

The Contexts and Pragmatic Functions of Review Apology in Wole Soyinka's *Alapata Apata* and *Kongi's Harvest*

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Abstract

*Review apology is an apology type resulting from contemplation, re-consideration and self-realisation of a mistake or offence committed. Existing studies on apology largely focus on types and strategies of apology performance in natural discourses with scanty attention paid to apology resources in drama texts. This study is therefore designed to examine the contexts of review apologies in Wole Soyinka's *Alapata Apata* and *Kongi's Harvest* with the purpose of examining their context types and pragmatic functions. Jacob Mey's Pragmatic acts theory is adopted as the framework and the descriptive design is used. Wole Soyinka was purposively selected because of his literary prowess while the texts were selected because of thematic relevance and prominent deployment of apologies in them. Cultural and cognitive contexts are identified within review apology in the data. But while it manifests within cultural context in the two texts, it features within cognitive context in only *Alapata Apata*. It is also discovered that review apology manifests within the contextual features of shared situational knowledge, reference, inference and metaphor and performs pragmatic functions of pleading, regretting and repairing. The study finally submits that review apology has implications for enhancing self-evaluation, engendering fault admittance and encouraging social harmony. It is finally recommended that apology should not just be taught as a pragmatic concept, but as a topic where all its aspects will be covered.*

Keywords: Review apology, Wole Soyinka, *Alapata Apata*, *Kongi's Harvest*, pragmatic functions

Introduction

Conflicts unavoidably happen in human society. When they do, one of the efforts made to resolve them is apologising. Apology benefits both the apologisee and the apologisee. As submitted by Engel (2001), it gives the hurt, disappointed and betrayed person a wonderful gift more healing than anything else, and makes them feel that we regret the actions that offended them and we let them see that we respect and care for them. Lazare (2004) believes it reduces the victim's desire for revenge, heals humiliations and facilitates reconciliation, and conversely,

whether accepted or not, apology has the effect of removing sense of guilt from the offender. Friedman (2006) also contends that apologising reduces the need for retaliation from the offended person and keeps the offender at ease that they have been forgiven. Apology is significantly important in every area of human life. For instance, scholars like Braithwaite (2000) and O'Hara (2004) argue that many legal disputes would be averted if the importance of apology is appreciated.

Similarly, Friedman (2006) contends that nations may not be able to deal effectively with each other without a sincere apology and patients are not likely to sue doctors if they are humble enough to apologise for the mistakes they inevitably make when performing their professional duties. Odekunbi (2023) thus submits that the role played by apology is so significant that it can restore trivial issues that destroy homes, break relationships and pull-down organisations. We want to add here that marriages will stand, friendships will last and relationships will be sustained if the value of apology is appreciated.

Statement of the Problem

Studies on apology as one of the commonest means of resolving conflicts and repairing relationships have been considered using natural data from some African and European languages and cultures such as Hebrew, Japanese, German, Akan, Arabic and English with special emphasis on the apology strategies used and their pragmatic functions. But to the best of our knowledge, those situated in literary texts written in English with Yoruba cultural orientation are scanty. And if this is not done it will be difficult to appreciate text representativeness of the cultural resources of apology and perfect understanding of how apologies are realised in Yoruba language and culture may not be known. This is the gap this study is out to fill.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This aim of the study is to examine the contexts of review apology in Wole Soyinka's *Alapata Apata (AA)* and *Kongi's Harvest (KH)* with the specific objectives of determining their types and discussing their pragmatic functions.

Significance of the Study

This study will benefit those in cultural linguistics because it is situated in Yoruba culture, an effort new in apology studies. It will also afford those in contrastive linguistics to compare apology performance by Yoruba users of English and others who are bilinguals in English and other languages. It will also provoke comparative study of apologies in drama and other genres of literature. Those in pragmatics will also find it highly useful because of its introduction of pragmeme to apology studies. Finally, scholars working on Soyinka's plays will find it indispensable because apology studies on his plays are scarce.

Conceptual Explication

Apology has been defined differently by experts. Ahmed (2017) traces the origin of apology to the Greek word "apologeomai" which means "to justify or defend oneself" or "defence". He then submits that the term apology was first used to mean defence or justification for doing something, but has now shifted to "regret offered by an offender to an offended person for offending them". Believing that apology can be written or spoken, he then concludes that it is "a written or spoken expression of regret, remorse or sorrow" for insulting, failing, injuring or wronging a person. While we do not condemn Ahmed's definition, we want to state here that apology, particularly in the Yoruba society, can be non-verbal. The definition therefore needs modification.

Bergman and Kasper (1993) see it as "a compensatory action to an offence in the doing of which "S" was casually involved and which is costly to "H". It is not debatable that apology is compensatory as claimed by them, but it needs to be stressed that an apologiser may not necessarily be involved in the action that hurt the offended. In other words, an apology can be performed on behalf of an offender. This is the reason Holmes (1995) quickly adds that a person may apologise for someone else's behaviour, when he defines apology as a politeness strategy used by a speaker or an offender to remedy an offence they have committed. In addition to everything said so far, we also want to state here that apology is also performed in the Yoruba society for a mistake one wants to commit. Odekunbi's (2023) definition which captures apology as a verbal or non-verbal act usually performed by an offender or on their behalf to express regret or remorse for an offence committed or to be committed with the goal of enhancing

harmonious relationship between the speaker and the offended will therefore be adopted in this study.

Context

Simply put, context is the environment or situation in which a speech event takes place. Crystal (1987) defines it as “where a communicative event takes place”. Adebija (1999) see it as “all the relevant aspects of the physical or social setting of an utterance or discourse”. Because it plays an important role in meaning explication, Odebunmi (2015) sees it as the spine of meaning. He then argues that as it dictates what one can say, it also has a way of pointing out where an interaction takes place. For instance, he argues that an utterance like: “You can lie on the bed for examination” can predictably be made in a consulting room in a hospital by a medical doctor in the day, while “You are sentenced to a three-year imprisonment with hard labour” is expected to be made by a judge in the courtroom in the day. He however argues that, in pragmatics, what is said cannot be constrained strictly to a setting because situation may call for a teacher to preach to their students in the classroom and a lawyer may narrate a story in a court to prove a point. Van Dijk’s (1977) definition that context captures “everything we need to know about to properly understand an event, action or discourse” will therefore be appropriate here. Filani (2021) stressing this therefore argues that to have full understanding of the utterance: “The dog is at the front door” said by a husband to his wife, one needs to understand what the couple mean by the utterance, that is their intention and the contextual assumption shared by them. Based on their shared contextual assumption, the intention of the husband may be to inform the wife to go and feed the dog.

Though Odebunmi (2016) discusses types of context as a macro and micro concept, in this study Fetzer’s (2002, 2004) classification of context into cognitive, linguistic and social contexts is adopted. Cognitive context, according to him, embraces mental representations, propositions, contextual assumptions and factual assumptions. Odebunmi (2016) calls it “the mental host of inferences and reasoning”. Linguistic context is the co-text, which simply means that the meaning of the lexical terms in an utterance is largely determined by the words that come before and after it. This has to do with the other words that function in the environment of the word used, that help in the understanding of an utterance. Social context comprises the participants in a discourse, their physical locations and their verbal and non-verbal actions.

Review Apology (RA)

Review apology is formed from the word “review”, which in the Advanced Learners’ Dictionary has “contemplation (over) or consideration of past events, circumstances or facts” as one of its entries. Review apology is therefore taken, in this study, to mean an apology type resulting from contemplation, re-examination and self-realisation of a mistake or offence committed. That is, the apologisee contemplates over or reconsiders what they have said or done and realise they have committed a mistake or offended a person and feel the need to offer an apology to the offended. While most instances of RA in *AA* occur in the discussions between Alaba the butcher and his visitors, in *KH*, they manifest mostly in the people’s discussions with Oba Danlola.

Synopses of the Selected Texts

Alapata Apata dwells on Alaba, a retired butcher who resolves to spend his retirement sitting on the rock in front of his house. His bosom friend, Teacher, intending to celebrate him, decides to erect a board with the inscription of his Alapata Apata, meaning the butcher on the rock. But, because the students he sent to write the inscription have poor knowledge of Yoruba tonal marks, they write Alapata Apata, meaning the ruler of the rock domain, which equates him to a king. This thus sets him against the king of the village and his council of chiefs.

Kongi’s Harvest is about Kongi, a military dictator in the imaginary state of Ismland who, intending to make himself an absolute ruler, decides to use his military force to compel Oba Danlola, the king who wields traditional and spiritual power to relinquish the power to him. This he plans to achieve by deceiving him into handing over new yam to him on New Yam Festival Day. He however fails in the scheme because rather than being given a yam he is given the head of one of his enemies, Segi’s father, who is detailed in a plot to kill him.

Review of Previous Studies on Apology

Cohen and Olshtain (1981) examine how Hebrews produce apologies in English. They consider the extent to which the Hebrew learners of English could produce socio-culturally acceptable apologies. It is discovered that it is difficult to measure their competence in a second language. They therefore select only eight situations to find out the linguistic and cultural competence of these Hebrew speakers when producing apologies in English. They then discovered that when

simple offences were involved, the EFL learners apologised as the native speakers of English frequently, such as in coming accidentally into contact with an old woman, shaking her a bit. In all, they discovered that the apology strategies used by the Hebrew users of English as foreign learners were clearly different from those of native speakers of English. Cohen and Olshtain (1981) thus posit that the non-native speakers' non-conformity to the socio-cultural norms of English was caused by their shallow pragmatic competence in the language. They thus submit that Hebrew learners were expected to simply employ the socio-cultural norms and patterns used in Hebrew culture when apologising in English. They (ibid) however observe that though Hebrew and English are clearly different, sometimes Hebrew learners of English are very close to the English norms when apologising in English, particularly if the offence is light. They then assume that it may be because simple apology is required. Unlike their study that analyses natural data collected from Hebrew learners of English, data from drama texts written in English but situated in Yoruba culture are used in this study. Also, rather than examining how apologies are produced by Yoruba characters who speak English, it examines the contexts and functions of review apology, an apology type that is data-driven in our study.

Edmundson (1982) studies the perception of apologies by American native speakers of English. He considers the cues used by 161 American native speakers of English to determine the appropriateness, sincerity and acceptability of apologies in a number of television programmes. Edmundson believes that studying perception of apologies will help in understanding the pragmatic principles involved in the presentation of apologies in English. Though this study is on apologies like the present one, however, rather than using television programmes as done by Edmundson, apologies in selected plays are used. This apart, American native speakers of English are Edmundson's sources of data, but in this study, review apologies of fictional characters in drama texts written in English by a Nigerian Yoruba/English bilingual are analysed to identify their contexts and pragmatic functions.

Garcia (1989) compares how Americans and Venezuelans realise apologies in the English language situations. He adduces differences in the conversational styles as the cause of the misunderstanding and disagreement in "socio-pragmatic failure". He then concludes that cultural background has significant influence on the linguistic choices of apologies used by the speakers. He discovers that the American native speakers' responses are characterised with negative politeness, demonstrated in their excessive use of deference and respect expressions, while their

Venezuelan counterparts used positive strategies demonstrated by expressions of familiarity, cooperation and friendship. Unlike Garcia's study, does not compare how apologies are realised but considers contexts and functions of review apology, a particular type of apology, using data from drama texts of Yoruba cultural orientation, rather than natural apologies situated in foreign languages and culture.

Holmes (1990) examines the deployment of apology strategies by the New Zealand English speakers using a corpus of 183 apologies collected using ethnographic method. Her findings reveal that there was no difference in the instances where a single strategy was used and the ones where a combination of strategies was used. This, as contended by Holmes (ibid), depends on the nature of the situations; there were several categories of apologies in the case of serious offences, while in the case of the lighter offences, there were single categories. Finally, Holmes discovers that nearly all the instances included explicit apology. In another study carried out by Holmes on New Zealand English in 1993, she discovers the manifestation significant differences in the deployment of apologies between men and women; men do not apologise as more as women do in New Zealand English. This, according to her, is because women see apologies as important face-saving strategies while men believe they can do without them. Holmes also submits that New Zealand women give longer responses to apologies than American women do. The present study differs from hers because rather than dealing with the deployment of apology strategies and the situations that inform their usage, it is on contexts and pragmatic functions of review apologies, and dwells on characters grounded in Yoruba culture.

Deutschmann's (2003) study is on British variety of English. He examines the forms and functions of apologies and their social and conversational variation as they appear in the British national corpus consisting of recordings of a variety of more than 1700 speakers in both formal and informal situations and contexts. The two major findings he discovers are: one, the frequency of strategies that indicate speakers trying to minimise their responsibility is four times greater than those that indicate assumption of responsibility, and two, the degree of formality in which an apology is performed is dictated by the choice of strategies. He also notes that audience is a strong factor that influences the way British speakers of English apologise.

Umar (2007) studies how Sudanese Arabic speakers using English realise their apologies when compared with that of the British English native speakers using 100 Sudanese learners of English

and 15 native speakers of British English. He discovers that the Sudanese Arabic speakers learning English use the same strategies as the British native speakers, though with more intensified expressions of apology. But Ahmed (2017) is quick to observe that it will be difficult to defend the great difference between the numbers of Sudanese Arabic speakers learning English used and the British native speakers used. He argues that before generalisation can be made, there will be a need to bridge the gap between the numbers. The present study is on Yoruba users of English, it is not a comparative study and data from drama texts rather than students are used.

Dawaele (2008) writes on the deployment of apology in the Japanese as EFL learners. He compares the apologies produced by EFL learners got through DCT with those produced by the British speakers of English. He concludes that there is a difference in the way Japanese EFL learners and the native speakers of Japanese deploy IFIDs. Japanese EFL learners also interchange “excuse me” and “I’m sorry”. The present study is neither comparative nor on apology deployment by learners but on contexts and pragmatic functions of a type of apology produced by characters in drama texts.

Al-Zumor (2009) studies how Arab learners of English, native speakers of American English and native speakers of British English realise English apology strategies in different contexts in India. He discovers that the Arabians’ pragmatic transfer from Arabic, in the production of apologies, is because of their religious beliefs, ideas or social values. He then submits that Arabian speakers of English usually take on responsibility in their apology, while the native speakers of English are fond of using offers of maintenance or verbal compensation. Ilic (2014), using data collected through discourse completion test questionnaire and role plays from 40 Master’s level English language students (20 males and 20 females) who were native speakers of Bosnian, examines the similarities and differences in the apology strategies used in the DCT and RPs. His findings reveal that direct apology, offer of repair and acknowledgement of responsibility are the three most commonly used apology strategies in the DCT and RPs, direct apology is preferred in the DCT while offer of repair or compensation is preferred in the RPs, combination of several strategies were employed by most of the respondents and female examinees used a combination of at least three strategies for every single situation as against males who used two strategies, meaning that female apologisers are more expressive than males. However, it was limited to only 40 Master’s students who were native speakers of Romania and

it emphasises the combination of strategies used by the male and female respondents. The present study is situated in literary texts of Yoruba culture written in English.

Saleem and Azam (2015), using Focus Group Discussion questionnaire to elicit data from the EFL university students in Pakistan, examine issue relating to the pragmatic aspects of the use of apology strategies in English and the pragmatic transfer. They discover that most of the participants are not influenced by apology strategies from their L1 cultural norms but keep interlocutor's social status in mind when they use apology strategies. The study further reveals that it is the severity of an offence that determines the apology strategies of Urdu-speaking learners of English in university. They make use of intensifiers and indirect apology strategy if the offence is severe, but explicit apology strategy is used when the offence is mild.

Ahmed (2017) is on Iraqi Arabic and English and discovers that "collectivistic nature of Iraqi culture" determines their choice of apology strategies. His findings reveal that in contrast to the Arabic native speakers, the Iraqi EFL were not aware of pragmatic competence as grammatical competence, and the Iraqi native speakers were fond of using multiple strategies for some offences for which the Iraqi EFL prefer a single or non-apology strategy. Odekunbi (2023) studies the structures of apologies in Soyinka's *Jero's Metamorphosis* and reveals that it has implicit and explicit apology types which have simple and complex linguistic structures.

It is obvious from all the studies above that, apart from Odekunbi (2023) that analyses apology samples from a drama text, the focus of the other ones is on the apology strategies used by participants in natural discourses or interactions. Even then, Odekunbi (2023) studies the apology types and their linguistic features rather than limiting himself to contexts of RA and their pragmatic functions. This is the gap that this study is out to fill. If this is not done, the importance of apology resources in literary works, particularly in drama texts may not be appreciated.

Methodology

Jacob Mey's pragmatic acts theory was adopted. The choice of the theory is informed by the fact that the apology performance involves nearly all the features in pragmeme's activity part such as dialogues, psychological acts, physical acts, prosody and body moves that involve the use of inference, reference, shared situation knowledge and metaphor in the textual part. The

descriptive design was used for the study. Wole Soyinka was purposively chosen because of his literary prowess and international recognition, while *Alapata Apata* and *Kongi's Harvest* were purposively selected because of prominent deployment of apologies in them. *Alapata Apata* has 17 while *Kongi's Harvest* has 8 instances. The data were subjected to pragmatic analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Act Theory (PAT) also known as *pragmeme* is the theoretical framework for this work. The observed deficiency in J.L. Austin's Speech Act Theory brought about *pragmeme*. *Pragmeme* stresses the fact that socio-cultural and society factors play significant role in the construction and interpretation of meaning. It believes communication is a dynamic process in which an interactant is constrained by certain socio-cultural conditions. The society in which a language is used and the rules guiding a language are crucial to the interpretation of meaning. In the language of Akinwotu (2016), what is said and what is meant in a particular situation are dictated by the society, within the rules of the language. Mey (2001) therefore contends that properly understanding of a conversational contribution will be difficult without consideration of its environment of use. Akinwotu (2016) also submits that the rules of language significantly help to systematically arrive at the meaning of anything said in a context. He therefore concludes that the participants in an interaction operate within what their society and language permit. It is the submission of Mey that the theory of pragmatic act explains language use not from inside out but from outside in; its emphasis is on the environment in which the speaker and the hearer find their affordances. The entire situation is therefore hinged on what a society permits to be said and what is actually being said. In other words, an individual is constrained by his/her society. The model below is used by Mey (2001) to explain the theory.

PRAGMEME

ACTIVITY PART

(INTERACTANTS)

SPEECH ACTS

INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS

CONVERSATIONAL ('DIALOGUE') ACTS

PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTS (EMOTIONS)

PROSODY (INTONATION, STRESS,...)

PHYSICAL ACTS:

BODY MOVES (INCL.GESTURES)

PHYSIOGNOMY (FACIAL EXPRESSIONS)

(BODILY EXPRESSIONS OF) EMOTIONS

...

Ø (NULL)

TEXTUAL PART

(CO(N)TEXT)

INF REF REL VCE SSK MPH 'M' . . .

PRACT

ALLOPRACT

PRAGMEME, PRACT, ALLOPRACT

From the model, it can be seen that pragmeme has the activity part and textual part. The activity part is where actions take place and has a list of the options (speech acts, indirect speech acts, conversational acts, psychological acts, etc.) from where a language user can choose, and when no option is chosen, as in a situation of silence, the situation goes back to zero. The textual part is where contextual features such as INF (inference), REF (reference), REL (relevance), VCE (voice), SSK (shared situational knowledge), etc., that interactants engage in contexts. The interaction between the activity part and the textual part leads to a pract or an allopract.

Data Analysis

Contexts and Functions of Review Apology in AA and KH

Table 1 below gives the summary of our findings on the contexts of review apology.

Table 1: Showing types of review apology in the selected texts

S/N	Text	Review apology	Cultural context	Cognitive context
1.	Alapata Apata	17	12	05
2.	Kongi's Harvest	08	08	-
	Total	25	20	05

The table reveals two types of review apology contexts: cultural and cognitive contexts. However, while the two texts have instances of cultural context, it is only AA that has instances of cognitive context. The two types and their functions are explained and exemplified below

Cultural context

In this study, a context is cultural when an apology is used when issues related to the customs and ways of life of a people are being discussed. Review apologies are used in the selected texts when chieftaincy and priest consultation issues are being discussed. In AA for instance, it manifests in the discussion between 1st and 2nd Farmers as demonstrated below.

Excerpt 1

1st Farmer: (points). Now tell me I'm a liar.

2nd Farmer: I take it all back. I take back everything I said. (AA, 21)

Because the two characters talk informally without indicator of respect in their choice of words, certain inferences can be made. One, it can be inferred that they are friends of the same age. Two, their discussion presupposes that they had had a discussion on where and how they would meet Alaba, the character being talked about, before coming there. Thus, on seeing Alaba on the rock, 1st Farmer working on the shared situational knowledge, points to Alaba and retorts: "Now tell me I'm a liar". 1st Farmer is indirectly, through verbal (pointing) and non-verbal forms of language (Now tell me I'm a liar), making reference to their former discussion and accusing 2nd Farmer. Rather than challenging or arguing with him, 2nd Farmer, also based on shared background knowledge, calmly says: I take it all back. I take back everything I said". The statement is a form of review apology, the character contemplates over and comes to self-realisation that he had made a mistake and he apologises without being told, to the offended person. His statement presupposes that he had challenged 1st Farmer before but now realises his mistake now. Ordinarily, one might be thinking that there is no connection between the contributions of the two characters. But the shared situational knowledge, inference and reference make them understand each other. The context of the apology is cultural because a matter related to a visit to Alaba, a retired local butcher who has turned a rock to his home is being discussed. The 2nd Farmer apology here practises *repairing*. In other words, he uses it to repair the mistake or offence of challenging the 1st Farmer in their earlier discussion.

In KH, Superintendent has forcefully removed the flag that Oba Danlola uses to wrap himself. He therefore, in the excerpt below, accuses Superintendent of parading him to the world naked. This then necessitates Superintendent's apology which practs pleading.

Excerpt 2

Danlola: [Swelling, swelling...]; He paraded me to the world L'ogolonto.
I leave this abuse to judgement of the...
Superintendent: Please --- plead with him. Intercede for me. (KH, 7)

In the excerpt above, Oba Danlola making reference to what Superintendent, Kongi's agent, did to him, is indirectly accusing him of being rude to him, but resolves to commit him to God's judgement. Superintendent, admitting that he has offended Danlola, in apologising, appeals to some other characters in attendance to help plead with Oba Danlola. This is an instance of RA performed within cultural context because it involves a citizen being rude to an oba. In the Yoruba society, the offence is so serious that it can incur the king's curses. This is why the offender does not delay in apologising. Deference is the index of culture here while the apology is used to pract *pleading*.

Also in KH, Sarumi, a lesser oba, examines and realises that Superintendent is disrespectful to Oba Danlola. He, therefore, on his behalf, apologises to him as demonstrated in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 3

Sarumi: Kabiyesi, a father employs only a small stick on his child, he doesn't call in the policemen to take him to gaol. Don't give voice to awesome names on an Oba's tongue; when you feel kinder, they cannot easily be recalled. (KH, 7)

The excerpt above is an instance of proxy review apology performed within a cultural context and the index of culture here is deference. The contextual features here are reference, inference, metaphor and shared situational knowledge. "Father" and "child" refer to Oba and Superintendent respectively. Surumi is appealing to Oba Danlola be soft (employ a small stick) to Superintendent and should not call in the policemen to take him to jail. Calling in policemen metaphorically indicates the employment of a tough punishment on the child (Superintendent).

The metaphor of curses here also reinforces the belief among the Yoruba that a curse from an oba is usually difficult to remove when their anger subsides. The apology here practs *pleading*.

Cognitive Context

Cognitive context is the second context of RA discovered in our data. The word “cognitive” is an adjective form of “cognition” which is connected with the process of knowing, of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought and senses. Cognitive context is therefore a situation when an apology is tendered after a person has come to mental realisation that they have done something bad. This is usually not immediate; it takes place after many conflicts have been resolved. As submitted earlier, this context manifests only in AA. Some instances are discussed below.

In AA, Teacher apologises to Alaba for causing Alaba’s problem with the king and his council of chiefs.

Excerpt 4

Teacher: It’s all my fault. Me and my big plan...

Alaba: No, it’s like iroko tree. You are warned it is going to fall and you keep looking in front of you. (AA, 169-170)

One of the inferences that can be made here is that Teacher has come to self-realisation that he caused Alaba’s problem with the king and his chiefs. He admits it is his fault; he takes responsibility for the problem and then makes reference to all he did to celebrate him, which set Alaba against the king. Alaba then uses metaphorical analogy of iroko tree to show him that he was warned but he didn’t heed the warning. This apology is used to pract regretting. Teacher, the apologist now regrets what he has done.

Also, when the 2nd Student realises his mistake, rushing in with other students, he apologises to Alaba.

Excerpt 5

2nd Student: We heard the news. We had mobilized and were on our way to demonstrate against--- you! We thought you were a state agent. Now we know better—forgive us, militant comrade. (AA, 173)

In the excerpt above, 2nd Student makes a reference to what they had done working on the negative report heard about Alaba. But when they understand better, they realise that they had been wrong and therefore he comes with others to apologise to him.

Socio-pragmatic Implications for Social Relationship

Review apology has some socio-pragmatic implication for social relationship. One, it gives room for self-evaluation. It is after this that an offender will consider apologising. Two, it encourages readiness to admit fault. Since RA involves contemplation, reconsideration and self-realisation, an offender will be ready to accept their fault or mistake before the move for apology can be made. Three, it engenders peaceful coexistence/ socio-harmony between or among people.

Recommendations

Having critically examined the contexts and functions of review apology in Soyinka's selected plays as well as socio-pragmatic implications of apology for human relationships, it is recommended that teaching of apology should be introduced in the primary and secondary school curricula so that the students will be exposed to the importance of apologizing right from the primary school. Two, apology should not just be taught as a pragmatic concept in the department of English in the tertiary institutions, but as a topic where all its aspects will be covered. Religious centres can also organise seminars on apology periodically to expose their members to its gains.

Conclusion

So far, we have been able, in this study, to examine the contexts of review apology in Wole Soyinka's *AA* and *KH* using Mey's pragmatic acts theory. Two types of contexts namely, cultural and cognitive contexts are found. But while the apologies appear in the two contexts in *AA*, they feature in only cultural context in *KH*. It has also been revealed that review apologies manifest within contextual features of shared situational knowledge, inference, reference and metaphor to perform pragmatic functions of pleading, repairing and regretting in the two texts. This study has a number of contributions to the existing knowledge. One, unlike scholars like Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Garcia (1989), Holmes (1990), Deutschmann (2003) Al-Zumor (2009) and Ahmed (2017) who situate their studies in foreign cultures like Hebrew, Venezuelan, English,

Arabic and Japanese, it situates apology studies in Yoruba culture. Two, while data from natural conversations are used in nearly all the studies reviewed, data from characters in drama texts are used in this study. Three, the two context types identified may not be new in pragmatics (Fetzer, 2002 and 2004; Odebunmi, 2015 and Olaniyan, 2019) but they are novel in apology studies. Four, it introduces the theory of pragmatic act (pragmeme) to apology studies. Finally, it is one of the few studies that have ventured into analysing apologies in Soyinka's plays.

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