

# THE SPEECH ACT IN KID OF 5 YEARS OLD

Sayyid Khairunas  
Bahasa Inggris  
ABA BSI Jakarta  
Jl. Salemba Tengah No. 45, Jakarta Pusat  
sayyid.syk@bsi.ac.id

## ABSTRACT

*In conveying something, the speaker indicates an action. Such measures can facilitate the speaker to make the listener know what the intent or desire of the speaker. This is referred to as a speech act. Speech acts can also be found in the speech of children aged 5 years. In delivering the speech, a person unconsciously produces certain actions that his/her wishes were conveyed through speech can be realized. This study intends to explain the forms of speech acts which are in children aged 5 years within pragmatics study. The writer uses a speech of the child as the data of this study. Data collection was carried out either in the form of participation or just listen to conversation of the child. The results showed that the form of speech acts which are used by 5 years old kid are: directive, assertive, and expressive. The directive illocutionary act is mostly used. It indicates, in conveying meaning and intention, the 5 years old kid is already able to produce the indirect speech act. This shows that their cognitive has developed.*

**Keywords:** children language, pragmatics, speech act.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In order to communicate with others, people use language. They always share their ideas to the others. This also happens to the kid under five years old. They use their first language to communicate with the people around them. In the age under five years old, the kid have mastered approximately 200- 300 words. After getting their first language acquisition, they try to talk to the others. However, what the kid speak or utter always depends on what they needed or what they wanted. In the other words, it is all about them, about their ego. The kid under five years old will use their first language acquisition to get the attention of the people around them. They try to utter in the way that they know. In order to convey the meaning or intention, they also show an act in their speech. This is called as a speech act. Speech act is the things which people usually do while they are speaking. Speech acts also known as the minimal unit of speaking. Besides showing the act of their speech, the kid under five years old also use strategy in their speech.

There are a lot of ways in analyzing the kid speech by looking at the pragmatics point of view. It can be the study of implicature, speech act, politeness, and the conversation structure. In this research, the writer is focusing on the speech act in the kid speech, especially the kid in the age of 5 years old. Hence, the writer tries to find out what types or speech act are used by kid.

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### 2.1. Types of Utterance

Austin (2004: 380) in Sumarsono mentions two kinds of utterance in communication: performative and constative utterance. A performative utterance is an utterance which is used to form an action. Yet, a constative is an utterance which the verb is expressing something and the truth of the utterance can be proved. The following is the Austin's example (2004:380) in Sumarsono to differentiate two kinds of utterances above:

- 1) *I named this ship "Dewa Ruci"*
- 2) *I promise to meet you at 04.00*
- 3) *I promise to send you some money.*

All of those utterances above are the examples of performative utterance. Those utterances are the realization of some action and not the report of an action. When a person utters, "I promise...", it means that a person do something that is making a promise. That utterance cannot be evaluated whether the fact is true or false at the moment of speaking. In the other hand, if a person utters, "*He promised to send me some money*", the hearer can see the fact at the moment of those words being uttered.

### 2.2. Speech Act

According to Searle in Yule (1996: 47), speech act is the actions performed via utterances. Austin in Yule (1996: 48) mentions the types of act which is performed in a conversation, they are: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act. The following are their explanations:

### 1. Locutionary Act

A locutionary act is an act of how a person produces the utterance or to produce a meaningful linguistic expression. When the speaker uses his/her organ of speech to produce utterance, then, indirectly there is the locutionary act in his/her utterance. In the other words, locutionary act is the act of the speaker in using his/her organ of speech to produce utterances. For example, "I promise to give you some money", the moment when the utterance is being said by the speaker by using the organ of speech is called locutionary act.

### 2. Illocutionary Act

In every utterance, there must be a function in it. The function which is found in the utterances is called the illocutionary act. For instance, "I promise to give you some money", that utterance is not only a statement but it also binds the speaker to what s/he has just said. This is because that utterance intention is the fact that the speaker will do something in the future or we can say, the speaker promising something. Therefore, the illocutionary act of an utterance above is the act of promising.

### 3. Perlocutionary

Act Perlocutionary act is the effect of the utterance which the speaker said to the hearer.

The following is the example:

*I promise to give you some money.*

The effect of the utterance above can be a happy one. This is a result of the fact that the hearer really needs some money. Yet, it can also give the opposite effect to the hearer. The hearer may feel angry because of that utterance. This is because the hearer is a very rich person who does not need any money from the speaker. The hearer will feel as if he is being mocked.

### 2.3. Types of Illocutionary Act

The illocutionary act in speech act itself has its classification. Both Austin and Searle give

its classification. Basically, their classifications of illocutionary act in speech act are just the same. They are only different in the name. The following are the classifications by Searle in Mey (1993:163).

#### 1. Declaration

This illocutionary act is the kind of illocutionary act which can change the world by the utterance that is produced. The word "change" here refers to any situation. It can be the change of the status of a person. It can also be the ownership of something. The following is the example of declaration:

*I declare you husband and wife*

The utterance above changes both the two person's status. The status of the man change from someone who does not have any rights to the woman becomes someone who has rights to the woman. That is also happened to the woman, her status changes.

#### 2. Representative (Assertive)

Representative is the illocutionary act which states what the speaker believes to be the case or not and commits to the speaker truth. It shows the truth condition of the meaning of the utterance. The following is the example:

*The sun rises in the East*

That utterance shows the fact that the sun really rises in the East. This is a common fact that everyone knows.

#### 3. Expressive

Expressive is kind of illocutionary act which can show what the speaker feels. It expresses the psychological states. The example is shown by the following utterance: *I'm sorry to hear that.*

The utterance above shows the empathy of the speaker to the hearer condition. The speaker tries to feel what the hearer feel. Therefore, the hearer will at least lose a bit of their tension.

#### 4. Directive

Directive is a kind of illocutionary act which is used by the speaker to get someone else to do something. This kind of illocutionary act can make the hearer under an obligation. The example of directive illocutionary act:

*Don't be too noisy!*

That utterance contains a prohibition. It makes the hearer to be in silent. Maybe this is because the

speaker feels annoyed with the crowded made by the hearer.

## 5. Commissive

Commissive illocutionary act is an act which makes the speaker to commit what s/he said. It is also a future action of the speaker.

*I promise to give you some money.*

The utterance above is the example of commissive illocutionary act. It shows a promise of the speaker. It also shows what the speaker has to do in the future.

## D. The Components in Determining an Illocutionary Act

According to Vanderveken (1990: 104), there are six components for determining an illocutionary act. They are:

### 1. Illocutionary Point

The illocutionary point refers to the point of utterances for determining the content of utterances. In uttering an utterance, the speaker always tries to relate the world to the content of his utterance. This is for determining a direction of fit between language and the world. "Fit" here means the relation between the word (language) and the world (reality). Vanderveken mentions that there are four direction of fit, they are:

a. The words-to-world direction of fit.

In this direction of fit, the utterance which produced by the speaker is appropriate to the world or the fact itself. It can also said that the words-to-worlds direction of fit represents how the content of speech acts (words) fit to state of affairs existing in the world. Usually, this happens in the type of illocutionary act of assertive.

b. The world-to-words direction of fit.

In the world-to-words direction of fit, the world or the fact can be changed according to the words uttered. In a simple way, the utterance which is produced by the speaker can affect the fact. The world or the fact is transformed to the content of the utterance. It means that the world is changed to fit the content of speech acts (words). This direction of fit can be found in directive and commissive illocutionary act. In directive (the hearer) and commissive (the speaker) try to transformed the world or the fact in order to match the content of an utterance.

c. The double direction of fit.

It means that the world is changed to fit the content of speech acts (words) and the content (words) match a state of affairs (world). This kind of fit called as the double direction of fit. This usually happens in the illocutionary act of declarative.

d. The null or empty direction of fit.

In this direction of fit, the utterance which is produced by the speaker does not represent the state of affairs, it can also said that the speech act says nothing about the world and does not change anything. The illocutionary act of expressive usually uses this direction of fit.

## 2. Mode of Achievement

The mode of achievement is the way of how the speaker conveys or utters his meaning or intention. It determines how an illocutionary point must be achieved in the propositional content. For example, in a request, the speaker must leave the option of refusal to the hearer in making his attempt to get him to do something.

## 3. Propositional Content Condition

The propositional content condition is the content of the utterance itself. For example, the propositional content of a promise must represent a speaker's future course of action.

## 4. Preparatory Condition

The preparatory condition is the presupposition of the speaker for the utterance which is produced by him. In this case, the speaker knows his capacity or the hearer's capacity to accomplish what he said.

## 5. Sincerity Condition

The sincerity condition is a condition which shows the mental states of certain psychological modes of the speaker about the state of affairs represented by the propositional content. It refers to the honesty of the speaker to perform something. For example, when a speaker promises something, he shows an intention to do what he promised.

## 6. Degree of Strength

The mental state of the speaker in sincerity condition represents different degree of strength depending on the illocutionary act. It can also be said as the strength level of an utterance

produced by the speaker called as the degree of strength. For example, the speaker who supplicates something has the greater strength than the other who requests for something. The speaker who has a stronger desire is having a greater strength than who has not.

### E. The Speech Act of Five Years Old Kid

The speech act of kid under five years old, according to Dore in Owen (1988: 228) is using the primitive speech acts. The primitive speech acts are labeling, repeating, requesting an action, requesting an answer, calling, greeting, protesting, and practicing.

This theory is also supported by Halliday in Owens (1988:229). There are some early pragmatics functions according to Halliday. First, the instrumental function, for example, "I want, I need", which has a meaning that the child attempts to satisfy needs or desires. Next, there is a regulatory function and the example is "Do as I tell you". That utterance means the child attempts to control the behavior of others. The third function is interactional function. The example of this function is "You and me". In this function, the child establishes and defines social relationships and attempts to participate in social intercourse. The next function is personal function, for example, "Here I come". It means that the child expresses individuality or gives personal opinion or feelings. There is also an imaginative function, for instance, "Let's pretend". In this function, the child expresses fantasies or creates imaginary word. Then, the heuristic function means the child seeks information, for example, "Tell me why". The last function is informative function. This function means that the child provides information, for example, "I've got something to tell you." Yet, the act of the kid can also be influenced by their age.

## III. RESEARCH METHOD

### 3.1. The Type of Research

In this research, the writer conducts a descriptive qualitative research. This is a descriptive research because it describes the data. Then, the data are explained in order to get the information about illocutionary act in kid speech.

### 3.2. The Data Source

The data used in this research is a primary data kid speech. The data are taken from the

recording of the speech. The kid who is studied by the writer is named Raihan (5 years old). The writer is also used the secondary data to support the research. After getting the recording or the note of the conversation, the writer consults it to his parent. Therefore, it becomes the secondary data.

### 3.3. Method of Collecting Data

In this research, the writer uses the secondary source, that is documents to support the descriptive method. There are steps that the researcher takes to analyze the data:

1. record
2. have a conversation with the kid
3. convert the recording into text

The writer records the kid's conversation. The recording technique is done without being known by the object of the research. While record the conversation, the writer also takes note of the conversation of the kid.

### 3.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis is the process of identifying and classifying the data. This research uses *padan* method to analyze the data. According to Sudaryanto (1993:13) in *Padan* method, the determination used in a research is the aspect outside the language itself. It is a method in which the indicator device is the outside factor of the language. The technique which is used in this research is *Padan Pragmatik*. *Padan pragmatik* is used in the research because the indicator device of the research is the kid's utterance.

## IV. DISCUSSION

The writer describes the speech act in five years old kid. This chapter contains the discussion of the speech act in five years old kid.

### 4.1. The Speech Act of Kid in the Age of 5 Years Old

The types of speech act which is found in the kid of 5 years old conversation are directive, assertive, and expressive. Those will be explained as the following by using the theory of the components analysis of illocutionary act by Vanderveken:

#### 1. Requesting

**R:** *Aku pengen minum.*

**R:** I want to drink.

*M: Tu di kulkas.*

M: That is in the refrigerator.

*R: Sepi ya?*

R: It's quite, isn't it?

*M: Iya.*

M: Yes, it is.

**R: Anterin...**

R: Take me there...

The illocutionary act analysis according to Vanderveken:

#### a. Illocutionary point

The form of utterance of Raihan is the declarative, but the speaker (Raihan) does not mean to say how things are. The speaker tries to request something from the hearer. The speaker hopes that the hearer understand what he wants. Since the hearer does not fulfill what the speaker (Raihan) wants, Raihan utters the utterance. This utterance is in the form of imperative. The speaker (Raihan) tries to request the hearer to accompany him by using the imperative utterance. And if his request is not being fulfilled, then he will be disappointed.

#### b. Mode of Achievement

Raihan as the speaker conveys his utterance in the form of declarative. He uses it to request something to his mother. Raihan uses declarative in requesting something for getting his request accomplished. Finally, when the hearer does not fulfill what he wants, he utters his request once again in a direct form.

#### c. Propositional content

It can be seen from the illocutionary point of the utterance that this utterance is a form of effort from the speaker to request something from the hearer. In this case, Raihan (the speaker) requests his mother as the hearer to accompany him to get some drink in the refrigerator.

#### d. Preparatory condition

The utterance of Raihan is the utterance which is assured by the speaker that the hearer is able to do what he wants. He knows that the hearer usually fulfills what Raihan wants.

#### e. Sincerity condition

The utterance of is not really able to make the hearer to fulfill what the speaker wants. Since, the hearer possibly considers that Raihan's utterance is just a statement.

#### f. Degree of strength

The utterance has a lower strength. Since, the utterance does not give a satisfied effect to the speaker. It can be seen from the second request that is produced by Raihan that is "Anterin" which can give the satisfied effect to him, his request is being fulfilled. In sum, the utterances of Raihan above belong to the illocutionary act of directive that is requesting. Since, Raihan wants the hearer to do something for him, to accompany him.

## 2. Stating

*W: Dek, punya mainan gak?*

W: Dek, do you have toys?

*R: Punya. Aku punya Lego.*

R: I do. I have Lego.

*W: Mana? Coba aku lihat.*

W: Where is it? Can I see?

**R: Di situ. (menunjuk ke arah tempat mainan)**

R: It's over there. (Pointing the drawer where he keeps all his toys)

The analysis of illocutionary act of the above utterance are in the following:

#### a. Illocutionary Point

This utterance shows that the speaker just tries to give a direction to the hearer. The speaker utters something to represent how the things are. In this case, the speaker (Raihan) utters where his toys are to the hearer.

#### b. Mode of Achievement

The utterance states how things are. The speaker utters it in the form of declarative sentence. This utterance can be considered as a successful utterance since it is only stating something.

#### c. Propositional Condition

The utterance consists a statement from the speaker. The content of the speaker's utterance represents the thing as it is. In this case, the speaker (Raihan) utters where her toys are.

#### d. Preparatory Condition

In uttering the utterance, the speaker (Raihan) already knows where his toys are. He just wants the hearer to know it. Therefore, he utters the utterance to tell the hearer the fact where his toys are.

#### e. Sincerity Condition

The utterance is a sincere utterance. It is a result of the fact that the speaker (Raihan) is success in giving a direction of where his toys are to the hearer.

#### f. Degree of Strength

The utterance has no strength. This is because this utterance is only a statement. The speaker does not need to convince the hearer about what he said. In sum, the utterance above is the utterance of assertive illocutionary act. Since, it does not give the speaker or the hearer any obligations.

### 3. Inviting

*R: Ini Lego aku.*

R: It is my Lego.

*W: Bisa bikinnya emang? Coba bikin mobil.*

W: Can you build something? Try car!

*R: Bisa. Ayo bantuin bikin yuk!*

R: Sure I can. Would you mind helping me?

The illocutionary act analysis above:

#### a. Illocutionary point

The utterance above is the utterance in the form of imperative. Raihan wants the hearer to do something for him. The speaker tries to invite the hearer to join building Lego.

#### b. Mode of achievement

In producing the utterance, Raihan uses the imperative form. It can be seen from the meaning of that utterance itself that is asking someone else to do something together with the speaker.

#### c. Propositional Content condition

The utterance of is an inviting from the speaker to the hearer. It is as a result of the fact that the speaker (Raihan) is playing something with the hearer at the time of Raihan utters that utterance. Here, he invites the hearer (the writer) to join with him.

#### d. Preparatory condition

The speaker's utterance above is believed by the speaker that the hearer is able to join with him. Raihan is sure that the hearer is able to do what he wants from the fact that the older might be able to fulfill what he asked. The hearer is also sure that the invitation from the speaker is not a difficult thing to do.

#### e. Sincerity condition

It can be seen in the utterance that the speaker has a desire to invite the hearer to join with him. The invitation that is repeated with the word "Yuk!" in the end of utterance shows that the speaker really wants the hearer to play together with him. Moreover, the hearer is able to fulfill the invitation of the speaker.

#### f. Degree of strength

The utterance that is uttered by the speaker has a great strength, since the hearer wants to fulfill his invitation. In sum, the utterance of Raihan above is a kind of directive illocutionary act. As a result of obligation that is put on the hearer.

### 4. Suggesting

*W: Dek, ini kok Legonya gak bisa masuk gimana?*

W: Dek, how can it be like this? The Lego won't stick.

*R: Ini dipasin dulu... trus diteken kaya gini yang kenceng.*

R: You have to match it first then press it a little hard.

The conditions which are in the utterance are:

#### a. Illocutionary Point

The utterance of the speaker shows the world-to-words direction of fit, as the speaker tries to make the hearer to do something. The speaker tries to give a suggestion to the hearer. The speaker (Raihan) wants the hearer follow what he suggested.

#### b. Mode of Achievement

The utterance can be considered as a successful utterance due to the fact that the utterance can convince the hearer to do something as the speaker does. It can be seen from the use of the direct utterance in conveying her suggestion.

#### c. Propositional Condition

The utterance consists a suggestion for the hearer. Raihan as the speaker wants the hearer (the writer) knows how to build Lego. This suggestion is able to be done by the hearer at the time.

#### d. Preparatory Condition

Before uttering the utterance, the speaker already has the presupposition that the hearer will do what he suggested. The speaker (Raihan) knows that the hearer (the writer) could do his suggestion.

#### e. Sincerity Condition

The utterance is sincere to the hearer as it can convince him to do the suggestion of the speaker. The suggestion of the speaker is very possible for the hearer to do it.

#### f. Degree of Strength

The utterance has a great strength. Since, it can make the hearer try the suggestion of the speaker. The utterance of the speaker (Raihan) can make the hearer understand about how to build a Lego. The suggestion which is supported by an action, is able to make that suggestion stronger. Finally, it can be considered that the utterance of Raihan above is an utterance of the directive illocutionary act, due to the fact that this utterance tries to transform the reality to match to it.

### 5. Expression

M:(Mencubit Raihan)

M:(*Pinch Raihan*)

R: **Ah... sakit tau!**

R: (*Aw.. That hurts!*)

The conditions of the utterance above are:

#### a. Illocutionary Point

The utterance above has the null or empty directive of fit. Since, this utterance only expresses the feeling of the speaker. The speaker utters his feeling and it does not matter if the hearer does not give any respond.

#### b. Mode of Achievement

The utterance is uttered by the speaker in the form of declarative sentence. It can be considered as a successful utterance since the speaker is able to express her feeling to the hearer.

#### c. Propositional Condition

The propositional content condition of the utterance above is an expression of the speaker's feeling. The speaker only tries to express his to the hearer.

#### d. Preparatory Condition

In uttering the utterance, the speaker knows that the hearer would listen to what he said. This utterance also does not give any obligation to the hearer. Therefore, the speaker utters it.

#### e. Sincerity Condition

The utterance is a sincere utterance. Since, the speaker is success to tell the hearer about his feeling.

#### f. Degree of Strength

The utterance has no strength, as it does not give any obligation either for the speaker or the hearer. Finally, it can be said that the utterance above is an utterance with the expressive illocutionary act. As it shows the expression of the speaker's feeling.

### V. CONCLUSION

This chapter contains some significant points as the conclusion of the writing of the research. From this research, it is concluded that the kid in the age 5 years old have shown the act in their speech. The types of speech act which is found in the kid of 5 years old are directive, assertive, and expressive. From the descriptions above, it can be seen that kid under 5 years old is already able to produce speech act. The directive illocutionary act is mostly used according to the research. This is as result of the fact that in the age under 5 years old, kids are still having a big ego. They still do not care about their surroundings. They just pay attention on their needs and make everything for pleasure. However, in conveying meaning and intention, the 5 years old kids are already able to produce the indirect speech act. This shows that their cognitive has developed.

### REFERENCES

- Arikunto, Suharsimi. 2002. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.
- Danim, Sudarwan. 2004. *Metode Penelitian Untuk Ilmu-Ilmu Perilaku*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Dardjowidjojo, Soenjono. 1991. *Pellba 4 Pertemuan Linguistik Lembaga Bahasa Atma Jaya: keempat*. Jakarta: Kanisius.
- Mey, Jacob L. 1993. *Pragmatics an Introduction*. USA: Blackwell Publisher.
- Muhadjir, Noeng. 1998. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Rake Sarasih.
- Owens, Robert. E. Jr. 1998. *Language Development An Introduction Second Edition*. Ohio: Merrill Publishing Company.
- Sudaryanto. 1993. *Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa Pengantar Penelitian Kebudayaan Secara Linguistik*.

Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana. University Press.

Sumarsono. 2004. *Buku Ajar Filsafat Bahasa*. Jakarta: PT. Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia.

Susilo, Dody Eko. 2003. "*Analisis Transformasi Pada Lirik Lagu dalam Album POD Yang Berjudul Sattelite*". Semarang: S1 Sastra Inggris Diponegoro University.

Vanderveken, Daniel. 1990. *Meaning and Speech Act. Volume I. Principles of Language Use*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.

Yule, George. 1996. *Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.