

SPEECH ACTS IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS (A CASE STUDY AT ISLAMIC COLLEGE JAKARTA)

Fitriyah Fitriyah

Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika, Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: fitriyah.fit@bsi.ac.id

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze and describe (1) the forms of speech acts in interactions in English class at Islamic College Jakarta and (2) the types of speech acts in the interaction in English class at Islamic College Jakarta. To achieve this goal, the researcher uses a descriptive-qualitative research design. The participants of this study are students of Islamic College Jakarta. The objects in this study are the forms, functions, and types of speech uttered by Islamic College Jakarta students. The data collection is done using the note-taking method supported by recording techniques. The data analysis is done based on the interactive Miles model, which includes three stages: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, (3) verification. The results of this study indicate that: (1) Three forms of speech acts: declarative, interrogative, and imperative modes and (2) types of speech acts of students in English class: direct speech, and indirect speech acts are found in the research.

Keywords: *English learning, classroom interaction, speech acts*

1. Introduction

Language is a means of connecting, a means of communication in community, consisting of individuals as humans who think, feel and desire. According to real experience, language always appears in the form of individual speech acts. Therefore, every study of the structure of the language must start from the study of speech acts. Speech acts are a concrete manifestation of language functions, which are the basis for pragmatic analysis (Rahardi, 2005).

Each individual can act in the form of language, and the behavior of this individual language can have a wide effect on other members of the language community. However, the individual is still bound by the "rules of the game" which apply to all members of society (Sumarsono, 2009, 19).

In creating meaningful communication, language knowledge alone is not enough, it must be supported by situation and context factors in language use. A speech act is an entity that is central in pragmatics so that it is essential in the linguistics field. Speech acts are the basis for analyzing other pragmatic topics such as presuppositions, the principle of cooperation, and the principle of politeness. Speaking is a skill in conveying messages through spoken language to others. Speaking activities in which there is the interaction between speakers and speakers can be said to be conversations and establish a communication. These activities cannot be separated from the function of humans themselves as social beings who carry out conversations in forming interactions among

people in maintaining social relations in society. Defining conversation as an activity is regulated by rules, norms, and conventions as part of the process of acquiring language competence. A conversation is a form of oral discourse. (Sumarsono, 2009).

One of the factors that influences the form and meaning of oral discourse is speech event. Speech events are social events because they involve the parties speaking in a particular situation and place. This speech event is basically a series of speech acts organized to achieve a goal. In a speech event, the speaker certainly hopes that the interlocutor can understand what is being communicated. For this reason, speakers always try to be relevant to the context, clear, easy to understand, dense, concise, not deviating from the problem so that they do not waste time from their interlocutors (Wijana & Rochmadi, 2011).

While in language learning context, Celce-murcia (2007) states that one of the purposes of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is to be able to communicate. Students must have communicative competence that does not only consist of linguistic competencies, but also socio-cultural competencies, interactions, formulas and strategies. Kasper in Senowarsito (2013) says that sociocultural, interactional, and strategic competencies refer to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge. Pragmatic perspectives can be specifically defined as knowledge of communicative actions, how to apply them, and the ability to use language appropriately in a context. The same with Console (2006) who says that classroom is a sociolinguistic environment and discourse community where we speak using various language functions to build a communication system, and the interaction of teachers and students is believed to contribute to the development of student language.

In the process of teaching English, the lecturer must not focus only on language rules grammatically, but also on the use of practical language in everyday life, especially the knowledge of politeness concepts in English which may differ from our cultural background (Fitriyah, et. al., 2020). Cultures carry norms and expectations on how speech acts are performed. On the other hand, responding to compliments is challenging in nature for not only it involves an internal conflict, but also is subject to cultures and other factors (Cedar & Setiadi, 2016).

The upper intermediate and the intermediate learners use different types of speech acts in each situation and that at low levels some degree of pragmatic awareness should be presented. The study provides some pedagogical implications for the field of EFL teaching and syllabus designing (Behnam & Azarmi, 2012).

To find out the repertoire of forms and types of English speech acts among Islamic College Jakarta students is the object of this study. The descriptions of the forms, functions and types of speech acts in the English class of Islamic College are expected to provide an actual picture of the skills of using English by students because their skills in communicating in English are currently lacking and also heavily influenced by the environment.

2. Literature Review

Pragmatics deals with the study of the ability of natural language speaking. In philosophy of language, a natural language or sometimes called ordinary language is a language which is spoken, written, or signed by human beings for general purposes of communication. In classroom, interactions or conversations occur between lecturers and students in the classroom. Conversations occur because of greetings, remarks, such as: questions, statements, requests, praises, promises, and so on. The interaction is part of the speech act and the speech act is part of the conversation. This is consistent with what Eggins

(1997: 40) states that "conversation as a sequence of speech act." When a conversation occurs in the classroom, the conversation contains a series of speech acts.

By studying language on the basis of pragmatics, we can get big advantages. We can talk about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their goals, and the kinds of action (request, refusal, agreement, disagreement, thanking, apologizing, etc) when they are speaking. And to achieve the success in communication, a speaker from one language should understand the meaning and effects of utterances in relationship to the context and the speaker's intention. Pragmatics entails some fields and one of them is politeness.

Suhardi (2009: 34) classifies speech acts based on the speaker's intention when speaking into five major groups, namely: a) Representative, a speech act that describes a situation or event; statements, allegations, reports, descriptions. b) Commissive; speech acts that can bind the speaker to do something: promises, oaths, threats. c) Directive; this speech act is intended to make the listener take an action: asking for help, ordering, challenging, inviting. d) Expressive; speech acts that indicate the psychological state or attitude of the speaker: greeting, asking or giving forgiveness, congratulations, condolences, giving praise.

Yule (1996) also describes pragmatics as the study of the speaker's meaning, requiring a consideration of how speakers organize what they want to say in accordance with who they are talking to, where, when and under what circumstances. Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning. From the explanation of pragmatics given, pragmatics is a study about language, meaning, and the context in a communication.

So, it can be concluded that verbal behavior in speech acts has three aspects, namely, form, meaning and function. Form refers to the formal physical characteristics of speech which grammatically belongs to the level of morphology, syntax, or even discourse. For example, forms at the morphological level can be in the form of morphemes or words, and forms at the syntactic level can be in the form of phrases, clauses or sentences. Traditional sentence forms are usually grouped into three, namely the form of statements (declarative), questions (interogative), and forms of commands (imperative), (Subyakto & Nababan, 1992: 27-28).

3. Research Method

This study is a descriptive qualitative research. According to Bogdan, Robet and Bikien (2007) the design used in the research refers to the researcher's plan of how to proceed. Information about speech acts is best approached using descriptive qualitative method which generally involves studying real world settings, activities of people, whole picture, user's own view (perspective), and literature.

The selection of Islamic College Jakarta as research site is because here, students have gone through a selection test process to become outstanding students as evidenced by the presence of an entrance tests, one of which is English, and they get English matriculation courses for two months, at campus.

The participants of this study are three English classes, they are class A (Speaking Class), Class B (Reading Class), and Class C (Grammar class). They are determined based on purposive sampling technique — a choosen subject as they are believed to facilitate the provision of maximum information for a complete data collection.

The following chronological steps are taken to obtain the data of this study: 1. Recording and taking videos of the students and lecturers' utterances in the classroom 2. Transcribing the recording. 3. Identifying the speech acts 4. Analyzing the speech acts used by the lecturers and students 5. Concluding the analysis.

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the observation transcripts, audio visual transcripts, field notes and other materials that the researcher accumulates to increase her own understanding of them and to enable her to present what she has discovered to others (Bogdan & Bilden, 1992). The analysis involves three concurrent flows of activity, namely, data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

The researcher first carefully selected the data, which are relevant, summarizing the data which are in the forms of words, subsuming or grouping the data into the similar categories. Afterwards the researcher displayed the data as an organized assembly of information that permits conclusion and action taking. The last activity is conclusion which was done through deciding the pattern or regularities after reading the matrices or display.

Data analysis in this study is based on the interactive model of Miles (1994: 16) which is generally known in the realm of research. In general, data analysis of this model includes three stages, namely (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) verification or drawing conclusions.

4. Results and Discussion

a. Form of Speech Act

The form of speech acts is a form of using speech acts in a real way in a conversation. In a conversation, the speaker's form of speech acts can be manifested in the form of speech in declarative, interrogative, and imperative modes. Declarative speech is a speech that is conventionally used to convey information. Interrogative speech is speech that is conventionally used to ask questions and imperative speech is speech that is generally used to command or use to ask.

Based on the research results, the form of speech acts of students can be divided into 3, namely (1) declarative mode, (2) interrogative, and (3) imperative. Recapitulation of data emergence can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Recapitulation of the Speech Act Mode Occurance

No	Modes of Speech Act	Amount	Percentage
1	Declarative	28	29,8 %
2	Introgrative	37	39,4 %
3	Imperative	29	30,8 %
	Amount	94	100 %

1. Declarative Mode

In every speech uttered by speakers and interlocutors, some use declarative speech. The content of the speech only asks the interlocutor to pay attention, because the speaker's intention is only to tell information or something. This means that speakers do not expect comments, and there is no obligation for the interlocutor to comment. Here are some examples.

Situation: In a speaking class (Class A), the lecturer (L1) discussed transportation problem and asked the students (S) about it.

L1: *Well...we already heard about our experience in using home remedies, now, let's come back to our new topic ...it's our transportation problem. Now let me ask you some questions, like ...how do you go to school? Do you use public transportation or not?*

S1: I'm not using public transportation everyday, because when I go out, I just walk.

S2: Poor you are.

The speech that has been delivered by L1 in the declarative mode is delivered directly aiming to *inform* about the presentation of traditional medicine, and inviting students to discuss new topics, as well as giving a turn to talk to students by asking a few questions. The speech delivered by L1 indirectly aims to instruct students to answer and explain the questions. Another example is:

Situation: In a speaking class (Class A), the lecturer (L1) discussed transportation problem and asked the students (S) about it.

S1: Except Sunday.

L1: Ooh, except Sunday, okay. Yeah. I mean working days, on every working days, almost everyday? *You're making me confused* (laughing). Ok. And then, what did you take? What kind of public transportation did you take? (still asking to Junia)

The form of speech delivered by L1 is in a declarative mode, which directly functions to approve and at the same time clarifies S1's answer that he uses public transportation only on Sundays or weekdays as well. Indirectly, the speech serves to be funny. This cuteness arises when L1 tries to ask for an explanation of the answer given by S1.

2. Interrogative Mode

A form of interrogative speech act is a speech that contains the intention of asking something to the interlocutor. That is, a speaker intends to know the answer to something or situation. The answer given earlier demands an answer in the form of a yes response and a deny response. However, there are times when every question that is spoken by the speaker does not get a response in the form of a verbal answer but through cues or signs. Here are some examples.

Situation: In a speaking class (Class A), the lecturer (L1) discussed *transportation problem* and asked the students (S) about it.

L1: *How about the public transportation already used?*

S1: He's always walking around

L1: You like sport, that's why you walk?

S1: If I use public transportation, I'm always confused

L1: Oh. I see, because you have to pay? *How much you have to pay? About the price or confused of what?*

S1: Confused.

The Lecturer's (L1) speech aims to ask student (S1) about the public transportation they usually use. The speech delivered by L1 is a direct speech that aims to ask for opinions or explanations from students and indirectly the speakers want to mention the reasons why the student feels confused. Another example is:

Situation: In a reading and comprehension class (Class B), the lecturer (L2) discussed *Religion* and asked the students (S2) about it.

S2: Religion.

L2: Okay, its a part of religion. Ok, *kategorinya berarti ini masuk ke..? masuk ke Religion. Ok, the others?* Ms. Rany, have you? Ok Rany, come on!

S2: I don't finish it Sir.

L2: You don't finish. Okay, Ms. Mela? Oh, you didn't study last week ya. The previous meeting. Miss...*have you?* (Pointing at someone). Okay come on, Mr. Adhika, *come on what numbers did you criticize?*

S2: 50.

L2: 50. Ok.

This direct question that was asked by L2 aims to clarify whether the student attended last week's lesson. However, indirectly the speech asked students to provide answers to the questions given by L2. This is confirmed by L2's speech when asking students to give criticism, L2 said "*Okay come on, Mr. Adhika, come on what numbers did you criticize?*" This speech clearly emphasizes that L2 wants students to answer his questions.

3. Imperative Mode

An imperative form of speech act is utterance that has a commanding intent in the hope that the speech answers carry out the contents of the speech. Speech with the intention or function of commanding can be broadly divided into two parts, namely, the order function and the prohibition function.

In research at Islamic College Jakarta, the researcher found speeches with imperative mode of ordering, asking and prohibiting. The following are data on speech in imperative mode in communication between students and lecturers at Islamic College Jakarta. The imperative mode of speech acts was immediately seen in the speech of students and lecturers. The imperative form of speech act is immediately stated as ordering. Here are some examples.

Situation: In a grammar class (Class C), the lecturer (L3) discussed *Clauses* and asked the students (S3) about them.

L3: *Ok, coba perhatikan (clapping his hands), sekarang!* No (1) Although this lesson seems easy, there are many students who are still confused. (2) The application letter will be accepted provided (as long as) you send before Friday. (3) Why he becomes the only person (one) who get/is chosen/ to be selected to get this job is still a mystery for me (to be itu bermakna harus sama dengan have to. (4) Whenever you are ready, you are allowed to take this chance/ are permitted to take this opportunity. Do you have any question?

S3: *Selain where sama when, itu adverb?*

L3: Adverb *pasti*. *Hanya* where sama when *bisa ke* adjective clause, *bisa ke* noun clause. Any other question? *Ok, prepare for tomorrow ya. Tomorrow I'll give you exercise. Ok, one minute more.*

The direct speech delivered by the L3 has the imperative mode aimed at instructing students to prepare themselves for the exercises that will be held the next day. However, indirectly the speech delivered by L3 means that he still doubts whether the students have understood the lesson or not. This doubt was expressed in his utterance *Ok, one minute more*. This speech is indirectly in imperative mode, which aims to instruct students to ask further questions.

Another example:

Situation: In a speaking class (Class A), the lecturer (L1) discussed *transportation problem* and asked the students (S1) to watch the movie.

L1: Now...I wanna show you the video ...ya...we will watch movie

S1: Yeay, watching movie...Wow, refreshing...

L1: Yeah. *But don't tell it to your friend.* Do you know Rotterdam splash bus? Can you imagine what kind of bus is that?? Guys, can you imagine Rotterdam. Rotterdam. Do you know what is Rotterdam? In the Netherlands (pointing at a student) splash bus of course it is a kind of bus, yes. And splash is related with? Water. (The lecturer shows the students a picture)

S1: Wow, it's kind of rollercoaster

This is imperative speech aimed to prohibit the students. L1 prohibits students from telling other friends; his speech is *but don't tell it to your friend*. Based on this speech L1 directly forbade students to tell their friends who were in other classes. Indirectly, this L1 speech instructs students to focus on the film they are going to watch and invites students to imagine Rotterdam.

b. Types of Speech Act

Table 2. The Recapitulation of the Types of Speech Act Occurance

No	Types of Speech Act	Amount	Percentage
1	Direct Literal Speech Act	88	93,7 %
2	Indirect Literal Speech Act	6	6,38%
	Amount	94	100 %

1) Literal Direct Speech Act

Situation. In a speaking class (Class A), the lecturer (L1) discussed *transportation problem* and asked the students (S1) the use of it.

L1: *How about the public transportation used?*

S1: He's always walking around

L1: You like sport, *that's why you walk?*

S1: If I used public transportation, I'm always confused

L1: Oh, I see, because you have to pay? How much you have to pay? *About the price or confused of what?*

The speech delivered by L1 is a direct speech that aims to ask for an opinion or explanation from the student and indirectly the speaker wants to mention the reason why the student feels confused. This is evidenced when students give an explanation with the utterance *If I used public transportation, I'm always confused*. The explanation given by the student can be understood by L1, but he asks again what is the reason for the student's statement.

Another example can be found in the following conversations.

Situation: In a grammar class (Class C), the lecturer (L3) started the class with introduction.

L3: Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, Good morning students.

S3: waalaikumsalam warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. Good morning, Sir.

L3: *Before we start our lesson, let me introduce myself.* My full name is Achmad Firdaus, just call me Mr. Firdaus.

S3: All right, Mr. Firdaus

- L3: And I will teach you English Grammar. I hope we can work together so you can learn English better.
S3: InshaAllah, we will Sir.
L3: I will be teaching you on Monday and Wednesday.

The speech of L3 directly informs the students that before starting English language learning, he introduces himself first.

2) Literal Indirect Speech Act

Indirect Literal Speech Acts are speech acts that are conveyed in a sentence mode that is in accordance with the intent of the speech, but the words that compose it do not have the same meaning as the speaker intended.

Situation: In a speaking class (Class A), the lecturer (L1) discussed *transportation problem* and asked the students about the use of it.

S1: Except Sunday.

L1: Ooh, except Sunday, okay. Yeah. I mean working days, every working day, almost everyday? *You're making me confused (laughing)*. Ok. And then, what did you take? What kind of public transportation did you take? (still asking to Junia)

The speech delivered by L1 is to approve and clarify the student's answer. But indirectly, the speech functions to be funny or joking. This humor arises when L1 tries to ask for an explanation from the student.

Another example can be found in the following conversations.

Situation: In a speaking class (Class A), the lecturer (L1) discussed *transportation problem* and asked the students about the use of it.

L1: Oh, you always get a headache every time you use public transportation?

S3: Yes. But if I go to... I don't use public transportation, but I watching watching what I want (not too clear what Rahmat said). Yes, I always get what I want.

L1: So, you always get what you want? Hmm... That's too philosophical. So, this is talking about public transportation seeing from the philosophy point of view. Ok, so, the conclusion is you get a headache everytime you use public transportation. Ok, how about you, Nila? So, do you also have headache?

S1: *Make me dizzy*

The speech conveyed by the student is to answer the lecturer's question. This speech is indirectly clarified by the the lecturer's questions.

Based on the research findings, the speech forms in English learning are divided into direct speech and indirect speech forms. The forms of direct and indirect speech discussed are based on the mode of speech used by lecturers and students in learning English. The speech found included declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences. It is found that the function of students' speech acts in communication in schools is generally direct mode. The existence of the function of the speech act indicates that it tends to state the intention based on a shared understanding of the context of the conversation.

According to Geoffry (1983: 112) declarative sentences have the meanings of propositions or statements; interrogative sentences have a question meaning, and imperative sentences have a command meaning. In addition, to speak politely can be

conveyed with news sentences or questions. When this happens, an indirect speech act will be formed (Wijana & Rochmadi, 2011: 30).

Based on the above opinion, in speaking, the speaker can use the form of direct speech or indirect speech to the partner. Based on the research findings, the lecturers used the forms of direct speech and indirect speech to students in the declarative, interrogative, and imperative modes. The forms of speech acts in the declarative mode used by the lecturer are to report, tell, arrange speech turns, make jokes, and explain, and these are found in learning English. The forms of speech acts with the interrogative mode are used by the lecturer to get explanations from students, mention things, and find out what students think. The imperative modes of speech acts are used by the lecturer to instruct, argue, argue, scold, apologize, say thank, express intimacy, express approval, and give suggestion.

The forms of speech used by students in learning English can be explained as follows. Direct speech used by students when dealing with lecturers aims to declare readiness, gratitude, questions, apologies, greetings, notification, refuting, and agreement. The students use indirect speech to express their ability to answer greetings, ask for explanations, and clarify.

Based on the description above, it is known that the form of speech acts used by students is less varied. Students in answering each lecturer's question seem afraid of being wrong, so that the answers submitted by students are mostly saying yes, or by using short speech. This happens because psychologically students feel more burdened, and their behaviors are disturbed when dealing with English lecturers, so that the resulting speech is less varied. In academic communication such as in learning English, students should try to be brave enough to express their opinions in English to the lecturer. Students must be able to argue in English to the lecturer about the topic being discussed without neglecting the values of politeness in language.

5. Conclusion

There are several forms of direct speech and indirect speech in learning English between lecturers and students. The differences in the use of these speech forms can be concluded as follows. The form of direct speech used by lecturers in learning English is to open learning, notify, invite, ask for explanations, joke, instruct, prohibit, apologize, express gratitude, and approve; while the indirect form of speech is used by lecturers, to order, reveal, compare, agree, argue, remind, express anger, and show intimacy. The form of speech used by students in learning English can be explained as follows: direct speech used by students when dealing with lecturers aims to answer questions, express readiness, express gratitude, ask questions, express apologies, give greetings, notify, refute, and express approval.

The students use indirect speech to express their ability, expect answers to greetings, ask for explanations, and clarify. In learning English, psychologically, students' communication patterns seem to be more burdened; students' behavior will have an effect when dealing with lecturers, so that the resulting speech is less varied. Lecturers have the opportunity to use the form of direct speech which aims to instruct, prohibit, scold, show intimacy, and be funny, while students do not have the opportunity to use this form of speech either directly or indirectly.

The results of this study are expected to increase the knowledge in the field of language education, especially related to the theory of speech acts. By obtaining descriptions and explanations of the forms of speech acts, functions of speech acts, and types of speech acts, the students can communicate well.

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