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## Pragmatic Studies on Balinese Speech Act Verbs

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**Abstract**--This article is aimed at discussing Balinese Speech Act Verbs from the pragmatic studies. The data are oral and written ones, the former was collected by interview from the key informant from two regencies in Bali namely: Tabanan and Bangli regencies. The later, i.e written data was obtained by observation and note-taking, taken from four Balinese short stories. The collected data was analysed by applying the Pragmatic theory. The result shows that from the types of Balinese speech act verbs, there are locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech act verbs. Examples of the Locutionary Acts: *la nyatua* lakar luas ka Bali 'he tells to go to Bali' Illocutionary acts : *la metakon* dija meli togog 'He asks where buying statue' Perlocutionary acts : *la nundén* apang nulungin ngaba batu 'he instructs to help him bring stone' There are also five categories of Balinese speech act verbs, they are: (1) representatives which bind the speaker to the truth of the stated proposition: *nyutetang* 'conclude' (2) directive which the speaker's attempts to compel the addressee to act *nunas* 'request' (3) commissives which obligate the speaker to take some future action *masamaya* 'to promise', *metanjénan* 'to offer'; (4) expressives characterized by the expression of a psychological state *ngajumang* 'to praise', *ngamélmél* 'to complain' and (5) declaratives – which alter the institutional state of affairs immediately and frequently rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institution : *ngadanin* 'to name'.

**Keywords**---commissive, declarative, directive, expressive, illocutionary, locutionary, perlocutionary, representative.

## Introduction

Pragmatics is believed that what is communicated is more than what is said. The utterances that the speakers produce in communication contain deeper sense than the actual meaning of the words or phrases themselves. Yule (1996), states that pragmatics has consequently more to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves. Pragmatics also strongly related with context or situation when something is being said, thus it is very important for the speakers to focus on the context. Leech (2016), also states that pragmatics is the study of meaning which is related to the speech situations. In accordance to Leech statement, Yule (1996), argues that pragmatics should also consider aspects of context such as who people are talking to, when, where, and under what circumstances that will determine the act itself. Speech act, a variety of verbal communication and also a subdivision of pragmatics, often takes place in verbal and nonverbal communication. Yule (1996), states that speech acts are a study of how the speakers and hearers use language. Bach & Harnish (1979), explains that an action in verbal communication has message in itself, so the communication is not only about language but also with action. In conclusion speech act is the utterance that occurs and act refers to an action.

There are certain aims beyond the words or phrases when a speaker says something. Austin (1962), explains that speech acts are acts that refer to the action performed by produced utterances. In line with this, Yule (1996), states that speech acts is action which is performed via utterances. According to Goddard & Weirzbicka (2013), Though there are many different subclasses of speech-act verbs, most of them work by characterizing the kind of message that the speaker has expressed and linking this with an apparent mental state (wants, thoughts, assumptions). For example, if I say that someone ordered me to do something, I am saying, first, that this someone has expressed a message with the content 'I want you to do such-and such', and, second, that this someone said it as if he or she assumed that I had no choice but to do it and that I recognized this. On the other hand, to say that someone asked me to do such-and-such involves attributing more or less the same message, but with different assumptions; roughly, acknowledging that I can choose not to do it if I wish. Other speech-act verbs, such as *marry*, *sentence*, *sack*, and *veto*, incorporate reference to culture-specific social roles, institutions, and situations (Tsoumou, 2020; Chen et al., 2023; Janson & Woo, 1995; Azhari et al., 2018).

In Balinese Speech Act Verbs, as being said by Weirzbicka (1996), that there are two kinds of components recurring in virtually all the explication and these require some explanation. First, there is a component in the frame 'I say....', which is called the *dictum*, and second, a component in the frame 'I say this because ...', which is called the *illocutionary purpose*.

The Balinese lexicon, for instance, *masamaya* 'to promise', the *dictum* is "I say...I promise to you." and the *illocutionary purpose* is " I say this because I want to cause you to know that I want to do something for you in the future

Apart from the example *masamaya* 'to promise' it was found that Balinese speech act verbs have a number of varieties, however in this research the topic merely include the types and category. The types and categories of Balinese speech act verbs have so variety that any single concerned topic is interested to be further discussed. The main purposes of such discussion are to discuss further about the types including: (i) the locutionary, (ii) illocutionary and (iii) perlocutionary speech acts and elaborate the categories including (i) assertive (ii) directive (iii) commissive, (iv) expressive, and (v) declarative (Kurzon, 1998; John et al., 2019; Tomasello, 2023; Bayat, 2013; Widiyasri et al., 2019).

### **Related studies**

A number of studies dealing with speech acts verbs has been written and published in the academic world. In order to have clear position of this article, the followings are reviewed accordingly. The general view dealing with pragmatics has been discussed by The article entitled Speech Acts: Force Behind Words (Agus Hidayat). This article is having good relevance since it deals with the understanding about Speech Act which becomes the core of our article.

*He said that* the ability to understand the hidden message of utterance is really important to have. Some words or utterances could be misdirected into something unpleasant if we are not careful. By understanding Pragmatics and speech acts we can get clearer understanding of the utterances. In Indonesia, English serves as the foreign language. There are things that exist in English that do not exist in Indonesians such as certain idiomatic expressions. Those expressions are barriers that could hindrance someone to fully grasp the actual message of words or utterances. In the effort of raising the awareness of those barriers' speech acts could be socialized in the classroom. In teaching certain expressions such as giving advice, complementing, and congratulating, the teacher should have these three goals in mind, namely: raising awareness, knowledge building, and productive development (Hymes, 2013; Isnaniah, 2016; Shinzato, 2004; Rose, 2005; Attardo, 1997).

He also added that the goals of teaching speech acts in the classroom should be directed in rising consciousness of the students that utterances in English as foreign language could lead to misinterpretation. It is imperative to accurately understand the intended meaning by analysing the utterances. By understanding the norms and idiomatic expressions of the first and second language the students could determine the message of the utterances so that it could expand their knowledge resulting in the ability to perform the speech act. (Available online at: <http://ejournal.radenintan.ac.id/index.php/ENGEDU> English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris p-ISSN 2086-6003 Vol 9 (1), 2016, 1-12 English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris, 9 (1), 2016, 1 IAIN Raden Intan Lampung Email: [hidayatagus\\_88@yahoo.com](mailto:hidayatagus_88@yahoo.com)

The article entitled with Pragmatic uses of compliment speech-act verbs, by Samara Mohammed Ahmed, Ali Arshad Rushdi, and Waqqas Saddi Ismael. They said that performative refers to a type of action that is performed under the sentence having been uttered. Knowing a language entails understanding how to construct correct sentences and how to use those sentences to construct

appropriate utterances. As a result, they frequently employ a variety of linguistic forms. An utterance is, however, only a performative utterance if the conditions necessary to make it an act prevail. Knowledge of a language does not simply imply an understanding of the rules that generate an infinite number of sentences; it also entails an understanding of the context and socio-cultural rules that govern the use of sentences to generate appropriate utterances. Most utterances are performative utterances that can be preceded by performative verbs. Furthermore, there are different types of utterances; explicit and implicit Performatives.

Performative verbs have a particular significance; they determine the illocutionary force of an utterance. The present study aims at investigating Iraqi English Foreign Language learners' performance in analysing performative verbs. Compliment act has been chosen as the study favourite to represent learners' mastery in pragmatic proficiency as well as their communicative ability. To achieve these aims, the study finds that EFL learners face many difficulties in recognizing performative verbs to perform correct speech acts. They were also influenced by their own social norms.

The writers of this article are only discussing the performative verbs, and the difficulty for foreign learners in recognizing them. They also found reasons that the students' social norms do influence them. In using Balinese speech act verbs in general, the social and religious norms might be the reason of such a difficulty. (Available online at [www.jlls.org](http://www.jlls.org) JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC STUDIES ISSN: 1305-578X Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 18(Special Issue 1), 543-555; 2022 English Department, College of Education for Humanities, Tikrit University, Iraq)

The article entitled Semantic Structures of Balinese Speech Act Verbs by I Nengah Sudipa, I Nyoman Weda Kusuma, Komang Dian Puspita Candra and Eka Dwi Putra. This collaborative article discussed Balinese Speech Act Verbs from the semantic perspective. The writers furthermore explains that the data are oral and written ones, the former was collected by interview from the key informant from two regencies in Bali namely: Tabanan and Bangli regencies. The later, i.e written data were obtained by observation and note-taking, taken from four Balinese short stories The collected data was analysed by applying the Natural Semantic Metalanguage with further discussion seen from (i) mapping and together with (ii) explication

The result shows that there are a number of non-compositional polysemy implied by any lexicon in terms of Balinese Speech Acts. The non-compositional polysemous are including: *say* and *say*, *say* and *know*, *say* and *feel*, *say* and *happen*, and the last is *say* and *do*. The findings are relevant to the present article since the data source and the concerned topic has similar nature, (Available online at <https://sloap.org/journals/index.php/ijllc/> Vol. 8, No. 5, September 2022, pages: 229-241 ISSN: 2455-8028 <https://doi.org/10.21744/ijllc.v8n5.2183> published in International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture)

Another article entitled Verba Ujaran dalam Bahasa Bali by Denok Lestari She combined the theories of Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) dan speech acts

in analysing. The method of analysis was descriptive qualitative which classified data, analysed semantic structures of the speech verbs, and described the semantic components to formulate meaning configuration.

The result of the analysis showed several speech verbs in Balinese had illocutionary function, including: 1) assertive (*ngorahang* ‘telling’, *nyambatang* ‘mention’, *nuturang* ‘telling’); 2) directive (*nundén* ‘enjoin’, *nagih* ‘billing’, *nuturin* ‘advise’); 3) commissive (*mejanji* ‘promising’, *metanjénan* ‘offer’); 4) expressive (*ngajumang* ‘praise’, *ngamélmél* ‘complain’, see ‘blame’, *matbat* ‘berate’, *ngamadakang* ‘pray’); and 5) declarative (*ngadanin* ‘naming’, *nombang* ‘forbid’). Some findings do support especially in the case of pragmatic view, however our article is more specific because it focuses solely on pragmatics studies. (Address Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Bali Internasional. Email: denoklestari@stpbi.ac.id.)

## Methods

There are two kinds of data to support this writing, namely (i) oral and (ii) written data. The oral data was obtained by interviewing the key-informant in two regencies in Bali, namely Regency of Bangli (east Bali) and Regency of Tabanan (west Bali). The written data was collected by observation and note-taking, from 4 novels using modern Balinese language, namely (i) *Jro Lalung Ngutah* (2015), (ii) *Tuan Déwan* (2018); (iii) *Wangchi Wuhan* (2020) and (iv) *Ngalih Arjuna di Kamasan* (2021) all written by *Ida Bagus Wayan Widiasta Keniten*. The collected data was analysed using Pragmatic theory, dealing the types with Locutionary, Illocutionary and Perlocutionary Acts, with the additional categories of speech act derived from (1) representatives, (2) directive, (3) commissive, (4) expressive and (5) declaratives.

## Results

### Types of Balinese speech act verbs

There are three types of the Balinese speech act verbs, they are locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary.

### Locutionary

Locutionary speech act is roughly equivalent to uttering certain utterance with certain sense and reference, which again is roughly equivalent to meaning in traditional sense (Austin, 1962). In line with this, Cutting (2005), states that locutionary is what is said. also proposed by Yule (1996), who states that locutionary act is the act of producing meaningful utterances.

- (1) Tiang *nuturang* lakar luas ka Jakarta  
 Person tell will go to Place  
 ‘I tell (that) I will go to Jakarta’
- (2) Timpalé *nyatua* indik ada blabar di kampung-né  
 Friend-Poss tell about exist flood Prep village-Poss  
 ‘my friend told about the flood in his village’
- (3) “Di kampus jani suba kawangun togog batu anyar” Dekanné *ngorahang*’

'Prep campus now already be-built statue stone new' Dean-Poss tell  
 "In campus it was already built a new stone statue" The dean *told*

The above three sentences represent the actual conditions because producing meaningful utterances. The first sentence refers to the telling '*nuturang*' the truth that he is going to Jakarta, the second sentence refers to informing '*nyatua*' that there was a big flood happening in his friend's village and the last sentence indicates explaining '*ngorahang*' fact that in his campus there is a new statue already built.

### **Illocutionary**

The illocutionary act is performed via the communicative force of an utterance, such as promising, apologizing, offering (Yule, 1996:48). This act is also called the act of doing something in saying something. The most significant level of action in a speech act is the illocutionary act because the force, which has been desired by the speakers, determines this act.

Illocutionary act can be the real description of interaction condition.

- (1) Bapa-né *nundén* masuk apang dueg  
 Father-Poss ask enter (school) to clever  
 'His father *asked* to go to school in order to be clever'
- (2) buin mani tiang *majanji* lakar nguliang pipis-é  
 Time tomorrow Person promise to return money-Poss  
 'Tomorrow I *promise* to return the money'

The two above sentences represent the real descriptions of interaction condition which have been desired by the speakers. The first sentence refers to asking '*nundén*' to attend school resulting to be smart, and the second sentence refers to promising '*majanji*' to return the loan-money. Both the Balinese speech act verbs *nundén* and *majanji* are desired by the speaker to determine the act.

### **Perlocutionary**

It was stated that perlocutionary act is the act that is carried out by a speaker when making an utterance causes in certain effect on the hearer and others. Perlocutionary act is also the act offering someone. Perlocutionary act refers to the effect the utterance has on the thoughts or actions of the other person. A perlocutionary act is specific to the circumstances of issuance, and is therefore not conventionally achieved just by uttering that particular utterance, and includes all those effects, intended or unintended, often indeterminate, that some particular utterance in a particular situation cause

- (1) suba taén mémén-né *nombaang* I Kiyul apang suud mamunyah  
 already ever mother-Poss forbid name to finish drunk  
 'His mother has ever *forbidden* I Kiyul to stop drinking alcohol too much'
- (2) ping telu ping pat Pak Guru *ngowélin* I Murga tondén masi kapok  
 time three time four person blame name not yet still surrender  
 'three or four times the teacher *blames* I Murga, but he is never giving up'

These above two sentences represent the effect of the utterance which has on the thoughts or actions of the other person. The first sentence refers to an utterance causing the hearer stop doing drunken anymore, the second one refers to the hearer get effect by blaming ‘*ngowélin*’ acted by the speaker.

### Categories of Balinese speech act verbs

Speech acts can be classified into five categories as [Searle \(1979\)](#), states that the classifications are representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.

#### Representatives

Representatives are speech acts that the utterances commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition. The utterances are produced based on the speaker’s observation of certain things then followed by stating the fact or opinion based on the observation ([Blum-Kulka et al., 1989](#); [Buck & VanLear, 2002](#); [Fujimori & Houck 2004](#)). When someone says “*she’s beautiful*”, the speaker can state the sentence based on the fact or just give his or her own opinion about physical condition of a person. It also states what the speaker believes to be the case or not. Statements of fact, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions are all examples of the speaker representing the world as he or she believes it is.

- (1) Sesai ia ngorahang déwék-né suba bisa maca Bali  
 Everyday person explain self-Poss already manage read Balinese  
 ‘Everyday he *explains* himself that he has managed to read Balinese characters’

The Balinese speech act verb *ngorahang* indicates the truth expressed by the speaker, explaining about the real proposition. The subject of the sentence *He* explain himself the truth that he manages already to read the Balinese characters.

- (2) Klian Dusun-né maan mituturin krama-né apang nyak mevaksin booster  
 Head village -DET ever advise society - DET to willing vaccine booster  
 ‘The head village once *advised* the society members to be willing to have booster vaccine’

The Balinese speech act verb *mituturin* represents the meaning based upon the head village observation that the villagers must undergo the vaccination. It is true that the head village gives opinion toward the physical conditions of the villagers

- (3) Sing dadi sesai nyesel raga, hidup mula state kuangan  
 Not become everyday complain self, life always ever less  
 ‘It is better not to self-*complain* everyday, life is never complete’

The Balinese speech act verb *nyesel* represent the complaining because the speaker can just give his or her own opinion about physical condition of a person. The sentence implies the meaning that we are not always complaining ourselves, because life is never flat.

- (4) Bedik-bedik *ngaku* dueg, sing tawanga mara tamat Sekolah Dasar  
 Little-little acknowledge clever, not know just finish elementary school  
 'always boasting, she always *acknowledge* clever, he never realizes that he merely completed elementary school'

The Balinese speech act verb *ngaku* represents the fact that what the speaker believes to be the case or not. Using this kind of speech act verb, the subject of the sentence is always boasting *ngaku* that he himself is very clever although he is still learning. In Balinese Speech Act Verb: *ngorahang*, *mituturin*, *nyesel* and *ngaku* referring to Representatives bind the speaker to the truth of the stated proposition (Ahmed et al., 2022).

### Directives

Directives are speech acts that speaker uses to get someone else to do something. These speech acts include requesting, questioning, command, orders, and suggesting.

- (1) Sameton *nunas* iraga sareng sami masikian  
 Person *request* someone all us unity  
 'Villagers *request* us all together in unity'

This sentence is used by the speaker to *request* someone to do something, in this case to be unity for all of us.

- (2) Nyén lakar bareng ka Ubud, klian banjar-é *nakonin*  
 Who FUT join PREP Place, someone village-DEF *ask*  
 'Who will go to Ubud, the head sub-village *asked*'

This sentence is used by the speaker to *quest* someone to answer the question "who will go to Ubud"

- (3) sing ada nak bani *ngongsokang* I Suwéna apang énggal ngantén  
 NEG be someone brave *order* Person PREP quick marriage  
 'No one is brave enough to *order* I Suwena to get married soon'

This sentence is used by the speaker to *order* someone 'I Suwena' in order to get married in the very short time.

- (4) *Ongkon* ja pianak-é apang demen kursus Bahasa Inggris  
 Command yes someone-DEF to happy course Language English  
 'Yea *command* your child to be happy taking an English course'



This sentence is used by the speaker to strongly suggest the child in order to take an English course

From the Balinese data, concerning with Directives, These are the speaker's attempts to compel the addressee to act (Ahmed et al., 2022).

### Commissives

Commissive are speech acts that the utterances commit the speaker to some future course of action, these include promising, threatening, offering, refusal, pledges. For example when someone says “*I’ll be back*”, represents the speaker’s promise that he/she will be back.

- (1) Sesai *nulak* apang tusing dadianga klian  
 Everyday *reject* in order NOT become chairperson  
 ‘Everyday (he) reject in order not to be elected as chairperson’

The verb *nulak* in Balinese is used by the speaker to refuse the offering from others, in this sentence he rejects the position of being head village.

- (2) Nyén bani *majanji* mani lakar teka ka umah-né?  
 Who brave promise tomorrow FUT come PREP house-DEF  
 ‘Who is brave enough to *promise* for coming to his house?’

The verb *majanji* in Balinese is used by the speaker to make a promise that he will do something to other persons. In this sentence the subject confirms that he will come to other’s house.

- (3) Apang berek bani ia *masumpah*  
 Be rotten brave PERSON swear  
 ‘No other choice he dares to pledge’

The verb *masumpah* is used by the speaker to pledge with the other emphasizing tone ‘no other choice’.

It can be proved that by observing Balinese Speech Acts from the data (3), Commissives obligate the speaker to take some future action (Ahmed et al., 2022).

### Expressives

Expressives are speech acts that the utterances express a psychological state. These speech acts include thanking, apologizing, welcoming, and congratulating.

- (1) tiang *ngaturang selamat* dwaning sampun puput karyan dwéné  
 SOMEONE *congratulate* cause already finish ritual POSS  
 ‘I *congratulate* because your ritual has been successfully accomplished’  
 (2) Angga prodi *angayubhagia* indik ngamolihang prestasi  
 SOMEBODY institution *welcome* cause obtain achievement  
 akreditasi  
 accreditation

Everybody in the study programme *looks forward* to obtaining accreditation achievement

- (3) *pastika tiang nunas pangampura*  
 sure SOMEONE beg apology  
 'I am sure I must apologize for.'
- (4) *Matur suksma ngih antuk sapengerauh ida peranda*  
 Thank you well for coming SOMEONE priest  
 'Thank you for the coming of the Holy Priest'

It turns out that the Balinese data dealing with Expressive is characterized by the expression of a psychological state (Ahmed et al., 2022).

### Declaratives

Declaratives are speech acts that the utterances effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions. These speech acts include excommunicating, declaring war, christening, firing from employment.

- (1) *Pemargin dané macihna gumi-né jagi becik*  
 Walk SOMEONE characterize world-POSS FUT good  
 'The ways he took *characterize* the globe will be good'
- (2) *Paruman durung wnten mamutus sané kasungkemin sareng sami*  
 Meeting not yet exist decide DEF be-agreed with all  
 'The meeting has not yet *decided* what is agreed together'
- (3) *Sing dadi muungang yén suba kabligbagang makelo*  
 NOT ever *reject* if already be-discussed long  
 'It is never *rejected* if it has been discussed for long time'
- (4) *Nyén lakar prasida ngangkat ia dadi prebikel*  
 Who FUT able baptize SOMEONE to head village  
 'Who will *baptize* him to be a head village'

Declaratives, seen from the Balinese above data (*macihna*, *mamutus*, *muungang*, and *ngangkat*) which alter the institutional state of affairs immediately and frequently rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institution" (Ahmed et al., 2022), (see also Yule, 1996: 53-54).

### Conclusion

The Balinese speech act verbs are discussed from two points of view, namely: (i) the types of Balinese speech act verbs are locutionary (*nyatua* 'tell'), illocutionary (*matakon* 'ask' and perlocutionary (*nundén* 'instruct) (ii) the five categories of Balinese speech act verbs, : (a) representatives (*nyutetang* 'conclude') (b) directive (*nunas* 'request'), (c) commissive (*masamaya* 'to promise', *metanjénan* 'to offer', (d) expressive (*ngajumang* 'to praise', *ngamélmél* 'to complain') and (e) declaratives (*ngadanin* 'to name')

From the pragmatic point of view, it turns out that the meaning of Balinese Speech Act Verbs depend closely to the context of Balinese culture, e.g. *nundén* and *ngongkon* having the synonymous meaning 'ask'. The former has stronger

instructive manner rather than the later, because the verb *ngongkon* has lighter sense in instructing someone.

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