

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

It has been known already that language is used by human beings to communicate with one another. Language is one of the characteristics of human beings which differentiates human beings from other creatures. The essence of language is human activity - activity on the part of one individual to make himself understood by another, and activity on the part of that other to understand what was in the mind of the first. These two individuals, the producer and the recipient of language, or as we may more conveniently call them, the speaker and the hearer, and their relations to one another, should never be lost sight of if we want to understand the nature of language and of that part of language which is dealt with in grammar (Jespersen, 1924:17).

In society, people may speak different languages to express their ideas depending on the contexts in which they are involved. Karl Buhler (1934) also says that

language is a two-way interaction between speaker-listener. So language is a signal that there is a life, there is a society. A person cannot be separated from other people because a man is both an individual and a social being. Therefore, language is a means of communication among the people of a society (Keraf, 1984).

Before stepping out a little further, it would be a good idea to see what is meant by communication as a system. Effendi (1981:67) defines it as a process of transmitting messages between men. Finocchiaro (1974:3) views communication as the passing of human thought, ideas, and experience of the world they live in. The product of communication takes both forms, oral and written productions. Here the word 'communication' means a process whereby we create, negotiate, and interpret personal meanings. Communication can also be seen as a dialectic between social and personal knowledge, between what the language 'knows' and what individual speakers know (Riley, 1985:1-2).

The communication via speech in a society is regarded by most members of a society as a truism. They take it for granted that they are able to understand what they are listening to and getting across what they

want to (Kreckel, 1981:3). Therefore, we need to understand the pattern of communication since we speak differently in different social contexts. Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community. One way to understand the pattern of the communication is by analysing speech acts. In speech acts, language is seen as a form of acting. John Austin (1976) concludes that all expressions of language must be viewed as acts. Speech acts themselves can be categorized into three parts: locution, illocution, and perlocution.

Since language is always associated with a certain culture, it is important to analyze the communication pattern or speech acts in certain group of society because it will avoid misunderstanding among speakers, for example: students' speech acts.

Here, the writer wants to analyze conversations which are academic-oriented of which the topics deal with the academic problems. Academic problems here can be divided into three: (1) lecturers, (2) facilities, and (3) lessons. These can be expanded not only about teaching materials but also about three academic

activities--community services, research, and education and teaching.

Based on the reasons above, the writer would like to find the speech acts elements spoken by students of the English Department in Widya Mandala University. The writer would like to show the usefulness of using the speech acts theory in analysing the conversations from the aspects of the forms, the functions, and the effects of the conversations.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Since the writer is concerned with the analysis of speech acts, the questions she would like to put forward are:

1. What speech acts are used by the students of the English Department during informal situation?
2. What kinds of illocutionary functions are manifested in the speech acts used by the English Department students during informal situation?
3. What kinds of perlocutionary functions are manifested in the speech acts used by the English Department students during informal situation?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In line with the statements of the problem above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the speech acts which are used by the students of the English Department during informal situation.
2. To find out the kinds of illocutionary functions which are manifested in the speech acts used by the English Department students during informal situation.
3. To find out the kinds of perlocutionary functions which are manifested in the speech acts used by the English Department students during informal situation.

1.4 Significance of the Study

1. Hopefully the result of this study is to contribute more insight into the interaction pattern among the students of Widya Mandala University.
2. The writer wants to show the usefulness of using the speech acts theory in analysing the communication.
3. The study can be a good contribution to the learning of Discourse Analysis.

4. The writer wants to find out how far illocution and perlocution are used in the students' academic-oriented conversations.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study is limited to find out the speech acts in the academic oriented-conversations spoken by the students of the English Department in Widya Mandala University in informal situation. The subjects of this study are limited to the students of the English Department because they are the easiest access for the writer to do the observation and collect the data. The writer records the conversations for three months (from March through May) and chooses the academic-oriented conversations only because it seems that those conversations represent all the students' speech acts.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The title of this proposal is "An Analysis of Speech Acts in the Academic-Oriented Conversations of the English Department Students of Widya Mandala University". The major terms in this proposal are:

1. Speech acts

Speech acts are acts characteristically performed by uttering expressions in accordance with sets of constitutive rules (Searle, 1969:37). Another linguist, Pratt (1980:234-235), says that speech acts are the utterances which are treated as performing an act by a speaker in context with respect to an addressee. Meanwhile, Austin (1962) defines speech acts are the approaches which try to formulate how much knowledge is brought into language. In 1976, Austin says the acts of speaking which see language as a form of acting can be defined as speech acts.

In this study what is meant by speech acts are the acts of speaking which see language as a form of acting.

Speech acts are divided into three kinds:

a. Locutionary acts

They are acts of saying something or acts of uttering certain words of a certain vocabulary and in a certain grammatical form (Austin, 1962). Austin (1962:94) also says locutionary acts are the utterances of certain words in a certain construction, and the utterance of them with a certain 'meaning'. Meanwhile in 1976, Austin states that locutionary acts are the

physical acts of producing utterances or the production of the utterances or the acts of stating the utterances.

In this study what is meant by locutionary acts are the physical acts of producing utterances or the production of the utterances or the acts themselves.

b. Illocutionary acts

According to Austin (1962), illocutionary acts are acts in saying something such as 'asking questions', 'giving orders', 'making promises', etc. Meanwhile, the attempts to accomplish some communicative purposes such as giving advice, making a promise, etc can also be defined as illocutionary acts according to Pratt (1980:234-235). Austin (1976) also states that illocutionary acts are the acts which are committed by producing utterances; by uttering a promise, a promise is made; by uttering a threat, a threat is made. In other word, it is the function of the utterance.

In this study what is meant by illocutionary acts are the acts which are committed by producing utterances; by uttering a promise, a promise is made; by uttering a threat, a threat is made. In other word, it is the function of the utterance.

c. Perlocutionary acts

Austin (1962) states that perlocutionary acts are acts by saying something. In 1976, Austin also says that the production of effects through locution and illocution or the effects on the receiver can be defined as perlocutionary acts.

In this study what is meant by perlocutionary acts are the production of effects through locution and illocution or the effects on the receiver.

2. Speech community is a group of people who interact by means of speech (Bloomfield, 1933:42).
3. Academic-Oriented Conversations are conversations of which the topics are about academic problems.
4. English Department students. They are students who take English as their major study.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I is introduction. It gives the readers some explanation about the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, and the definition of key terms. Chapter II deals with review

of the related literature which are relevant to this study. Next, chapter III deals with methodology of the study. In chapter IV, the discussion of the findings and thesis interpretations will be discussed. Finally, chapter V concerns with the conclusion and suggestions.