THE GRAMMAR OF INTERPERSONAL EXCHANGES: COMMUNICATIVE ACTS USED IN EFL CLASS

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ABSTRACT

The language structures of standard English may change for some local area. Such as, Malaysia, Singapore and it involves Indonesia. We have to dig deeper understanding of the language used, especially for the ungrammatical utterance both spoken or written. It has also been tried by teachers while they are guided the students in class by varying and modifying the learning technique or method used. In fact, the grammatical processes and illocutionary acts are still found during speaking activity. This study aims to analyse the clause used in EFL class in which mood and speaker's intent do not match while speaking and identify the exact meaning of it. The findings show the declarative, interrogative, or imperative clause of mood has other Illocutionary acts used during speaking that was for directive, providing a threat, exclaiming, giving command, advice and conveying a negative statement. This result is supported by the generalization of mood of clause to the speaker's act that relate to the local language structure and its meaning which has differences with standard English.

Keywords: *Functional grammar, Interpersonal exchanges, Communicative acts*

Sari

Struktur bahasa dalam standar Bahasa Inggris dapat berubah ubah untuk beberapa daerah. Seperti, Malaysia, Singapura dan meliputi Indonesia. Kita harus menggali lebih dalam untuk memahami bahasa yang digunakan, terutama pengucapan yang tidak sesuai dengan tata bahasa baik lisan maupun tulisan. Hal ini juga telah dicoba oleh guru ketika mereka membimbing siswa di kelas dengan menggunakan teknik atau metode pembelajaran yang beragam dan terbaharukan. Namun, faktanya proses tata bahasa dan tindak ilokusi ini masih ditemui selama aktivitas berbicara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis klausa yang digunakan dalam kelas Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa asing (*EFL)* di mana *Mood* dan *speaker's intent* tidak sesuai ketika berbicara dan mengidentifikasi arti sesungguhnya. Temuan menunjukkan *Mood* klausa deklaratif, bentuk tanya, atau bentuk perintah memiliki tindak ilokusi lain yang digunakan ketika berbicara, diantaranya itu ungkapan direktif, memberikan ancaman, seruan, perintah, saran dan menyampaikan pernyataan negatif. Hasil ini didukung oleh generalisasi *Mood*

klausa untuk tindak pembicara yang berhubungan dengan struktur bahasa lokal dan maknanya yang memiliki perbedaan standar bahasa Inggris.

Introduction

The language structures of standard English may change for some local area. Such as, Malaysia, Singapore and it involves Indonesia. We have to dig deeper understanding of the language used, especially for the ungrammatical utterance both spoken or written. It has also been tried by teachers while they are guiding the students in class by varying and modifying the learning technique or method used. Misunderstanding often happens during speaking whether directly delivered or texted because speaker's intent received by the hearer are sometimes different. This issue comes up along with the online media used as the media in delivering the message both spoken or written.

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) developed by Michael Halliday in the 1960s which is assumed as the new model to most students in learning grammar since they only learn traditional grammar while they were as young learner in schools. In fact, they have used some expressions which show its functional grammar rather than traditional one. Halliday (1994) points out that functional grammar is so-called because its conceptual framework is a functional one rather than a formal one. It is functional in three distinct senses: in its interpretation (1) of texts, (2) of the system, and (3) of the elements of linguistic structures. It means that functional grammar is quite different with traditional grammar which concerned with the organization within sentences and looks at a language as a set of rules while functional grammar focuses on the way language is put together so that meaning is communicated for particular purposes, and looks at a language as a system of meaning. In other words, functional grammar is different from traditional grammar in that it focuses on language as a meaning-making resource rather than as a set of rules (Schleppegrell, 2004).

Analyzing and describing sentences in isolation is not enough. We need to understand why some well-formed sentences may not be appropriate in some contexts and why some fragments or otherwise 'anomalous' sentences may be quite acceptable in certain contexts (Deterding and Poedjosodarmo, 2001). It means that it is important for language learners who need to evaluate or analyze language produced by others, both written and spoken. Basically, Halliday's model looks at the clause as representing simultaneously three different types of meaning. There are referred to as Experiential, Interpersonal, and Textual (Deterding and Poedjosodarmo, 2001).

Concerning to the problem of this writing, this case study aims to analyse the interpersonal clause used in which mood and speaker's intent do not match while speaking and identify the meaning of it. In other words, we sometimes called it as Indirect Illocutionary Acts. Interpersonal meaning includes (1) the mood of the clause and how it functions and (2) forms identifying the roles of speaker and hearer (Deterding and Poedjosodarmo, 2001).

Deterding and Poedjosodarmo mentioned five moods in English, called Declarative, Yes-No Interrogative, WH-Interrogative, Imperative, and Exclamative. However, it is difficult to identify how many illocutionary acts there are, clearly said that there are more than five. Those are Apologizing, showing sympathy, expressing gratitude, praising, giving advice, making an offer, greeting someone, other acts. Other linguistic features may be involved in the expression of intent which includes intonation and the use of modals. It can be concluded that one mood, i.e. Declarative may have more than one illocutionary acts if the intonation changes (falling tone to rising intonation).

Butt et al (2000) add that sometimes speakers want to signal that they are not definite about their messages, that is, they are looking for a position between a definite yes and a definite no. they do this by changing the configuration of the Mood Block in some way. Their range of options for doing this is known as Modality and it has its own metalanguage.

Previous research has proposed that SNSs provide a forum for social interaction and interpersonal exchange (Donath & Boyd, 2004). The findings of this research support a proposition, with almost 60% of status messages containing an expressive speech act to convey emotion towards the receiver(s). Further, 39% of speech acts were produced to have the receiver form an impression or belief (i.e., assertives), 6% to seek to get the receiver(s) to do something (i.e., directive) and 3% to commit to future action (i.e., commissive). The proportion of expressive speech acts within status messages was higher than all other categories, and expressive and assertive speech acts were significantly higher than other categories, indicating that SNS users are predominantly expressing emotions and presenting facets of themselves in these new media.

Methods

It was descriptive qualitative research. The first-grade students of English department in one of universities in Cirebon participated in conducting this research. Incidental interview (key informant) and classroom observation (note taking, self-report) were used to compile this writing. The data got while teaching learning process was being conducted.

Research Findings

Data exposures:

W-H Interrogatives are often used to elicit an item of information in the neutral instance (Downing and Locke, 1992). Yet, in this below conversation both lecturer and student express a directive, especially in conjunction with a modal:

(1) L : Your score is not good enough. It's very low.
    What will you do next?
   Ss : I will study more harder and discuss with my friends.

Let us now examine the intonation. 'what will you do next?' (1) used raising intonation with its emphasizing on it. Besides the speaker does not ask for the information of what the addressee will do, the illocutionary acts express more. She asked the addressee to study more than what she/he did before. It can be shown by addressee's response that 'she/he will study more harder and try to discuss with her/his friends'.

Downing and Locke mention the use of interrogative to convey a negative statement as in (2),

> (2) L : **Do you expect me to explain the material from the beginning to the end?**
>   Ss : (None of them answer lecturer's question)

In a direct illocution or direct speech act, interrogative yes-no refers to find out if something is true. While in the sentence 'Do you expect me to explain the material from the beginning to the end?' is identified to convey a negative statement. It means that the speaker does not ask whether the addressee will answer 'yes' or 'no' but she conveys to not explain the material from the beginning to the end. It is supported by addressee's response that no one of them answer the speaker's question. They know that the material should be read and discussed together as the activity of teaching learning process.

They list additional functions that imperatives can perform as providing the condition for a threat as below statement (3):

> (3) L: **Do like this anymore you'll fail for this subject**.
>   (this statement is delivered while lecturer was discussing the student's task in class)

The form of statement above is imperative which has meaning to get someone to do something or stop doing something. In fact, the sentence 'Do like this anymore you'll fail for this subject' has different illocutionary acts. The speaker provides a threat to addressee who did inappropriate lesson plan. He needs to revise it as the procedure given. If a declarative sentence is uttered with a high fall rather than a low or normal fall, it is likely to be interpreted as an exclamation, perhaps conveying that the speaker is surprised as in (4):

> Ss : What is the difference of 'at' and 'in'?

> (4) L : **That's not <u>A</u> question!** Have you read your reference?
>   Ss : Not yet
> (5) L : **You <u>read</u> it first on page 117-118!** Anyone wants to explain it?

The statement (4) formed declarative sentence. But its meaning turns a declarative into an exclamative. It may also suggest disagreement or sarcasm. It is caused of the intonation uttered by speaker with a high fall as graphic shown. Here, the speaker was surprised of interlocutor said (student) that should be clear if he did what the lecturer instructed to read the reference at first. It is obviously described by the next sentence which implied by the speaker 'Have you read your reference?'

While it has been said before that modals can be used to express speaker's intent as in (5) 'You read it first on page 117-118'. Modal can turn a statement (declarative) into a command. As in (4), the speaker uttered her intonation though the peak of the falling tone is likely to be higher than the other moods. The speaker does not offer something to the addressee, whether he will read the reference or not, but the instruction given is a must to do by the addressee.

It is in line with Donath & Boyd (2004) whose findings of the research support a proposition, with 6% to seek to get the receiver(s) to do something (i.e., directive). Directives, as other mood of clauses, such as declarative, interrogative (yes-no), interrogative (Wh-), and imperative may have variety of speaker's intents. Downing and Locke also list additional functions that imperatives can perform as giving advice.

(In some class, one of students get cough and cough continuously.)
(6) L : 'get your drink.'

Referring to that situation, the speaker wants to give an advice to the addressee by taking her bottle of water. Here, the mood of imperatives 'get your drink' (6) express to give some advice instead of ask someone to do something or stop doing something.

Moreover, they list other functions of imperatives such as expressing disbelief, providing the condition of a promise, giving warning and making an offer as showed by their findings that almost 60% of status messages containing an expressive speech act to convey emotion towards the receiver(s). Further, 39% of speech acts were produced to have the receiver form an impression or belief (i.e., assertives), and 3% to commit to future action (i.e., commissive).

Those analyses will have more different interpretation to each researcher or reader which depends on the situation and utterance received, especially if we analyse written text. It is in line with Deterding and Poedjosodarmo's statement that however, though there is a fixed number of moods (declarative, yes-no interrogative, Wh-interrogative, imperative and exclamative), it is somewhat difficult to come up with a fixed list of possible intents. Even the boundaries of established ones are sometimes unclear. For example, *directive* is the term that is used to express asking someone to do / get something. What about warnings and threats? Clearly, they are trying to get someone to do something or stop doing something, but it seems also that they are semantically sufficiently distinct to deserve having their own labels. It is also shown in the sentence of 'That's not a question!'. The reader may identify it as disagreement or sarcasm, while the speaker assumed that it is exclamative intents. They add "however, despite these fuzzy areas, we can see that the kinds of distinctions made are very useful because they not only label forms but also provide a framework for us to understand how those forms function in acts of communication".

Conclusion

In this research, the writer hopes that this study is able to enrich and contribute in English study material and the literary on English teaching and learning process, especially in giving description about functional grammar. In addition, it also can be used as the reference for those who are interested in conducting a linguistics study. Moreover, this research gives an additional information for both English learner and teacher not only to enhance their knowledge to obtain a greater understanding of the languages used, but also to compare the structure of different languages. Obviously, functional grammar theory plays a significant role in EFL's life because the study of functional grammar, especially the interpersonal meaning is very important to know the exact meaning which has dozens of possible illocutionary acts. Besides its significance in teaching and learning, involving functional grammar, language teaching and learning will be more interesting and meaningful.

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Biography

Dwiniasih was born on October 13 in Cirebon. She is a lecturer of English department in Swadaya Gunung Jati University Cirebon. Her subjects are grammar and micro teaching. She graduated from magister of education in Semarang University state. She has many interests in educational research. One of them is analysing pre-service teacher problem faced during teacher training. She is reachable at dwini6644@gmail.com.