

DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS IN ISLAMIC ACADEMIC DISCOURSE: CAN PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS REVEAL ISLAMIC-SPECIFIC POLITENESS PATTERNS?

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ABSTRACT

In global higher education, classroom interaction has become a central concern in understanding how language practices shape participation, authority, and learning effectiveness. Directive speech acts, as a key component of academic discourse, play a crucial role in managing interaction and facilitating instructional processes across diverse cultural and institutional settings. This study aims to examine the usage and functions of directive speech acts among students in an Islamic higher education learning environment. Employing a qualitative case study approach, the research analyzed recorded classroom interactions involving 48 students from the Indonesian Language Tadris Study Program at Sultan Muhammad Syafuiddin Sambas University (UNISSAS), West Kalimantan. Data were collected through classroom observation and documentation and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results identified 78 instances of directive speech acts classified into six functional categories: requests (26.92%), commands (23.08%), invitations (15.38%), prohibitions (14.10%), suggestions (11.54%), and advice (8.97%). Requests and commands emerged as the most dominant forms, reflecting the instructional orientation of classroom discourse and students' efforts to ensure participation and mutual understanding. In conclusion, directive speech acts function not only as pragmatic tools but also as ethical communicative strategies in Islamic academic contexts. The study implies that strengthening pragmatic awareness in Islamic education can promote effective, respectful, and harmonious classroom communication aligned with Islamic values.

Keywords: Speech Acts, Directives, Students, Learning, Islamic Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

The practice of directing speech acts in academic discourse refers to distinct linguistic procedures used in learning experiences to represent ethical and scholarly principles in Islamic higher education. In practice, communication between students and lecturers, as well as among peers, serves not only to convey information but also to demonstrate attitudes of respect, responsibility, and personal characteristics that reflect both academic and religious identity (Alshakhi, 2019; Hasnah et al., 2022; Hilal, 2023). Politeness and speech acts are essential components of internalizing religious teachings in Islamic educational institutions, which in turn indirectly develop students' personalities (Prayitno et al., 2022; Ardiansyah, 2023). Nonetheless, recent empirical data shows that student speech act practices have evolved (Özcan, 2024). The quality of scholarly communication has been greatly impacted by technological developments, resulting in a noticeable discrepancy between idealized academic norms and real linguistic practices (Naela, 2024). The manifestation of speech acts among students in Islamic higher education settings, particularly in learning environments, consequently needs to be examined.

Speech acts appear not only as intellectual definitions, but also in a variety of real-world communicative practices. According to pragmatic theory, speech acts can be divided into numerous language strategies that serve to sustain harmonious social relationships between speakers and interlocutors (Azzah & Mujiyanto, 2023; Santoso et al., 2024). Brown and Levinson recommend using indirect sentence constructions, incorporating hedging devices (softening words), acceptable forms of address, and polite expressions of requests and apologies (Gunaningtyas & Wuli Fitriati, 2021). These approaches are used differently depending on social relationships, status, age, and interactional setting, thereby adding ethical value to communication and reflecting the speaker's identity (Pratama, 2017; Sapran & Rusmawati, 2024). In addition, different phrases may include humble speech patterns, avoidance of verbal confrontation, and positive affirmation or reinforcement for interlocutors (Arifianto et al., 2023; Zahid, 2022). Collectively, these forms show that speech acts are dynamic, contextual, and significantly influenced by the value systems present within specific language communities. In Searle's framework, directive speech acts are classified separately. These are linguistic phrases that prompt the interlocutor to perform an action based on the speaker's intention (Bago & Karlić, 2023; Hilman et al., 2023). From a practical standpoint, these speech acts reflect power relations, communicative goals, and strategic exchanges between speakers and listeners (Khumalo, 2024). These directives utilize various forms, including mandates, requests, suggestions, prohibitions, advice, and recommendations, each with varying degrees of illocutionary power (Laslop, 2022). Similarly important, the success of directive speech actions is determined not merely by their linguistic structure but also by sociocultural context, interpersonal connections, and the politeness procedures used (Pertwi et al., 2021).

In this regard, a significant transformation of language has arisen in the linguistic context of West Kalimantan's upcoming generations, marked by diminishing politeness levels in daily interactions (Syafutri et al., 2023; Pangesti & Muzammil, 2024). This linguistic modification is manifested by several key phenomena: the use of coarse diction, direct speech patterns that disregard social hierarchies, and the gradual disappearance of culturally specific polite expressions, including traditional honorifics in local languages and religiously influenced speech norms (Taib et al., 2024; Van Der Lubbe et al., 2021; Wijayanto et al., 2017). This scenario reflects a deterioration in comprehension of language's pragmatic components, notably speech acts that mediate interpersonal interactions. Hence, in order to overcome this issue, educational activities are required to emphasize the value of linguistic civility in social contact. And such efforts should highlight the consistent use of positive speech acts in both academic and non-academic settings. This technique is expected to help younger generations develop not only communicative skills but also a reflective awareness of the speech act values deeply embedded in West Kalimantan's local wisdom.

Finally, speech acts are crucial for sustaining social harmony among students in West Kalimantan, particularly at UNISSAS in Sambas Regency. While various studies have analyzed speech acts in Indonesia as a whole, research on Islamic higher education institutions in West Kalimantan has remained sparse. Existing research has primarily examined speech acts in broad scenarios, failing to take into account local cultural influences, religious conventions, and the distinct social dynamics of West Kalimantan. The study's novelty lies in its consideration of the various functions of directive speech acts in the academic environment of Islamic higher education. Furthermore, using authentic classroom interaction recordings allows for genuine, context-rich insights into how speech acts influence academic communication dynamics in Islamic colleges. This study aims to gain a better understanding of linguistic strategies that help build social ties among students, and to contribute to the formulation of educational policies that foster more polite and effective communication in Islamic higher education environments.

METHOD

This study employs qualitative research methods with a focus on direct teaching practice in the context of learning at UNISSAS in Sambas Regency. This academic institution was selected because it is the only educational institution in the Muslim communities of Sambas, Singkawang, and Bengkayang. This is the first large-scale Islamic religious education in Sambas.

In addition, the primary sources of data for this study are language use trends among students enrolled in the Indonesian Language Tadris Study Program in educational settings. The distribution of participants by academic level includes 13 first-semester students, 15 third-semester students, and 20 fifth-semester students, while demographic data reveals a gender makeup of 2 males and 46 females. Not only that, the cohort consists of 45 Malay students and 3 Javanese students, for a total sample size of 48 participants. Table 1 includes complete demographic information.

Table 1. Student Demographic Profile Indonesian Language Education Tadris Program - UNISSAS

No.	Semester	Academic Year	Male	Female	Total	Malay	Javanese	Total
1	I	2024/2025	1	12	13	12	1	13
2	III	2024/2025	1	14	15	15	-	15
3	IV	2024/2025	-	20	20	18	2	20
	Total		2	46	48	45	3	48

This research scrutinizes directive speech acts that have been systematically collected from a series of 15 classroom interaction recordings, which were captured during routine learning activities. Additionally, Table 2 provides an in-depth overview of the specific recording settings and conditions under which these recordings took place.

Table 2. Recording Data

Duration	Recording														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Minutes	39.	14.	36.	66.	44.	31.	34.	35.	13.	79.	78.	45.	24.	44.	47.
/	09	43	53	27	46	18	33	01	35	03	40	25	55	13	48
Seconds															

The primary data collection approaches implemented during this study were observation and documentation. Classroom observations were conducted to directly investigate students' speech acts during educational processes. The documentation included both video and audio recordings, which served as authentic proof, allowing researchers to revisit and verify key events connected to the collected data. For data analysis, we used the Miles and Huberman methodology, which has three stages: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification (Simanungkalit et al., 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An examination of 15 instructional recordings at UNISSAS in Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan, revealed 78 instances of directive speech acts. These instances were classified into six functional categories: (1) commands, (2) requests, (3) invitations, (4) advice, (5) prohibitions, and (6) suggestions. The quantitative distribution of these categories, including frequency counts and percentage representations, is systematically presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of Directive Speech Acts

Directive Speech Act Function	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Command Function	18	23.08
Request Function	21	26.92
Invitation Function	12	15.38
Advice Function	7	8.97
Prohibition Function	11	14.10
Suggestion Function	9	11.54
Total	78	100

An analysis of 15 classroom interaction recordings from UNISSAS in Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan, revealed 78 instances of directive speech acts, which were classified into six primary functions: commands, requests, invitations, advice, prohibitions, and suggestions. The request function was the most common, accounting for 21 occasions (26.92%), followed by instructions with 18 occurrences (23.08%). Other functions appeared with the following frequency: invites (12 instances, 15.38%), prohibitions (11 instances, 14.10%), suggestions (9 instances, 11.54%), and advice (7 instances, 8.97%). These findings reveal that request and command functions are the most frequently used directive speech acts in student interactions, while advising appears to be the least used function in this academic setting.

Building on these quantitative distributions, the findings indicate that directive speech acts play a strategic role in structuring student interaction during classroom activities at UNISSAS. The predominance of requests and commands suggests that students primarily employ directive forms to negotiate participation, manage peer behavior, and clarify academic tasks within instructional discourse. In contrast, the relatively low frequency of advice indicates that evaluative or guidance-oriented directives are less commonly enacted among peers in this academic setting. This pattern reflects a learning environment in which directive speech acts primarily serve as pragmatic tools to coordinate classroom interaction rather than to offer reflective or mentoring input, aligning with the instructional and task-oriented nature of higher-education classrooms in Islamic institutions.

Directive Speech Acts

Directive speech acts are often used to issue orders, make requests, extend invitations, or make offers (Gerstenberg & Skupien, 2021; Karandeeva et al., 2022). Directive speech acts can be distinguished by the level of politeness and by how they are delivered, such as using a direct command form or a more polite request-like sentence (Górnikiewicz, 2021). Below is an excerpt from a piece of speech between students in the context of learning.

- Speaker 1 : *Baiklah demikian tadi presentasi dari kelompok empat, saya akan membuka sesi tanya.*
Okay, that was the presentation from group four, I will open the question and answer session.
- Speaker 2 : *Saya*
Me!
- Speaker 1 : *Silahkan yang ingin bertanya*
Please ask those who want to ask
- Speaker 3 : *Ohhh... ramainya*
Ohhh...it's crowded.
- Speaker 2 : *Saya*

- Me!
- Speaker 1 : *Silahkan Julaika.*
Please Julaika.
- Speaker 2 : *Apa saja tantangan yang sering muncul pada masing-masing tahap membaca dan bagaimana cara mengatasinya?*
What are the challenges that often arise at each stage of reading and how to overcome them?
- Speaker 2 : *Mohon diulangi.*
Please repeat.
- Speaker 1 : *Apa saja tantangan.... yang sering muncul... pada masing-masing tahap membaca dan bagaimana cara mengatasinya.*
What are the challenges... that often arise... at each stage of reading and how to overcome them.

In the context of classroom interactive communication, Speaker-1 serves as a discussion facilitator (most likely a lecturer or moderator). The speech acts used by Speaker-1 are oriented towards directives, the type of speech act that aims to make the listener take an action.

Utterance: *"Silakan yang ingin bertanya."*

"Please ask those who want to ask."

This sentence is more explicit in containing the direction of the directive speech act. Sp-1 uses the imperative verb "please," which is a form of polite request. Although its form resembles a command, sociopragmatically, it is categorized as a command with a permissive connotation, because it aims to facilitate active participation without imposing the will. This utterance functions to maintain politeness in a formal interactional context and indicates that Sp-1 gives authority to participants to start speaking. In terms of illocutionary force, this strengthens Speaker-1's role as the controller of the discussion flow, while maintaining harmonious social relations.

Utterance: *"Silakan Julaika."*

"Please Julaika."

This utterance is a specific directive speech act, directing a particular individual (Sp-2, namely Julaika) to speak. After repeated interruptions from Sp-2, who said "Me!", Speaker-1 responded by mentioning a name, which pragmatically gives an explicit turn to speak. This action also manages the dynamics of the conversation to remain orderly. In Searle's classification, this is still classified as a direct directive act with an imperative form that is turn-taking in the discussion.

Sp-1 uses various forms of directive speech acts that reflect important social functions in classroom interactions: giving turns, directing participation, and responding to requests for clarification. The directive speech acts used are cooperative and permissive, which show a balance between control and politeness in academic communication.

- Speaker 1 : *Baik, saya ingin bertanya. Apa perbedaan dari tahapan membaca aktif dan refleksi?*
- Speaker 2 : *Eee...tolong diulangi.*
Uee... please repeat.
- Speaker 1 : *Apa perbedaan perbedaan dari tahapan membaca aktif dan refleksi*
What are the differences between the active reading and reflection stages?
- Speaker 2 : *Membaca*
Reading...
- Speaker 1 : *Aktif.*

- Active.
Speaker 2 : *Aktif.*
Active.
Speaker 1 : *Dan refleksi.*
And reflection.
Speaker 2 : *Makasih*
Thank you.

In the conversation excerpt between Sp -1 and Sp -2, the primary focus is on Sp-2's utterance.

Utterance: "*Eee...tolong diulangi.*"

"Uee... please repeat."

This utterance contains elements of directive speech acts that are important to analyze. When viewed from the structure and purpose, Sp-2 does not provide information; instead, it directs Sp-1 to take an action: repeating the previous question. Functionally, the phrase "please repeat" is a form of request. The use of the word "please" indicates an element of politeness and a request that softens Speaker-2's intention. Although it is a request, this utterance is not coercive or urgent; instead, it shows that Sp-2 needs clarification on a question that may have been unclear or not fully understood. This speech act can be categorized as illocutionary to produce a repetitive action from the interlocutor. The illocutionary speech act of Sp-2 is for Sp-1 to repeat the previous utterance, while the expected perlocutionary effect is for Speaker-1 to repeat the question. This conversation achieves this effect, as evidenced by Sp-1's response, who immediately asks, "*What are the differences between the stages of active reading and reflection?*"

Sp-2's speech act "please repeat" is an example of a polite and functional directive speech act. Through word choices that respect politeness norms, Sp-2 effectively conveys the request to Sp-1, enabling the interaction to continue within a harmonious communicative framework. Directive speech acts play an important role in maintaining the smoothness and effectiveness of communication in the classroom. The use of directive forms, wrapped in polite expressions, demonstrates the speaker's pragmatic awareness of maintaining harmonious social relationships while still directing the interlocutor's participation in academic discussions (Risdiyanto et al., 2023; Hanafi et al., 2024). Directive speech acts, when packaged politely and tailored to context, can create an inclusive, orderly, and productive discussion atmosphere in an academic environment (Chejnová, 2021; Conti, 2020).

Directive Speech Acts with the Function of Ordering

Directive speech acts with the function of ordering, in this context, involve the speaker possessing a strong intention to influence the behavior of the interlocutor through utterances that are directive, requesting, or commanding (Dror, 2021; Akyüz, 2023). These speech acts are typically marked by the use of imperative verbs or command sentence structures, although in practice they can also be conveyed subtly through politeness strategies, depending on the social context and the relationship between the speaker and the listener, including elements of power and authority (GiYoto et al., 2020). The following excerpt illustrates an utterance containing a directive speech act with the function of ordering:

Utterance: "*yang ingin bertanya angkat tangannya.*"

"Those who wish to ask a question, raise their hands."

The utterance "*yang ingin bertanya angkat tangannya*" (Those who wish to ask a question, raise their hands) can be analyzed as a directive speech act with a veiled ordering function. Directives are a type of speech act that aims to get the interlocutor to perform an action (Prayitno et al., 2021). In this context, the speaker, acting as a discussion facilitator, does not directly command the students to raise their hands; instead, they use a declarative sentence

structure that implies an instruction. In other words, this sentence conveys a command indirectly. Instead of saying, "Please raise your hand if you want to ask a question," the speaker conveys the request through a sentence structure that ostensibly only provides information. However, in the pragmatic context, the students understand this intention as an active request to perform a specific action, raising their hands as a procedure for asking questions in the class discussion.

The ordering function in the utterance becomes effective by leveraging situational context and mutually understood academic interaction norms. The utterance context, situation, and prevailing norms are crucial for the speaker to comprehend (Goodness, 2024; Willcox-Ficzere, 2025). In a classroom setting, there is a social expectation that speaking should be preceded by permission or a specific procedure, and "raising hands" becomes a universal symbol of a request to speak. Therefore, even though the linguistic form is not a direct imperative, the ordering function is still conveyed cooperatively. This speech act also demonstrates the speaker's politeness strategy, which seeks to maintain harmonious social relations by avoiding excessive dominance or coercion towards the interlocutor. Consequently, this sentence represents a subtle form of directive and reflects an effective communication strategy in academic practice.

Directive Speech Acts with the Function of Requesting

Directive speech acts with the function of requesting are a type of speech act in pragmatic theory that aims to get the interlocutor to perform an action in accordance with the speaker's wishes (Kavaliauskaitė & Dabašinskienė, 2021). Requests, as part of directive speech acts, possess an illocutionary force that encourages action, but they are not coercive, so the realization of the action depends on the interlocutor's willingness and interpretation (Rakaj, 2023; Dewi et al., 2024). The strategies for conveying requests can vary, ranging from direct forms such as "Please..." which imply an expectation of a specific action, to more indirect forms. The choice of strategy is influenced by factors such as social relationships, situational context, and norms of politeness in a particular culture. The following excerpt illustrates an utterance containing a directive speech act with the function of requesting:

Utterance: "*Bisa diulang lagi pertanyaannya?*"
"Could you repeat the question?"

The excerpted utterance is a form of directive speech act that functions as a request in the context of communication. A directive speech act is a type of utterance that aims to get the listener to perform an action. In this case, the speaker does not explicitly command or order but instead conveys a request in a polite, non-coercive manner. This utterance implies the expectation that the interlocutor will repeat the question that was previously asked. Although the form is an interrogative sentence, this utterance is pragmatically an indirect request for action rather than an inquiry about the listener's ability. This reflects that in natural communication, speakers often use politeness strategies by avoiding direct command forms to maintain harmonious social relationships.

This utterance falls into the category of indirect speech acts. Literally, the sentence appears as a question about ability (*bisa* - can), but implicitly, the speaker is performing a requestive act asking for the repetition of the question. This strategy demonstrates the speaker's pragmatic awareness, adjusting their way of speaking to suit the norms of politeness, the social context, and the relationship between the speaker and the listener. This speech act also reflects careful attention to maintaining the social face of both parties. Thus, the use of an indirect form in this request underscores the pragmatic function of the utterance as a means of maintaining interpersonal relationships without sacrificing the clarity of communicative intent.

Directive Speech Acts with an Invitation Function

Directive speech acts with the function of inviting are a form of utterance that aims to influence the interlocutor to perform an action in accordance with the speaker's wishes, but conveyed in a persuasive and non-coercive manner. In this context, invitations usually employ subtle and polite expressions, such as *"mari"* (let's) or *"ayo"* (come on), which indicate the speaker's good intention to involve the interlocutor in a joint activity. The function of invitation also reflects a collaborative intent between the speaker and the interlocutor, where the success of this speech act depends on the interlocutor's willingness to respond positively. As part of directive speech acts, invitations occupy a softer position compared to commands or requests, yet still demonstrate an intention to direct the interlocutor's behavior. The following excerpt illustrates an utterance containing a directive speech act with the function of inviting:

Utterance: *"Makanya harus terus saring menyaring informasi yang datang untuk tidak percaya yang tidak benar."*

"That's why we must continuously filter incoming information so as not to believe what is untrue"

The utterance *"That's why we must continuously filter incoming information so as not to believe what is untrue"* can be analyzed as a directive speech act with the function of inviting. A directive speech act with the function of inviting is a type of illocutionary act that aims to invite, encourage, or persuade the interlocutor to perform a joint action or respond to the speaker's wishes with active involvement. Invitations usually appear in the form of subtle, cooperative requests, not coercive, but rather providing positive encouragement for the interlocutor to participate in an activity (Widiasri, 2020; Hu et al., 2022). In this excerpt, there is a clear implication to act, to filter incoming information. This filtering of information aims to prevent the listener from being influenced by untrue information. The word "must" in the sentence functions as a form of encouragement or recommendation, indicating that the act of filtering information is not merely an option but a necessity that needs to be carried out by the listener.

Furthermore, this utterance demonstrates a form of invitation that leans more towards a suggestion or moral appeal. Pragmatically, the speaker seeks to guide the listener to maintain vigilance against potentially misleading information. Within Searle's theory framework, this invitation is not a direct request but rather a suggestion that is expected to be accepted by the listener, subsequently leading to a specific action. By using words like "continuously" and "must," the speaker reinforces the importance of a selective attitude towards received information, thereby strengthening the communicative goal of maintaining information accuracy amid the rapidly growing flow of information.

Directive Speech Acts with the Function of Advising

Directive speech acts with the function of advising are a type of speech act that aims to influence the interlocutor to perform an action based on suggestions or recommendations given by the speaker (Syarifuddin et al., 2023). In this context, the speaker usually has a good intention to help, provide guidance, or improve the situation faced by the interlocutor. Although directive, advice is still conveyed non-coercively, so the recipient has the freedom to follow or reject the suggestion. A characteristic feature of advice is the use of subtle, persuasive expressions that consider the norms of politeness to maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships. The following excerpt illustrates an utterance containing a directive speech act with the function of advising:

Utterance: *"Menurut saya, akan lebih baik jika jawaban Ria bisa didukung buktinya."*

"In my opinion, it would be better if Ria's answer could be supported by evidence."

In the excerpted utterance “*In my opinion, it would be better if Ria's answer could be supported by evidence, the speaker conveys a form of advice or suggestion to the interlocutor, namely Ria, to provide evidence to support her answer. This sentence does not contain a direct command but instead uses a politeness strategy in the form of a personal opinion and a conditional clause “it would be better if...”*” which demonstrates the speaker’s effort to reduce the impression of being coercive.

Furthermore, the advising function in this utterance demonstrates the illocutionary intent of the speaker for the interlocutor to perform a specific action, in this case, including evidence for her statement. This action is intended to strengthen Ria’s argument and improve the quality of the ongoing academic or discursive communication. This speech act falls into the directive category because the speaker attempts to influence the interlocutor's actions in a non-coercive but rather persuasive manner. The utterance also reflects a social relationship that considers linguistic ethics, namely, providing the interlocutor with space to consider the advice given without pressure (Mayrita et al., 2024). Therefore, this analysis confirms that the utterance is a directive speech act that serves the function of advising, employing a subtle, interpersonal, and communication-effectiveness-oriented pragmatic approach.

Directive Speech Acts with the Function of Prohibiting

Directive speech acts with the function of prohibition are a type of speech act in pragmatics that aim to restrict or prevent the listener from performing a certain action. In this context, the speaker uses language to give negative commands or instructions that imply a prohibition, such as the words “don’t,” “forbidden,” or similar expressions that indicate rejection of an action. The prohibiting function in directive speech acts not only emphasizes the linguistic aspect but also reflects the social norms, ethics, and power inherent in the relationship between the speaker and the listener. Thus, prohibitions not only regulate behavior but also serve as a means to maintain social order and cultural values within a society. The following excerpt illustrates an utterance containing a directive speech act with the function of prohibiting:

Utterance: “*Tak boleh memanfaatkan apa yang menjadi kelemahan kami?*”

“Is it not allowed to exploit what are our weaknesses?”

In the analysis of the utterance “*Is it not allowed to exploit what are our weaknesses?*,” we can see a directive speech act with the function of prohibiting expressed by the speaker. Directive speech acts function to direct or ask the listener to do something or not to do something. In this case, the utterance functions to prohibit or remind the listener not to exploit the weaknesses possessed by the speaking party. This prohibition clearly sets a boundary against a certain action that is not desired by the speaker. The use of the phrase “not allowed” reinforces the nuance of prohibition, indicating that the action is considered unacceptable.

Pragmatically, this utterance reflects the speaker's intention or hope that the listener will comply with the proposed prohibition, with the expectation of avoiding behavior that could harm the speaking party. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this kind of prohibitive action can also be seen in the context of power relations and social hierarchy, where the speaker may feel the need to express a prohibition to protect their position or dignity (Mohd Salleh et al, 2022; Akyüz, 2023). Therefore, in sociopragmatic studies, this utterance is not only viewed from the aspect of its sentence structure but also from the social context and interaction between the individuals involved.

Directive Speech Acts with the Function of Suggesting

Directive speech acts with the function of suggesting are a form of utterance that aims to encourage or advise the interlocutor to perform a specific action for the common good or benefit. In this type of speech act, the speaker does not coerce but rather offers advice in a persuasive, polite tone, thereby giving the interlocutor the freedom to consider and decide

whether to follow the suggestion (Gallardo, 2017). The difference between directive speech acts with the function of advising and suggesting lies in the intensity of the encouragement and the relational position between the speaker and the listener. Directive speech acts with the function of advising are usually conveyed based on the speaker's experience or knowledge and tend to contain serious considerations of the consequences or impacts of the suggested action. Meanwhile, directive speech acts with the function of suggesting are lighter and more flexible, do not overly emphasize consequences, and are usually conveyed to encourage actions that are considered good or beneficial.

Utterance: “*Bagaimana kalau jawaban pertanyaan ini kita jadikan kajian bersama?*”

“How about we make the answer to this question a joint study?”

In the context of the above excerpted utterance “*about we make the answer to this question a joint study?*”, it falls into the category of directive speech acts with the function of suggesting (advice or suggestion). Implicitly, the speaker does not command or force the interlocutor to take action but rather suggests a form of collaboration in examining an answer to a question. The strategy used is indirect, marked by the interrogative form “*How about...*”, which pragmatically aims to convey a proposal. This demonstrates an effort to maintain politeness and uphold an egalitarian social relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor by disguising the directive intention in a more polite and collaborative form.

This utterance shows the characteristic of a directive that is not rigidly binding but rather opens up space for dialogue and negotiation of meaning. The success of the speech act depends on the preparatory condition of the interlocutor being ready to accept and carry out the suggested action (Kostromitina & Miao, 2024; Powell, 2024). In this case, the utterance requires the interlocutor's willingness to engage in a joint study activity. Furthermore, this utterance contains social values in the form of a spirit of cooperation, equality in scientific discussion, and respect for the opinions of others. Therefore, the function of suggestion contained in this speech act is not only pragmatic but also sociopragmatic, representing social and cultural norms in scientific communication that emphasize collaboration and politeness.

In this research, the primary focus is to analyze the practice of directive speech acts in the context of discussions among students at UNISSAS, particularly in Islamic student learning. The directive speech acts found in the recordings of this learning process are divided into six functions: ordering, requesting, inviting, advising, prohibiting, and suggesting. In the practice of discussions among students, the use of directive speech acts plays an important role in guiding the flow of conversation, directing attention, and regulating social interaction in the academic context (Jin et al., 2025; Kebede & Endalamaw, 2025). Based on the data, the most dominant directive speech act is the function of requesting, followed by the function of ordering, indicating that students often invite or ask for clarification regarding learning materials. Suggestive speech acts, although slightly lower, show an effort to invite peers to discuss or participate more actively in learning.

The implications of these findings are crucial for understanding the dynamics of communication among students, especially in the context of learning discussions in Islamic higher education. The dominant function of requesting indicates that students tend to ask each other for information, clarification, or further explanation about the topics being discussed. This signifies a need to strengthen students' communication skills in academic contexts, such as the ability to convey requests clearly and appropriately. Meanwhile, the quite significant directive speech act of ordering illustrates the need to provide clear instructions in learning. However, the presence of prohibitions and advice in the discussion highlights the importance of normative aspects in communication among students, particularly in maintaining ethics and politeness in communication.

CONCLUSION

Based on an analysis of 78 directive speech act data collected during the learning process at UNISSAS, it can be concluded that, in discussions among students in Islamic higher education, the most dominant directive speech act is requesting (26.92%), followed by ordering (23.08%). This reflects that students are more likely to use requests to obtain clarification or support from fellow discussion participants. The functions of inviting, prohibiting, and suggesting, which also appear, each with a smaller proportion, indicate collaborative and guidance-oriented communication in the discussion context. However, the relatively low rate of advising (8.97%) may indicate that students offer direction or advice less frequently to their peers, possibly because the discussion is more focused on exchanging ideas and problem-solving than on direct guidance. Based on these findings, it is suggested that learning in Islamic higher education can further facilitate collaborative practices that encourage students to more often share perspectives and provide constructive advice to one another, so that the learning process is not only focused on commands and requests but also on guidance and more comprehensive self-development.

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