

## THE DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS USED IN ENGLISH SPEAKING CLASS

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### Abstract

*This research discusses about an analysis of the directive speech acts used in english speaking class at the third semester of english speaking class of english study program of IAIN STS Jambi. The aims of this research are to describe the types of directive speech acts and politeness strategies that found in English speaking class. This research used descriptive qualitative method. This method used to describe clearly about the types and politeness strategies of directive speech acts based on the data in English speaking class. The result showed that in English speaking class that there are some types and politeness strategies of directive speech acts, such as: requestives, questions, requirements, prohibitives, permissives, and advisores as types, as well as on-record indirect strategies (prediction statement, strong obligation statement, possibility statement, weaker obligation statement, volitional statement), direct strategies (imperative, performative), and nonsentential strategies as politeness strategies. The achievement of this research are hoped can be additional knowledge about linguistics study, especially in directive speech acts and can be developed for future researches.*

**Key words:** *directive speech acts, types, politeness strategies.*

### 1. Introduction

Linguistics is a broad and exciting interdisciplinary field of study. It focuses on language in use, connecting our knowledge about languages with an understanding of how they are used in the real world (Heigham & Croker, 2009; 4). There are some areas of linguistics research, one of them is investigating the contexts and experiences of language use. Investigating the way of communicate as a language tool is a part of linguistics. Related to communication, actually, people do not only communicate to share information, but also do a certain act through their utterance. There are two kinds of utterance, namely constative utterance and performative utterance. A constative utterance is used to accomplish some expression of a state of affairs which will contrast with the function of a performative which is to be or bring about the state of affairs (Lanigan, 1977: 31). Performative utterance indicates that the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action – it is not normally thought of as just saying someone things (Austin, 1962: 6). In fact, the utterance of human does not only contain some information, but also it has some acts, one of them is marked by the appearance of performative verbs such as command, promise, begging, prohibition, and etc. However, performative verb does not always appear explicitly in the utterance, so it needs its context in order to get the aim of meaning (action) that contain in the utterance itself.

Utterance and context are inseparable. Context has been understood in various ways, for example to include ‘relevant’ aspects of the physical or social setting of an utterance (Leech, 1983: 13), this is investigated by pragmatics. Levinson (1983: 21-24) stated that pragmatics is the study of the relation between language and context that are basic to an account of language understanding. This is related with a comprehension of intention by assuming that, generally, the hearer has recognized the intention and context of the conversation. However, the relationship between utterance and context are also investigated by Stanley (2007: 137), in his essay stated that pragmatics values are assigned relative to a context of use. Thus, pragmatic does not only discuss the realization of language, but how to use it for communication in a certain context.

One of the main studies in pragmatics is speech acts. In general, actions performed via utterance is called speech acts (Yule, 1996: 40). The utterance conveyed by a person is not only in the form of locution, but also contains illocution, and the cause which appear from illocution itself is called perlocution. Illocution is the main focus in the study of pragmatics. Illocution tends to be difficult to define because, the speaker and the hearer must be recognized, when and where the illocution happens, and other factors around the utterance.

Ullrich in Zevin (2010: 30) stated that, teachers can also be thought of in metaphorical terms, as guides, coaches, trainers, salespersons, dictators, and so on. One of them as a guide on the activities of teaching and learning, teacher guides them through a command, advice, work instruction, and prohibition

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to students in order to perform the activities of teaching and learning. Command, advice, work instruction and prohibition those are generally realized in directive speech acts, that is a speech act be intended to hearer to do something on the intention of the speaker. Directive speech act can be realized into various types and politeness strategies of the speech that be intended to students to do something related on teacher's intention. A teacher should choose the suitable language in speech so that the intention of teacher can be accepted well and increase the students' self-confidence. A selection and suitability of language which is used by teacher in classroom will increase the students' self-confidence.

Teaching and learning process in the classroom is a reflection of teacher's directive speech act in transferring knowledge to students, of course, the teacher often uses it in that process. However, teacher as a model in the classroom, should be able to speak in a good rhetoric, especially selecting words among the various types of directive speech acts. Poejdosudarmo, Putra, Wijana, and Winarti (2015), stated the performers of directive speech act consider several aspects in using this type of speech act, for example the configuration chosen, the function of configuration, and the context of the speech act, including linguistic context and non-lingual context which is the overview of the situation when the directive speech act is spoken.

It can be seen from the study of directive speech acts was conducted by Putri (2012), the script of directive speech act realization is as follows :

*Lecturer: Let's review a little bit!*

*(context : while lecturer gives a question, no one of students try to answer. The lecturer invites students to review the material had been given before).*

The utterance indicates the use of invitation directive speech acts which convey directly, by using invitation imperative utterance. The function of the speech is for inviting students to review again the material had been given before. In the utterance, the teacher uses *let us/let's* as a part of politeness strategies, that is involving the speaker and hearer in a certain activity.

The lecturer of English Study Program of The State Institute for Islamic Studies Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi realized directive speech act during teaching and learning activities, especially in speaking class. The illustration is as follows :

- (1) Lecturer : *The first speaker. Come on. Please come here*  
Student : Me, sir.
- (2) Lecturer : *Who is going to start the activity?*  
Students : (...the students were silent)

the example (1) of one of occasions where the lecturer softened his direct expression with the

conventionally polite expression '*please*'. The lecturer required student to perform in front of the classroom. Actually, the student's respon was not related to what lecturer intended, he could say "yes, sir" as indicator of agreement, not "me". Related to the politeness markers, Plaza (2013) proposed that "*please*" is a linguistic device used to convert orders into requests, the use of *please* generally appeals to the addressee's optionality towards the required action. On the other side, Arani (2012) also added there are some conventional politeness forms that are recognized as markers of distance and formality, such as second plural subject-agreement on the verb, "please" and "excuse" words. The example (2) that was a command of directive speech act which conveyed indirectly by interrogative sentence. According to Horecky & Racova (2005), they proposed that a specific way of formulation of directive illocutionary act is represented by the interrogative sentence, when the speaker turns to the addressee by a question, he expects a response – an answer from him. In this case, the lecturer used interrogative sentence as a part of politeness strategies to reduce the impression of the command to students. Here, the students took an action in silent way of lecturer question, it happened because the students were not well-prepared.

The researcher chooses to analyze directive speech acts in English speaking class underlying two reasons. The first reason is, based on the preliminary study the researcher had, there are various types of directive speech acts used by lecturer to interact with students, it also the pattern, function, intention, and politeness strategies in conveying meaning of directive speech acts. The directive speech acts variety used by lecturer such as, giving requirements, suggestions, prohibitions, it agreed as what proposed by Bach & Harnish (1979). The variety of directive speech acts in use also influenced by the activities in the classroom and the lecturer's intention in conveying it. The second reason is, the situation in the classroom, the students often receive insufficient input for comprehension as it is only the classroom that provides language use, and such inputs are usually found in the form of teacher-talk (in giving instructions). Whereas, in a language classroom, the development of the students' language depend much on the target language that is exposed to, presented to, and used by the lecturer. Therefore, the researcher considers that the need to understand pragmatics theories or how to carry out the message as well as interpretation of the meaning in one's performance is important because pragmatics studies the relationship between sentence forms and human beings who use these forms and also concerns to contexts, situations, and setting within the language usage occur, especially in L2 classroom.

In the light of explanation above, the researcher is interested in analyzing the use of directive speech acts on its types and politeness

strategies in speaking class at the third semester of English Study Program of The State Institute for Islamic Studies Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi. The chosen of directive speech acts because a large number of its types are used by the lecturer while teaching in the classroom. Teaching speaking class was chosen in this research because the lecturer has a big number of using directive speech act orally to give a command, suggestion, prohibition, or other kinds of directive speech acts.

## 2. Method

This present research had employed a descriptive qualitative approach, "Qualitative descriptive studies tend to draw from naturalistic inquiry, which purports a commitment to studying something in its natural state to the extent that is possible within the context of the research arena." (Vickie and Clinton, 2012). It was used to describe the realization of directive speech acts. The main point of this study was to know the types and politeness strategies of directive speech acts used by the lecturer when teaching and learning process in speaking class. Thus, it had been analyzed and interpreted by using suitable techniques.

Setting of the research was at the third semester of English Study Program of State Islamic Institute Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi in 2016 - 2017. It was chosen because of the use of English as language instruction. Therefore, the explanation and feedback were clearly noticed. On the other side, the subject of this research was an english lecturer of English Study Program in State Islamic Institute Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi. This research focused on the lecturer when teaching in speaking class at the third semester students of English Study Program.

The source of the data was lecturer itself, as key informant of this research using the first approach. It was decided by purposive sampling method. The criteria in deciding an informant underlying on competence relevant with the objectives of research. There were several kinds of data used in this research. They were oral and written data as the main data, as well as oral data from the result of semi-structured interview through the key informant or lecturer as additional data. Oral data in the form of utterances getting from lecturer directly in the classroom. Written data in the form of utterances transcription which transcribed from the result of taping.

The data needed for this research collected through non-participant observation, recording, and field note. In acquiring the data, the following steps were taken. The first step was non-participant observation. The scope of observation was all events, indications, topics, time in the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. The researcher sat on the back chair of classroom while recording and observing the directive speech act produced by the lecturer. The second step was taping. Taping was

intended as a technique of collecting primer data by recording, the researcher attended in the classroom when the lecturer was teaching, taping was done by using *Handphone Nokia type Lumia 520*. After that, the result of recording were classified based on time of taping, topic, class, time, name of subject, then the result were transcribed. The third step was field note. This was intended to notice indications or events which unfiltered by observation and taping.

Generally, the analysis was done by using contextual approach, that is the study of language by considering its context. Specifically, the analysis of types and politeness strategies was done through the following steps. Firstly, the activities of analyzing the data in this research were started by condensation. According to Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014), data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appear in the full corpus (body) of written-up field notes, interview, transcripts, documents, and other empirical material. The process of identification, classification, putting the data in the right order, and coding the data were done in this stage. The process of identification were done on the lecturer's speech act. Secondly, data display. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) stated, generically, a display is an organized, compressed assembly, of information that allows, conclusion drawing an action. It included ordering the data as the result of reduction. The ordered data were presented by using a table based on the problem of research. Thirdly, was conclusion. According to Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014), they added that the third stream of analysis activity is conclusion drawing and verification. Getting a conclusion or verification was done on the result of interpreting the data after it displayed. This research employed a triangulation method. It is used as a combination of some methods to discuss the related phenomenon from different view of points. Triangulation method was done by comparing the information or data through different way. Semi-structured interview is used as triangulation method in getting the valid information or data. It was done after getting the data through the lecturer itself.

## 3. Result and Discussion

The researcher found the data as needed. The collected and discussed data will be directive speech acts used in speaking class at the third semester of English Study Program of The State Insitute for Islamic Studies Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi. The classification of these directive speech acts based on the classification which was proposed by Bach & Harnish (1979:47). Bach & Harnish divided the directive speech acts into six types, they were; requestives, questions, requirements, prohibitives, permissives, and advisores. From those six types, the type of *questions* have the highest number with 217 utterances, followed by type of

*requirements* with 91 utterances, *advisores* with 74 utterances, *prohibitives* with 43, *permissives* with 39, and the last one was the type of *requestives* with 34 utterances. Meanwhile, the strategies of politeness as stated by Leech (2014: 147) in chapter II, the researcher found some strategies, including the following; on-record indirect strategies (prediction statement, strong obligation statement, possibility statement, weaker obligation statement, volitional statement), direct strategies (imperative, performative), and the last one was nonsentential strategies. This will be present the types and politeness strategies used.

#### a. Requisites

*Requestives* are the least used of directive speech acts. *Requestives* indicate that in conveying an utterance, speaker (lecturer) asks to the hearers (students) to do an action. Speaker expresses his willingness and intention in order to the hearer does something on the speaker's willingness. *Requestives* directive speech acts can be seen in lecturer's utterance "*Coba kita cek secara bersama tentang language problems you have made*". The context was after the activity of speaking had been done, the lecturer (speaker) made an evaluation on students' performance. Here, the lecturer invited all of students to check their language problems. As stated by Turner & Sbisu (2013: 446), in traditional speech act theory, the mental state of speakers plays an important role in the constitution of a request (or any speech act). The utterance express the speaker's desire that the hearer do something, one of them by inviting. Here, lecturer's utterance on the utterance above expresses the lecturer's willingness by inviting students to check their language problems, in order the hearers want to involve themselves to check and share each others about the problems they have made.

The utterance is an interaction between the lecturer and students during teaching and learning process. The lecturer's (speaker) utterance contains an intention that the lecturer asks students (hearer) to involve in the activity and accept the willingness of lecturer. In this case, lecturer's *requestives* utterance can be seen by the utterance "*Coba kita cek*". The students respond and take a comfortable place by saying "yes, sir" as agreement of the inviting. Politeness strategies found in *requestives* directive speech acts can be seen through lecturer's utterance "*Coba kita cek secara bersama tentang language problems you have made.*" The lecturer employs **imperative** utterance through **direct strategies**, as one of politeness strategies. As stated by Leech (2014), this direct in that they convey directive meaning directly, without any device to reduce the face threat. Here, lecturer tries to be more soften in asking by involving both speaker and hearers in the activity. It is also signed by pronoun "kita". The use of word "coba" above, is line with Etikasari's finding (2012), she stated the use of "coba" is intended to make the utterance more soften, thus, the students

will not feel at the lowest position in the classroom activity, indeed, to be more comfortable for them.

#### b. Questions

*Questions* are the most frequently used directive speech acts in this research. It is line with Yahya's finding in his study (2013) that the type of *questions* are also the most frequently used with 315 utterances. *Questions* mean that the speaker (lecturer) beseeches to the hearer (students) in order to give a certain information related to speaker's intention. Based on its formal characteristic, the pattern of interrogative sentence is denoted by marker (?). Other characteristics of interrogative sentence or *question* are word questions, such as; what, who, when, where, why, and how. *Questions* directive speech acts can be seen in lecturer's utterance "*I would like to know, what is your problem in speaking?*". The context was some students were required to speak one by one in front of the classroom, but most of them could not speak well and fluently, then, the lecturer wanted to know what problem the students had in speaking by asking them a question after the students finished their speaking performance. It is signed by "what" question. The lecturer's intention through this type of *question* directive speech acts is to know the factors causing students' difficulties in speaking English, in order the lecturer can give some feedbacks. Here, the students only respond to lecturer's question by answering "nervous, sir" as verbal action.

The politeness strategies employed are **volitional statement** and **question** through **on-record indirect strategies**. Volitional statement indicates a willingness from the lecturer. Here, the lecturer tries to be more polite in conveying the utterance by using *I would like* rather than *I want (you) to*. This is tune with the statement of Leech (2014), she stated that "I want" statement are typically impolite (because the imply "what I want is something you need to respond to").

#### c. Requirements

*Requirements* directive speech acts indicate that in conveying an utterance, the speaker (lecturer) requires the hearers (students) to do an action. In expressing a willingness, the speaker has higher position than the hearer in relationship, the reason which speaker has is strong enough for hearer to do an action. The speaker expresses an intention in order to the hearer does an action (at least a part of) speaker's willingness. *Requirements* directive speech acts can be seen through lecturer's utterance "*We have to finish all the meetings at the end of December!*". The context was the lecturer explained to the students in the classroom that this semester had short of time. Before that, the class missed one meeting last week. So, the lecturer requested the students to complete all meetings, especially speaking subject, at the end of December. The utterance of lecturer means that all meetings have to

be done at the end of December, without any exception. Through the utterance, the lecturer demands the students, to complete all meetings based on the schedule, let there be no any missing class for the next time. It is signed by the word “have to” as a demand. The students respond to lecturer’s requirement by paying attention and listen to lecturer, only several of them seem to nod their head, it means deal with the requirement given.

Politeness strategies found in *requirements* directive speech acts can be seen through that utterance. Here, the politeness strategies employed is **strong obligation statement** through **on-record indirect strategies**. The utterance has strong obligation statement, because the lecturer has a higher authority and position than the students.

Related to this case, Leech (2014) added by her statement that this express not only strong obligation, but the personal authority of the speaker, and so it can have a dictatorial tone. The lecturer employs “include both speaker and hearer in activity” as a part of politeness strategies. It can be seen by the pronoun “We”. The pronoun “we” indicates an inviting (to make lecturer’s requirement more soften) from lecturer to students to complete all the meetings as the time mentioned.

#### d. Prohibition

*Prohibitives* directive speech acts are utterances shown when expressing the utterance, the speaker (lecturer) prohibits the hearers (students) to do an action which related to what the speaker intends. According to Bach & Harnish (1979: 47), *prohibitives* are essentially requirements that the hearer not do a certain thing. *Prohibitives* can be seen through lecturer’s utterance. “*And then, before we start our activity, I would like to inform you that you are not allowed to talk when your friend is talking in front of you*”. The context was after checked students’ attendance, actually the lecturer would start the activity. But before it started, the lecturer informed the students things that were not allowed to do during the process, because it would disturb another students who were performing in front of the classroom. The utterance means the students are not allowed to talk by the lecturer when another student is performing in front of the classroom, because it can disturb them. It means that, the lecturer prohibits students who are not performing and have to respect and pay attention to student who is performing to speak in English in front of classroom. The student respond to lecturer’s utterance by taking in silent way, it means that they are agree with the utterance conveyed by lecturer.

The politeness strategies employed are **volitional** and **strong obligation statement** through **on-record indirect strategies**. Here, volitional statement indicates a willingness from the lecturer to inform them what things they are not allowed to do. But here, the lecturer tries to be more polite in

conveying the utterance by using *I would like* rather than *I want (you) to*.

#### e. Permissives

*Permissives* directive speech acts indicate that the speaker wants the hearers to do an action. The speaker (lecturer) expresses belief that the utterance permits hearers (students) to do a certain action with the relationship that the speaker has a higher position rather than hearers. *Permissives* directive speech acts can be seen through lecturer’s utterance “*Disini kita boleh menggunakan keduanya, apakah itu wake up atau get up*”. The context was when discussing about student’s language problems, one of students in the classroom asks the lecturer the use of wake up and get up. Then, the lecturer gives a respon to students’ answer through the utterance above. The utterance means that the lecturer allows students to choose one of words when they used in a sentence. By giving the options both wake up and get up, indirectly, the lecturer helps them not to be confused in its use. The *permissives* directive speech acts in this utterance is signed by the word “boleh”. Here, the students respond to lecturer’s utterance by listening and paying attention to lecturer’s explanation.

The politeness strategies employed is **possibility statement** through **on-record indirect strategies**. According to Leech (2014), the use of *may* (boleh) or *might* can also be used similarly, to make directive relatively muted. The utterance of lecturer contains two possibilities, it can use wake up or get up. Here, the lecturer is involved in the utterance by using pronouns “we”, to create a good atmosphere between the lecturer and students in the classroom.

#### f. Advisores

*Advisores* directive speech acts are when conveying an expression, the speaker (lecturer) advises hearer (students) to do something. The speaker expresses belief that there is an adequate reason for hearers to do an action. The speaker believes what is expressed is a good action and will give benefits to hearer. This is tune with Etikasari’s study (2012), she stated that what the speaker expresses are not only a willingness of speaker for students to do a certain action, but it tends to belief that students do an action as necessary for themselves. *Advisores* directive speech acts can be seen through lecturer’s utterance “*It will be better, if you copy the whole book*”. The context was before started the lesson, the lecturer asked to the captain of the classroom about the book of speaking had been given last week. But, the captain of the classroom did not copy all parts of the book, then the lecturer suggested to copy the whole book. Intention of the utterance is to suggest students to copy the whole book. Because they only copy a part of book. If the students copy the whole book based on lecturer’s

suggestion, it will give some benefits to themselves. Here, the students respond to lecturer's utterance by only listening to lecturer's suggestion, actually, the lecturer does not know whether they will do an action based on the suggestion given or not. Let's look other utterance conveyed by lecturer "You have to practice outside with your friends. Disini ada beberapa teman you yang bisa dijadikan tempat untuk berdiskusi". It means that the students have to practice outside too. The intention of the speaker based on the suggestion before, is the students will make an English club and other forums of discussion to practice and share with friends about language problems they have faced, because the lecturer doesn't want students only rely on classroom activity. The students respond to lecturer's utterance by paying attention to lecturer's suggestion, they do not take a response as verbal, so, there is no any interaction happen between lecturer and students in form of communication.

The utterance, it contains **weaker obligation statement** through **on-record indirect strategies**. The weaker obligation statement is signed by "it would be better", to reduce a forced impression in suggesting.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the result of research that was found by researcher through some steps such as: collecting data, analyzing the data and also doing triangulation, the researcher gets some conclusions, those are: a variety in directive speech acts types, *requestives, questions, requirements, prohibition, permissives, advisores as well as the politeness strategies*: on-record indirect strategies (prediction statement, strong obligation statement, possibility statement, weaker obligation statement, volitional statement), direct strategies (imperative, performative), and the last one was nonsentential strategies.

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