

Types of Speech Acts Used on Instagram Comments of EllenDeGeneres' Account

Marhan Pebrianto, Hanna Latifani, Diyanisa Awaliyah

English Department, Universitas Dian Nuswantoro Semarang
(311201601666@mhs.dinus.ac.id)

Abstrak. Masalah homoseksual merupakan sesuatu yang masih dalam perdebatan di beberapa Negara saat ini. Walaupun demikian, Negara barat seperti USA sekarang lebih terbuka dan bias menerima fenomena di atas. Fenomena di atas bias saja terjadi di kalangan selebriti karena biasanya mereka mengunggah foto atau berita mereka di media social. Ellen DeGeneres merupakan salah satu artis “gay” dan comedian. Dia selalu menggunakan Instagram untuk mengunggah foto-foto kegiatannya. Salah satu foto yang diunggah adalah foto ketika dia mencium istrinya, Portia de Rossi. Foto ini banyak mendatangkan komentar dari netizen. Komentar mereka menggunakan berbagai jenis tindak tutur. Paper ini bertujuan menggambarkan jenis-jenis tindak tutur yang muncul pada komentar-komentartentang Ellen DeGeneres pada tanggal 11-13 Oktober 2018, dan menjelaskan mengapa mereka menggunakan jenis tindak tutur tersebut. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif karena paper ini menjelaskan fenomena secara kualitatif. Teori Austin tentang speech act digunakan sebagai kerangka untuk menganalisis masalah ini. Komentar-komentar para netizen dikelompokkan berdasarkan jenis tindak tuturnya. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa jenis tindak tutur yang paling sering digunakan dalam komentar tersebut adalah representative dan ekspresif. Ini menunjukkan bahwa para netizen mengemukakan opini-opini dan perasaan mereka kepada Ellen sebagai “gay”.

Kata kunci: Instagram, LGBT, komentar, tindak tutur

Abstract. Homosexuality is something that is still in debate in some countries until now. Even so, western country like USA is now more open and accept the phenomena. Those phenomena can happen among public figures. Frequently, most public figures are connected to the world by using social media. Ellen DeGeneres is one of the famous American gay artists and comedians. She also uses Instagram actively to show her post including photos. One of the photos that she posted on her Instagram, that showed the action when she kissed her wife, Portia de Rossi, has come up with various comments left by netizen. Those comments used various kinds of speech acts. This paper aims to find what kind of speech acts that often appear on Ellen DeGeneres', October 11 - 13, 2018 post's comments and to describe the reason why they used those kind of speech acts. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative since it describes certain phenomenon qualitatively. J.L Austin's theory regarding speech act is used as the framework of this study. Firstly, several comments on October 11 - 13, 2018 were collected. Then, those comments were analyzed and classified into the type of speech acts. The results showed that the type of speech acts mostly appear in the comments are representative and expressive. Through their comments, it can also be inferred that netizen want to state their opinions show their feelings towards Ellen as a gay.

Keywords: Instagram, LGBT, netizen's comments, speech acts.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

When discussing about human behavior particularly deal with language, we certainly will find out some of the most fascinating question. people in the world interact to one another using language, whether it is verbal or non verbal. Apart from that, few things playingas central role in oureveryday lifes is language. That's why language is our most important tool in communicating our thoughts and feelings to each other.

D. Barton, Literacy (1994) say that language is symbolic system linking what goes on inside our heads with what goes on outside. It mediates between self and society. It is a form of representation, a way of representing the world to ourselves and to other.

In fact, the language has certain rules and patterns. Because language is used by speakers of heterogeneous social backgrounds and different customs, the language is to be diverse in several levels which include the level of phonological , morphological , syntactic and the level of the lexicon. Moreover, language which is culturally determined influencing what people think. Halliday's (1975) view on language and language learning address the relationship between social meaning and language form. Instead of describing language as a self contained system of rules, he has attempted to described it in terms of its use as a symbolic system reflecting the meanings generated and shared within social group.

Actually, language functions such as language personal works, which means the speaker does not express the language, but also show when conveying emotion. In this case the listener is also able to predict whether the speaker feels upset, angry or excited. Language is a tool to convey human's thoughts . in this case, Language is a tool to interact or tools to communicate, in order to deliver thoughts , ideas , concepts or feelings. Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics , (1916) " Language can also be compared with a sheet of paper: thought is the front and the sound the back; one cannot cut the front without cutting the back at the same time; likewise in language, one can neither divide sound from thought nor thought from sound

Pragmatics

The study of language called Linguistics in which Pragmatics as a branch of it concerns the meaning of the utterances depend on situational context. According to Levinson (1993 :5) Pragmatics, in a traditional sense, comprises "the study of language usage", to be distinguished from syntax, which is " the study of combinatorial properties of words and their parts ",and from semantics, " which is the study meaning ".meanwhile, Leech redefines pragmatics for the purposes of linguistics as " the study of meaning in relation to speech situations ", and he deals with "utterance meaning", rather than sentence meaning.

Speech Acts

There is one of interesting theory of Pragmatics, known as speech act theory developed by J.L. Austin and Searle. They studied speech acts in isolated sentences or fabricated utterances issued in a given context. The study of speech acts is found in Pragmatics.

Yule (1996) points out that generally speech acts are action performed through utterances. Furthermore, in English are commonly given more specific labels, such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, or request.

According to Austin's theory (1962), there are three kinds of act on what we say:

1. Locutionary act, that is, the literal meaning of what is said. Example: *It's cold in here* means referring to the temperature.
2. Illocutionary act, which means the social function of what is said. Example: *It's cold in here* means a request to close the door.
3. Perlocutionary act, defined as the effect of what is said. Example: Someone actually closes the door.

Furthermore, type of speech act explained above can be classified into several classes. Searle (1975) finds that communicative functions are reducible to five major classes, there are representatives, directives, expressive, commissives, and declaratives;

1. Declarations are those kinds of speech acts that change the world via their utterance. Example:

When a priest says: "*I now pronounce you husband and wife.*"

When a jury says: "*I sentence you to death*".

2. Representatives are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speakers believe to be the case or not. The speaker's purpose in performing representatives is to commit him / herself to the belief that the propositional content of the utterance is true. Statement of fact, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions are included in representatives.

Example:

The earth is flat.

It was a warm sunny day.

3. Expressives are those kinds of speech acts that state and can be in the form of statements of pleasure, pain, likes, joy, or sorrow. Some kind of statement that can be used in expressive are: thanking, apologizing, welcoming, deploring.

Example:

I'm really sorry!

Thank you so much!

4. Directives are those kinds of speech acts that speaker use to get someone else to do something. They are commands, orders, invites, advice, begs, request, and suggestions.

Example:

Could you lend me a shirt, please?

Don't touch that!

5. Commissives are those kinds of speech acts that speaker use to commit themselves to some future action. They express what the speaker intend. They are

promises, plans, vows, threats, offers, refusals, pledges, and as the example, they can be performed by the speaker alone, or by the speaker as a member of group.

Example:

I will not do it again.

I promise I will buy it for you.

More insight is brought into this issue by discourse analysis which studies speech acts, not in isolation, as it happens in philosophy or pragmatics, but in sequences occurring in natural discourses. Generally speech act which concerns with the act of someone performed through saying something still becomes interesting discussion to be analysed when it is applied on our functions. Speech act used to express a certain attitude, and the type of speech act being performed related to the type of attitude being expressed. For example, a statement expresses a belief, a request expresses a desire, and an apology expresses regrets. As we all know, speech acts are used in our daily communication both in written and spoken as well as on social media.

Nowadays, online media as a part of our improvement communication used by most people to connect with each others across the world unlimitedly for instance some platforms of social media. Of course, this way result in the opportunity for people either to share or accomplish sensitive issues as a public consumption. They not only post their statements, photos, or even videos, but also leave various comments in order to share their opinions or feelings. They sincerely type their comments in a number of meaningful utterances. The most frequent thing people do with social media is posting their stories and checking a certain people such as public figures, then, they leave various kinds of comments on someone's post.

One of the study exploring the use of Expressive speech acts on online media has ever held before. Marta Carretero et al. in the review of *An Analysis of Expressive Speech Acts in Online Task-Oriented Interaction by University Students of Pablo de Olavide* exposed that the research was held in a corpus of online interaction involving three groups of university students in the area of English Linguistics. The result showed that the influence of certain contextual variables such as multiculturalism, age, linguistic proficiency and group size seems to have a strong bearing on the expressives employed by each group. In addition, Another research related to the speech acts theory of Searle was conducted by Lulu Fatichatis (2017) in title "An Analysis Types of Speech Act Used by English Teacher in English Teaching Learning Process". Speech acts classified from the teacher talks proved that the most frequent utterances used were various types of speech acts such as representatives, expressives, and directives.

The data source of this research and the previous study mentioned above are distinguished from the utterance form used. This research collected the online written comments. Whereas, the previous study observing speech acts in teaching process used the teacher's spoken utterances.

This paper explores the identification and the analysis of the speech acts classification found on the post comments of an American gay presenter, ElenDegeneries photo posted on Instagram. This research focused on the use of social media to obtain the data since it is a place where a number of people sharing their thought through their

comments.it would be interesting to know how they react towards the topic about the same sex marriage based their socio cultural background.

RESEARCH METHOD

The data used for this research is comments from Ellen DeGeneres' October 11, 2018 Instagram photo collected from October 11-13, 2018. After that, the data were analyzed using J.L Austin's theory and John Searle's theory to see which classification of speech acts that mostly appear in the comments. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data were analyzed by first, collecting the comments from Ellen's account, then sorting out and classifying them, and the last is identifying the sentences patterns based on the speech act theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on Ellen's post comment² that were collected, we got 3 speech act classifacionsshown in table 1 below:

Table 1. Speech Acts Classification Found in the Comments

No	Types of Speech Action	Σ	%
1	Representatives	63	50,4
2	Expressive	42	33,6
3	Directive	20	16
Total		125	100

Table 1 shows that the most dominant type of speech acts used in the comments are representative. This happens because most of the commentators give their opinions about the gay presenters. The second type of speech act is expressive, since they express their feeling about the phenomenon. Directive speech acts are also found in this data. Most of them request Ellen not to pose his pictures in the Instagram.

Representatives

According to Searle (1975), Representatives are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speakers believe to be the case or not. The speaker's purpose in performing representatives is to commit him / herself to the belief that the propositional content of the utterance is true. Statement of fact, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions are included in representatives. This kind of Speech Acts appears 50,4% of post comment. It can be proved from the following data.

Excerpt 1

@kasiameran:"Role model for EVERYONE!! □

Excerpt 2

@der_capo: You can clearly see that Ellen is the man in this relationship!!! Being gay isn't normal it's a psychological sickness or disorder

Excerpt 3

@amayafinkI djust d no know that you were gay I have watched you for a couple years

Excerpt 4

@kadeedidittoo: It's obvious to me that nobody gay goes to church because if they did and talk to the pastor they would not agree or approve because that's not what it says in the Bible and that is your father in heaven who created every one whether you like it or not but he did not create gay!

Expert 1 to 4 shows the people opinions on the gay presenter. Some agree about the phenomenon and some do not agree. For the person who agrees says that being a gay can become the role model, but for those who disagree it is said that being a gay is not normal, or even against their religion.

Expressive

Based on Searle's opinion, Expressives are those kinds of speech acts that state and can be in the form of statements of pleasure, pain, likes, joy, or sorrow, offering thanks and compliments.

From the table, 33,6% of comments are identified as expressive speech acts. we can see the examples in the excerpts below:

Excerpt 5.

@nikkibunce: "Welcome back wow"

@thekidisback41 Ellen woof: "i feel sorry for the woman ☐"

Excerpt 6.

@graciela_dulce: "Love you Ellen!!!! Thank you for being so amazing and kind to everyone! It's so great how you're just you and I'm so happy for your happy relationship and successes! You deserve all the best in life! ❤️☐"

Excerpt 7.

@omarsh111: "Disgusting ☐☐"

Excerpt 5 to 7 are the examples of expressive speech acts. They show the feeling of the commentators on Ellen as a gay presenter. Most of them show their unhappiness about Ellen as a gay.

Directive

Directives are those kinds of speech acts that speaker use to get someone else to do something. They are commands, orders, invites, advice, begs, request, and suggestions (Searle, 1975).

On the Ellen post comments on 11-13 October, there are 20 utterances or about 16% of the total of speech acts that are found on it. Some examples of their comments can be seen in the excerpts below :

Excerpt 8.

@layla.buntz:Who is that?

It is a question functions as a request in order to get an answer. In oxford dictionary, request is An act of asking politely or formally for something.

Excerpt 9.

@introverts_hub:"Don't forget to turn off your data, fams#"

It is a suggestion that can be seen from the imperative form functions to give consideration. In Oxford dictionary, suggestion is defined as an idea or plan put forward for consideration.

Excerpt .10

@jomh13:Be who you were born to be. Love with all your heart. & fulfilling your dreams with the one you love makes life more than wonderful... In this life...I was blessed to be loved by you...❤"

It is an advice in imperative form. Oxford dictionary defines Guidance or recommendations offered with regard to prudent future action.

Excerpt 11

@alanasalandy:Can someone tell me who is that? is Ellen kisses here?

It is a request proved by the use of "can someone tell me...". In oxford dictionary, request is An act of asking politely or formally for something.

Excerpt 8 to 11 belong to directive speech acts. Most of the commentators request Ellen not to publish his picture on the Instagram.

After identifying the data selected, we found that the people mostly use representatives and expressives speech acts on their comments because they share their thought and feeling. The main goal of representatives is stating what the speakers believe to be the case or not. Especially in the case of the same sex marriage, people in the world exactly have the different opinions about what they believe. They transfer their Opinion or judgments in the form of statement and description. As we can see from the data, the long conversation occurred since the people denied or supported to one another.

Moreover, the people posting the comments are from various countries who have different cultural background.

In addition, expressive speech acts related to the feeling of the speaker towards the matter. LGBT discussion is a sensitive topic for everyone. The people who left the comments on Ellen's photo were not only they who live in the place which accepts LGBT as a normal thing. It can be proved from the netizen who gave the comments using various languages such as Arabic and Thai. They show their expression through their comments.

CONCLUSION

In general, people always use various speech acts in the daily conversation for instance the use of them on Instagram. Social media as our tool functions to connect someone to a number of people. The interesting posts of some public figures possibly come up with various comments such as opinion and judgement from their followers on comments column. In linguistics study, in particular Pragmatics, their comments can be identified as speech acts classification using Searle's speech act theory.

Based on the result of this research, the most dominant netizen's comments are Representatives and Expressive. Many netizen used expressive speech acts in order to show their feelings towards the phenomena. While representatives inform what the netizen believe on the issue of LGBT discussed on Instagram post comments of Ellen's photo.

REFERENCES

- Anna Trosborg, (1995). *Interlanguage Pragmatics Requests, Complaints and Apologies*. Berlin New York : Mouton de Gruyter.
- DasepSupriadi, (2013). *Teacher's Awareness in Developing Pragmatic Competence of EFL Learners*. *Eltin Journal* Volume 1/1, October 2013.
- Rasekh, Z. Eslami. 2005. *Raising the Pragmatic Awareness of Language Learners*. *ELT Journal* Volume 59/3.
- Searle, J.R. (1975). *Inderect speech acts*. In P.Cole n J.L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics : Vol. 3. Speech Acts* (pp. 59-82). New York: Seminar.
- Searle, J.R. (1969). *Speec h acts : An essay in philosophy of Language* . Cambridge, U.K : Cambridge University Press.