# What is *Maaf* for in the Indonesian Language? A Study of its Use in Written Sources

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**Abstract**

*Apologizing, commonly, contains the word 'sorry' for the English language and other languages, has the meaning of 'feeling regret or penitence'. In the Indonesian language, 'sorry' is similar to the word 'maaf'. The study focuses on the use of 'maaf' in the Indonesian language. Its primary aim is to find out the functions of 'maaf' in the Indonesian language. The subject of this study is written data which is from three Indonesian novels. Meanwhile, the object is the functions of the use of the word 'maaf'. Reading attentively method was used in collecting data specifically in noting technique. The technique used for data analysis is pragmatic (identity) method. The researchers used the framework by Kimura (1994) combined with Pratiwi and Hilaliyah (2018) in analyzing the functions of 'maaf' in the Indonesian language. Based on the analysis, it was found that the function of 'maaf' in the Indonesian language are for regret (63 occurrences) as the most used in the novels, followed by attention-getter (five occurrences), closing (four occurrences), request (three occurrences), and mocking or teasing (two occurrences ) as the least used function. Generally, the characters in the novel were displayed to produce apologies in different ways, depending on power (i.e. employee to employer), relationships (i.e. a nephew to his aunt, between friends), age (i.e. same age, young to old, and vice-versa) and situation (i.e. approaching strangers). These different ways bear various functions of 'maaf' in their conversations. The article further elaborates on the results and provides recommendations for future research in related studies.*

**Keywords:** The word *maaf*, Indonesian language, novels, function.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A conversation aims primarily to deliver a message from someone to others whom he/she communicates with. In communication, one may produce utterances as in the examples below.

(1) I'm sorry!

(2) Sorry, can you help me?

(3) I'm sorry, I can't attend this Saturday party.

These examples contain the same word of 'sorry'. Example (1) and example (3) have the same words of 'I'm sorry' while example (2) has the word 'sorry' without 'I'm'. Example (1) can be used as an expression to say sorry to whom he/she communicates. This means that the speaker wants to apologize to the listener for feeling guilty to the listener. On the other hand, example (2) is different from example (1). 'Sorry' in example (2) is not intended as a means of apology. It represents a polite way of asking help since the speaker needs help from the listener. Moreover, example (3) is similar to example (1). However, it happens in different situations and may have different expressions or reactions. For example (3), the speaker says sorry because he/she feels guilty of something and it is related to the listener. However, the speaker says 'sorry' in a situation where the speaker has not done the mistake, yet. It also can be meant that the speaker apologizes for something 'in the future' where he/she can feel guilty towards the listener. On the other hand, the first example is expressed in the situation where the speaker has done something that made the speaker feels guilty towards the listener.

There are various ways of apologizing in communication and different meanings are conveyed (Asmali & Yavuz, 2014; Lingley, 2006; Tabatabaei et al., 2018; ). Apologizing, commonly, contains the word 'sorry' in the English language and other languages which has the same meaning as 'feeling regret or penitence'. The question raised here is whether all people use 'sorry' to apologize or not, and whether 'sorry' only means as a way of apologizing or not. The literature notes that 'sorry' is one of the most common formats in apologizing (Fatigante et al., 2016). When there has been a fault, 'sorry' is said or when someone does not feel she/he can do something, he/she says 'sorry'. The word 'sorry' can also be said when someone asks someone else for help. There are many kinds of 'sorry' as mentioned in the earlier, however, each example has a different meaning and different use.

Accordingly, the researchers are interested to further investigate the functions of the word 'sorry' in the Indonesian language, which is *maaf*. This study is connected to pragmatics because the study of meaning based on its context is covered in this field. Pragmatics itself is strongly related to context or surrounding situation (Cruse, 2006, p. 136). It means that, basically, context should be taken into account when finding out the real meaning of a particular word. Context should be an essential aspect of a discussion. Some different meanings might exist when the context itself is ignored in finding out a word meaning.

This study focuses on the word *maaf* (or 'sorry') in the Indonesia language. Thus far, some research has been conducted on this matter in other languages around the world. The first study was conducted by Borkin and Reinhart (1978). They discuss the use and effect of 'excuse me' and 'I'm sorry' phrases in particular social situations. 'Excuse me' is commonly used as a way to ask a remedy of the past (something that the speaker says in the past, or to ask the remedy of it), or it can be as a sign of etiquette

or minor offense for a speaker to say it. On the other hand, 'I'm sorry' is commonly used to show dismay or regret at an unpleasantness suffered by a speaker. It also examined the reasons for the inappropriateness of some uses of 'excuse me' and 'I'm sorry' on the part of non-native speakers of English and point out the importance of cultural knowledge for the accurate interpretation of generalizations about those phrases.

Another study was conducted by Kimura (1994), in which its main concern is the function of *sumimasen* in the Japanese language which is used commonly for apologizing and saying thanks. The data were a ten-hour conversation that has 44 tokens of *sumimasen*. The results revealed that there were five functions of *sumimasen* found. Those functions are as request marker, attention-getter, closing marker, regret marker, and gratitude marker. The study also includes the description of the functional principle of *sumimasen* and also the relation of other expressions of apology and gratitude.

The next study was conducted by Boangmanalu and Lumbangaol (2015) on the use of the word *maaf* (sorry) and *terima kasih* (thanks) in the Bataknese language. They found that the varieties of *maaf* (sorry) in Batakness language consist of three words. They are *santabi, marpanganju,* and *marpamuati*. *Santabi* is used before doing mistakes, *marpanganju* is spoken by adults to younger people, and *marpamuati* is spoken by young people to adults after doing mistakes. *Terimakasih* (thanks) or *mauliate* represents politeness value as an honor attitude that is commonly directed to a speaker who has the highest position among other speakers.

Furthermore, there is a study conducted by Nugroho (2018) on the use of the word *maaf* (sorry) in Indonesian in WhatsApp messenger by students who directed this word to their lecturers. Nugroho (2018) found that there are two functions of *maaf* in this case, those two functions are to show apologies and politeness.

Although these previous studies concerning the word on apologies have been done, the study of *maaf* in the Indonesian language is still limited. Regarding this case, the researchers would like to further examine the word *maaf* including its functions in the Indonesian language through written forms. In order to provide explanation to this aim, the researchers focus on its use as displayed in three Indonesian novels.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is also called the study of speaker meaning (Yule, 1996). As pragmatics is connected to the speaker, listener, and their communication, the outcome is called conversation or dialogue. Weigand (2018) describes dialogue as a pragmatic object. This object has an important role as a methodological key in structuring pragmatics. To structure pragmatics, there is a need to understand language use and refer it to language action and language reaction. Action can be defined as the act done by the speaker which also means as the act to deliver message or information. Meanwhile, the reaction is the portion of the listener (Weigand, 2018).

The present study is furthermore within semantics in the field of pragmatics. Cruse (2006, p. 136) argues that semantics is related to the 'truth-conditional' aspect of meaning while pragmatics has to do with 'non-truth conditional'. The meaning of

truth-conditional is the surface meaning of a sentence or an utterance, or what is said is what it means. On the other hand, the study of pragmatics is non-truth conditional meaning that it does not only consider surface meaning such as the semantics study. For example, when a speaker says 'I like ice cream 'it does not mean 'I like ice cream'. It can be interpreted as 'Buy me an ice cream' or 'Do not forget to bring ice cream'. The problem is how the listener can get the 'exact' meaning of what the speaker intends to. Related to this case, the listener or hearer needs to consider the context of the conversation and needs a sense to 'read' the speaker's intention.

## 2.2  Context

It is said that context is one of the two aspects besides communicative principles affecting the communicative situation (Fatma et al., 2018). However, informally, context refers to scopes. It may be in the micro aspect or macro aspect. Metaphorically, context talks about the influence of an action or event.

In the study of language, context comes as the surrounding culture of language and language use (van Dijk, 2008). Dawson (2016) suggests that those surroundings of context are divided into three kinds: linguistic context, situational context, and social context. He further explains that linguistic context is related to utterance, the situational context is related to the situation when the utterance is uttered, and social context is related to the relationship of speaker and listener and their role in society.

## 2.3  Speech Act

The speech act is the act of speaking. It refers to the whole communicative situation including context or situation, and the meaning of interaction (Black, 2006). The reason why people utter an utterance is to convey meaning to other people. In conveying meaning, people do some 'act of utterance'. That act of utterance can be in the form of lowering the voice, questionable voice, or using an expression.

Speech act has three types (Cruse, 2006; Gusthini et al., 2018) including the locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. Austin (1962, p. 108) describes locutionary act as the meaning which is the same as the utterance that is uttered. Austin also mentioned the 'traditional' sense of meaning. It means that what is said is what is meant. In other words, if someone says 'it's cold', it means that it is exactly as 'it's cold'; here, 'it's cold' is a locutionary act. As quoted from Austin (1962, p. 108), it is said that the illocutionary act deals with conventional 'force'. It means that it is related to the 'intention' of the words uttered. The intention may have meaning, for example, to lend a jacket or to close a window. The intention is directed to the person the speaker speaks to. Meanwhile, the perlocutionary act deals with the effect of an utterance or what the speaker achieves by saying an utterance (Austin, 1962). In speech act theory, the forms of speech act were proposed by Yule (1996, p. 53) in five forms: declarations, representatives, expressive, directives and commisives.

## 2.4  Language Function

Language function can be called as the 'effect' of language or the 'aim' of language. The function of language or the use of language is investigated by a discourse analyst (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 1). It is said that a discourse analyst is

committed to examine and do research about language function. Further in the discussion, Brown and Yule mentioned some functions of language. They use two main terms in defining language function. They are transactional and interactional.

According to Brown and Yule's description, the transactional term of language function acts as the expression of 'content'. On the other hand, the interactional term of language function serves as the expression of social relations and personal attitudes. It is known that the two functions are about expressing something. However, interactional is something more expressive, a saying that does not always need to be correct. When transactional is primarily transactional, the interactional is primarily interactional (Brown & Yule, 1983).

## 2.5    The Word *Maaf*

*Maaf* is an Indonesian word meaning 'sorry' or to apologize (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008, p. 890). Nomarlinda and Manaf (2019) informed that *maaf* is commonly said at the end of a group discussion of Indonesian language learning which has the meaning of apology that contains invoking or begging should there be any miscommunications between the members of the group when discussion was held. In *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Dictionary of Bahasa Indonesia)*, maaf* has the meaning of asking forgiveness, freeing someone from his/her flaw, and also adding a way to ask permission to do something.

In the case of apologizing, Retnowati (2015) conducted a study on the variation of the speech act in apologizing used by university students. There are two cases named A and B. The first case is a situation where the student(s) wer late in his/her class, and the second case is when the student(s) were late in submitting his/her task to the lecturer. From the findings, it is shown that 95% students used the word *maaf* when they come late to class. The use of this word is also followed by other elements such as the reason for being late, promise not to be late anymore, and others. Meanwhile, in the second case, it was found that 100% students said *maaf* to indicate that the 'burden' of guilt is high on the students' part.

Accordingly, the word *maaf* does not only mean to apologize. It also can be used for other purposes (Nugroho, 2018). It is similar to the function of language in general and similar to Kimura's (1994) research on the *functions of sumimasen*.

## 2.6    The Functions of Apology

Based on the literature, there are five functions of apology. The first one is the function of request. It is used as a way to request something to someone whom he/she talks to. In this case, it is more likely that the speaker tries to ask the listener as polite as possible since he/she includes the word 'sorry' in it. The word 'sorry' here is then a sign of politeness. In a polite way of saying 'sorry', it *is* needed since what someone wants to do is to request. A request is something that someone asks and he/she hopes that the listener can do that as what she/he asks. Based on that reason, he/she needs to ask it with the politest way of saying so that the listener hopefully can do what was asked. The example of the utterance is 'I'm sorry, can you call him for me?". In this example, there is a question mark (?) at the end of the sentence. The question mark is a characteristic of the interrogative form of request which is commonly used in expressing questions (Crystal, 2008).

The next one is the function of attention-getter (Kimura, 1994). It is used when a speaker needs attention so that his/her voice can be heard by the listener whom she/she speaks to. The example of that function is as, "Sorry, how much is this book?" This question indicates that it is in a situation where the speaker wants to buy a book in a bookstore but there is no price-tag available. Because of that, the speaker asks someone working in that bookstore about the price of the book. Since the worker is in his/her working hour, the worker may be busy with his/her job. The speaker says 'sorry' in order to not disturb the worker. In other words, he/she tries to get the worker's attention politely.

The next function is the function of closing which means to close a conversation. It is known that a conversation just cannot continue forever. There are 'start', 'pause', and 'end'. In this case, 'sorry' is used to end a conversation as in, "Sorry, I need to talk to Mr. Agung first". This utterance is uttered in a situation where the speaker meets someone, he/she knows when the speaker is on the way to meet someone named Mr. Agung and they start a conversation. They may greet each other and talk about other simple things. However, since the speaker has to meet Mr. Agung, he/she has to end the context function by using the function of regret. As discussed earlier, 'sorry' is commonly used as a means of apologizing, which means that someone feels guilty or regretful.

The function of regret is the same as trying to apologize. The example is, "I'm sorry, I need to go tomorrow". This utterance shows that the speaker is feeling guilty or regretful. He/she was asked to attend a meeting with his/her boss; but he/she cannot attend it since he/she has another important schedule tomorrow. Because of that, he/she says 'sorry' as a means of apologizing.

The last function is the function of gratitude. In Kimura's (1994) research, the word *sumimasen* is also used for thanking someone. It is also built from the culture of the language (Lingley, 2006). For examples, in Chinese, a speaker expresses gratitude with an apology when he/she is embarrassed for causing the interlocutor extra effort or for taking up his or her time (Cheng, 2006). In Japanese, the use of *sumimasen* as a part of gratitude with an apology us when a student arrives late to a meeting with a professor and the professor still accepts him/her to attend the class (Ide, 1998).

In addition to the functions by Kimura (1994), there is another function of to mock or to tease Pratiwi and Hilaliyah (2018). For example, "(You are) not my level, sorry". The phrase indicates mocking someone. In Pratiwi and Hilaliyah's discription, they argue that it has the intention to satire someone. This utterance is commonly said by a speaker to a hearer who says something that does not please the speaker, and thus the speaker firstly mocks him and adds "sorry" as a satire.

## 3.    METHODS

This study is about language, meaning, and conversation which is not related to statistical analysis. The design of this research is a qualitative research design (Creswell, 2009). To find the real meaning, the data were untied or interpreted which were then described by considering the context.

The data of this research are sentences containing the word *maaf* in the Indonesian language. The subject of this study is written data from three novels. The novels are 'Jingga dan Senja' and 'Jingga dalam Elegi' published in 2010 and 2011

written by Esti Kinasih. 'Jingga dan Senja' and 'Jingga dalam Elegi' are two novels from the trilogy novel that tell the story of Ari and Tari who have similar names, Ari with full name Matahari Senja and Tari with full name Matahari Jingga. Because of those similar names, Ari who is Tari's upperclassmen and a popular student in her high school are interested in Tari. The other novel is 'My Lovely Boss' published in 2018 written by Ainun Nufus. 'My Lovely Boss' tells about Jenia and her boss, Zio. At first, Jenia does not have a good relationship with her boss, Zio. However, gradually, their relationship got better through many events that happened throughout the story.

The method of collecting the data is reading attentively (Sudaryanto, 2015). It is to collect data by scrutinizing. The researchers scrutinized the data by using the noting technique or taking notes of what is important. This was done by noting in the novel: (a) any sentence containing the word *maaf* along the storylines, (b) the word *maaf* as said by the speaker/character in a conversation.

In terms of data trustworthiness, the researchers used a triangulation method to minimalize errors in analysis. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state that triangulation uses more than one method to achieve a deep understanding of a related case. It is used to reduce data misinterpretation or ambiguity and it uses more than one perception to verify and clarify findings (Stake, 2005). The triangulation includes triangulation in method, in source data, and an expert (Stake, 2005). Therefore, for verification and clarification, the researchers had another reader (i.e. expert) to identify the data in the three novels. From here, 100% of data were matched and thus were used in this study.

In analyzing the data, the framework that the researchers used is Kimura (1994) and Pratiwi and Hilaliyah (2018). In analysis, there are two methods used as suggested by Sudaryanto (2015). They are the identity method and distributional method. The identity method is a method done by correlating the data with other elements other than language. Besides, the distributional method only focuses on the language itself. It means that it does not co-relate the data with other language units. Since this study is in the field of pragmatics and pragmatics dealing with context, therefore, the study used the identity method in analyzing the data.


## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part discusses the findings of the study of the use of the word *maaf* in the Indonesian language from written sources, specifically in its functions. The results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The functions of *maaf* in 'Jingga dan Senja', 'Jingga dalam Elegi', and 'My Lovely Boss'.

| No. | The functions of the word *maaf* | Quantity | Percentage |
|-----|----------------------------------|----------|------------|
| 1. | The function of request | 3 | 3,90% |
| 2. | The function of attention-getter | 5 | 6,49% |
| 3. | The function of closing | 4 | 5,19% |
| 4. | The function of regret | 63 | 81,82% |
| 5. | The function to mock or to tease | 2 | 2,60% |
| Total | | 77 | 100% |

From Table 1, from the total of 77 sentences, there are three words of *maaf* within the function of request, five within the function of attention-getter, four within

the function of closing, 63 within the function of regret, and two within the function
of to mock or to tease. The use of *maaf* is mostly used for regret, followed by attention-
getter, closing, request, and mocking or teasing as the least used. The findings are
further discussed and divided into five sub-headings from the functions found in data
from the most to the least.

## 4.1 The Function of Regret

As shown in Table 1, the function of regret shows the highest frequent data. The
function of regret means apologizing because the speaker regrets something to whom
he/she speaks to (Kimura, 1994). Some examples from the data are presented in this
section.

(1) *Gue     minta maaf*
I          apologize
I apologize...

(*Jingga dalam Elegi*, 2011, p. 49)

In (1), the speaker of that utterance wants to apologize to the listener. He
understands and shows that he is regretting what he has done. This utterance contains
the word *maaf* in it. The word *maaf* begins with *minta* (meaning 'want, wish, ask for,
request, charge') which cannot be separated with the word *maaf* in the Indonesian
language. *Minta maaf* is the most common phrase used in this language in asking for
apology. The word *gue* (meaning 'I') represents the speaker, Ata, who wants to
apologize to the listener, Tari. Since the following description is added with *sungguh-
sungguh* in the text (meaning 'really, earnestly, truly'), it means that the speaker shows
that he sincerely regrets the thing that he has done to the listener.

(2) *Maaf,        ucap     Ata      dengan     suara     pelan*
Sorry           said     Ata      with       voice     low
"(I'm) sorry", Ata said with his low voice.

(*Jingga dalam Elegi*, 2011, p. 52)

The word *maaf* in (2) is said by a speaker named Ata and directed to the listener,
Tari. Ata says *maaf* to show that he regrets something related to Tari. He feels that the
idea that he gives to Tari can benefit her. However, because of that idea, Tari does not
feel that she gets benefits. On the other hand, she feels that it is a bad idea. Because of
that, Ata says *maaf* to asks forgiveness from Tari.

(3) *Maaf          Dad*
Sorry           Dad
(I'm) sorry, Dad.

(*My Lovely Boss*, 2018, p. 97)

In (3), the utterance is said by a speaker named Zio to his father. Zio feels that
he has made a mistake by making his father disappointed. He apologizes by saying
*maaf* to his father. He knows that he is at fault and understands that since the next
description in the text, he says *Ini salah Zio* (meaning 'it is Zio's (my) fault').

In Nugroho (2018), he also found similar results as this present study, where the word *maaf* is mostly used for expressing regret. In this function, *maaf* is used by the speaker to ask for forgiveness from the interlocutor. To ask forgiveness means that the speaker says *maaf* to apologize for something he/she has done. This is also in line with the findings by Retnowati (2015), in which regret was also used by university students in apologizing to their lecturers.

## 4.2 The Function of Attention-getter

The function of attention-getter seeks the attention of a listener to start an interaction (Kimura, 1994). A speaker wants a listener to listen, see, or focus on him/her at that moment. Some examples in data on the function of attention-getter are:

(4)  | *Maaf* | *Ibu* | *Bapak* | *kami* | *permisi* | *numpang lewat* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Excuse me | Ma'am | Sir | us | please (permit) | pass (through) |

Excuse me, Ma'am, Sir, please let us pass through...
(*Jingga dan Senja*, 2010, p. 139)

This example belongs to the function of attention-getter as the word *maaf* is said in a situation where the speaker wants the listener to 'please listen to me'. The speaker utters *maaf* at the beginning of the sentence as a polite way especially to people who are older than the speaker, which is shown in the addressing of *Ibu* and *Bapak* (meaning 'Ma'am' and 'Sir'). This is followed by the following utterance of *kami permisi numpang lewat* or 'please let us pass'. However, the point here is that *maaf* is not merely used for asking request but more of to get the attention of the listeners. The other difference is that the request is sometimes used when the speaker and listener know each other or there is a 'starting' conversation before the speaker makes a request.

(5)  | *Permisi,* | *Kak* | *Maaf* | *numpang lewat* | *Ya* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Excuse me | seniors | sorry | pass-through | (particle) |

Excuse me, seniors. Sorry, please let us pass through...
(*Jingga dan Senja*, 2010, p. 146)

In (5), it has the same case with the first-mentioned attention-getter data number (4). It is about the speaker who wants to pass through so that the listener can make way in order for the speaker to do so. Because of that, the speaker needs an 'attention' from the listener so the listener can see and hear the speaker. That way, the listener can understand and do according to what the speaker says. Because the speaker wants the listener to do as the speaker wants, the speaker says it politely by starting her utterance with *permisi* (meaning 'excuse me').

(6)  | *Maaf, Pak, tapi* | *Pak Zio* | *sudah minum* | *tiga gelas* | *dan....* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sorry  Sir  but | Mr. Zio | has drank | three glasses (of coffee) | and... |

Sorry, Sir, but Mr. Zio has drank three glasses and...
(*My Lovely Boss*, 2018, p. 8)

The sentence in (6) is uttered by a secretary to his boss named Zio. The speaker wants to get her boss's attention and listen to her. The context is when the boss asks the secretary to make a glass of coffee again even though the boss has already had three glasses of coffee before. The clock already shows nine o'clock, which means that it is not working time anymore. With that reason, the speaker says *maaf* as a sign of 'please listen to me and do not drink too much coffee' as its implicature/implicit meaning.

## 4.3   The Function of Closing

The function of closing is to close something or to trigger the closing of an interaction (Kimura, 1994). That meaning of 'something' here is the conversation between a speaker and a listener. In this research case, *maaf* has the function to close a conversation. The following is an example taken from the data.

(7)   *Maaf,*      *Tante*   *mesti*   *buru-buru*   *berangkat*
      Sorry        Aunt     need to   hurry           go
      (I'm) sorry, Aunty. I need to (hurriedly) go.

(*Jingga dan Senja*, 2010, p. 130)

The sentence in (7) is uttered by someone younger than the listener as indicated by the way the speaker addresses the listener in using *tante* or 'aunt, aunty' in English. Here, the speaker wants to end the conversation with the listener because he needs to go to school soon. Because of that reason, he tries to stop the conversation with the person he called *tante* by saying *maaf,* and states some reasons for that. By providing reasons, it shows that the speaker cannot just end the conversation without giving some reasons to show his respect to his interlocutor, i.e Aunt.

(8)   *Tapi*   *Maaf.*       *Lagi*           *buru-buru*   *banget*
      But      sorry      in (a situation)     rush         (really)
      But, I'm sorry, I'm (really) in a rush (right now).

(*Jingga dan Senja*, 2010, p. 139)

The sample in (8) contains *maaf* at the beginning of the utterance. The sentence begins with *tapi* or 'but' in English indicating that it is a negation of what the speaker uttered before. The word *maaf* in that utterance is to stop a conversation since the speaker needs other things that are important to do than doing a long conversation with the listener. Because of that, the speaker says *maaf* to say that 'I cannot talk with you for too long' and as a sign to show the polite way of speaking.

(9)   *Oke,*        *maaf*
      Okay         sorry
      Okay, (I'm) sorry.

(*My Lovely Boss*, 2018, p. 127)

In (9), the sample has *maaf* as the function of closing. The closing here is the closing of the conversation between the speaker who is the boss of the listener, named Zio, and the listener who is her secretary named Jenia. The situation here, however, is not a situation where the boss talks to his secretary but a situation where a person who

knows each other has a conversation. Based on that matter, the conversation is not in a formal way of speaking. It happens when Jenia talks a little bit too much and somehow is mad at Zio, the speaker. Because of that, Zio just says *maaf* to stop Jenia from rambling.

## 4.4 The Function of Request

*Maaf* is used as a request is when someone says *maaf* to request something to whom he/she speaks (Kimura, 1994). Below is an example of *maaf* in the category from data.

(10) *Maaf      Pak      ada      yang      bisa      saya      bantu?*
Excuse me      Sir      there is      (that)      can      I      help?
Excuse me, Sir, is there anything I can help (you) with?
(*My Lovely Boss*, 2018, p. 2)

The question in (10) consists of *maaf* at the beginning of the sentence. The conversation happens when the speaker has a conversation with her boss. She talks to her boss since the boss is somehow looking at her. In that sentence, the speaker uses *Pak* (meaning, 'Sir') to address her boss. The use of *Pak* is a formal way of speaking as she is talking to her boss who has a higher position than her. The speaker uses *maaf* to begin her conversation, which is in the purpose to ask a favor. The speaker asks the listener about something that she may help the boss with which means that the speaker does request. It can be seen that the speaker requests her boss to do something related to work or the speaker asks for a favor asking whether the boss needs her help or not.

(11) *Maaf      Pak.      Izinkan      saya*
Excuse me      Sir      allow      me
Excuse me, Sir. Please allow me...
(*My Lovely Boss*, 2018, p. 9)

Similar to (11), (10) has the same words at the beginning of the sentence those are *maaf* and *Pak.* The speaker uttering the words are the same as in (1). The speaker is a secretary and the listener is her boss. As mentioned before, the use of *Pak* is the formal way the speaker speaks to her boss since he is her boss having a higher position. However, the context in (10) is different than (11). Here, the speaker asks her boss about something related to permission. So, in that situation, the speaker requests permission to the boss for her to do something. This is shown by the word *saya* or 'I' after the secretary says *izinkan* which has the base word of *izin* or 'permit, permission' in English.

(12) *Maaf      tapi      bagaimana      saya      menggantinya?*
I'm sorry      but      how      I      replace it
I'm sorry, but how can I replace it?
(*My Lovely Boss*, 2018, p. 22)

As it is a conversation between a secretary and her boss, (12) still uses a formal way of speaking. It is indicated in the use of the formal address of *saya* or 'I'. The word *maaf* in that sentence is to ask or request something. It is also added by the

question mark at the end of the sentence. Here, the speaker or the secretary requests a solution. The story happens, according to the boss, when the secretary is at fault since she lost an important document. Based on that reason, the secretary asks the solution to her boss about how to make up for her mistake. Since she feels guilty and does not know how to undone what she has done, she speaks politely as she has a lower position than her boss. The utterance also gives the feeling that the speaker will do whatever the listener will ask her to do to compensate for her mistakes.

In the function of request, *maaf* is used by the speaker to show that he/she asks a favor to the listener. The function of request is directed to ask something to the person the speaker speaks. It contains the politeness attitude of the speaker. That characteristic is similar to the finding of Nugroho (2018) on the use of *maaf* in the student-lecturer context. There are two functions found by Nugroho, among them is the politeness value. The students used *maaf* to show their politeness to their lecturers they communicated to.

Related to showing politeness in the function of request, it has a similar vibe with the use of *maaf* in the Bataknese language in Boangmanalu and Lumbangaol's (2015) research. The similarity is how *maaf* has different uses for young people and adults where '*marpanganju*' is spoken by adults to the younger people, while '*marpamuati*' is spoken by young people to the adults after doing or making mistakes. These differences indicate that politeness is also related to respecting the age of people as interlocutors.

## 4.5 The Function of to Mock or to Tease

The last function of *maaf* found in data is to mock or to tease. It means that *maaf* is used to mock or to tease someone about something that the listener does not like. It intends to mock or satire someone (Pratiwi & Hilaliyah, 2018). Below is an example.

(13) *Maaf,      gue    terpaksa    mengecewakan    elo,    Kakak*
     Sorry      I      forced      disappoint       you     senior
     (I'm) sorry, I forced to disappoint you, senior.

<div align="right">(<em>Jingga dan Senja</em>, 2010, p. 275)</div>

In (13), the utterance is said by Tari, a junior, to her senior, Ari. The situation shows that Tari does not have a good friendship with Ari, the listener, and somehow, she may hate him. However, here she says *maaf* not to show that she does not like him, but to mock him in a satire way, instead.

(14) *Maaf      edh.      Itu      derita      elo.*
     Sorry     (particle) That     pain       your
     Sorry, that's your (own) pain.

<div align="right">(<em>Jingga dan Senja</em>, 2010, p. 304)</div>

The sample in (14) is also categorized into the function to mock or to tease since the situation or context has the characteristic of a speaker who mocks a listener. Here, there is a situation where the speaker has a business to do with a person named Ari, who is famous as a delinquent student. The above sentence has the same meaning to when a person says 'sorry, that just your bad' or it is likely saying that 'that is not my business, please do not count me in' or 'your loss'. It is a way to mock someone.

## 5.    CONCLUSION

The word *maaf* in the Indonesian language, commonly has the meaning of an apology. This research tries to find whether all words of *maaf* posed in three Indonesian novels have the meaning to apologize. It was found that the function of *maaf* in the Indonesian language are for regret (63 occurrences) as the most used in the novels, followed by attention-getter (five occurrences), closing (four occurrences), request (three occurrences), and mocking or teasing (two occurrences ) as the least used function. Generally, the characters in the novel were displayed to produce apologies in different ways, depending on power (i.e. employee to employer), relationships (i.e. a nephew to his aunt, between friends), age (i.e. same age, young to old, and vice-versa) and situation (i.e. approaching strangers). These different ways bear various functions of *maaf* in their conversations.

The study of *maaf* is in the field of pragmatics. It is specifically in the speech act aspect. In the findings, the researchers present that the word '*maaf*' is not only used for apologizing, however, it is also used for other purposes which are different from asking for forgiveness. Therefore, it is recommended that further research in terms of the word *maaf* can focus on how this word is used by people with different gender, social rank, and other variables, to find the tendency of its functions and how it affects the speaker or the listener.

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