Illocutionary Speech Acts on Tweets Posted by Public Figures: Pragmatics Study

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ABSTRACT

The title of this research is "Illocutionary Speech Acts on Tweets Posted by Public Figures: Pragmatics Study". The purpose of this research is to identify the types of illocutionary speech acts and describe the functions and strategies of illocutionary speech acts from tweets posted by two international public figures. The tweets are taken from Dwayne Johnson and Lebron James' twitter accounts. In analyzing data, the method used is descriptive qualitative method. The theory used in this study is the theory stated by Searle to identify the types of illocutionary speech acts, theories from Leech to identify the functions of illocutionary speech acts and theories from Yule to identify illocutionary speech acts strategies. This study analyze 8 data from the tweets' of Lebron James and Dwayne Johnson. The research shows that: 2 assertive types, 2 commissive types, 1 expressive types, 2 directive types, and 1 declarative type. Furthermore, this study identifies 3 collaborative function, 2 competitive function, and 3 convivial function. Furthermore, the research indicates 5 direct strategies and 3 indirect strategies.

Keywords: *Speech Acts, Illocutionary, Type, Function, Strategy.*

INTRODUCTION

Recently, social media has been essential in humans' daily activity. Several social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Line, and Facebook commonly used in gadgets. In other words, Social media is the transformation of communication pattern in modern era. As one of communication devices, linguistic phenomena are identified in the usage of social media communication specifically when speakers deliver messages to listeners. According to an online article, showing a survey conducted by The Next Web, published by liputan6.com identified that the users of Twitter in Indonesia reach 6, 6 million users and it is considered as the twelfth highest users around the world. Base on that survey, it can be implied that Twitter is one of social media which are often used by Indonesian people to communicate and share information.

To communicate in Twitter, users can use the feature of *tweet* to start a communication or to make statement. Furthermore, other users can continue the communication by using the feature of *retweet* or *reply*. In addition, among million users of Twitter around the world, public figures also take advantage of the

communication pattern occurred in Twitter. Public figures are individuals who are popular among society because of his profession, talent or ability. As Twitter can help its users to communicate each other, public figures use it to communicate with their relatives or their fans.

Based on the reasons of many Twitter users having communication with each other, it can be concluded that many linguistic phenomena occur on Twitter and one of them is pragmatic. Levinson (1983) stated that the study of relationship between language and context that are basic to an account of language understanding is the focus of pragmatics. Communication that occur on Twitter are possible to have the relationship between language and context that can affect the communication process. Moreover, one of the pragmatic phenomena that occur in social media is speech act. Speech act on twitter involve the users producing tweets as speakers and the users replying tweets as the listeners. Those aspects are very essential in pragmatics. Based on that background, this research aims to identify types, functions, and strategies of speech acts. Furthermore, the research object are tweets posted by public figures. The selected public figures are Dwayne Johnson and Lebron James. Both of them have been actively involved in making communication on Twitter.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to fulfill the aims of this research, several theories specifically theories about speech acts, types of illocutionary speech acts, functions of illocutionary speech acts, and strategies in delivering illocutionary speech acts are reviewed

Regarding to speech acts, Austin in Rusminto (2010: 22) stated that speech acts are not only limited to saying something, but also doing something on the basis of that speech. In classifying its form, Searle (1969:

23-24) stated that there are three types of speech acts, namely locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. Locutionary speech acts are speech acts that state something in the sense of "saying" or speech acts in the form of understandable sentences. Meanwhile, illocutionary speech acts are speech acts to carry out an action by saying something. On the on the hand, perlocutionary speech acts are speech acts that give effects to the listeners.

In regards with Illocutionary speech acts, Searle (1979: 12-17) classified illocutionary acts into five types which are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech acts. In support of Searle's theory, Tarigan (2009: 42-43) stated that assertive speech acts are speech acts that bind the speaker to the truth of what is expressed. Meanwhile, the next type is directive speech act, Searle (1979) indicated that this type of speech act is a speech act that tries to get the listeners to do something. Moreover, concerning the next type which is commissive type, Searle explained that this type make the speakers bound to an action in the future. On the other hand, in reference to expressive type, Searle stated that this type is the type of expressing the psychological attitude of the speaker towards the conditions occurred in the illocution. Lastly, the last type identified by Searle is declarative type. This type is used to ensure compatibility between the contents of the proposition in a speech and in reality.

In connection with speech acts' function, (Leech in Oka, 1993: 162-163) stated that different situations in a speech affect different types of verbs and different level of courtesy. Therefore, Leech divides the illocutionary function into four types which are competitive where speakers and listeners compete each other, convivial where speakers give respect to listeners, collaborative where speakers and listeners do not have willingness to dominate, and

conflictive where the speakers and the listeners are in conflict with each other.

In relation to speech acts' strategies, Yule (1996:95) explained that if in the sentence there is a direct relationship between structure and function, then it is called direct speech. In support with that statement, Wijana (1996: 30), stated that sentences are divided into declarative sentences, interrogative sentences, and imperative sentences. If all types of sentences are used conventionally, the speech formed can be categorized as direct speech act. In contrast, Yule also explained that if there is not relationship between structure and function, then it is called indirect speech. In indirect speech, there is an implicit meaning. To find the meaning, it must be seen from the context occur in the utterance and the response from the listener. Amalia and Simatupang (2016:120) stated that language is resulted rules from every aspect in its circumstances, like who the speaker and the listener are, the place where the language is used or occurred, the intention of the speaker, the mood of the speaker, and the norms of the society. The implicit meaning mostly known as implicature. Moreover, implicature is something that is implied in a conversation and in the actual use of language (Rusminto, 2009: 70).

METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative-descriptive method. Sutopo (2006:40) stated that qualitative descriptive research refers to a detailed an d in-depth description of the condition portrait of what actually happens according to what it is in the field of study. In collecting data, the Twitter pages of Lebron James and Dwayne Johnson are accessed via the internet. Tweets from November 2018 to March 2019 are recorded as data samples. Furthermore, 8 tweets are selected. Once selected, those tweets are classified according to their type, function and strategy. In classifying and analyzing the type, this research applies Searle's theory. Regarding to classifying and analyzing the function, this research applies Leech's theory. In addition, this research applies Yule's theory to classify and analyze the strategy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis explanation starts from describing the context that occurs in the speech. After a brief explanation of the context, this research analyzes the types of speech acts using Searle's theory to answer the identification of the first problem. After the type of illocutionary speech act has been identified and explained, the function of the speech as data is identified and explained using Leech's theory to answer the identification of the second problem. Lastly, this research identifies and explains the analysis of speech acts' strategies using Yule's theory.

Data 1
Data: *"Life is a workout!!!"* - @KingJames
Type: Assertive
Function: Collaborative
Strategy: Direct

Lebron James acts as a speaker and the listeners of the speech is the followers of the Lebron James Twitter account. The context that occurs in the speech is a statement from the speaker who says that life is about practice or workout. The Speech in data 1 can be identified as assertive speech acts. Firstly, the statement shows the truth that binds the speaker because Lebron James is a professional basketball athlete whose daily work is practicing or doing workout. Secondly based on the utterance, the also informs the truth concerning about the speaker. The word of "*workout*" indicates the truth that happens to the speaker. As the

utterance has correlation with the fact occurred, the utterance in data 1 can be identified as assertive illocutionary speech act.

The function of the speech in data 1 can be identified as collaborative. First of all, the listeners have their own authorities to accept or reject the speech uttered by the speaker or in other words, the listeners can decide whether to follow Lebron's lifestyle or not. Based on the utterance, Lebron does not ask the listeners to follow his lifestyle represented by the word of *"workout"* and the listeners has no obligation to follow the athlete's lifestyle. The listeners do not have to do a workout every day because their realities may be different. As both of the speaker and the listeners are not tied to each other, the function of the speech can be identified as collaborative. The speech delivery strategy is carried out directly. The context of the speech is delivered directly without any implied meaning other than the meaning that has been spoken by the speaker. There is no implicature in *workout* word. The word of *workout* still has a literal meaning which is *a session of vigorous physical exercise or training*. In other words, the listeners exactly know the intention and the meaning of the speech without finding out implicature.

Data 2
Data: *"Dodge a bullet! Sheesh, Pray to the Almighty God* - 26/12/18 @Kingjames
Type: Assertive
Function: Collaborative
Strategy: Indirect

The context in data 2 is that Lebron James suffered a collision during an *NBA* game between *LA Lakers* against the *Golden State* Warriors and had to leave the game early to avoid injuries due to the fact that the collision was very harsh. After the game, Lebron James as a speaker makes an utterance delivered to the listeners which are the

followers of his account informing his condition after the game. The speech in data 2 has the characteristics of assertive speech acts. Firstly, Lebron informs the listener about of the fact of himself. He tries to inform about his condition after encountering harsh collision previously in the game against *Golden State Warriors* and the fact is that Lebron is fine as he participates in the next game. Secondly, based on the utterance, Lebron successfully avoids severe injury despite the harsh impact. It can be seen from the using of *"Dodge a bullet"* phrase. It can be implied that there is correlation between the facts occurred to the speaker and the utterance uttered by the speaker. Based on that reason, the utterance in data 2 is included in the type of assertive speech acts.

In terms of function, the speech in data 2 does not have a social purpose that binds the speaker and the listener. The utterance in data 2 can be categorized as collaborative function. The speaker is not bound to the listener because the utterance is only a statement about the condition of Lebron after experiencing a collision. On the other hand, the word *"dodged"* is a verb that is encountered by the speaker not an instruction for the listeners. The listener is not tied to the verb *"dodged"* because the verb is only information for the listener. There is no action that can be taken by the listener after receiving the utterance from the speaker. In data 2, the speech is delivered indirectly by the speaker. Firstly, it can be seen where the context of the speech is not related with the choice of the words in the speaker's utterance. Consequently, the utterance has implicature. In addition, *"Bullet"* literally means *a metal projectile for firing from a rifle, revolver, or other small firearm, typically cylindrical and pointed, and sometimes containing an explosive*. But implicitly, that word means something dangerous that can make the speaker feel pain. The use of the verb of *dodged* verb was

interpreted as the success of Lebron and the medical team anticipated the injury obtained by Lebron James.

Data 3
"Tequila and steak on me one day, my friend". - @The Rock
Type: Commissive
Function: Convivial
Strategy: Indirect

The context of the speech in data 3 is that Dwayne Johnson as the speaker is in a conversation with a listener, Elon Musk, one of Dwayne's colleagues. Previously, Elon praised Dwayne about the success of his career and Dwayne replies the praise with the utterance above

The speech above can be identified as commissive illocutionary speech act. After getting a positive face, the speaker is in a happy condition, to reply to that, the speaker promises something to listener as a sign of gratitude. What the speaker promised the listener is represented by the nouns *tequila* and *steak*. The phrase which shows that the speech is a promise is represented by the phrase *on me* which implicitly has a meaning that the speaker will treat the listener. Furthermore, the expression of *one day* is a description of future time and it clarifies that the expression is a promise. It can be concluded that the speaker is bound by the action of treating the listener in the future.

The function of the speech in data 2 is convivial. First, based on the context that occurs in the speech, the speaker plans to treat the listener in the future. Treats are verbs that can make the listener happy because he gets something without paying a fee. In this context, the listener will get a tequila and steak without spending a fee. Second, in the speech, the speaker also shows respect for the listener by using the phrase *my friend* as a call to the listener.

In data 2, Dwayne Johnson uses an indirect strategy in in delivering the speech. In the speech, the speaker does not directly mention what actions will bind him in the future. There is only the phrase *on me* used by the speaker. The phrase has an implicature which has a verb in it. Implicitly, the phrase can have the meaning *I'll buy it for you*. The verb of *buy* is not used by the speaker and therefore the speech strategy is indirect.

Data 4
"Not in our household. Pizza will be the new year's special too!!". – 29/12/2019 @KingJames
Type: Commissive
Function: Convivial
Strategy: Indirect

The context that is occurred in the utterance above is that Lebron that acts as the speaker replies a tweet previously posted by @blazepizza. @blazepizza previously tweeted and asked Lebron *"Would it be weird to bring pizza to Christmas dinner?"*. Lebron as the speaker replies that pizza is still considered appropriate to be served during the Christmas Eve celebration. To convince the speaker, the speaker utter an utterance that binds him to do certain action in the future.

Regarding with the type of illocutionary speech act, the speech uttered by Lebron can be categorized as commissive illocutionary speech act. The use of *will* is an indicator of future action that will be performed by Lebron. In context, Lebron does not use action verbs in his speech but implicitly there are verbs that must be done by Lebron in the future. The action that will be done by the speaker is shown in this expression *Pizza will be the New Year's special too.* In that expression, there is an implicit action that will be performed. Furthermore, the future action time for the utterance will occur on the New Year's eve

and Lebron will be obligated with that action. As the utterance makes Lebron obligated to an action in the future, the utterance above can be considered as commissive illocutionary speech act.

In the context of the conversation between the speaker and the listener, the listener initially has doubts about the suitability of serving pizza at Christmas celebrations. Lebron as the speaker assures the listener that serving pizza during Christmas celebration is still appropriate. With his speech, Lebron can convince speakers by giving listener an action of agreeing. This kind of action can be interpreted as politeness and showing respect from Lebron. It can be shown form the phrase *"not in our household"*. Lebron tries to agree with the speaker's utterance, and convinces the listener's utterance. Under these conditions, Lebron's speech contains an aspect of courtesy that can please the listener. Therefore, the speech's function from Lebron' utterance is convivial.

In delivering the utterance, Lebron uses indirect strategy. In the context of the speech, Lebron does not use action verbs that can bind him. Lebron only gives phrases that stated *"Pizza will be the new year's special too!!"* in his utterance. However, if we include implicit context, there are action verbs contained in the utterance. That action verbs are the action Lebron must do in the future. The implication on the speech is that Lebron will serve Pizza during New Year's Eve celebrations. But in his speech, Lebron did not mention the verb *serve* or other verbs that have similar meanings that explain the meaning of the phrase *"Pizza will be the new year's special too."*

Data 5
"Amazing!! Congrats Judge Melody Stewart". - @KingJames 06/11/18
Type: Expressive
Function: Convivial

Strategy: Direct

The context that occurs in data 5 Lebron as a speaker congratulating the listener, Melody Stewart, the first black woman who become a judge in the Ohio high court, United States. The greeting was said by Lebron after Melody was officially appointed as a judge.

The speech from Lebron can be identified as expressive illocutionary speech act. Lebron, as one of the black athletes is known to be active in social activities that empower black people in the United States. The news of Melody Stewart's appointment as the first black judge at the Ohio high court could certainly influence the psychological attitude of the speaker. The adjective of *Amazing* is an elaboration of the psychological attitude of the speaker. It represents Lebron's feelings towards the situation encountered by the listener. Furthermore, in the utterance, the speaker congratulate the listener. A congratulation is also the sign of expressing psychological attitude. With that indications, it can be concluded that the speaker express his feeling towards the listener.

The function of the speech in data 5 is convivial. The adjective contained in the data 3 has a meaningful and positive connotation. The adjective can affect the condition of the listener after the speech is delivered to her. Feelings of pleasure and pride will be felt by the listener. Furthermore, the exclamation of *congrats* in the end of the speech is a form of hospitality from the speaker to the listener over the conditions being experienced by the listener.

In delivering expressive speech, Lebron uses a direct strategy. In data 3, there are no implicature found. The adjective of *amazing* that represent the psychological state that speakers feel about what happens to the listener still have literal meaning which is *causing great surprise or wonder;*

astonishing. Similar with the adjective, the exclamation of congratulations still has literal meaning which is *words expressing one's praise for an achievement or good wishes on a special occasion*.

Data 6
"Haley Project is back! Check it out". - @TheRock
Type: Directive
Function: Competitive
Strategy: Direct

The situation occurred in data 6 is that previously, Dwayne Johnson's colleague, @BigDradio asked Dwayne to promote the video he made. The video content contains the narration of @BigDradio with his daughter named Haley who talks about the Haley Project, a social program, which invites people to donate books and stationery to underprivileged children. Responding to the request, Dwayne delivers a speech aimed at his followers.

The speech in data 6 can be identified as directive speech act. The speaker makes a request to the listener to do something. The action requested by the speaker to the listener can be seen from the use of the phrase verb *check out*. The speaker asks the listener to check or to find out about the Haley Project. The pronoun it refers to the Haley Project. This clarifies the actions expected by the speaker to be carried out by the listener. It can be concluded that the listener is bound to the speech so that the speaker's goal in delivering the utterance can be achieved.

The speech's function in data 4 is competitive. At first, the state of the listener was not initially obligated to take an action. However, after Dwayne delivers the utterances in data 6, the listeners are expected to meet the objectives of the speakers. Requests made by the speaker to the listeners actually conflict with manners because the listeners will do actions influenced by the

speech delivered by the speaker. The context of Dwayne Johnson as a public figure influences the listener. The speech will be more binding to the listeners who are generally the fans of Dwayne Johnson. That kind of relationship can make it easier for the speaker to achieve his goal of making the listener find out information about the Haley Project. In addition, as the listener is obligated to do something because of the speaker's utterance, the utterance in data 6 is considered as competitive.

In delivering the utterance, Dwayne Johnson uses a direct strategy. In Twitter communication pattern, when the speaker does not mention particular accounts when posting a tweet, it can be understood that the tweet is directed at users' followers. In the statement on data 6, Dwayne does not use a pronoun. However, based on the Twitter communication patterns, the listener will understand that the speech is aimed to them. Furthermore, the verb *check* is interpreted literally in the utterance above. *Check* has the meaning which is *examine (something) in order to determine its accuracy, quality, or condition, or to detect the presence of something*. The verb does not have implicature so that the listener partner can easily understand the context of the speech.

Data 7
"I need a @drose one!". - @KingJames
01/11/2018
Type: Directive
Function: Competitive
Strategy: Direct

In the utterance above, the context is that Lebron James responds to a tweet that was previously posted by Jon Krawczynski, a spokesman who works for *NBA* team, *Minnesota Timberwolves*. In the tweet he uttered, Jon posted a photo of the one of the Timberwolves player, Tyus Jones who is wearing his team's new jersey. Seeing the tweet from Jon, Lebron responded by asking

Jon to show a photo of another Timberwolves' player, Derrick Rose, wearing the new jersey. The reason of why Lebron requesting that is because Lebron and Derrick have a close relationship as a friend.

The speech in data 7 can be identified as directive illocutionary speech act. In this speech, the speaker uses the verb *need*. The verb can be categorized as a performative verb. Implicitly, the verb *need* is a request from the speaker to the listener. In other words the verb is not just a statement about the needs of the speaker but it is a request to the listener to do certain actions so that the speaker's goal from producing the utterance can be achieved. Furthermore, the listener is bound to the speech as after it has been delivered the listener has an obligation to produce an action that helps the speaker achieve his goals. The listener can produce the act of giving a photo of Derrick Rose wearing a new uniform to the speaker. Moreover, if the listener doesn't perform the action, it will affect the relationship between the speaker and the listener.

In terms of the speech's function, the speech in data 7 is considered as competitive. Asking or ordering something to the listener is an act that does not contain the aspect of courtesy or manners. At first, Jon Krawczynski was not attached to anyone and to any action when posting his tweet. His purpose is only to provide information to the followers of his Twitter account. But after Lebron responded with the directive utterance, Jon became attached to Lebron's utterance. Jon is bound by an act of giving or showing a photo of Derrick Rose to Lebron and that was not originally planned by Jon at first.

The strategy used by Lebron in speaking the utterance in data 7 is direct. Literally, the verb of *need* means *require (something) because it is essential or very important*. The verb of *need* is a request from the speaker to the listener. In other words, the

speaker asks to show the speaker Derrick Rose's photo. Furthermore, it depends on the listener to fulfill the requirement from the speaker. As long as the speaker see Derrick Rose photo, whatever actions that will be performed by the listener will not matter.

Data 8
"And with that, our very first titan Champ."
- @TheRock
Type: Deklaratif
Function: Collaborative
Strategy: Direct

Dwayne Johnson as a public figure guides a physical competition reality show called Titan Games. In the last episode of the show, there were two competitors, Charity Witt and Jackie Wood. At the end of the event, Charity defeated Jackie and made Charity win the competition. The context of the speech is Dwayne as the speaker ensuring the suitability of the proposition to Charity as the listener.

The speech in data 8 can be identified as declarative illocutionary acts. The context of the speech is that after winning the competition in the last episode of Titan Games, Charity win the competition. Dwayne Johnson through his utterance ensures the fact of the proposition to the listener. The purpose of the speech uttered by Dwayne Johnson is to formalize the victory that has been obtained by Charity. Without the speech, Charity's victory is not been confirmed or formalized because Dwayne as the announcer of the show has the authority to formalize the winner of the competition.

The function in the data 8 can be categorized as a collaborative. One of the objectives of the speech is to announce. In announcing something, the speaker and the listener are not bound to one another. The speaker only announces a fact about the listener and she is not bound by any action and does not experience a change in mental state. This happens because what is said by

the speaker matches the proposition that occurs in the listener. There is no aspect of courtesy in the speech because the objective is not involved in announcing something.

The strategy used by Dwayne Johnson in delivering the speech is direct. The use of the word *champ* is in accordance with the facts conveyed. The word does not have implicature, it is still meant as *a person who has defeated or surpassed all rivals in a competition, especially in sports*. The word represents the proposition that occurs to the listener. The listener does not have to see the speech's implicature to understand the purpose of the speech.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the types of illocutionary speech acts that can be identified according to the data that have been analyzed above are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. As we can see in data 1 and data 2, assertive type is used when the speaker utters a speech showing about the fact about himself. Meanwhile, commissive type, as we can see in data 3 and data 4, is used when the speaker make a promise or commit to an action in the future. One of the characteristics of this type is the usage of words that show future time orientation. In accordance with the expressive type, in data 5 the speaker express his psychological attitude towards the listener by uttering an adjective to the listener. In this type, the use of adjective can be the indicator. As for the directive type, in data 6 and data 7 shows that the listener is bound to do an action because of the speaker's utterance. In this type, the listener will obligated to do something after receiving utterance from the speaker. Meanwhile, the declarative type, as we can see in data 8, is used when the speaker ensures the fact of the proposition to the listener. Without declarative utterance, the fact that occurs in certain occasions is formalized.

In terms of speech act functions, based on the analyzed data above, three out of four functions are identified. Those are 3 collaborative, 2 competitive, and 3 convivial functions. Collaborative function is identified when the utterance uttered by the speaker does not force the listener to do something. The listeners are free to react to the speaker's listener. In other words, the listeners are in their own control. In contrast, competitive function is identified when the utterance uttered by the speaker forces the listener to do something. In this function, the listeners are obligated to do something. If the listeners do not perform the asked questions, it will affect the relationship between the speaker and the listener Meanwhile, the convivial function is identified when the listener encounter psychological change after receiving the utterance. However, conflictive function cannot be found from the data. In regards with the strategy used by the speaker,

Regarding with the strategies, based on the data above, both direct and indirect strategies are identified. Based on the research, there are 5 direct strategy ad 3 indirect strategy. Direct strategy is identified when the utterance does not have implicature or in other words, the structure used in utterance is related to the context of the utterance. Contrary to direct strategy, the indirect one has implicature on its utterance.

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