AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHER'S LOCUTIONARY SPEECH

ACTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH AT SMAN 3 BULUKUMBA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of locutionary speech acts by English language teacher's during classroom instruction at SMAN 3 Bulukumba. Language in education plays a crucial role not only as a tool for delivering instructional content but also as a medium for fostering interaction, building relationships, and managing the classroom environment. Grounded in Austin's Speech Act Theory, this research specifically focuses on two components of locutionary acts: phatic acts and rhetic acts. Phatic acts are examined in terms of their interpersonal functions, such as initiating greetings, checking student well-being, expressing appreciation, and fostering classroom rapport. Rhetic acts, on the other hand, are explored for their instructional value in delivering content, stating facts, providing directions, expressing opinions, and persuading students to participate and engage with the lesson material.

This research employs a qualitative descriptive methodology, with data collected through systematic classroom observations two English teacher's at the senior high school level. The utterances collected were analyzed using a framework informed by Austin's typology of speech acts, focusing on how teacher's structure their discourse to achieve pedagogical goals. The findings demonstrate that both phatic and rhetic acts are consistently utilized across different stages of instruction, serving both social and academic functions in the classroom. Phatic acts were particularly evident in teacher-student interactions at the beginning and end of lessons, helping to establish a warm and welcoming classroom climate. Meanwhile, rhetic acts were predominantly used during lesson delivery and student engagement, emphasizing clarity, structure, and motivational discourse.

Classroom transcripts and observation tables provide empirical evidence of how these speech acts function in practice, revealing that their strategic use not only facilitates communication but also enhances student motivation, comprehension, and classroom dynamics. The study concludes that locutionary speech acts are

integral to effective teaching and recommends their intentional application as part of teacher communication strategies. These findings have implications for teacher training programs, highlighting the need to develop pragmatic awareness among educators, particularly in EFL contexts where language functions extend beyond semantics to include social interaction and cultural sensitivity.

Keywords*: locutionary, phonetic act, phatic act, rhetic act, teacher*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki penggunaan tindak tutur locutionary oleh guru Bahasa Inggris selama proses pembelajaran di SMAN 3 Bulukumba. Bahasa dalam pendidikan memainkan peran penting, tidak hanya sebagai alat untuk menyampaikan materi ajar, tetapi juga sebagai sarana untuk membangun interaksi, menjalin hubungan, dan mengelola suasana kelas. Berlandaskan pada Teori Tindak Tutur Austin, penelitian ini secara khusus memfokuskan pada dua komponen tindak lokusioner: tindak fatis dan tindak retik.

Tindak phatic dianalisis berdasarkan fungsinya dalam hubungan interpersonal, seperti menyapa siswa, menanyakan kabar, memberi apresiasi, dan membangun kedekatan emosional di kelas. Sementara itu, tindak retik dikaji dari nilai instruksionalnya dalam menyampaikan materi, menyatakan fakta, memberikan arahan, menyampaikan pendapat, dan meyakinkan siswa untuk terlibat aktif dalam pembelajaran.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, dengan data yang dikumpulkan melalui observasi sistematis terhadap dua orang guru Bahasa Inggris di tingkat sekolah menengah atas. Tuturan yang dikumpulkan dianalisis menggunakan kerangka kerja yang mengacu pada tipologi tindak tutur Austin, dengan fokus pada bagaimana guru menyusun tuturan mereka untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa baik tindak fatis maupun tindak retik digunakan secara konsisten dalam berbagai tahap pembelajaran, dan berfungsi secara sosial maupun akademis di dalam kelas.

Tindak phatic tampak dominan dalam interaksi guru dan siswa di awal dan akhir pembelajaran, membantu menciptakan suasana kelas yang hangat dan bersahabat. Sementara itu, tindak retik lebih banyak digunakan saat penyampaian

materi dan proses keterlibatan siswa, dengan penekanan pada kejelasan, struktur, dan motivasi.

Transkrip kelas dan tabel observasi memberikan bukti empiris tentang bagaimana tindak tutur ini berfungsi dalam praktik, menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan strategisnya tidak hanya memfasilitasi komunikasi, tetapi juga meningkatkan motivasi siswa, pemahaman materi, dan dinamika kelas. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa tindak tutur lokusioner merupakan bagian penting dari pembelajaran yang efektif dan merekomendasikan penggunaannya secara sadar sebagai bagian dari strategi komunikasi guru. Temuan ini memiliki implikasi bagi program pelatihan guru, khususnya dalam mengembangkan kesadaran pragmatik di kalangan pendidik, terutama dalam konteks EFL (English as a Foreign Language), di mana fungsi bahasa melampaui makna semantik untuk mencakup interaksi sosial dan sensitivitas budaya.

Kata Kunci: lokusioner, tindak phonetic, tindak phatic, tindak rhetic, guru

A. Introduction

Language is a vital means of communication and one of the most fundamental aspects of human interaction. Since the beginning of life, humans have relied on language as the primary tool to express thoughts, emotions, desires, and to build social relationships with others. In the field of education, language serves a much more complex function. It is not merely used as a vehicle for delivering instructional material, but also acts as a medium to create a positive learning environment, build interpersonal relationships between teachers and students, and manage the structure and dynamics of classroom instruction.

Language enables teachers to deliver clear explanations, provide directed instructions, give constructive feedback, and stimulate students' motivation to actively participate in the learning process. In the context of language learning, especially English as a foreign language, a teacher's ability to use language effectively is a crucial factor in determining the success of the educational process. The way a teacher speaks, their intonation, word choice, and

communication strategies can significantly influence students' understanding of the material, their level of engagement in discussions, and even the emotional atmosphere within the classroom itself. Thus, language functions not only as a tool for transferring knowledge, but also as a foundational element for shaping meaningful interactions, fostering emotional connection, and creating a learning environment that supports the intellectual and social development of learners. Therefore, a deep understanding of language use—particularly in the form of speech acts—is essential for educators to perform their roles effectively.

Teacher's do not merely serve as transmitters of instructional content, but also play a crucial role as facilitators in classroom discussions. In fulfilling this role, they utilize language as a strategic tool to manage student behavior, provide motivation, express appreciation, and foster an interactive and supportive learning environment. Language becomes the teacher's primary instrument for explaining abstract concepts, guiding students in understanding material, and

encouraging them to think critically and creatively. With effective communication skills, teachers can adapt their delivery style to suit the unique characteristics of their students, making the learning process more personalized and meaningful.

Every utterance delivered by a teacher in the classroom carries not only semantic meaning but also specific communicative purposes that can influence the overall dynamics of the learning process. For example, a question posed by the teacher is not solely intended to assess students understanding, but also to stimulate participation, foster engagement, and strengthen social bonds among members of the class. Therefore, it is essential for teacher's to possess pragmatic awareness in language use—that is, the ability to understand how their speech can shape social interactions, provide clarity of information, and enhance students' confidence and motivation to learn. This awareness is key to creating a conducive learning environment that supports the holistic development of learners.

One of the theoretical approaches

relevant to understanding the function of language, particularly in instructional interactions, is Speech Act Theory, which was introduced by J. L. Austin and further developed by John Searle. This theory explains that speaking is not merely about constructing sentences or conveying literal meanings, but rather a form of social action that carries specific intentions and effects. From this perspective, every utterance spoken by an individual contains three core dimensions: locutionary acts (locution), illocutionary acts (illocution), and perlocutionary acts (perlocution). A locutionary act refers to the act of producing an utterance in terms of sound and grammar; an illocutionary act involves the speakers intention, such as commanding, suggesting, or questioning; while a perlocutionary act refers to the effect that the utterance has on the listener, such as persuading, frightening, or inspiring.

This study specifically focuses on locutionary speech acts, which form the foundation of all other types of speech acts and consist of three components: phonetic (the physical articulation of sounds), phatic (utterances that serve to maintain social relationships, such as greetings or expressions of concern), and rhetic (the propositional content or meaning conveyed in the utterance). In the context of classroom instruction—particularly in teaching English as a foreign language—teacher's do not merely convey information, but consciously or unconsciously employ locutionary acts as strategic tools. They use phonetic acts for articulation clarity, phatic acts to build rapport with students, and rhetic acts to explain lesson concepts in a logical and meaningful manner. Therefore, locutionary speech acts play a crucial role in creating effective classroom communication, fostering positive social interaction, and directing students' attention and engagement in an active and contextualized learning process.

The primary objective of this study is to explore how English teacher's at SMAN 3 Bulukumba utilize locutionary speech acts, with a specific focus on two main types: phatic acts and rhetic acts, in classroom learning activities. Phatic acts are used to build and maintain interpersonal relationships between teachers and students, such

as by offering greetings, showing concern, or creating a friendly classroom atmosphere. Meanwhile, rhetic acts are employed to convey propositional meanings that include information, instructions, explanations, or opinions. Both of these speech act forms play a vital role in shaping meaningful interactions between teachers and students and in fostering effective communication during the teaching and learning process.

This study is highly relevant because, in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, the success of the educational process is determined not only by grammatical competence but also by pragmatic competence—that is, the ability to use language appropriately according to social context and communicative intent. Teacher's who are aware of pragmatic aspects tend to be more effective in delivering content, building relationships with students, and managing the classroom as a whole. Therefore, the findings of this study are expected to offer both theoretical and practical contributions—particularly in the development of teacher's

communication strategies in the classroom, as well as in serving as a reference for designing teacher training programs that emphasize mastery of pragmatic skills in the context of English language teaching in Indonesia.

B. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, aiming to systematically, factually, and accurately describe the phenomenon of locutionary speech acts used by English teacher's in classroom learning activities. The subjects of this study were two English teacher's at SMAN 3 Bulukumba. The selection of participants was conducted purposively, based on their teaching experience and active involvement in the teaching and learning process.

The data collection technique was carried out through direct observation of classroom learning activities. During the observation process, the researcher documented and recorded the teachers' utterances that contained locutionary speech acts. The collected data were then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which consists of

three key stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

The analysis focused on the identification and classification of phatic and rhetic speech acts based on Austin's speech act theory. Each teacher's utterance was analyzed to determine its communicative function within the learning context, such as building social interaction, explaining material, giving instructions, and providing motivation or feedback to students.

C. Research Findings and Discussion

The results of the study show that English teacher's at SMAN 3 Bulukumba consistently use locutionary speech acts during the learning process. Specifically, both teachers (e.g., Teacher DA and Teacher SF) employed two types of locutionary speech acts: phatic acts and rhetic acts. Phatic acts were predominantly observed during the opening and closing sessions of classroom instruction. Teachers used greetings, small talk, and questions about students well-being to create a warm and supportive classroom atmosphere. The data revealed that both teacher's frequently opened the class with greetings (such as *"Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatu, Good morning guys!"* or simply *"Good morning!"*), and asked about students' conditions with expressions like *"How are you today?"*, which functioned to build positive interpersonal relationships.

Rhetic acts appeared during the delivery of content, giving of instructions, as well as when providing motivation and feedback. Teacher's used rhetic acts to convey clear information and provide direction regarding tasks or learning activities. For instance, Teacher DA used expressions like *"We can combine the words 'ubiquitous' and 'ephemeral'..."* to explain concepts in depth, while Teacher SF used statements such as *"Alright, let's start from the beginning. Present tenses are used to express events..."* to facilitate students' understanding of the material.

These findings support Austin's (1962) speech act theory, as well as its further development by Searle, which emphasize that every utterance not only carries semantic meaning but also possesses a communicative function that influences classroom dynamics. Thus, the use of locutionary speech acts by teacher's contributes not only to the effective delivery of instructional content but also plays a significant role in enhancing students motivation, comprehension, and participation throughout the learning process.

Table 1. Teachers' Phatic Speech Acts in Classroom Instruction

Teacher	Utterance
DA	"Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatu,Good morning guys!" (Membangun hubungan dan menciptakan suasana yang positif)

SF	"Good morning!"(Menyapa siswa untuk memulai pembelajaran secara hangat)

SF	"Baik, mari kita mulai dari awal. Present tenses digunakan untuk menyatakan kejadian atau situasi yang sedang berlangsung pada saat ini. Ada tiga bentuk utama: present simple, present continuous, dan present perfect."(Memberi instruksi dan menjelaskan materi)

Table 2. Teachers' Rhetic Speech Acts in Classroom Instruction

Teacher	Utterance
DA	"Kita bisa menggabungkan kata ubiquitous dan ephemeral, kalimatnya bisa seperti ini: meskipun kecantikan alam sangat ubiquitous, namun tetap terasa ephemeral. Itu salah satu contoh jika kita ingin menggabungkan dua kata tadi,kita bisa asa asal kita paham arti katanya."(Menyampaikan penjelasan konsep dan contoh detail)

E. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that English teacher's at SMAN 3 Bulukumba actively use locutionary speech acts during the teaching and learning process. Phatic acts are used to build positive social relationships with students, such as through greetings and praise, while rhetic acts are employed to deliver instructions, explain learning materials, and motivate students to be more engaged in classroom activities. The use of these two types of speech acts has been shown to contribute to the creation of a conducive learning environment and enhance student engagement.

As a suggestion, teacher's are encouraged to consciously and strategically utilize locutionary speech

acts in the classroom, particularly in the context of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) instruction, in order to strengthen the pragmatic aspects of classroom communication. Additionally, teacher training programs should include the development of pragmatic competence, enabling teacher's to use language not only grammatically, but also functionally.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope of the study by involving more schools and teacher's, as well as to examine the impact of speech act usage on student learning outcomes through quantitative analysis, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.

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