies***

The rare use of additional intensifiers to indirect apologies results in the low frequency of the strategy. This particular strategy only occurs in two instances (4.5%), all of which involves the performing of *Offer of Repair* (OR) as intensifying devices, as seen in the realization of ES + OR and AR + OR. Interestingly, it can be taken into account that the combinations above feature realization formation similar to that of direct apology combinations, as they contain only two formulae for each production.

The consistent occurrence of OR strategy as intensifiers within the two instances is a matter worthy of further investigation. Considering the potential damage resulting from the offense in the observed cases, the preference to minimize the damage apologetically by reparatory actions appears justifiable. The following examples illustrate the use of such combinations.

(7) 00:07:43 → 00:07:49 TC02.E07. ES + OR  
(SD-P=)

*Context:* Margaret is visiting Antony's gallery because the couple will have an appointment with the journalists. In a sad tone, Margaret says that his former lover Peter Townsend is going to marry someone in Brussels. This really puts Margaret in tears, because she and Peter have pledged that if they fail to marry each other, they won't marry someone else. Hearing this, Antony tries to appease Margaret, saying that she will do just fine. In light of this soothing moment, Margaret proposes Antony to marry her. Antony doesn't say a word and remains silent. Margaret feels offended, because Antony cannot just ignore her proposal since she really meant it. He then explains that they both will be late for the exhibition if they keep talking and to repair the offense, Antony then promises to discuss it another time.

Princess Margaret: You can't just leave it there.

Antony Armstrong-Jones: **Darling, we're half an hour late as it is.**

Princess Margaret: I've just effectively proposed.

Antony Armstrong-Jones: **We can discuss this in another time.**

Two different formulae are employed in Antony's attempt to placate Margaret. The consolation is first done through the issuing of ES strategy. In the context, Margaret is heavily affected after hearing that her former lover Peter will marry someone in Brussels. It evokes the nurturing side of Tony, who immediately offers his sympathy to Margaret. In light of this delightful moment, Margaret senses an opportunity to make a marriage proposal to Tony, who is apparently still busy with his stuff. However, Margaret views this differently, as she thinks that Tony is ignoring her. The ignoring of her proposal hurts Margaret even more

and thus elicits a response "You can't just leave it there". Tony acknowledges her partner's disappointment and tries to calm her down by providing an account that he has been busy preparing the exhibition. The expression "Darling, we're half an hour late as it is" explains implicitly the cause why he remains silent. Since Tony does not intend to hurt Margaret in any way, he offers to talk about it in another time, as reflected by the expression "We can discuss this in another time". The offer can be seen as a form of reparation and thus is identified as OR, for Tony promises specifically to talk about the proposal seriously, which he hopes can really mend the damage.

(8) 00:13:18 → 00:13:35 TC02.E10. AR + OR  
(SD+P<)

*Context:* John Profumo's affair with Christine Keeler has put British government in turmoil. Harold Macmillan, the Prime Minister, feels like he is to blame for this embarrassing scandal. He thinks that as the Head of the Government, he has failed to establish order within the institutions he leads. Consequently, he asks for an audience with Elizabeth to talk about that urgent matter. He accepts the responsibility and to save his face, he offers his resignation in immediate effect.

Elizabeth: This dentist, Mr. Ward, clearly has a lot to answer for.

Harold Macmillan: Osteopath, ma'am.

Elizabeth: Oh, well, he seems to have orchestrated it all.

Harold Macmillan: **He may have orchestrated it, but read the newspapers, you'd think it's all my fault. And for that reason, I think it's only right that I offer you my resignation.**

Elizabeth: What?

Another instance of OR production as an intensifier can be observed in the combination above. Preceding the formula is an expression of AR, which acts as the primary apologetic move. The scale of the offense which has spread nationwide is the key factor why the production of OR is discovered here. The Prime Minister is actually aware of the affair but he decides to prevent it from circulating in mass media. However, journalists are

finally able to uncover the truth and put pressure on Harold. Harold, as the Head of the Government, bears direct responsibility to the Queen for any misconduct within his institutions. Thus, as a remedial move to the perceived 'offense' he has committed to the people of the country, he patriotically takes the blame by saying "But read the newspapers, you'd think it's all my fault" (Explicit self-blame). The apologetic remark is intensified by the offering of his resignation in immediate effect, as reflected from the expression "And for that reason, I think it's only right that I offer you my resignation". The resignation explicitly represents Harold's reparatory actions as a payout for the damage, a typical attribute of specified OR strategy.

## CONCLUSION

The present research has been conducted to identify and classify the apology strategies produced in *The Crown* with the taxonomy provided by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). The research has successfully identified and classified 45 apology utterances which have been discovered in two seasons of the series. The results have shown that most of the characters opt for direct apologies as the primary means of showing regret and maintaining harmony. From a total of 45 apologies found, 33 (73.4%) are classified as direct realizations (27 as standalone IFIDs and 6 other as IFID combinations). This particular finding may be explained in the words of Slavianova (2012), who argues that the prevalence of direct apologies in British culture is partly due to the fact that speakers tend to avoid the intrusion of personal privacy as a means of showing politeness. Therefore, in circumstances where the invasion of privacy is inevitable, which includes the committing of an offense, speakers are more likely to offer 'formulaic' direct apologies (Slavianova, 2012). Meanwhile, indirect apology realizations are relatively rare with only 12 occurrences in total. ES strategy is found to be the most commonly used indirect strategy with 6 instances, constituting 13.3%.

With the accomplishment of the present research, investigating apologies from other

unscripted sources for future studies is highly-recommended. The realization of apology in debates or telephone conversations, for instance, can contribute to new findings as to how apologies are offered in naturally-occurring speech. Since people know very little about apology realizations in natural conditions, future studies therefore should focus on investigating this particular area.

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