

**Research Article**

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**An Analysis of Direct and Indirect Apology in *The Daredevil* First  
Season (2015) Series**

Hagi Alwirido<sup>a</sup>, Oktiva Herry Candra<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Diponegoro, Jl. Prof. Sudarto No.13,  
Tembalang, Semarang, 50275, Indonesia

<sup>b</sup> English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Diponegoro, Jl. Prof. Sudarto No.13,  
Tembalang, Semarang, 50275, Indonesia

[herrychandra@lecturer.undip.ac.id](mailto:herrychandra@lecturer.undip.ac.id)

**Abstract**

This research is about the analysis of the speech act of apology strategy. The researcher analyzes the apology strategies phenomenon in the *Daredevil* First Season (2015) series. The study aims to reveal the direct and indirect apologies and the social functions of the apologies produced by the characters in the series. The research method of this study adheres to descriptive qualitative, with non-participatory observation as the method of collecting data. Then, the collected data is analyzed using [1] and [2]. The researcher discovers that both direct and indirect apologies are used by the characters in this series with direct apologies as the most frequently used apologies strategy. There are also 5 social functions of the apology expressed by the characters in the series, namely showing good manners, showing contrition, asking to be forgiven, getting off the hook, and assuaging the addressee's wrath.

**Keywords:** Speech act; illocutionary; expressive; apology

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**1. Introduction**

Communication is one of the important parts of a human as a living being [3]. It keeps people connected and understood each other. Human is a naturally social being, so socializing is absolutely a need. There are plenty of ways for humans to communicate, one of which is speaking. By speaking, human produces what is called speech. It is a series of sounds produced by humans that construct words and sentences. Speech consists of not just sounds, but also ideas, expressions, or thoughts put by a human who produces the speech that can be understood by the other human. For that reason, it is natural that the speaker expects that his or her communicative intention will be understood by the hearer [3-5].

(1) I'm sorry

(1) is an example of an expression that humans can produce. It is called an apology. It is an expression to show regret or remorse. Naturally, the process of expressing an apology involves 2 sides, the addresser/speaker and the addressee/hearer [2].

Apology expression is available in every single language in the world. Humans will never escape from mistakes. This is why an apology exists, not to undo the mistakes that have been done, but rather to repair the "damage" for the mistakes people have made. The word damage refers to many things, including the feelings of a person who may be damaged by the offender. Apology also helps to repair the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. That is why, apologies usually come after the offenses are done to maintain harmony between the speaker and hearer [1].

*Daredevil* series (2015) takes place mainly in an area called Hell's Kitchen, also known as Clinton, Manhattan, America. Surely, the apology expressions in this show are the representation of the American apology custom that uses English as the language, because every country has its way to deliver an apology. Even though the British and America use the same language, they have differences in terms of apology customs. British people are famous for their habit to apologize so much even though they don't do something wrong.

## 2. Methods

To conduct this research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative as his method of the research. According to [6], descriptive research is concerned with examining phenomena in more detail or distinguishing them from other phenomena. It consists of data classification, data analysis, and conclusion drawing as the final step.

The sampling technique of this research adheres to purposive sampling. [6] states that purposive sampling is a sampling technique with certain considerations or special selection. The data in this study were selected based on the characteristics of the apology strategy and its social function according to [1] and [2]. Since the researcher gets the data from watching the series and reading the transcript of the series, the observation is done by the non-participatory method. [7-8] state that non-participatory observation does not require the observer to participate, they only observe the activity. The collected data are analyzed using the apology strategy proposed by [1] and the social function of apology by [2].

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Direct Apology

#### 3.1.1. Expression of Regret

MATT : "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It's been, It's been too long since my last confession. My dad, he used to come to this church back when I was a kid. He was a fighter. Old school. Boxer. Lost more than he won. Had a 24-31 record before he, uh But he could take a punch. Jesus, he could take a punch."

FATHER LANTOM : "Language."

MATT : "Sorry, Father. [...]"

According to [1], the expression of regret is marked with those expressions that include the word "sorry," such as "I'm sorry", "sorry", "I'm sorry for ...". It can be seen that after Father Lantom reproves Matt, he expresses his regret by saying *Sorry, Father* for using a curse word with the name of Jesus as he swears, which is considered a bad behavior. Using a low pitch and tone as Matt says *Sorry, the father* also shows his sincerity and the power and solidarity between Matt and the Father of the church. Since the father is known for his religious trait and is older than Matt, Matt lowers his tone as he expresses his apology.

#### 3.1.2. Offer of Apology

OWLSEY : “Look at my face. I can't go into the office like this. I'm afraid to go anywhere with that masked psychopath running around. My son was coming to visit. I had totell him, "Nope, stay out of New York, Lee. Shit's goin' on." I'm 73 years old. Youknow how many times I have left to see him.”

FISK : “**I apologize for the inconvenience**, Leland.”

[1] stated that expression using the word “apologize” such as “I apologize for” or “I hereby apologize” is an offer of apology. Therefore, the apology expressed by Fisk is an offer of apology, because Fisk uses “I apologize” to admit his failure to finish the job and apologize to Owlsey.

### 3.1.3. Request for Forgiveness

JUDGE : “Mr. Murdock, we're waiting.”

MATT : “Sorry, Your Honour. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, **forgive me if I seem distracted**. I've been preoccupied of late with, uh, questions of the morality of right and wrong, good and evil. Sometimes the delineation between the two is a sharp line. Sometimes it's a blur and often it's like pornography. You just know when yousee it.”

According to [1], [9], expressions such as “forgive me”, “excuse me”, and “pardon me” are the expression of request for forgiveness. Matt admits that he makes the judge and the jury waiting then he asks for forgiveness for it, which can be seen in the sentence “Forgive me if I seem distracted”. The situation is pretty formal and Matt’s social position is lower than the judge and the jury at the court, he explicitly asks to be forgiven by expressing “forgive me” instead of just expressing regret.

## 3.2. Indirect Apology

### 3.2.1. Implicit Acknowledgement

BEN : “You know who needs me, Karen? My wife... she needs me.”

KAREN : “It was important.”

BEN : “You could've just told me... but no, instead you gotta spin some story about thisgreat place upstate... could be good for Doris. Like you give a damn.”

KAREN : “Hey, that's not fair.”

BEN : “Welcome to my  
life.”

KAREN : “**Wait, you're right. You're right. I should've told you.**”

BEN : “Then why didn't you?”

KAREN : “I... was afraid you'd say no.”

Karen’s realization of her mistake makes her acknowledge that she is wrong and shouldn’t havelied to Ben as she says “You’re right. You're right. I should've told you”. This line indicates that Karen implicitly acknowledges that she does something wrong to Ben. Karen emphasizes the word *right* twice which indicates the seriousness of her acknowledgment of her lie that makes Ben upset.

Karen's realization of her mistake for lying to Ben is also represented in her word stress choice in the word "told" as says "I should've told you".

### 3.2.2. Expression of Lack of Intent

SUSAN HARRIS : "(Sighs deeply) You've got a reception area, a conference room, and two offices. Corner suite has a view of the Hudson. You can flip a coin with your partner for it."

MATT : "Uh, he can have the view."

SUSAN HARRIS : "**I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to**"

MATT : "Of course not."

Her line "I didn't mean to" indicates that she certainly doesn't mean or even intend to upset Matt because of her joke. There is also a slight pause and shocked mimic from Susan after Matt appears and says "Uh, he can have the view" before she expresses his apology which shows her lack of knowledge of Matt's condition. Even though she may just say "I didn't mean to", "I'm so sorry" in the front emphasizes her lack of intent to upset Matt for throwing the joke. Additionally, she even uses an intensifier "so" to emphasize her lack of intent. This may be affected by the solidarity between her and Matt. The fact that Susan Harris does not know about Matt's condition indicates that this is her first time meeting him. Thus, a very polite apology is chosen by her because Matt is a stranger to her before.

### 3.2.3. Expression of Self-deficiency

FOGGY : "Yeah, but this can't become what we do."

MATT : "Yeah, I know."

FOGGY : "And we have to be on the same team, making decisions together."

MATT : "**I got carried away. I'm sorry, Foggy.**"

FOGGY : "It's okay."

Foggy seems disappointed with Matt about what Matt has done. Matt realizes that what he has done is wrong because he suddenly accepts the case without talking to Foggy first. Matt finds out that Healy has a connection to Fisk whom Matt has been looking for. After that, he rushes to the interrogation room and accepts Healy's case hoping that his case will eventually lead him to Fisk. For that reason, Matt apologizes to Foggy for what he has done in his utterance "I got carried away. I'm sorry". He expresses his apology and accepts his deficiency to being carried away about his pursuit of Fisk by accepting the case unilaterally.

### 3.2.4. Explicit Acceptance of the Blame

DORIS : "He thought you were something else. The way you wouldn't let go until you got to the truth. He admired that. We never got around to having kids, too busy with this or that, but if we had, I think he would have wanted one like you."

KAREN : "Mrs. Ulrich, [crying] **I-I think it's my fault what happened to Ben. I pushed him into a story that he didn't want...**"

DORIS : “Ben Urich never got pushed into doing anything he didn't want to do. He was a reporter. That's what he lived for. [sobbing] And he passed doing what he loved what he had to do.”

Karen realizes what happens to Ben and blames herself by saying “I-I think it's my fault what happened to Ben”. The self-blame she states serves as an indirect apology that she expresses to apologize to his wife. Karen's self-blame comes from the fact that Ben's death happens after Ben and Karen visit the nursing home where Fisk's mother is taken care of. She kind of knows that Ben's death is related to their find about Fisk's mother. In her apology, she takes on the responsibility for Ben's death by admitting it in her dialogue “I-I think it's my fault what happened to Ben”, then she adds the reason in her dialogue “I pushed him into a story that he didn't want”. The following reason aims to make her mistake more visible so she can put the blame on her.

### 3.2.5. Explicit Explanation

FOGGY : “**Hey, sorry. Couldn't flag a cab.**”

MARCI : “You know that buffalo wouldn't make me a vodka martini? I had to settle for just vodka.”

FOGGY : “Hmm. Oh, yeah, she can be, um You gotta ask nice.”

Foggy comes late to his rendezvous with Marci. Realizing his mistake, Foggy, then, apologizes to Marci by saying “Hey, sorry. Couldn't flag a cab”. Instead of just expressing his regret to come late by saying sorry, he also states his situation and why he comes late, which he can't flag or get a taxi or cab on his way to Josie's Bar. The reason why he uses an explanation to apologize is to mitigate or minimize his mistake so Marci will not be so disappointed about that and to keep maintaining her mood so that he will not be mad. This is because Foggy and Marci are friends and ex-lovers, and also Foggy wants to ask Marci's help regarding Fisk's case. Hence, he has to make Marci in the mood so she wants to help him. Also, how Foggy performs his apology in an informal way which is indicated by the reduced sentence and word choice.

## 3.3. The Social Functions of Apology

### 3.3.1. Showing Contrition

DORIS : “He thought you were something else. The way you wouldn't let go until you got to the truth. He admired that. We never got around to having kids, too busy with this or that, but if we had, I think he would have wanted one like you.”

KAREN : “Mrs. Urich, [crying] **I-I think it's my fault what happened to Ben. I pushed him into a story that he didn't want...**”

DORIS : “Ben Urich never got pushed into doing anything he didn't want to do. He was a reporter. That's what he lived for. [sobbing] And he passed doing what he loved what he had to do.”

At Ben's funeral, Karen meets Ben's wife and claims that Ben's death is caused by her in her utterance “I-I think it's my fault what happened to Ben. I pushed him into a story that he didn't want” because she realizes that Ben is killed by Fisk because they know about Fisk's mother. She consciously regrets lying to Ben when she persuades Ben to see a nursing house that may be good for Doris, Ben's wife, who suffers from an unidentified illness which turns out that the nursing

The home they go to is the nursing home where Fisk's mother is taken care of. Thus, Karen's apology isto show her contrition for what she has done which pushes and lies to Ben that she says in her dialogue "I pushed him into a story that he didn't want" to indicate that she takes on the responsibility.

### 3.3.2. Asking to be Forgiven

JUDGE : "Mr. Murdock, we're waiting."

MATT : "Sorry, Your Honour. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, **forgive me if I seem distracted**. I've been preoccupied of late with, uh, questions of the morality of right and wrong, good and evil. Sometimes the delineation between the two is a sharp line. Sometimes it's a blur and often it's like pornography. You just know when yousee it."

Matt apologizes to the judge by saying *sorry* followed by his apology to the jury and request for forgiveness to be spaced out and take everyone's time in the trial in his dialogue "*Forgive me if I seem distracted*". Hence, the social function of Matt's apology is asking to be forgiven, because Matt explicitly asks the judge to forgive him which is shown by the verb *forgive* in his dialogue.

### 3.3.3. Showing Good Manners

FOSTER : "**Sorry to bother you so late, ma'am**. My name is Detective Foster, with the 65<sup>th</sup> Precinct. We had a bit of a disturbance a few blocks from here. We're asking everyone if they've seen or heard anything unusual in the past few hours."

CLAIRE : "What kind of disturbance?"

Before Foster asks, he starts with an apology *Sorry*, even though he does not do something wrongto Claire. This kind of apology serves as a politeness when starting a conversation. Even though the idea of apology may exist as showing regret to interrupt at a late time, the main purpose ofthe apology is to start a conversation in order to show a good manner from someone who starts theconversation.

### 3.3.4. Assuaging the Addressee's Wrath

FOGGY : "(Turns around). Oh, hi, Fran."

KAREN : "Oh..."

FOGGY : "**Sorry.**"

KAREN : "**We're really sorry.**"

FOGGY : "**Sorry.**"

KAREN : "**We're sorry**. We'll be quiet."

Fran, Matt's neighbor is disturbed by Foggy and Karen. As she comes out of her apartment room, she does not have any dialogue but her face looks pissed and angry. Foggy and Karen realize her angry face and apologize quickly to her in their dialogue, *Sorry* for Foggy and *We're really sorry*for Karen. Their apologies indicate their success to take on responsibility for their actions that makes someone unhappy and they apologize to assuage Fran's unhappiness. Thus, their apology is classified as assuaging the addressee's wrath.

### 3.3.5. Getting off the Hook

MATT : “You could talk to Hoffman.”

BEN : “Tried. He's in the wind. Or the bottom of the river. Either way...

[SHRUGGING]”FOGGY : “He just shrugged.”

BEN : “**Sorry.**”

Hoffman is a police detective who is bribed by Fisk to be his pawn. Ben has no idea where he is because he is gone mentioned in Ben’s dialogue “Tried. He's in the wind. Or bottom of the river. Either way”. Ben’s uncertainty about Hoffman’s presence does not only occur in his line, he also uses body gestures to deliver his uncertainty which cannot be seen by blind people like Matt. After realizing it, Ben apologizes to Matt using the word *sorry*. Ben’s apology serves as his responsibility as well as his way to get away from any social punishment that he may get for doing inappropriate ways to communicate with blind people by performing visual communication, which is the body gesture. Thus, Ben’s apology social function is to get off the hook.

## 5. Conclusions

Power, social distance, and range of imposition give a contribution to the selection of linguistic codes and strategies used during the conversation. From the data analysis, it seems social distance or the degree of intimacy among interlocutors holds the most functional aspect to the selection of strategies applied. Mostly, speakers apply direct speech acts as if they are asking for an apology. Even, when speakers are speaking with the more powerful hearer, the conversation sometimes is done direct way. This indicates that intimacy plays an important role in selecting the strategy of apology. Besides, the factor of range of imposition also gives contribution to the strategy applied. The low risk of the possibility of refusal to the utterances containing the proposition of attacking the face of speakers makes the speakers take this direct speech act. Moreover, the potential of threatening the face of the hearer is reduced by giving additional speeches functioning to save others’ faces.

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