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On historical Chinese apology and its strategic application

DÁNIEL Z. KÁDÁR

Abstract

The present paper aims (a) to reconstruct the formal peculiarities of historical Chinese apology (HCA), and (b) to apply the data gained to re-examine the concept of “discernment”. In the first part of the study I look into the interactional application of ritualised formulae of apology (apology-RF), with the aid of historical pragmatics. The examination not only reveals the characteristics of apology-RF, but also shows the fact that they and elevating/denigrating terms of address (EADAs, cf. Kádár 2005a; forthcoming) correlated in HCA. In the second part of the study I try to reinforce the findings of studies that deny the claim that the use of honorific/ritualised formulae was definitely non-strategic, as is asserted according to the so-called “discernment” aspect of linguistic politeness. HCA provides a corpus that is appropriate for analysing this issue because, as the first part of the study shows, in old China apology was practiced via honorific/ritualised formulae, the contextual application of which was constrained by strict sociolinguistic rules. As the examination of the honorific formulae of HCA shows, in spite of their “fixed” contextual application schemata, in a number of cases the speakers intentionally deviated from these to attain personal discourse goals.

Keywords: historical pragmatics; traditional Chinese apology, ritualised formulae, elevating/denigrating vocatives, discernment

1. Introduction¹

1.1. Apology research in East Asian social contexts and the importance of studying HCA

The research of social function and expression of apology in East Asian cultures has gained attention in politeness research because it can: (a)

help improve universal theories of apology (or politeness, in a wider sense), cf. Enochs and Yoshitake-Strain (1996) or Ide (1998); (b) provide challenging data for intercultural studies, cf. Maeshiba et al. (1996) or Nonaka (2000). Historical Chinese apology (henceforth HCA), however, has remained a regrettably understudied topic. Although some attempts have been made to study Chinese apology, e. g., Gu (1990) and Mao (1994) (and Li and Okumura 2000 for apology in intercultural contexts), these do not usually involve historical Chinese culture in their analysis. Nevertheless, HCA deserves attention because its study can reveal much about how apology works in a hierarchical and considerably closed society. Hence the present paper has chosen it as the topic of research.

1.2. The definition of HCA

In this study HCA refers to the way in which the inhabitants of old China practiced the social act of apology, i. e., the linguistic manifestations of apology in the pre-20th century China. In the research of Chinese (im)politeness, a regularly accepted view is that historical and modern (im)politeness have to be separated (Tōdō 1974; Peng 2000). This break between “traditional” and “modern” is rooted in the social and sociolinguistic changes that occurred during the late 19th century, and it also manifests itself in Chinese apology: although there is some overlap between pre-modern and modern Chinese apologies, the size of the traditional lexicon of apology significantly decreased in modern Mandarin (Peng 1999)².

This paper primarily examines HCA from the perspective of semantic formulae. Studying these is a prevalent trend in apology research³, since a regular concomitant of apologizing is the application of ritualized formulae of apology (henceforth apology-RF, see more on this terminology at the end of this section). But, in contrast to the regular approach to this issue, apology-RF have to be examined in relation to honorific address formulae when discussing HCA. Chinese honorific vocatives are constituted from interlocutor-elevating and self-denigrating forms of address (henceforth EA/DAs; see more on this terminology in Kádár forthcoming). Similarly, *daren* (lit. ‘great man’, i. e., ‘outstanding person’) refers to the interlocutor, *xiaoren* (lit. ‘small man’, i. e., ‘worthless one’) refers to the speaker. There are two reasons why apology-RF and EA/DAs (or other vocatives) have to be studied together:

- a) As will be shown later, in HCA interactions, apology-RF and EA/DAs were in close relation⁴. And, what is more important, honorific vocatives (or their lack, or substitution with non-honorific forms) worked as indicators of the weightiness of a given insult/interpersonal

power/social distance, while – in many cases – apology-RF were applied independent of these contextual factors (see the definition of “context” below). This resulted in an apology being realized using EA/DAs only, cf. example (7). This phenomenon is rooted in the important role that honorific addressing had in traditional Chinese (im)politeness⁵: according to the traditional Chinese notion of politeness (*li*) a person has to denigrate self and elevate others. This is one of the earliest characteristics of Chinese politeness, e. g., the (Confucian) morality book *Liji* (‘Record of Rites’), which was compiled during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220), already refers to elevation/denigration as a (linguistic) behavior of primary importance (see more in Legge 1985).

- b) This paper (among others) categorizes apology-RF according to the familiar/non-familiar context in which they occur. As Chinese (honorific) vocatives worked as markers of non-/familiar interpersonal relations between the interlocutors in historical Chinese politeness (note that this is similar in modern Mandarin), they are particularly appropriate for studying the non-/familiar contextual factors that influence the use of apology-RF.

In short, as will be shown by the analysis below, from the perspective of semantic formulae the two main categories of HCA are apology-RF and EA/DAs. The term HCA will implicitly cover both of them, even though in certain sections of this study they receive different amounts of attention.

It is necessary to briefly note that I take (a) the severity of a given insult, (b) the degree of social distance and (c) relative power as the primary contextual factors that weight the requirements of apologizing in HCA, relying on Marquez Reiter (2000: 59). I accept the claim that these contextual factors regularly (but not always) correlate in apologies. Also note that in the present paper the terms “historical” and “traditional” are used rather loosely, both of them refer to old China and its (im)politeness. Finally, it has to be mentioned that in this paper I intentionally apply the term “ritualized” instead of “routine” in reference to Chinese apology formulae. Although it is usually unnecessary to make a distinction between these terms when studying apology formulae, in the case of Chinese the term “ritualized” refers to the constraints that ruled the interactional application of HCA formulae. That is to say, while in many languages routine formulae of apology can be used in different contexts, from serious insults through formal interactions (Lakoff 2001: 201–204), the application of Chinese apology formulae is strongly ritualized: they can only be applied in the speech-act of apology,

i. e., when the speaker adheres to “politic” (or polite) behavior (Watts 2003). Thus, in HCA, utterances similar to “*Sorry, but I don’t care a bugger!*” cannot be found.

1.3. The objectives and frameworks of the present study

My first goal (studied in Section two) is the mapping of HCA formulae, which can provide new information for understanding apology through cultures and languages. Thus, in the first part of the study I aim to contribute to the framework of apology studies by examining the interactional properties of HCA formulae (see the brief survey of East Asian apology research in 1.1. above). Setting out from the hypothesis that apology can be formally mapped through the study of apology-RF similarly to other languages (Suszczyńska 2005), I will examine the most regularly applied apology-RF of HCA according to their

- a) frequency of occurrence in the studied texts;
- b) lexical variability;
- c) applicability in relation to contextual factors (see above); co-occurrence with (honorific) vocatives in relation to contextual factors;
- d) applicability in non-/familiar scenarios;
- e) sequential occurrence.

It will turn out from the analysis that apology-RF and EA/DAs are interdependent, i. e., EA/DAs cannot be ignored when studying HCA.

The second objective of the present paper (studied in Section three) is the reinforcement of the relatively new idea in pragmatics which calls into question the claim that the use of honorifics/RF was basically non-strategic. The notion that the use of honorifics/RF is basically non-strategic is rooted in the concept of “discernment”, elaborated by Hill et al. (1986), Ide (1989), Matsumoto (1989) and others, as an East Asian challenge to Brown and Levinson’s (1987 [1978]) universalistic framework. The “discernment” aspect means that the use of polite discourse formulae/registers is not optional but socio-pragmatically obligatory (Ide 1989: 231). This invalidates the universal applicability of Brown and Levinson’s theory that observes linguistic politeness through strategies. The notion of “discernment” maintains that in certain power relations the speakers cannot volitionally self-decide which honorific/RF to use. Instead they have to apply formulae/register appropriate to the given interpersonal relations. Note that the above-mentioned scholars have focused on Japanese, but they have not claimed that the “discernment” was valid for Japanese only (cf. Eelen 2001: 17–20). For example, Ide (1989) addresses intercultural differences by mentioning that Japanese is

somewhat less-frequently strategic than English and other so-called Western languages, but she does not claim that “discernment” was a property of East Asian politeness systems only.

Even though the “discernment” concept proved to be an effective critique of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory, several scholars have criticized the claim that the use of honorifics/RF was basically non-strategic. O’Driscoll (1996) has already raised this problem when criticizing Hill et al. (1986), while Okamoto (1999) and Usami (2002) have shown that the usage of honorifics/RF can be quite strategic in Japanese⁶. The recent study of Pizziconi (2003: 1471) argues that “the principles regulating the use of honorific devices in Japanese are not substantially different from those of English, both being similarly strategic.” Furthermore, it was also demonstrated that honorifics/RF are not always used to show politeness and have other discourse functions, cf. Cook (1998; 2005). Section three tries to corroborate these critiques, from the perspective of historical Chinese politeness. A drawback of these studies is that they focus on Japanese, in modern linguistic context, only. In other words, the issue is studied within quite narrow spatial and temporal limits. Thus it is useful to extend the examination of this question to languages that are spatially and temporally distant from modern Japanese (preferably East Asian languages, because Ide 1989 claims that East Asian speakers are less strategic than Westerners, see above). The speech-act of apology in historical Chinese contexts provides data particularly appropriate for the analysis, because

- a) In HCA honorific formulae/RF had a central role (cf. section 2.1);
- b) The contextual application of the above formulae is strongly determined by sociolinguistic customs, just as claimed according to the “discernment” concept.

So, if strategic intentions can be shown to persist in the conversational application of HCA, this can support the claim that the use of honorifics/RF is not necessarily non-strategic.

1.4. The methodology: Historical pragmatics (reconstructing HCA)

Before delving into the analysis of the above issues, it is necessary to address a factor that renders the reconstruction of HCA difficult, i.e., it exists only in literary form. This necessitates applying the analytic methodology of historical pragmatics when studying it. Several scholars have already addressed the issue how to reconstruct spoken data from literary texts; cf. Culpeper and Kytö (2000), Jucker (2000), or Taavitsainen and Jucker (eds. 2003). Because of the complexity of historical

pragmatic research and the restricted space of this paper, here I will only discuss two historical pragmatic research methods that I rely on when reconstructing HCA.

a) *Choosing the possibly most suitable corpora for the research*

As Jucker and Taavitsainen (2003: 7) note, “There are several types of data that provide reasonably good approximations to spoken language”. In other words, there are differences in historical corpora with respect to their applicability for historical pragmatic research. There are two major written traditional Chinese corpora available, the Classical Chinese (*wenyan*, lit. ‘refined language’) and the so-called “pre-modern” or “vernacular” Chinese (casually referred to as *baihua*, lit. ‘clear speech’). The present paper examines the latter linguistic stratum, which includes the written vernacular of the period spanning the 11th through the 19th centuries (see Lü 1985: 1). Pre-modern Chinese was chosen because the vernacular literary pieces record much more life-like discourses than works written in the Classical (Zhang 1995).

b) *Relying on a large quantity of texts of diverse genres/date, and place of compilation*

In order to provide reliable data, I collected together (with the aid of computer databases) 251 discourse fragments in which apology occurs, from as many as 28 literary pieces written in different periods. These pieces include several literary genres, like

- a) Ming (1368–1644) and Qing dynasty (1644–1911) novels, e. g., the *Shuihu quanzhuan* (‘Water Margin Story’), the *Xiyou ji* (‘Journey to the West’), or the *Honglou meng* (‘Dream of the Red Chamber’)
- b) Yuan (1260–1368) and Ming dynasty drama collections, like the *Yuan Ming xiju daodu* (‘Textbook of Yuan and Ming dynasty Dramas’)
- c) Ming and Qing dynasty short-story collections, like the *Sanyan* (lit. ‘Three Speeches’) trilogy.

In addition to encompassing diversities in genre and date of compilation, these works record the language use of different areas, or were compiled by authors who were born in different regions of the country and so applied local linguistic features in their works. For example, as Kōsaka (1987: 13) notes, the parlance of several characters of the novel *Shuihu quanzhuan* reflects the Shandong province *patois*.

The studied literary pieces record a wide range of realistic HCA interactions, and so they describe the work of HCA in the greatest details.

Because these descriptions show relative concordance, the general reconstruction of HCA has become possible.

It is necessary to mention briefly that, as this study deals with historical discourse corpora, in the quoted examples I cannot apply the detailed transcription conventions regularly used by critical discourse/conversation analysis (e.g., Sacks et al. 1974). In traditional Chinese literature no pauses, overlaps, or other kinds of discourse elements are denoted, so it becomes difficult to write about certain discourse stylistic issues, like “high considerateness style vs. high involvement style” (Tannen 1984), or other properties of discourse that would be relevant for the analyst. Nevertheless, I would claim that studying these factors is not essential for the analysis of HCA. Hence, in this study I include discourse context, the sequence of occurrence of HCA formulae (mentioned in Section two, but discussed in details in Section three), and subsequent discourse factors, all of which can be well observed, in the scope of examination.

Finally, regarding the transcription, I have underlined the studied formulae in the *pinyin* transcription, the gloss, and the English translation of Chinese texts. In the gloss of the examples I do not use punctuation marks except commas, which substitute every other punctuation mark, like colons. Using commas is necessary, particularly in longer discourse extracts, to dissect the sequences of texts for the sake of clarity. (Note that there is no punctuation at all in the original Chinese texts.)

2. The formal mapping of HCA

In this section I attempt to map the formal characteristics of HCA. Relying on the hypothesis mentioned in 1.3, i.e., that the formal properties of apologies can be primarily examined through apology-RF, I focus on these semantic formulae. Through the analysis I will not only try to map the sociolinguistic customs that controlled the application of these formulae, but also try to show the claim that their use was interdependent with that of EA/DAs, which is a peculiarity of HCA.

First I will give a general survey of HCA, then I study the three most regularly applied apology-RF. In the analysis I will rely on the five analytic points that were introduced in section 1.3 above.

2.1. On the general characteristics of HCA

When examining HCA, one of its conspicuous characteristics is the constant presence of honorific formulae/RF in apology. In the texts that I have examined no speech-act that can be interpreted as apology (or apologizing strategy, cf. Blum-Kulka et al. 1983: 290–293) occurs without honorifics and/or RF. Even though one cannot exclude the possibil-

ity that the inhabitants of old China could express apology without using honorifics/RF, there is no textual evidence for this, which suggests that honorific formulae/RF had a fundamental role in HCA.

Turning to the apology-RF of HCA, their first apparent property was that they generally conveyed self-blaming meaning. This is somewhat in contrast with modern (Mandarin) Chinese apology, the RF of which are constituted either from self-blaming formulae, like *bu-hao-yisi* ('it [what I did] is embarrassing'), or formulae that express a request for forgiveness, like *qing-yuanliang* ('I ask you to forgive me'). In fact, in traditional Chinese politeness there were some formulae that were used to ask the interlocutors not to be angry. Consider *xinu* ('I ask you to bridle your anger') and other expressions, like *bie-dongqi* ('do not fly into a rage') or *bu-yong-shengqi* ('it is not necessary to be angry')⁷. These, however, were *not* used in strict-sense apology. Consider the following example (1):

- (1) *Jiubao dao*: "Guanren xinu, xiaoren zen'gan jiao ren tiku, dajiao guanren chijiul" [...]
 Innkeeper say, official rest-anger, small-man how-dare make man weep-aloud, disturb official eat-alcohol [...]
 'The innkeeper said: "Don't be angry (*xinu*), my respected guest (*guanren*, an EA used towards guests), how would I, this worthless person (*xiaoren*, a DA form used by low-ranking people), dare to make anybody cry, to disturb your, my respected guest's drinking!" [...]'
 (*Shuihu quanzhuan*/Chapter 3)

Here an innkeeper tries to calm down a furious guest. As this quotation exemplifies, formulae (like the above *xinu*) that express begging for the other's excuse did not work as apology-RF in historical Chinese politeness. Rather, they served the averting of conflict by refusing to accept responsibility for a certain matter.

In the vernacular discourses I have examined so far, there are three regularly applied apology-RF, *shuzui* ('you must be angry for my guilt'), *youzui* (lit. '[I] have guilt') and *zuigai-wansi* (lit. '[I] should die ten thousand deaths for [my] guilt'). They are not the only apology-RF used in Chinese texts, but there are other forms as well, e. g., *dezui-feixiao* ('my guilt is not small'). The number of these other apology-RF, however, is relatively small: they appear only 19 times (7.6%) in the studied 251 interactions. This proportion indicates that the inhabitants of old China mostly applied the above three RF when apologizing, hence in this paper I primarily focus on these.

In what follows, let us delve into the properties of *shuzui*, *youzui* and *zuigai-wansi*. I will examine the first two RF together and *zuigai-wansi*

separately. This is because the latter has some unique characteristics, compared with the first two formulae, and it is also less regularly used than the other two, as it has some strongly emphasized meaning.

2.2. *Shuzui* and *youzui*

Examining the formulae *shuzui* and *youzui*, it turns out that they were the most generally used RF types in HCA. *Shuzui* occurs in 109 (43.4%) and *youzui* is applied in 97 (38.6%) of the total 251 collected apology discourses. Their popularity is also shown by the fact that in contrast to other apology-RF they had a number of variants. For example, *shuzui* can be observed in the following compound forms in the studied historical interactions.

<i>wanwang-shuzui</i>	(‘I expect ten thousand times your anger for my guilt’)
<i>wangqi-shuzui</i>	(‘I expect and beg for your anger for my guilt’)
<i>qieqi-shuzui</i>	(‘I eagerly beg for your anger for my guilt’)

Youzui also had a number of variants applied in interactions:

<i>duoduo-youzui</i>	(‘I have countless guilt’)
<i>youzui-de-jin</i>	(‘I am critically guilty’)

These RF could also be reduplicated or constitute compound forms with honorific vocatives, like

<i>shuzui-shuzui</i>	
<i>wang-X-shuzui</i>	(‘I expect X’s [EA form] anger for my guilt’)

A concomitant of the widespread character of these two RF is that they could be applied independently from contextual factors (cf. section 1.2). Consider the following examples of *youzui* and *shuzui*.

- (2) *Jia Zheng dui Feng Ziyang dao: “Youzui, youzui, zanmen shuohuar ba!”*

Jia Zheng to Feng Ziyang say, have-mistake, have-mistake, we speak ba (*sentence-final particle*)

‘Jia Zheng said to Feng Ziyang: “I have guilt, I have guilt, and we (zanmen, inclusive plural) have to talk to each other”’

(*Honglou meng*/Chapter 92)

- (3) *Fang gui gao-yue*: “*Zhen he youzui, wang da-jiangjun nu zhi.*”
 Fang kneel report-say, I admit have-mistake, look-forward great-general angry it
 ‘Fang kneeled down and said: “I (a polite DA used by the emperor) admit that I have guilt (*youzui*), I will wait for your, this great general’s (*da-jiangjun*, EA formula applied towards high-ranking military officials) anger for it.”’ (*Sanguo yanyi*/Chapter 109)
- (4) *Zheng tu kan shi, jian shi Lu Tixia, huangmang chu ju shen lai, changre dao*: “*Tixia shuzui!*”
 Zheng butcher look time, see is Lu Tixia, hurry out counter body come, low-bow say, Tixia anger guilt
 ‘When Butcher Zheng looked [at him], and saw that it was Lu Tixia, he hurriedly came out from [behind] the counter, and told with a low bow: “Tixia (the interlocutor’s name), you must be angry for my guilt (*shuzui*)!”’ (*Shuihu quanzhuan*/Chapter 3)
- (5) *Na han dao*: “*Quecai shen shi wuli, wanwang-shuzui. You yan bu shi Taishan!*”
 That guy say, lack-talent really is lack-polite, ten-thousand-expect-anger-guilt, have eye not see Taishan
 ‘That guy said: “I, this awkward one (a DA form), am really impolite, I expect ten thousand times your anger for my guilt (*wanwang-shuzui*). I have eye but do not see the Taishan⁸ [Mountain Tai].”’
 (*Shuihu quanzhuan*/Chapter 22)

These interactions show that the RF *youzui* and *shuzui* could be uttered in any kind of apology, independent of the contextual variables. In (2) *youzui* expresses ritualized apology between friends, two men of roughly equal social position/contextual power. This is also supported by the fact that the speaker applies the inclusive first person plural personal pronoun *zanmen* and the imperative sentence-final particle *ba* – neither of these was applied in formal context – in order to convey intimacy. In short, in (2) the contextual factors do not require serious apology, and so *youzui* co-occurs with non-honorific vocatives. In (3) the emperor Cao Fang (r. 240–254) begs, in a crisis situation, for the rebellious general’s forgiveness for a crime that he had not even committed. Thus the offence is not severe, but other contextual variables necessitate serious apology: although the emperor is of higher rank than any other person, in the given context the general has absolute power over the emperor, as his soldiers surround the defenseless and frightened emperor. So here the context is rather serious, and the emperor applies the apology-RF *youzui* together with the DA *zhen*⁹ and the EA *da-jiangjun*, both of which em-

phasize his apology. Similarly to *youzui* in (2) and (3), *shuzui* serves as a tool for ritual apologizing in (4), while it occurs with a strongly emphasized meaning in (5). In (4), the speaker greets his customer, and he only apologizes for not immediately recognizing him when entering his butcher's shop. This is also manifested in his addressing the interlocutor by name, which expressed intimacy in traditional Chinese cultural contexts. Note that although there is major power difference and social distance between the interactants, due to the low social and institutional rank of merchants in old China (Kádár 2005b), they are familiar to each other. In short, the context does not necessitate serious apology. In (5), *wanwang-shuzui* redresses a serious insult: the speaker gets into conflict with an unknown person, who turns out to be the head of the usurpers, whose gang he wants to join. Hence, the speaker applies the DA *quecai*, and also draws a parallel between the interlocutor and the sacred Mountain Tai. Note that the social distance/power difference correlates here with the weightiness of the insult, as Chinese gangs were rather hierarchical.

It is necessary to note briefly that the compound forms of the RF *shuzui* and *youzui* can be more regularly observed when contextual factors demand serious apology, while their simple forms are more typical in ritualized context, or in close interpersonal social/power relations, cf. (2) and (4). Yet this is not a socio-pragmatic "rule". Consider the following interaction:

- (6) *Song Jiang [...] dao: "Xiandi, ni ting wo shuo [...] Qieqi-shuzui!"*
 Song Jiang [...] say, wise-young-brother, you hear I say [...] eager-beg-anger-guilt
 'Song Jiang [...] said: "My wise younger brother (xiandi, a quasi-familiar EA), [please] listen to what I say [...] I eagerly beg for your anger for my guilt (qieqi-shuzui)!"'
 (*Shuihu quanzhuan*/Chapter 20)

Here Song Jiang (the protagonist of the Ming dynasty novel *Shuihu quanzhuan* or 'Water Margin Story') talks to his interlocutor with whom he is on friendly terms, and they are of equal social rank. Song also reinforces their relationship by applying the quasi-familiar EA¹⁰ *xiandi* and Song apologizes ritually rather than redressing a real insult. Still the compound apology-RF *qieqi-shuzui* occurs in the utterance. So, (6) shows that the application of the different forms of *shuzui* and *youzui* were somewhat unregulated in HCA, even though the more complex a compound was, the more it tended to occur in serious redressing acts, or contexts of social distance/power asymmetry. This is in contrast to many other languages. For example, Hungarian apology-RF types can

be clearly categorized according to apology triggering contextual factors, cf. Suszczyńska (2005).

The above quotations show that *youzui* and *shuzui* were applied relatively independent of context. Instead, the honorific vocative formulae that did (or did not) co-occur with these RF appeared to be in proportion to contextual factors. While in (2) and (4), where context does not necessitate serious apology, EA/DAs are not used at all, honorific vocatives appear in (3) and (5), in which context triggers serious apology. Hence it appears that the application of *youzui* and *shuzui* was strongly interwoven with the use of EA/DA formulae. This explains why these apology-RF could occur in any context. As honorific addressing was of primary importance in historical Chinese polite register (cf. section 1.2 above), polite vocatives were generally applied as soon as the contextual factors made their use necessary. This is also borne out by the fact that it is observable in some cases the inhabitants of old China apologized without using apology-RF at all. Consider the following instance:

- (7) *Na jiaren man-xin bu'an, dao hong-zhe lian ti zhuren daoqian shuo: "Zhuren shui-zhong-jiao hai-mei xing li! Ming-er ge ziji guo-lai, gei daren qing'an ba!"*

That family-member whole-heart nervous, but reddened *zhe* (*particle*) face instead of family head apologize say, family-head sleep-*zhong* (*infix*)-sleep still not wake *li* (*exclamatory particle*), tomorrow one self come-through, for great-man pay-respect *ba* (*emphasis*)

'That family member became very nervous, but with ruddy face he apologized instead of the head of the family: "The head of the family is just sleeping, and he has still not woken up! Tomorrow he will visit you himself, and surely he will pay his respects to you, this outstanding person (*daren*)!"' (Niehai hua/Chapter 6)

This utterance is an explicit apology, as also made obvious by the author of the *Niehai hua* ('Flower in the Sea of Sin', a Qing dynasty novel) in the descriptive text. Still the speaker of (7) does not use any apology-RF, but he applies the EA *daren* when referring to the interlocutor instead. Even though the present study focuses on the relation of apology-RF with EA/DA, hence such applications are not studied in detail, (7) proves that using EA/DA used to be just as essential as apology-RF when redressing insults in HCA. In other words, it is possible to conclude that the apology-RF *shuzui* and *youzui* interplayed with EA/DAs in HCA.

It has to be noted finally that the apology-RF *shuzui* and *youzui* could co-occur with both familiar and non-familiar address formulae. As it has turned out from the above examples, when the speakers apologized to

familiar interlocutors (cf. examples 2, 4, 6), they regularly used (quasi-) familiar honorific (self/other) address formulae, or used non-honorific vocatives. On the other hand, when they apologized to non-familiar interactants (cf. examples 3, 5, 7), they used non-familiar EA/DAs without exception. Also note that these RF were not only able to co-occur in both familiar and non-familiar scenarios, but they could also appear in any sequence of the given interaction. (Sequential issues will be addressed in more details in 2.3.)

2.3. *Zuigai-wansi*

Zuigai-wansi occurs less frequently in the studied interactions than the apology-RF *shuzui* and *youzui*. In the 251 apology-interactions I collected, this apology-RF occurs only 23 times, constituting only 10.4% of the total number of discourses. Also, it did not have discourse variants, in contrast to the above-studied RF. Its rare occurrence appears to be due to the fact that it conveyed excessive apology, hence it was applied only in contexts that require more-than-symbolic apologies, and where there is a major societal rank/power difference between the interactants. This also manifests itself in the fact that *zuigai-wansi* regularly co-occurs with honorific vocatives. Consider the following interaction:

- (8) *Huanghou kan le, dunshi danu dao: "Zhe shi shui zuo de yanyang, an-hai zhen de? Guai-bu-de wansui-ye pingbai de gei zhen bu-he le. Zhe ge lang-du-de-zei, fanzheng chu-bu-liao nimen zhe yi dui ren." [...] Nei zhong yi ge nianji da-xie de dao: "Qing huanghou xiangcha [...] Deng dao wansui-ye chuqu zuochao, huanghou ye shang taihou na li qu le. Nubi-men meiyou jin qin'gong lai chong-fu qinru, zhe shi nubi-men de zuigai-wansi."*
Shuo ba, ketou chu-xie.

Empress look *le* (*particle*), in-a-minute great-anger say, this is who make *de* (*particle*) misdeed, secret-harm I *de* (*particle*), wonder-not-attain ten-thousand-years-father for-no-reason *de* (*particle*) for I not gentle *le* (*particle*), this *ge* (*quantifier*) wolf-poison *de* (*particle*) criminal, in-any-case out-not-can you this one group man [...] Inside *zhong* (*suffix*) one *ge* (*quantifier*) time-of-life big some *de* (*particle*) say, ask empress detailed-investigate [...] wait arrive ten-thousand-years-father out go sit audience, empress also go dowager there *li* (*suffix*) go *le* (*particle*), slaves did-not go-inside sleep-palace come arrange bed-quilts, this is slaves *de* (*particle*) guilt-must-ten-thousand-death

Say-finish, strike head out blood

‘When the Empress saw it, she flew into a big rage in a minute and said: “Who perpetrated this misdeed, by secretly harming my Imperial Person (*zhen*)? It’s no wonder that the Ten Thousand Years Living Father (an indirect EA referring to the emperor) was unkind to me without any reason. There’s this cringing criminal [among you], and in any case I won’t let you, this group go out from here.” [...] One of [the maids of honor] who was a bit older said: “I ask my empress to carefully investigate this matter [...] [We] waited while the Ten Thousand Years Living Father started the audience, and [with] your Highness [we] also went to visit the Empress Dowager. We, these slaves (*nubi-men*, a DA used by courtiers) [only] did not go back to the Sleeping Palace to arrange the bed-quilts, this is our, these slaves’ (*nubi-men*) guilt, for that we should die ten thousand deaths (*zuigai-wansi*)!”

After saying these words, she kowtowed [so strongly that] blood spurted out from his head.’
(*Niehai hual*/Chapter 26)

Example (8) is crisis talk: the old maid of honor speaks with the furious empress, who suspects the maids of placing a dead dog into the emperor’s bed, and the result of her talk can even be their beheading. Here the contextual factors trigger serious apology: not only are the maids accused of a severe offence (although in fact they have not committed it), but there is also a large social distance and power difference between them and the empress. So, in order to show deep respect towards the empress, the old maid of honor applies the apology-RF *zuigai-wansi* together with the collective DA formula *nubi-men* when she apologizes for failing to arrange the bed-quilts.

The above interaction shows why the RF *zuigai-wansi* occurs relatively rarely in the studied texts: it was only used in contexts that require emphasized politeness, otherwise it could have been unnecessarily polite, thus becoming open to be interpreted as “ironic” (cf. Watts 2003: 260). This characteristic of *zuigai-wansi* also explains why it did not have discourse variants, as can be observed in the cases of RF *shuzui* and *youzui*. In contrast to the above RF, the use of *zuigai-wansi*, which expressed emphasized meaning, was sociolinguistically strictly codified, thus it had only one standard form.

A concomitant of the strongly formal connotation of the RF *zuigai-wansi* is that in the overwhelming majority of cases it co-occurs with non-familiar EA/DAs. The speakers not only apply non-familiar EA/DA formulae when interacting with emotionally distant/socially more powerful interlocutors but also use non-familiar forms when apologizing

to kinsmen, or people emotionally close to them with the help of *zuigai-wansi*. Consider the following example:

- (9) *Ta dao wu-zhong gei ta muqin gui-dao shuo: "Hai'er-wo ziji shichang zai nilao-renjia mianqian wuli, zuigai-wansi."*

He arrive room-inside for he mother kneel-down say, child-boy-I myself often *zai* (prefix) you-old-person face-front lack-polite, guilt-must-ten-thousand-death

'He went into the room, fell onto his knees in front of his mother and said: "I, this child was often impolite to you, this older person (*nilao-renjia*, an EA used towards non-familiar interlocutors, see Ji 2000: 638), for this I should die ten thousand deaths (*zuigai-wansi*)!"'

(*Jigong quanzhuan*/Chapter 15)

In this example, the speaker has a twinge of conscience for failing to be respectful towards his mother; hence he applies the apology-RF *zuigai-wansi*. It can be of interest to note that here the context necessitates serious apology because, according to the law of old China, unfilial conduct was a deed punishable by execution (Shapiro 1990: 54). As can be observed, the speaker uses the non-familiar EA structure *nilao-renjia* together with *zuigai-wansi* when addressing his own mother. Since using *zuigai-wansi* presupposes an absolutely formal style, the EA/DAs used in such contexts have also to be non-familiar.

Finally, a characteristic of the apology-RF *zuigai-wansi* related to its emphasized connotation was that it regularly occurred in the final sequences of the apology utterances. A common schema of the studied interactions is that the speakers first apologize by applying an increased quantity of EA/DA formulae, and then they place *zuigai-wansi* into the closing sequence of their apology; see (8) and (9) above. This is in contrast to *shuzui* and *youzui* which can occur, in a relatively random way, at any point of the studied HCA utterances (see the above examples 2–6: e.g., in 2 *youzui* occurs in utterance initial position, while in 6 *qieqi-shuzui* is applied in the final sequence of the apology). This property is probably rooted in the fact that *zuigai-wansi* was applied in crisis talk when it was used to redress serious (real/alleged) insults. Therefore, by finishing their talk with *zuigai-wansi* that symbolically gives an option for the interlocutors to punish them, the speakers presumably emphasized the sincerity of their apologies.

2.4. Summary

In Section two I have set out from the hypothesis that apology can be understood from a formal perspective through the analysis of apology-

RF. My aim has been to reconstruct the historical application of these RF from a historical pragmatic perspective. The examination has shown that there were three regularly applied RF in HCA, *shuzui*, *youzui*, and *zuigai-wansi*; the latter had fixed application “rules”, compared to the former ones, because it was used only when contextual factors necessitated accelerated apology.

Besides showing the peculiarities of apology-RF, the analysis has also supported the assumption that apology-RF and EA/DAs are interdependent in HCA. This is a peculiarity of HCA: when analyzing apology in interaction, apology-RF cannot be examined in isolation, but they have to be observed in relation to EA/DAs. Therefore, instead of discussing apology-RF with respect to HCA, it seems more appropriate to speak about apology-RF *and* EA/DAs that correlate with each other, and the context-dependent *schema* of co-application which was strongly codified by sociolinguistic customs. For example, the lack of EA/DAs, or their substitutions with non-honorific vocatives, definitely yielded different interpretations of apology-RF (and so the speech-act of apology in general) to instances when honorific vocatives were used.

3. Re-examining “discernment”: Strategic RF applications in HCA

3.1. *The analyzed data: zuigai-wansi*

In what follows I will reinforce the findings of Okamoto (1999), Usami (2002), Pizziconi (2003) and others, who criticize the assumption that the use of honorifics/RF was non-strategic, through examining the conversational application of HCA honorifics/RF. As has been already mentioned in the introduction, HCA constitutes particularly appropriate data for analyzing this issue because honorifics/RF had a central role in it (cf. section 2.1). Furthermore, as the above examination has illustrated, sociolinguistic customs strongly determined the use of apology-RF and (the omission of) EA/DAs in accordance with contextual factors. Besides this, HCA as data is diachronically and spatially different from modern Japanese, so it helps widen the scope of examination.

Below I will examine one of the above-studied apology-RF, *zuigai-wansi*, and the vocatives that co-occur with it. I have chosen *zuigai-wansi* because its contextual application was strongly determined, due to the fact that it was used only in cases when context requires emphasized apology (cf. Section two), while other apology-RF could be used in varied contexts. The constraints of the application of *zuigai-wansi* make it easy to track cases when speakers deviate from the regularly prescribed schema of its use, because of strategic intentions. In 20 (88.5%) of the

23 interactions in which this apology-RF is used, it co-occurs with non-familiar EA/DAs in utterance-final position; the considerably large proportion of this kind of use suggests that this application schema was perceived as “non-marked” in historical Chinese context. There are three cases (21.5%), however, when “marked” deviations occur in the use of *zuigai-wansi* and the honorific vocatives that accompany it. These deviations, which prove to be strategic, are manifested in:

- a) *Sequential “disorders”*: As studied in Section two, *zuigai-wansi* is generally used in utterance-final position, in order to emphasize the speakers’ sincerity (cf. section 2.3). However, in some instances *zuigai-wansi* is used with “pre-redressing” intention: i. e., the speakers use it even before informing the interlocutor about the act that took place, and so they utilize it as a “discourse resource” (Thornborrow 2002) to arouse the other’s sympathy. In short, such usage proves strategic intentions because *zuigai-wansi* is used in a somewhat over-emphasized way, beyond what would be expected (cf. Watts 2003: 21) when applying it. This is in contrast to the understanding of honorifics/RF as non-strategic: according to such conceptualization, politeness formulae should be used exactly as expectable in certain interpersonal relations.
- b) *Mixture of non-familiar vocatives*: *Zuigai-wansi* is generally used with non-familiar EA/DAs. In these cases, however, there is an unusual co-occurrence of non-familiar and familiar EA/DAs and non-honorific vocatives, which simultaneously express respect and emotional closeness in order to captivate the interlocutor.

In short, these deviations can prove strategic intentions in the conversational application of honorific/ritualized formulae. Note that the above-listed deviations co-occur in the studied interactions.

Beside changes in the apology-schema, there is a further fact to substantiate the claim that apology (and so its formulae) is applied strategically in these discourses. Surveying the three examples in which such deviations occur, it turns out that in all of these the speakers want to attain a secondary aim that differs from mere apology. In other words, even though *zuigai-wansi* and the vocatives are applied “properly”, to redress serious insults between interactants of power asymmetries/rank difference, apology has a secondary discourse goal. When considering the juncture of strategic intentions and deviations in the schema of apologies, it seems reasonable to suppose that intentional modifications of honorific register can serve personal discourse goals. If, however, personal goals influence the application of politeness formulae, it cannot be

claimed that honorific/ritualized language is necessarily non-strategic in East Asian societies.

Because of the lack of space, in the present paper I will only introduce one interaction where apology serves some strategic purpose. I examine a marriage proposal, in which the suitor deviates from the regular application of the RF *zuigai-wansi* and the EA/DAs that accompany it, not only to redress the fact that he had illicit intercourse with his sweetheart, but also to convince the father to agree to the marriage.

3.2. *The data analyzed: A marriage proposal*

In pre-modern China (particularly in well-heeled families) young couples could not by any means meet before marriage. Due to the strict Confucian societal norms, heads of families arranged the marriage of the young couple personally, or they entrusted matchmakers with arranging the wedding. If the suitor had lost his parents, or if they lived in a remote place, he could personally ask for the girl's hand from the girl's father/older (male) relative without meeting the girl. Thus, it was normally forbidden for young people to have contact with each other before the wedding, not to mention pre-marital sexual contact, which counted as a crime in old China.

In the example studied below, the young man and woman had secret sexual intercourse before the suitor's proposal. Hence, this is crisis talk, in that the suitor has to apologize for a very serious matter. On the other hand, it is also strategic talk, with the potential for opening up negotiation. Even though pre-wedding intercourse was an illicit act, and so heads of families had the legal right to punish (even with death) their female relatives and initiate legal proceedings against the "depravers", this right was hardly ever practiced in reality. That is, if the suitors managed their requests for marriage successfully, and accompanied the fait accompli they announced with well-applied politeness, in many cases the fathers/male relatives agreed to the marriage. (See more details on traditional Chinese matrimonial customs, laws and practices in Watson and Ebrey 1991 and Ebrey 1993.)

- (10) 1. *Cui sheng bai fu zai di, bu gan yangshi, you bu-hao zhi-shuo, kou li zhi cheng: "Xiaoxu zuigai-wansi! Koutou bu zhi.*
 2. [*Wu*] *fangyu dao jinghai qi-lai, dao: "Langjun you he zui guo?" [...]*
 3. *Cui sheng jian ta guangjing shi xihuan de, fangcai shuo-dao: "Xiao-xu meng ling'ai Qingniang bu-qi, yi-shijian jie le si, fangwei shi mi, ernü qing duo, fu bu-yi zhi ming, fan sitong zhi lü. Chengkong-*

dezui-feixiao, bu-de ji yinye bentao, qianni cunxu, jing jin yi-zai. Yinrong jiu zu, shuxin nan chuan. Suiran fufu qing shen, gan-wang fumu enzhong? Jinri jin tong ling'ai, dao ci baifang, fuwang cha qi shen qing, raoshu-zuizei, ensi xielao zhi huan, yong sui yu fei zhi yuan. Yuefu bu shi wei ni'ai, xiaoxu de wanmei shijia, shi chu wan-xing! Zhi qiu yuefu lianmin zege.

1. Cui student kowtow *zai* (*prefix*) earth, not dare up-look, also not like direct speak, mouth *li* (*suffix*) only address, small-son-in-law guilt-must-ten-thousand-death

Kowtow not stop

2. [Wu] high-official arrive-at surprise up-come, say, young-sir-gentleman have what mistake *guo* (*particle*)

[...]

3. Cui student see he prospect is likable *de* (*particle*), only-then say, small-son-in-law cover ruling-love Qingniang not-abandon, one-time-period tie personal-alliance, room-curtain matter secret, boy-girl feel lot, burden not-righteous *zhi* (*particle*) name, hurt illicit-intercourse *zhi* (*particle*) rule, honestly-afraid attain-guilt-not-small, not can self late-at-night escape, hide oneself village-wasteland, pass-now whole period, voice-and-countenance a-long-time obstruct, book-letter difficult pass, even so man-woman feel deep, dare-hope father-mother grace-great, this-day respectful together ruling-love arrive here kowtow-visit, prostrate-hope examine (s)he deep feel, forgive-anger-guilt-responsibility, mercifully-give grow-old-together *zhi* (*particle*) happiness, forever follow in fly *zhe* (*particle*) wish, father-in-law not loose be lovesick, small-son-in-law reach complete beauty room-house, really go-out ten-thousand-happiness, only beg father-in-law pity-sympathize this

‘1. Student Cui kowtowed on the earth, he did not dare to look up, also he did not dare to directly report anything, but he could only say: “I, this worthless son-in-law (*xiaoxu*, a familiar DA used by son-in-laws towards their father/mothers-in-law, cf. Ji 2000: 1066) should die ten thousand deaths for my guilt (*zuigai-wansi*)!” He did not stop kowtowing.

2. High-official [Wu] stood up in surprise and said: “What mistake did you, this young gentleman (*langjun*, a familiar EA used towards sons-in-law, cf. Ji 2000: 485) make?”

[...]

3. Student Cui was convinced that the circumstances were positive and only then started to say: “This worthless son-in-law (*xiaoxu*) could not keep himself in check with your lord’s love (*ling’ai*, a non-familiar indirect EA referring to the interlocutor’s daughter), and we have quickly fallen in love with each other. We did our

acts secretly behind curtains, both of us was full of feelings, and finally we had the burden of non-righteousness, as we had illicit intercourse. I am honestly afraid that our guilt is not small (*cheng-kong-dezui-feixiao*), but I could not, under cover of the night, run away and hide myself in some wild place, forever. [If I did so, we] could never meet, [we] could not write [to each other]. But, even though we deeply love each other, I do not know whether I can dare to hope that our father and mother (*fumu*, familiar direct referring term) will be merciful? Today I respectfully came here together with your lord's love (*ling'ai*) to prostrate in front of you, we respectfully hope that you will examine her deep feelings, forgive our misdeed, and mercifully give us the pleasure of getting-old together, and fulfill the desire to fly together forever. If you, my father-in-law (*yuefu*), will not destroy the fulfillment of our great love, I, this worthless son-in-law (*xiaoxu*) will obtain the absolute beauty in my home, and ten thousand happinesses will appear. I only beg for you, my father-in-law (*yuefu*), to sympathize with our case.”⁷

(*Chuke pai'an jingqi*/Chapter 23)

In this example, student Cui speaks with high-official Wu, the father of his love Qingniang. The speakers are on familiar terms: student Cui's father is an old friend of Wu. Years before this interaction, the two fathers decided that student Cui and Wu's other daughter, Xingniang, will marry when they have grown. Xingniang, however, died before the marriage, and when Cui arrived at Wu's house to express his condolences, he fell in love with the younger sister Qingniang. Subsequently, the two lovers slept together in defiance of social customs. This interaction has several properties that show strategic intentions in the application of the apology-RF *zuigai-wansi* and the vocatives accompanying it. Let us briefly analyze these.

In turn one, Cui starts his announcement with the RF *zuigai-wansi* and the familiar DA *xiaoxu*¹¹. Even though the contextual factors trigger emphasized apology, applying *zuigai-wansi* without informing the other about the concrete matter is beyond what is expected suggests that Cui intends to gain Wu's sympathy by apologizing in an overemphasized way. This is supported by the fact that he applies a familiar DA when referring to himself, which is in stylistic contrast to *zuigai-wansi*. That is to say, by referring to their familiar relationship, Cui presumably intends to raise the interlocutor's sympathy. In short, in turn one, a disorder can be observed in the sequential use of *zuigai-wansi*, which is accompanied by irregular familiar EA/DAs. These deviations signal strategic intentions in apology. Examining the hearer's reaction (cf. Eelen 2001: 109–111), Cui's strategy seems to be working: Wu is at a loss with Cui's

sudden exaggerated apology, and he urges Cui to clarify his words, in a friendly way. Also, he applies the familiar EA *langjun* in reference to Cui, in order to mitigate other's embarrassment.

Later on, Cui continues the presumably strategic convincing of Wu. In the introductory line of turn three, the author's description makes it clear that a strategic discourse is going on by mentioning that Cui comes to the topic only when he is convinced of having gained Wu's sympathy. In this turn, Cui repeatedly apologizes with a relatively rare apology-RF (*chengkong-dezui-feixiao*). This apology-RF is in stylistic contrast with *zuigai-wansi* because it conveys less emphasized meaning than the former. As textual research has shown, (*chengkong-dezui-feixiao*) can appear in any context, similarly to *shuzui* and *youzui*. In other words, the fact that Cui applies an apology-RF of exaggerated connotation *before* he confesses his "crime", while he uses a regular one when stating the crime, further underlines the strategic pre-redressing function of *zuigai-wansi* in turn one. Besides the matter of apology-RF, it must also be noted that in turn three Cui applies, again, a range of vocative formulae, including the non-honorific familiar *yuefu* and *fumu*, the familiar DA *xiaoxu*, and the non-familiar indirect EA *ling'ai* (when referring to Qingniang). This variation is in contrast again with the style required by contextual factors, which would necessitate the use of non-familiar honorific vocatives, particularly because *zuigai-wansi* already has been used in the discourse. Cui presumably utilizes these vocatives of different stylistic value for the sake of simultaneously maintaining emotional closeness with the interlocutor and expressing respect.

3.3. Summary

Section three has tried to reinforce the claim that the use of honorifics/RF is not necessarily non-strategic, through the examination of the honorific/ritualized formulae of HCA. HCA provides a corpus that is suitable for analyzing this issue because the speech-act of apology was practiced by honorific/ritualized formulae in historical Chinese culture, the application of which was constrained by strict sociolinguistic rules (cf. Section two). In the analysis I have focused on *zuigai-wansi* and the EA/DAs that accompany it because this apology schema was only used when contextual factors necessitated serious apologizing, and so its application rules were strictly defined. There are, however, discourses in which this schema is modified, i. e., *zuigai-wansi* is applied in utterance-initial position, and there is an observable fluctuation among non-/familiar EA/DAs and non-honorific vocatives. These modifications serve strategic intentions, which is supported by the fact that in these discourses the

apologizing persons have secondary discourse goals. The case study of a marriage proposal where the suitor applies apology to gain the father's agreement, provides an example in support of this argument.

4. Concluding remarks

The present paper has set two perspectives: to examine HCA from a formulaic perspective, and to reinforce the findings of those researchers who claim that the use of honorifics/RF is not necessarily non-strategic. In Section two, I studied the most regularly applied apology-RF of HCA. The analysis has not only revealed their interactional characteristics, but has also made evident the fact that (honorific) vocatives must also be included in the analyses of HCA. By mapping the work of apology-RF and EA/DAs in HCA, I hope to have contributed to the understanding of apology across cultures. In Section three, I have examined a case study in which modifications of the regularly accepted schema of HCA formulae serve strategic intentions. The examination has supported the claim that the use of honorifics and RF, or intentional shifts between honorific and non-honorific styles (in the case of HCA the shifts between the honorific and non-honorific vocatives), can be strategic.

Beside the above issues, the present study has also tried to draw attention to the importance of studying historical language use. Using historical data not only helps to widen the scope of inquiries into linguistic politeness, but it also points out the potential relevance of historical pragmatics in the examination of contemporary linguistic issues.

Notes

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2. Note that a few traditional apology lexical items have been reintroduced into modern language recently, but they rarely occur in the colloquial, being used in archaising contexts.
3. Works that study apology regularly touch on routine/ritualised formulae. Consider Matsumoto (1988), Obeng (1999) and others for examining apology formulae in given languages; Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Olshtain and Cohen (1983), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), Suszczyńska (1999) or Trosborg (1995) for formulae in cross-cultural apology; Holmes (1990; 1995) or Suszczyńska (2005) for the relation between gender and apology formulae.
4. Note that I do not intend to suggest that HCA was *exclusively* practiced through these forms; e. g., elevating/denigrating verbal formulae, or intensifiers also played a part in it.

5. It is necessary to note that addressing is important in modern Chinese politeness, as well, as noted by, for example, Gu (1990), or Lin (1998). But the historical and modern Chinese (im)polite addressing systems are strongly different (see more in Kádár forthcoming), and so the traditional addressing phenomenon, which is discussed in the present paper, has little relation to the honorific vocatives that are applied in modern Chinese politeness.
6. Note that in this paper the expression “strategic intention” does not mean that the speakers carefully select each of their expressions. I agree with Mills (2003) who maintains that utterances are a result of “a longer process of thinking, habit, and past experiences” (Mills 2003: 21). In the present paper, “strategic language use” refers to the fact that the speakers – whether intentionally or not – use certain forms in order to attain certain discourse goals.
7. These latter two RF only appear in Qing dynasty works written in the 1700s and 1800s. Similarly *Honglou meng* (‘Dream of the Red Chamber’), or *Di gong’an* (‘The Cases of Judge Di’) already contain these formulae, while *xinu* occurs both in pre-Qing and Qing dynasty works, even though less so in Qing dynasty pieces.
8. The Taishan is one of the holy mountains of China. The expression “having an eye but not seeing the Taishan” is used when somebody does not recognize an outstanding person when (s)he meets one.
9. There is a controversy in Chinese linguistics as to whether the imperial formula *zhen* is a personal pronoun, or a DA formula. Considering, however, that *zhen* is used only in contexts that presuppose polite beliefs (usually together with EAs), in this paper I treat it as a DA form. (See more on this issue in Kádár 2005a)
10. “Quasi-familiar” polite (self/other) addressing formulae are applied, in contrast to “familiar” ones, towards non-family member interactants, with whom the speaker is on friendly terms. (See more on this terminology in Kádár forthcoming.)
11. Note that Wu and Cui apply familiar EA/DAs that are appropriate the relationship between father-in-law and son-in-law. This is because, in old Chinese society, the groom of the deceased bride counted as a family member.

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