

Speech Act of Buginese Housewives in Character-building of Pre-school Children

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Abstract—This research aims to find out and thus explain the form, function, strategy, as well as implication of speech act behavior of Buginese housewives in character-building of pre-school children. The research done using qualitative method with description design. Data gathered are in terms of act and speech of Buginese housewives in Wajo District. The form of speech act behavior is performed to say the written form of the word, or called performative speech act, to enable the children to understand. The function is described when the teacher converse by observing or asking matters related to the child condition while at school. The function of speech act is illustrated through the communication between teacher and student, by observing or inquiring about the observed condition of the student within the school environment. Additional of particles such as *mi*, *ki* and *ta* at the end of words are used in the conversation, by both teacher and student. The strategy of speech act behavior is meant to have better communication, and thus the simultaneous use of verbal and nonverbal language. The implication of verbal speech act behavior must be done at the same time with the non-verbal speech act. The nonverbal speech act, which is the hand-kissing gesture, is performed directly to his/her mother immediately before leaving for school. Such solemn parting gesture is hoped to contribute to the character-building process of the child.

Index Terms—speech act, housewives, Buginese, character, pre-school children

I. INTRODUCTION

Speech act may be expressed in the forms of verbal and non-verbal behavior. Verbal behavior uses sign or code of language, while non-verbal behavior uses signals, movements, and mimics. Cangara (2010, p. 99) and Baraja (2008, p. 208) states that “non-verbal behavior has meaning or connotation as a message from thought and feelings”.

Often, verbal and non-verbal behavior is done simultaneously. Austin (in Martinich, 2001, p. 131) argues that “language has not only functioned as message bearer, but also as action, since in saying something is doing something as well”. Utterance as action, by Austin (1962) is categorized into 3 (three) speech act, namely locution act, illocution act, and perlocution act. Locution act is an act to state something. Illocution act is an action, where stating or informing something, and at the same time doing something. Perlocution act is an action that brings forth impact on the listener.

Speech act is implemented in daily communication in a family. A mother is one of the family members that often stating or asking something to the child in the family to do something. Besides, a mother usually does something as an example for child to do some task. A mother has major role in providing good model behavior in speech language for their children. Moreover, a mother has very important role in child up-bringing process. Taking these into consideration, the researchers decided to use housewife as the subject of research, specifically, the Buginese women was chosen as subject of research taking into consideration the culture value embodied in Buginese women, that is to be the virtuous and faithful mother. Position, title, and profession as a mother is highly upheld in Bugis-Makassar tradition and culture. A mother must guard her purity, virtue, and intellectuality. A mother must up-date her knowledge, and so it is essential for her to read and improve her awareness and foresight.

Speech strategy employed by a mother shows which language is appropriate for speech that would compel the child to do what he is asked. Brown and Levinson (1987) pointed out speech strategy based on the level of indirectness, namely (1) directly without further ado, (2) converse with positive polite *tâe-â-tâe*, (3) converse with negative polite *tâe-â-tâe*, (4) converse in obscurity, and (5) speak inside one-self or in silence.

A mother’s chosen speech language would reflect her politeness in speech, whether she is speaking politely or impolitely. Fraser (1990) said that politeness is a property associated with speech, and with regard of the other speech

party that the speaker did not overstep his/her rights or not disregarding his/her obligation. Henceforth, the level of politeness of a mother is measured from the feelings of the child, as the child is the other speech party that receiving her verbal communication.

In receiving verbal communication, the child will also respond in verbal or non-verbal. Researchers used both types of respond, as responds from a person in a conversation may be in verbal and non-verbal simultaneously. Knapp and Hall (2007) pointed out that non-verbal codes used in communication have function to: (1) ensure understanding (as repetition), (2) show feelings and emotions that cannot be described in words (as substitution), (3) show one true-self, so others may recognise him/her (as identity), and (4) add or complete the verbal words that is felt inadequate/imperfect. Verbal and nonverbal respond used may be pleasant (positive) or unpleasant (negative).

Speech act behavior of a mother may be reflected back at the way a child is carrying out a request based on the mother's instruction. Through communication, a child sometimes carried away with the circumstance and the way in which the communication is presented, and every so often influenced by the local language and dialect. This is observed in Buginese community, particularly the housewives, as subject of this research. The Buginese community acknowledge the influence of local ethnic language to Bahasa Indonesia, which in turn may influence the child behavior development in terms of speech and act behaviour. A mother would make various efforts to get the child do what is expected or as instructed, one of the efforts is through communication. This is also taken into consideration by the team to further research the speech act behavior of Buginese housewives in character-building process of pre-school children.

Taking all into account, the objective of this research is to find and explain the form, function, strategy, and implication of speech act behavior of Buginese housewives in in character-building process of pre-school children.

II. METHODOLOGY

The types of research is qualitative research with descriptive design. The research is focused the form, function, strategy, and implication of speech act behavior of Buginese housewives in in character-building process of pre-school children. Data is divided into two parts, i.e. speech data and field record data. Speech data is gathered from the transcribed record. While field record data is divided into two types, i.e. descriptive notes and reflective notes. The source of data is collected from the behavior and speech of Buginese housewives at Wajo District. The main instrument of research is the researchers themselves. The researchers as the main instrument has duties to collect, deduct, analyse, and interpret the gathered data into a report. The researcher team used tape recorder to collect data, as well as using observation manual, interview manual, and table of data analysis utilization. Data collection technique used is observation technique, recording, and interview technique. Observation technique is a technique employed in recording the speech act of housewives at Wajo District.

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Pre-school age range is between 0 to 6 year old. Children within this range is generally able to absorb things from their surrounding and memorize faster than older children. Children must therefore acquire appropriate language during their pre-school age. Children must always be stimulated with things of pedagogy or education. Language education for pre-school children must always be improved to obtain more satisfactory speech ability. Speech ability that is trained since early on will shape the character of speech act behavior of the child.

The use of language by children in their daily activity requires conscious negotiation and decision from the speaker to choose which language be used in social interaction. Children language is rather difficult to understand by their speaking partner due to their early stage in language process, and also in transition stage of speaking.

Analysis of the research results is elaborated in this chapter based on the systematic of the research focuses, i.e. (1) Form of Speech Act Behavior of Buginese Housewives (Form of SABBH) in character-building of pre-school children, (2) Function of of Speech Act Behavior of Buginese Housewives (Function of SABBH) in character-building of pre-school children, (3) Strategy of Speech Act Behavior of Buginese Housewives (Strategy of SABBH) in character-building of pre-school children, and (4) Implication of of Speech Act Behavior of Buginese Housewives (Implication of SABBH) in character-building of pre-school children.

a. Form of SABBH in character-building of pre-school children

The form of speech act behavior of housewives, in this case is given by Buginese housewives. The language use of a mother is often mimicked by the child, until the child acquire the concept of expressive language to be used in his/her daily activity. Based on the existing data, vocabulary of children in classroom is developing. The ability of children to answer the assigned picture is largely dominated by correct answer, only a few incorrect answers. The use of words addressed by the teacher during lesson period is in forms of simple words. Form of SABBH may be described through the following example taken from the transcribed conversation record.

Guru: Gambar apa ini nak?

Sk/Siswa: Burung.

Guru: Iya Burung. Nanti itu ditulis B-U-R-U-N-G, burung!

(Teacher: What picture is this, girl?)

Student: Bird.

Teacher: Yes, bird. Please write it spelled B-I-R-D, bird!)

The above example is a part of conversation using Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian Language) which is influenced by Buginese ethnic language dialect. Performative speech is used when asked “What picture is this, girl?”, with the intention that the student answer according to the picture showed. Also, when sentence like “Please write it spelled B-I-R-D, bird!” is said, the teacher simultaneously write down the letter at the whiteboard. Similar view was expressed by Austin (1962) whom had said that “in expressing a speech, a person may do something (else). Thus, a person not only saying something, but also do something”.

The form of speech act behavior is done to say the written word to ensure the child know the word, is categorized into performative speech act. By using the question sentence in the beginning of the conversation with the objective to ask the child to answer correctly. Richard (1995, p. 76) mentioned that “during a conversation, performative speech act may be understood in a number of actions, such as, reporting, saying, warning, promising, suggesting, advising, criticizing, and asking”.

Guru: Gambar apa ini, Sekar?

Apa ini namanya?

Sk/Siswa: Rumah.

Guru: Pagar!

(Teacher: What picture is this, Sekar?

What is it called?

Student: House.

Teacher: Fence!)

The above is one part of conversation using a simple form of language that is easy to understand by the pre-school children. One part of the above conversation consists of performative speech the expected the opposite speaker to provide answer or respond through the sentence “What picture is this, Sekar?”, with the intention of having the student named Sekar to answer the picture showed by the teacher. Furthermore, when the answer given by the student “house” was incorrect, the teacher informed or provided the correct answer “fence”. The form of speech act behavior done by the teacher in the above conversation is a request form, where the child is asked to answer and informed the correct answer.

Sk/Siswa: Kambing.

Guru: Kambing.

Kalau ini?

/Siswa: Perut Kambing

Guru: Rumput.

Kambing suka makan... Rumput.

Kalau ini pohon, ini pohon yah! Kalau ini daunnya, ini awan!

Zaikal apa ini?

(Student: Lamb.

Teacher: Lamb.

What about this?

Student: Lamb’s belly.

Teacher: Grass.

Lamb like to eat... Grass.

This one is tree, this is tree, yah! This one is its leaves. This is cloud!

Zaikal, what is this?)

In the above conversation, the speech context delivered by the teacher by simultaneously showing a scenery in which various things may be pointed out to expand the child’s knowledge. Leech (1993, p. 13-14) suggested that “context is all the background of, and included in, and bring together a speech”. Such may be seen in the above conversation. A person may not understand what is the conversation about without the support of the speech context, which allow better understanding of the meaning of the exchange.

Sk/Siswa: Begini Bunda! Belumpi itu ini.

Guru: Ini.

Apanya ini?

Sk/Siswa: Kuda!

(Student: Here, Mother! This one first, not that.

Teacher: Here it is.

What is this?

Student: Horse!)

The above conversation is showing how a child delivered a speech act, using word Mother to greet the teacher, and proceeded with constative speech by stating that one of the picture had not been pointed out by the teacher and had been overlooked. Using a simple language, a student interrupted because the teacher had overlooked one of the pictures. This

is related to what Halliday (1985) said when he classified “the various speech act into 15 categories, based on the meaning of the act”. One of the form of speech act behavior that was shown by the student is greeting and interrupting.

The behavior exhibits by a person while communicating is a form of speech act behavior of a person towards the other person, which is influenced by the situation and condition at that particular time. Speech act behavior may be adjusted according to the situation and condition and to whom it was delivered in direct communication. That means, the speaker may behave differently while in formal situation than in informal situation. The speaker may also greet differently when conversing with older person.

Based on the realized action, the above conversation showed the locution of a mother is expected to answer each question asked by a child as a form curiosity of some things, and the child is expected to able to conduct the activity on his/her own. Illocution is statement of instruction or question from a person (mother) to the other person (child) to allow the child to know and understand the meaning. Perlocution of the above conversation is that the student (child) knew a lot of things, and the child is more accustomed to doing things independently, while the mother knew the needs of the child. Austin (1962, p. 100-101) categorized speech act into 3 (three) types of act. Firstly, locutionary act, which means an act to say something or mean something that was said, and for informative purpose only. For instance, a teacher informed and said something. Secondly, illocutionary act, which means an act to say something with the intention to make the other person to do it. For example, to ask the child to mimic what is being said. Thirdly, perlocutionary act, which is a type of speech act (of a speaker) that affect the child (listener) to pay attention to what is being said. The fitting of questions and statements in daily communication shows that language mastery is developing with the correct use of words which leads to communication, eventhough with the use of simple language.

b. Function of SABBH in character-building of pre-school children

The function of language as a means to communicate is understood by the children, using indicator of speeches that is delivered by the children and understood by the adults. The child perception of the world is expressed through the questions asked and the account given by the others. This may be observed through the conversation between the teacher and the student using more polite language. The use of Bahasa Indonesia with Buginese accent in data 1 reflects the minimal use of words, as following:

- Gambar apa ini, nak?* [1]
Kalau ini apa ini, nak? [2]
Begini Bunda! Belumpi itu, ini. [3]
 (What picture is this, **son**? [1]
 What about this one, **son**? [2]
 Here, **Mother**! This one first, not that. [3])

Several pieces of sentences are the speech act of a teacher to children while teaching in the classroom. The greeting utterance is used to allow familiarity between teacher and student, henceforth showed the function of speech act that may be instilled since early childhood. Greeting words such as “son” may lead to more comfortable feeling of the student with the given situation and condition.

The use of language in speech act behavior of Buginese housewives in child-rearing is often analogued with the communication between a teacher and a student school setting, by observing or asking the student of the things related to the student. One of the special characteristics (of the language) from the following data is the addition of particle *mi*, *ki* and *ta* at the end of the words utter by the teacher as well as the student.

- Ini bajuta nak, inimi.* [4]
Kecilmi. [5]
Kecilmi, sudah dianu. [6]
Mauki apa? [7]
 (Here is **your** shirt son, **it's** this one. [4]
It's too small **already**. [5]
It's too small **already**, already been... [6]
 What **would you** like to do? [7])

The sentences above shows the speech act behavior of Buginese community in communication. Addition of particle *mi* in Bahasa Indonesia means ownership. The particle *mi* has the same meaning as particle *mo*. However, particle *mo* is considered less polite. The particle *mi* is used to smoothen the speech uttered. Adding particle *mi* in “*inimi*” has changed the function of speech into an affirmation of the **particular** object. Similarly in the sentence “*kecilmi*” (**It's** too small **already**) is an affirmation of a particular object that is too small for his/her size.

Addition of particle *ta* in sentence [4], specifically in word “*bajuta*”, the particle *ta* is actually a contraction form of word “*kita*” (we, us, ours). When translated into Bahasa Indonesia, *bajuta* means our dress. However, the word “*kita*” when used in Buginese context has changed meaning into the other person’s ownership (“**your**”), as it is considered more polite speech. Thus, “*bajuta*” actually means “your dress”, not “our dress”.

In the above data, in sentence [7] in word “*mauki*” has greeting functional, which means “what do you want to do”. But the particle *ki* immediately following the word “*mau*” has made the greeting more polite in Buginese context. The use of particle *ki* has changed the meaning into “what would you like to do”. Similarly with the use of particle *ta*, the

use of particle *ki* also has function of smoothing the speech. Particle *ki* also originated from Bahasa Indonesia of word “*kita*” (we, us, our). However, this time its meaning is actually “*kamu*” (you).

Dijahit. Oh, sudah dijahit bajunya kecili. [8]

Pergimeki main di situ, pergimeki main. [9]

(Sewn. Oh, it’s already sewn, the shirt is too small already [8])

Why don’t you go and play over there, please go and play [9])

In the sentence [8] above, there is an addition of vowel *i* in word *kecil*, which is interpreted as “already”, thus word *kecil* means “already (too) small”. In sentence [9] in word *pergimeki* may be translated into Bahasa Indonesia as “*pergilah*” (do go). The above conversations shows that while using Bahasa Indonesia, the words and sentences are mixed with Buginese dialect. The use of such mixing is to reflect the politeness of the speech, inspite the disruption of the correct order of Bahasa Indonesia. The polite forms of speech is taught in early childhood, for character-building purpose in terms of speech act behavior of the child.

c. Strategy of SABBH in character-building of pre-school children

The strategy of speech act behavior is meant for better communication when using verbal as well as nonverbal simultaneously. The use of nonverbal language is influenced by the speech context made by the speaker, so that the listener can understand the meaning of the verbal language. Building communication as a habit in daily activity may lead to better cognitive capacity and communication capability, as both may be sharpened and developed optimally.

Following are several examples.

Apanya ini? [1]

Iya Burung. Nanti itu ditulis B-U-R-U-N-G, burung! [2]

Kambing suka makan... Rumput. [3]

Apa ini yang mendengar? [4]

(What is this? [1])

Yes, bird. Please write it spelled B-I-R-D, bird! [2])

Lamb like to eat... Grass. [3])

What is it that hear (things)? [4])

Of the above four sentences, sentence [1] and [4] are speeches in form of question uttered by the speaker and expecting an answer from the listener. Sentence [1] “What is this?” may not be answered by the listener without the support of nonverbal language, such as pointing the symbol or the picture to draw the attention of the listener to the object. Symbolically, hand gesture performed by the speaker as nonverbal language that attached to the verbal language “what is this?” allow the listener (in this case the student) to understand the meaning of the question. Similarly, in sentence [4] verbal language “What is it that hear (things)?” is paired with nonverbal language using hand gesture, where the teacher put his/her hand to touch the ear. Such hand gesture allowed the listener (student) to understand the meaning of the question.

Hoffman (1991, p. 92) suggested that “language development is strongly related to the sensitivity of the child of the language employed around him/her, and also to his/her ability to utilize the language”. Acquiring two languages will involve sensitivity development over those two languages, to recognize the forms and to learn to separate both language systems. As far as the observation goes, both the teacher and the students are communicative. This confirms that the child has natural potentials in communication, and practicing will improve his/her phonologic as well as articulator.

d. Implication of SABBH in character-building of pre-school children

Naturally, in communication activity the process of utterance production and understanding occurs. Human may only speak and understand each other in verbalized words. The language acquired since childhood is not the language that formed out of the blue, instead it is formed and acquired step by step. Ellis (1986) mentioned “two types of language learning, namely naturalistic type and formal type”. The naturalistic type is the type of language acquiring naturally without teacher and unintentionally. Following are the examples of naturalistic type.

Saling Mama, Assalamualaikum.

Wa’alaikumussalam. Hati-hati ya!

(Kiss Mommy’s hand, may peace be with you.

And peace be with you too. Take care!)

The above conversation shows implication of verbal speech act that is done simultaneously with nonverbal speech act. The use of word “*saling*”, is supposed to be “*salim*” in Bahasa Indonesia that means hand-kissing. Replacing consonant ‘m’ with consonant “ng” is one of the unique characteristics of Buginese people when speaking in Bahasa Indonesia. It is due to the Buginese language that uses quite often words ending with consonant “ng”. Thus, when the Buginese people speaking in Bahasa Indonesia using Buginese dialect, replacement of consonant “m” at the end of the word with consonant “ng” is often occur spontaneously. The nonverbal speech act is performed directly by kissing the mother’s hand right before leaving for school. The hand-kiss behavior prior to leaving for outside activity is expected to contribute to the shaping of the child character, and later on will occur without prompting from the parent.

In development process, all normal children will at least acquire one language. In other words, every child is normally acquiring one language that is usually called the first language or mother tongue, within the first years of his/her life. In the above conversation, the first language and second language are used simultaneously.

The language development and acquirement occur in stages. Several processes of language acquirement occur while the children are in the process of acquiring their first language. Namely, process of subconscious attainment of language, process of understanding the uttered sentences, and the process of producing sentences. The subconscious process of language mastery is part of the pre-requisite in understanding and producing sentences. For instance, when the child is actively communicating with his/her mother or with teacher at school.

IV. CONCLUSION

The form of speech act behavior is performed to **state** the written speech, hence allow the child to better understand the performative speech act category. By using question sentence at the beginning of a conversation, with the intention to **ask** the child to answer correctly.

The function of language utility in speech act behavior of Buginese housewives in child-rearing is often illustrated through the communication between teacher and student at school. The communication is related to the observation as well as inquiring about the observed condition of the child within the school environment. The conversation is done using several adjustment to the words as the language use, i.e. Bahasa Indonesia is influenced by the Buginese dialect. Additional of particles such as *mi*, *ki* and *ta* at the end of words are used in the conversation, by both teacher and student.

The strategy of speech act behavior is meant to have better communication, and thus the simultaneous use of verbal and nonverbal language. The appearance of nonverbal language is influenced by the speech context of the speaker, so that the listener may understand the meaning of the speech. The habit of encouraging the children to be communicative in daily activity may improve the cognitive system and the inherent communication ability of the child, and thus may be sharpened and developed optimally.

The implication of verbal speech act behavior must be done at the same time with the non-verbal speech act. The word "*saling*", which actually "*salim*" in Bahasa Indonesia, means hand-kissing gesture that portray the solemnness of the child toward parents. The difference of the word is due to the influence of Buginese dialect, and such occurrence is quite often when the speaker is Buginese and speaking in Bahasa Indonesia using Buginese dialect. The nonverbal speech act, which is the hand-kissing gesture, is performed directly to his/her mother immediately before leaving for school. Such solemn parting gesture is hoped to contribute to the character-building process of the child, which later on is expected to occur without the prompting from the parent.

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