



The Speech Acts and the Communicative Functions Performed in Thesis Examinations: a Pragmatic Analysis

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Abstract

Being a communicative event, a thesis examination process might generate a number of speech acts that possibly imply various meanings. To interpret meaning, a pragmatic analysis was implemented. The data analyzed comprised the authentic speech acts occurring within four thesis examination situations which were conducted by the EESP of FKIP Untan. The data analysis started by transcribing the speech recordings and by identifying the structures of the speech acts. This was followed by categorizing the communicative functions being performed. The last stage involved interpreting the contextual meaning of the speech acts. Three qualitative conclusions are arrived at in connection with and emerging from interpretations of the textual data: (1) the speech acts produced by the participants used various structures such as statements, questions, commands, instructions, prohibition and description; (2) the speech acts denoted various kinds of communicative or speech functions like expressives, directives, representatives, referentials, commissives, and metalinguistics; and (3) the occurrence of one particular communicative function can dynamically entail specific kinds of communicative functions in the light of the available context. Some categories of speech functions were not consistent with the purpose of the communicative event of thesis examination.

Keywords

pragmatic analysis, speech acts, communicative functions

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1. INTRODUCTION

A thesis examination in Teacher Training and Education Faculty and in other faculties of Tanjungpura University can be viewed as a formal academic communicative event. It normally involves one student as a *sarjana* candidate on the one hand and a lecturer team on the other. Being a formal academic communicative event within a limited duration, there must be such a formal rule to be neatly accomplished in a thesis examination process. Normally, the structure of the event begins with an opening questioning and answering session. All this is followed by announcing or declaring the result of the performance and a closing session. For each session, there must be one or more particular participant(s) of the event who have to communicate an idea or information by producing one or more speech events with a number of speech acts in a proper and orderly manner. As speech acts have several communicative functions (Yule, 1996), the speech acts being produced by each participant should be consistent with the functions required in

the communicative event. In other words, the communicative functions implied from the speech acts produced by the speaker should be relevant to the available communicative event itself.

The session of asking and answering a question, particularly, is the main session of the communicative event of a thesis examination. In this session, the examiners have to deliver questions, criticism, adjudication, clarification or give feedback as well as possible appreciation to the candidate. Such relevant speech functions are consequently very important to be delivered by the examiners for the purpose of assessing or valuing the candidate's performance fairly and objectively. Ideally, playing the role of an evaluator or a reviewer within a limited duration, a thesis examiner is required to evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's performance evenly and wisely. Therefore, the speech acts delivered by the examiners should imply communicative purposes which are consistent with those speech functions and, correspondingly, the

candidate's response should represent his/her comprehension on those speech acts.

As a matter of fact, to keep playing a single role of an examiner or evaluator during a communicative event of thesis examination consistently is not easy due to there being multiple roles to play when faced with the candidate (student). That is why while acting as the examiner or reviewer in the event, he/she cannot totally be free from acting him/herself as the lecturer or teacher, supervisor, and adviser. Therefore, the mixing roles can be represented from the speech events occurring as well as the speech acts produced by the participants in the communicative event. As a result, the rules or the norms of the communicative event might be broken. For this reason, it will be something valuable to analyze the speech acts produced by the participants in the communicative event of thesis examination conducted by the English Education Study Program (EESP) of Teacher Training and Education Faculty (*Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan – FKIP*) Tanjungpura University (*UNTAN*). The result of the analysis is expected to represent the actuality of communicative functions performed by the examiners in such an academic event of communication.

As an attempt at meeting these challenges that research should rise to, the objectives of this research are formulated as follows: (1) to identify the kinds of language patterns which are dominantly uttered by the participants in creating their speech acts in the communicative situation of thesis examination; (2) to classify the speech functions performed by the speech acts produced by the participants in the communicative situation of thesis examination; and (3) to interpret the contextual meaning of the speech functions performed by the participants in the communicative *sarjana* candidate of thesis examination with reference to any possible kinds of communicative events they might denote.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A communicative event normally involves a number of participants who produce a series of utterances with various categories of speech acts. Each speech act usually denotes a certain communicative function. Eventually, this communicative function entails a certain meaning or communication purpose of the speaker. A pragmatic study is relevant to be implemented in understanding what the speaker actually means by his/her utterances while performing his/her speech (Yule, 1996, p.4).

For this reason, this research applied a pragmatic analysis. To be consistent, the following description discusses some relevant concepts to pragmatic study, especially the ones directly connected to the issues of this research. Because the focus of this study is on the communicative event of thesis examinations which are conducted by EESP at FKIP UNTAN, it cannot be separated from the point of view of a teaching-learning paradigm. Therefore, any relevant

concepts which deal with teaching-learning and examination or assessment process need to be discussed in advance.

2.1 Teaching Learning Process and Thesis (Skripsi) Writing

A teaching-learning process is such a complex process that a teaching-learning profession needs to consider many factors in deciding how the process should be practiced in classroom interaction. Moreover, the process should be carried out dynamically within various strategies. Commonly, certain approaches or language and teaching-learning theories, that a teacher or lecturer is familiar with, determine the choice of such procedures within the process, as it is stated by Brown (1994, p.75) that the best teachers take a few calculated risks in the classroom, trying new ways in many activities. The inspiration for such innovation comes from the approach level, but the feedback that they gather from real implementation informs their whole understanding of the meaning of learning and teaching.

In addition, a teaching-learning process in every education level should be consistent with the teaching-learning outcomes which are initially formulated in the educational institution curriculum or syllabus. For the outcomes of the tertiary level of education or university level, particularly, they are considered as internalization and accumulation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies which must be achieved through a structural educational process and they include one particular field of study (Bambang Sujanarko, 2014).

In the case of EESP, it is one study program in the tertiary educational institution which has institutional goals to make the outputs acquire both English language competence and competence of English as a Foreign Language Teaching. Consequently, a series of relevant subject matters should be provided for the students. In relation to this, Brown (1994) stated that the type of curriculum that is designed to fit such typical student goals is English for Academic Purposes (EAP). It is a term that is very broadly applied to any course, module, or workshop in which students are taught to deal with academically related language and subject matter.

Furthermore, Bambang Sujanarko (2014) also explained that based on the Indonesia National Qualification Framework (*Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia* or *KKNI*) the learning outcomes of an education process, a job training and experience are categorized into 9 levels of qualification. They are grouped into three categories of qualification. The first one (level 1-3) is for the occupation of operators. The second is for technicians and analysts and the third one is for experts or specialists.

For the graduates of EESP at FKIP UNTAN, particularly, they are supposed to acquire the third category of qualifications. One of the structured will

facilitate them to attain the ability to develop science and technology, and or arts according to their major (field of study) or the practice of their profession through research. This qualification is required to enable the graduates to create innovative and ratified or approval products or creations. This category of qualifications is developed in accordance with the vision and mission of FKIP Untan as well as those of EESP (Dokumen Evaluasi Diri Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP UNTAN, 2015). For this purpose, the learning outcomes are formulated in accordance with a series of relevant subject matters that must be accomplished by the students. In addition, the learning materials should be well designed accordingly. Accordingly, the person in charge, normally a professional teaching team, has to develop relevant curriculum or syllabi with all their pertinent teaching sets to support the realization of the teaching-learning process as well as the achievement of the learning outcomes.

As many higher educations have adopted the competency-based model (Tudor, 2013), the learning objectives should be formulated by referring to key generic besides specific required competencies, and they ought to match the learning outcomes. In order to make them come into reality, a methodological plurality is strongly advised. It is also suggested that the lecturers include student-centered activities in their language teaching program (Nunan, 2013) as well as critical, autonomous, and lifelong learning. That is why learning modalities which involve a fast range of classroom organization are advocated. In addition, the roles of the teacher and the roles of students need to be redefined, with special attention to successful learning. Finally, evaluation becomes more individual or personalized, more creative and diversified, and more transparent; with the inclusion of better attention to formative evaluation, process evaluation, or on-going assessment and of the students' individual, private, or personal works. Consistently, the incorporated evaluation procedures for competency-based assessment may include papers and projects, task-based testing, oral presentations, and observation techniques, objective tests, reports and/or diaries on practical sessions, and oral interviews (in Cañado, 2013). Therefore, research project and thesis writing, namely '*skripsi*', is considered as a final project in many universities in Indonesia. It is one of the requirements that university students have to fulfill in order to accomplish their studies.

2.2 Thesis Examination as a Communicative Situation and Event

A thesis examination is a kind of authentic assessment. It is characterized by project work-based and student-centered. According to Richards and Renandya (2003), an authentic assessment is considered as an alternative or informal assessment

as it is based on a new paradigm which includes: focusing on the process of communication, learner-centeredness, integrating all skills, emphasizing on the process, open-ended and multiple solutions, using tests that also teach. That is why thesis writing and thesis examination are necessary to be administered for the *sarjana* candidate of the university. It can measure the learner's ability to use language holistically in real-life situations. The result of such kind of assessment can inform the comprehensive language ability of the candidate as well as the achievement quality of the whole subject matters that have been learned.

Moreover, a thesis examination, which is conducted in most universities in Indonesia, is the final assessment procedure that the students have to take after completing a number of former examinations during the semester periods. It is conducted after the student has completed writing his/her research report writing and after fulfilling some additional requirements required by the institution. As a matter of fact, the thesis examination should belong to a kind of performance evaluation where a teacher assesses and makes a decision or a judgment about the examinee's demonstration of competencies in designing a product, performing a response, or doing a presentation. It is primarily practiced for four types of learning targets: deep understanding, reasoning, skills, and products.

According to McMillan (2007), there are some strengths of using performance tests. It integrates evaluation with teaching. So, learning takes place during an evaluation or assessment. It tends to be more authentic than other types of assessments and engages students to be more active. It also provides additional ways for students to show what they know and can do. Conversely, some weaknesses are also there. It is difficult to establish its reliability. Moreover, the measurement error tends to happen due to the subjective nature of the scoring and it is difficult to plan for an amount of time needed. To minimize the weaknesses unfairness or bias should be avoided in the assessment tasks and procedures. From the perspective of sociolinguistics as well as pragmatics, however, a thesis examination is not only considered as a process of measuring the learning achievement of a candidate on his/her understanding, reasoning, skills, and products but also a communicative situation or a communicative event. It is the context within which a number of utterances or speech acts are produced. It includes the setting, participants and communicative purposes (Hymes, 1972; Saville-Troike, 2006). They can be references that should be taken into consideration in the effort to understand what the speakers (the participants) mean to say with their utterances.

Being a performance assessment, a thesis examination is usually conducted out of the classroom. It is normally set up in one particular room of the campus building. It involves a number of participants with particular role-relationship and

with particular communicative purposes, such as for testing, evaluating or assessing in one part and responding, defending or reporting on the other. Besides, the situation and the event is bounded with such rules of speaking by which the participants are required to produce their speech according to their role-relationship. Likewise, they have to strictly follow such norms of turn-taking as well as the use of one or more particular linguistic codes. Such a situation is in agreement with how a speech event is defined (Yule (1996, p.57).

The contextual information from the situation and the event of the thesis examination will denote the contextual meaning of the speech acts produced by the participants while the thesis examination process is in progress. More specifically, the interpretation of the contextual meaning of the speech acts should represent the fairness, the objectivity as well as the reliability of the assessment or otherwise.

Based on the ethnography of communication approach or ethnography of speaking approach, speech event is commonly replaced by a communicative event (Saville-Troike, 2006). They are interchangeable. In this writing, however, the writer prefers using communicative situations and communicative events to the other ones. The communicative situation, in particular, is recognized as the context within which communication occurs. It is usually associated with speech. Nevertheless, it is not always marked by speech. Therefore, it is not purely communication. The examples include ceremonies, fights, hunts, religious services, court trials, parties, auctions, classes in school and the like. Meanwhile, communicative events are both communicative and governed by rules or norms of speaking. They are activities in which participants communicate via language in some conventional modes to arrive at some outcome. communicative or speech events take place within a communicative situation and are composed of one or more speech acts. Being a communicative situation, a class in school, for example, will occur some communicative events such as greeting, lecturing or explaining, discussing, questioning and so forth. (Hymes, 1972; Fasold, 1996; Yule, 1996; Saville-Troike, 2006). To sum up, being both a kind of communicative situation and communicative event, a thesis examination process will consequently make the participants produce a number of speech acts by following certain rules or norms of speech.

2.3 Speech Acts and Speech Functions

Speech act is one of the concepts in pragmatics. As it is already mentioned, speech acts or communicative acts appear in a communicative event taking the forms of utterances (Yule, 1996). They are the remarks on the communicative event. They represent levels distinct from sentences, and not recognizable with any single measure of other levels of grammar. It gets its significance from the social contexts, grammatical forms, and intonations. Besides, different speech acts intensity may affect

dissimilar immediate mediation that lies between the common levels of grammar and the other speech event or situation in that it implicates both linguistic forms and social norms (Hymes, 1972).

The utterances produced in the speech acts usually consist of three related acts. The first is locutionary act, which is the basic act of utterance of or producing a meaningful linguistic expression. The second is illocutionary act or illocutionary force. It is performed via the communicative force of an utterance. The utterance “*I’ve just made some coffee*”, for instance, might mean a statement, an offer, an explanation, or for some other communicative purposes. The third is the perlocutionary act. The utterance is created with a function of intending it to have an effect. Depending on the circumstances, the same utterance (“*I’ve just made some coffee*”) is uttered by the speaker on the assumption that the hearer will recognize the effect he/she intended, for example, to account for a wonderful smell, or to get the hearer to drink some coffee (Yule, 1996, p.48-49).

In the case of the ESL situation studied by Saville-Troike (2006), she further explained that “... communicative act is made possible to determine the relative frequency of different communicative functions for students in different events and across time and to compare the linguistic form that was selected within events across time for each type of act (p.25)”. In other words, speech acts will implicate different communicative functions.

In the meantime, communicative functions are referred to directly related to the participants’ purposes and needs (Hymes, 1972). In sociolinguistic research, communicative functions can be categorized into expressive utterances, directive utterances, referential utterances, metalinguistic utterances, poetic utterances, and phatic utterances (Holmes, 2001, p. 259). Almost the same way, Yule (1996) explained that there are five types of general functions performed by speech acts. They are declarations, representatives, expressives, directives, and commissives.

In addition to the classification of the speech act mentioned above, Yule (1996) also distinguished the types of speech act from the basis of structure and its relationship to the communicative function. They are categorized as direct speech act and an indirect speech act. Whenever there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function, it is a direct speech act and whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, it is an indirect speech act.

In conclusion, a thesis examination is not merely an assessment process but also as a communicative situation. Therefore, a series of utterances in the forms of speech acts must be uttered by the speakers or the participants involved in the communicative situation. Simultaneously, a number of communicative functions are produced. They all might implicate various implicit communicative

purposes that need to be interpreted appropriately. The interpretations should represent the enduring process of the examination.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a pragmatic study. It is due to the meaning of an utterance produced by the speaker should not be directly interpreted from the language forms. The real meaning can only be interpreted based on the purpose of what a speaker means with his/her utterance in such a situation. We need to understand both the grammar level and the entire social context in which a sentence or an utterance was uttered. This level of interpretation occurs within the work of pragmatics. A pragmatic study explores the role that context plays in the interpretation of what people say, (Mayer, 2009, p. 48).

3.1. The Study Approach and Method

Pragmatics is the study of the use of context to make inferences about meaning (Fasold, 1996). Pragmatic competence includes the ability to act and interact by means of language. It is a necessary and sometimes daunting learning task for second and foreign language (Kasper and Roever, 2005). In acquiring pragmatic competence of a second language the learner has not only to do things with the target language words but also how communicative actions and the words that implement them are both responsive to and shape situations, activities and social relationships (Austin, 1962). In relation to this, Leech (1983) stated that the two domains of pragmatic competence are referred to sociopragmatic and pragmatic competence. This research is closer to the second domain than the first one. It focuses on the interaction of pragmatics and linguistic forms. It comprises the knowledge and ability for use of conventions of means (such as the strategies for realizing speech acts) and conventions of the form (such as the linguistic forms implementing speech act strategies (Clark and Thomas in Kasper and Roever, 2005).

Furthermore, it is stated that studies on instruction in pragmatics rely both on the theories of the teaching object and of the process of L2 learning and teaching. The first one includes such approaches to discourse organization and management as conversation analysis and different types of discourse analysis with the focus of study on speech acts which are based on speech act theory and empirical findings on speech act realization. This present study analyzed a kind of conversation. Precisely, it was a question and answer session occurring in some communicative situation of thesis examination which was conducted by EESP of FKIP UNTAN. Each situation involved participants, a lecturer team on one side and a sarjana candidate on the other. It was a formal speech situation that was

occurring along with such formal rules of speaking that must be strictly followed by the participants.

The interpretation of contextual meaning in the pragmatic study requires a consideration of how speakers organize what they want to say in accordance with whom they are talking to, where, when and under what circumstances (Yule, 1996). Therefore, the analysis is working with speech forms and their pragmatic functions. Likewise, it is stated that the pragmatic features examined include not only speech acts but also pragmatic routines, discourse markers, pragmatic fluency, and conversational ability – features that require study in a full discourse context (Kasper and Roever, (2005).

The speech acts analyzed in this research were the ones occurred in the communicative events of the thesis examination situation. They were categorized as observational data of spoken interaction, which especially belonged to authentic discourse. They are common to be observed to study pragmatic development in ordinary conversation and institutional encounters inside and outside of language classrooms (Achiba in Kasper and Roever, 2005; Walsh, 2006). For this reason, audio-tape records were crucial to be applied in collecting interactional data. To be consistent with the purpose of the research, the data were taken from the authentic speech recordings of five different communicative situations of the thesis examination. These five situations were purposely selected by considering the language competency level or the learning achievement of the candidates, ranging from the average to the excellent one. They were indicated by the reference of their GPA and their thesis examination score. The five numbers of events were taken merely in consideration with time constraints.

3.2. Data Analysis

With reference to interaction analysis and discourse or conversation analysis (McKey, 2006). This research used some recordings of natural or authentic oral interactions that occurred in several communicative situations of thesis examination. They were taken from the question and answer session during the thesis examination process. The whole examination process took 120 minutes (2 hours). The question and answer session was the main session. The duration was within 100 minutes distributed to the four examiners. The distribution of the time was based on the role of each examiner. The first examiner was normally given more or less 40 minutes to spend on questions, criticism, suggestions or the like. The second examiner took more or less 30 minutes only. Meanwhile, the third and the fourth examiners should only spend 10 to 15 minutes duration. Both, the third and the fourth were actually not supposed to be the real examiners. Instead, they were supporters or promoters to the candidate due to their roles as his/her supervisors.

The process of data analysis was formerly started by transcribing the speech recordings and then followed

by identifying the language patterns of the speech acts produced by the speakers involved in communicative situations. The next step was categorizing the communicative functions (Yule, 1996; Holmes, 2001) of the speech acts performed by the speakers.

Since a pragmatic study aims at understanding meaning from the utterances spoken by the speaker within the available context, the last step of the analysis to be practiced was by interpreting the meaning denoted by the speech acts and the speech functions. In this case, the analysis of the contextual meaning of the speech acts was carried out by considering both linguistic and sociocultural variables pertaining to several different perspectives of variations which usually co-occur in the actual practices. The process of analyzing the contextual meaning was referred to several considerations stated by Gumperz (1982): (1) the differences of cultural assumptions on the context and on appropriate actions and intentions; (2) the differences of shaping an argument or information; and (3) the differences of speaking. What the sociocultural variables in this research are regarding the role-relationship between the examiner and the candidate which has been occurring within the context of teaching and learning situations on campus. The role-relationship in such a context normally makes the participants create a number of communicative events with a number of particular rules of speaking as well. Therefore, the last step of the data analysis in this research was to interpret the speech acts produced by the participants in the communicative situation by referring to any kind of communicative events they might denote.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis was started by displaying any kind of language patterns used in the utterances or any forms of the speech acts produced by the participants and then followed by classifying any communicative functions implied from those utterances had been conducted. The next was to describe the findings by interpreting the contextual meaning of the speech functions performed by the participants in the communicative events.

4.1. Findings

Based on the description and the categorization of the communicative functions occurred in the conversation, it is found that a single utterance or speech act in different contexts may denote different communicative functions. Various kinds of linguistic forms or structures were produced to denote various communicative functions. However, there was not always direct relationship between the structure and the function in the communicative situation of thesis examination. Therefore, both direct speech act and indirect speech act were

produced to perform such communicative functions, as they are illustrated below.

The first is the expressive utterances. As they were performed to express the speaker's feelings, various linguistic forms like questions, particularly yes-no questions, positive statements, and exclamations. Besides that, denials or renunciations were also commonly used to indicate expressive communicative function. On one side, the kinds of feelings which were commonly expressed by an examiner were disappointment and sometimes acceptance or satisfaction to the candidate. On the other, the candidate might show his/her regret and thankfulness or gratitude to the examiner.

Tones, especially raising tones, were also practiced by examiners in addition to the questions, statements or denials. They indicated the expressive functions, mostly for expressing disappointment. An apology "I'm sorry" was also commonly used to represent the speaker's regret. It was mostly uttered by the candidate. Meanwhile, single words like 'okay' and repetitions of statements were used to denote acceptance or satisfaction referring to the language patterns used for such expressives, both direct and indirect speech acts were used to express this communicative function. Direct speech acts were chosen by the examiners to indicate his/her disappointment directly in order to make the candidate aware of the mistakes he/she had done. Meanwhile, the indirect ones were formerly used as a correction or a refusal to the inappropriate or the inaccurate things to do by the candidate. This kind of speech acts indirectly denoted the examiners' disappointment.

The second, directive function was commonly represented by direct commands or instructions, questions, negative commands or prohibitions. They belong to both direct and indirect speech acts. This communicative function was performed by the examiner to mean asking the candidate to answer questions, to read the text written in the thesis, to explain or to clarify something related to the thesis writing, to fix or revise the inappropriate part of the thesis writing. Negative commands or prohibitions were also performed to mean asking the candidate to make correction or revision on the inappropriate or incorrect parts of his/her thesis writing.

The third is the representative and referential functions. They were performed through various structures such as statements of facts, both in the forms of positive and negative statements, prohibitions or reminders, assertions, and descriptions. In a particular situation, these communicative functions entailed the more specific functions, for instance, an assertion can mean to show what the speaker believed to be the case (true or false). Positive and negative statements were uttered to possibly denote the speaker's (examiner) agreement or disagreement towards the candidate's ideas. Meanwhile, a description may mean to be a

reference from which the examiner formulated his/her questions to ask the candidate. It can also mean support to the speaker's own belief. In certain contexts, the other structures like prohibitions or reminders were used to represent a conclusion or suggestion. Such utterances were commonly articulated in the last part of one series of utterances.

The fourth is the commissive function. This communicative function was performed through various structures, such as direct commands or instructions, questions, conditional sentences, and denial or prohibition. In addition, raising tone was sometimes pronounced while uttering those structures. Such communicative function occurred in the thesis examination situation to mean intimidating or threatening the candidate by the examiner to ensure that the candidate would do what the examiner had already assigned or directed. The intimidation was performed to denote the examiner's refusal on what the candidate had done or written. It could be such a strong reminder to the candidate that he/she had to make the revision of any mistakes he/she had done.

The last is the metalinguistic utterances. They were articulated in relation to the language matters in the examination situation. The linguistic forms of questions, prohibitions or reminders, descriptions, instructions, suggestions and references were used to perform this communicative function. These utterances occurred whenever language problems were performed by the candidate. Metalinguistic utterances were performed for their function to test or assess the candidate's knowledge or understanding of certain language forms of English language, such as the words, grammar, or the other parts of linguistic knowledge, like sounds or pronunciation, spelling, and diction. The other function of metalinguistic utterances in this context was to make a correction by an examiner on the language mistakes or errors committed by the candidate.

4.2. Discussions

From the findings, it was noticeable that the communicative event of a thesis examination had required the participants to perform various communicative functions with various language patterns as their speech acts or utterances. In one single question and answer session of the examination, various communicative functions occurred. They were not only limited to denote the functions of asking and answering questions between examiners and the candidate, as they naturally happened to an examination process but also to denote various communicative functions. Therefore, each participant should be aware of the occurrence of such various functions, especially the candidate, in order to maintain the communication process to run smoothly.

It was found that the utterances or speech acts were more dominantly produced by the examiner than the

candidate during a single question and answer session. It is consistent with the role-relationship between the two parts of participants, in which the examiners were superior towards the candidate. It is, unfortunately, contrary to the fact that the candidate, who was supposed to communicate him/herself thoroughly as he/she was being assessed for his/her knowledge understanding, reasoning, skills and products, did not consistently perform as such. Moreover, it was also inconsistent with the nature of the thesis examination itself, as it has been noted that a thesis examination is a kind of authentic assessment which is characterized by project-based and student-centered. It should be based on new paradigm, which includes (1) focus on communication; (2) learner-centered; (3) integrated skills; (4) emphasis on process; (5) open-ended, multiple solutions; and (6) tests that also teach (Richards and Renandya, 2003).

The utterances or direct speech acts which denoted the expressions of acceptance and appreciation were very rare. They were not comparably performed with denials and refusals. In fact, the available expressive utterances performed by the examiners referred more to the feeling of disappointment, denial or refusal than the acceptance or appreciation.

Following the new paradigm mentioned above, the candidate should be the center in an examination process. Such a role-relationship should be represented by the performance of the candidate during the session through the candidate's domination of the speech. Besides, the candidate should have the role to respond, to defend, to describe as well as to clarify things pertaining to what he/she had done in his/her research. Meanwhile, the examiner should have the role to assess the performance of the candidate objectively or fairly, to weigh up the candidate's performance proportionally or to judge comparably which part of the candidate's thesis writing is already good and which one is not yet.

Moreover, directive utterances dominated the examiner's communicative functions. Intimidation with direct and speech acts was also performed as it was the part of commissives utterances. Such a communicative event might cause the candidate to feel anxious about the examination situation. It is also contradictory to one of the principles of an authentic assessment which should be informal and emphasis on process. In other words, the process of thesis writing and the research project should be appreciated similarly to the product.

Besides, Indirect speech acts were used by examiners in addition to direct speech acts in performing various communicative functions. The use of indirect speech acts by examiner might mislead to different meaning from the one he/she really mean to communicate. However, indirect speech acts might become more appropriate to be performed for the positive values that they can

imply, such as, politeness, keeping one's face and avoiding the candidate from being anxious.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The conclusion is formulated consistent with the research questions as well as the result of findings and discussion, as they are described below.

5.1. Conclusion

Based on the findings as well as discussion, there are some points to be concluded it can be concluded. The first point is regarding the language patterns or the structures which were dominantly uttered for the speaker's speech acts in the communicative situation of the thesis examination. With regard to this, it is concluded that various structures, like statements, questions, commands, instructions, prohibition, and description were uttered by the participants to denote various kinds of communicative or speech functions like expressives, directives, representatives, referentials, commissives, and metalinguistics.

The second is regarding the communicative functions or the speech functions performed from the speech acts produced by the participants in the communicative situation of thesis examination. With reference to this, it is concluded that those mentioned speech acts represented various speech functions in accordance with the context. Moreover, each of these speech functions may entail the more specific communicative functions. From one side of the participants, an expressive utterance may denote an expression of disappointment and denial or refusal incomparably with the expression of acceptance, satisfaction or appreciation. From the other, it represented a regret, thankfulness, and appreciation. Meanwhile, directives may denote a real instruction or command and a real prohibition. They were only performed by the examiners

Likewise, commissive utterances may entail some detail communicative functions. They denoted an instruction, prohibition and intimidation or threat. Meanwhile, representatives and referential utterances occurred from various structured like statements of facts, assertion, prohibition or reminder and a description. They were also uttered by the examiner to possibly denote what the speaker believed to be the case, a prohibition, suggestion, conclusion, as well as to be the reference of a question or evidence to support the speaker's belief. The last speech function is metalinguistics. They occurred in the conversations to mean testing the candidate's knowledge on the relevant language matters performed by the examiner as well as checking or correcting the mistakes or errors committed by the candidate.

The last point to be concluded was referring to which kinds of communicative events that might be denoted by the speech functions performed by the participants in the communicative situation of a

thesis examination. With regard to this, the communicative events occurred in the examination were entailed by the communicative functions themselves. One particular communicative function may represent more specific functions. In other words, the occurrence of a certain communicative function was dynamic following the relevant context within which the communication happened. The candidate's responses determined the coming communicative function performed by the examiner. In addition, the examiner's mood can determine the speech acts and the communicative functions he/she performed. Such a mood was marked by the speaker's tone voice while producing the utterances.

5.2. Suggestions

Since various forms or structures of speech acts may be dynamically uttered to denote one particular speech or communicative function, especially the one performed by the examiner, the candidates should recognize any possible meaning entailed by the speech acts. By then, they will be able to comprehend the utterances well and to respond accordingly as they are expected to do so.

In addition, an examination process is naturally supposed to assess the candidate's performance objectively and fairly. Therefore, appreciation and correction and the like should be performed comparably by the examiner. The candidate, on the other side, should be given more opportunity to express himself/herself to show his/her real performance due to his/her responsibility to actively engage performing all-out his/her best performance during the examination. Having adequate verbal expressions from the candidate during the examination, the examiners will be able to assess the candidate's understanding of the knowledge, reasoning skills, and products more proportionally and objectively. Such a practice can reduce the measurement error and the inaccurate conclusion on the candidate's performance.

Moreover, the performance of the directive function, especially the one represented by negative commands or prohibitions should be performed minimally if not possible to be eliminated. This category of functions may cause the candidate to lose face, to feel discouraged, anxious or to feel threatened. It can even possibly make the candidate frustrated. Such negative psychological state should not be encouraged during the assessment process. Nevertheless, the whole process of doing the research project should be appreciated equally to the process of defense performance during the thesis examination.

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