

## **SPEECH ACT OF ULEMA IN COVID-19 PREVENTION APPEAL**

**Ai Yeni Yuliyanti**

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

Email: [yeni.yuliyanti@uinsgd.ac.id](mailto:yeni.yuliyanti@uinsgd.ac.id)

### **ABSTRACT**

*Amid deep sadness because of this virus, ulema, as a reference for Muslims, have an important role. This study aims to analyze the speech acts of the ulema in the Friday sermon text at the Great Mosque of Bandung to prove the role of the ulema regarding the appeal for COVID-19 prevention and explore the speech acts of the ulema's directive related to the appeal. This research uses the Speech Act theory with qualitative methods. Data was collected by transcribing the Friday sermon video at the Great Mosque of Bandung during the New Normal period. The results showed that the data contained no assertive, directive, or expressive speech acts. Assertive speech acts dominate, followed by directive speech acts. This dominance is related to the text being a religious text containing religious propositions or teachings. There were also many directive speech acts because the ulema called for the government's appeal regarding the prevention of COVID-19. The dominant directive speech act is requestive. This finding shows that scholars prefer the language of invitation rather than orders. In addition, scholars very often use direct action directive speech acts.*

Keywords: Speech Act, Ulema, Covid-19 Prevention Appeal

### **ABSTRAK**

Ditengah kesedihan yang mendalam akibat efek dari virus ini, ulema sebagai acuan bagi umat Islam memiliki peran penting. Untuk membuktikan peran ulema terkait himbauan pencegahan COVID-19, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tindak tutur ulema dalam naskah khutbah jum'at di Masjid Raya Bandung dan juga menggali tindak tutur direktif ulema terkait himbauan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori Speech Act dengan metode kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan mentranskripsi video khutbah jum'at di Masjid Raya Bandung pada masa New Normal. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam data tersebut terdapat tidak tutur asertif, tindak tutur direktif dan tindak tutur ekspresif. Tindak tutur asertif sangat mendominasi disusul tindak tutur direktif. Dominasi ini terkait naskah tersebut merupakan teks keagamaan yang isinya proposisi atau ajaran keagamaan. Tindak tutur direktif pun banyak ditemukan karena para ulema ikut andil dalam menyerukan himbauan pemerintah terkait pencegahan COVID-19. Tindak tutur direktif yang dominan adalah requestive. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa para ulema lebih memilih dengan gaya Bahasa ajakan ketimbang suruhan. Selain itu, para ulema sangat sering menggunakan tindak tutur direktif tindak langsung.

Kata Kunci: Tindak Tutur, Ulema, Himbauan Pencegahan COVID-19

### **INTRODUCTION**

The emergence of COVID-19 has spread throughout the world, including Indonesia. This pandemic has affected the way people live. Society must change and adapt to new conditions. Various social problems also

emerged, such as panic buying, rampant criminal acts, prejudice, exclusion, and discrimination against victims of Covid-19, as well as high poverty and unemployment due to mass layoffs (Alifa, 2020). Divorce cases are also increasing (Radhitya, Nurwati, & Irfan, 2020).

The responses of the Indonesian people are very diverse: a) limit themselves to leaving the house and complying with the health protocol rules; b) understand but, for some reason forced to violate the rules of the health protocol; c) do not care or even underestimate; d) consider Covid-19 to be a deliberate 'business' or political conspiracy; e) believe in the principle of life in God's hands (Jamil, 2020).

All elements of society are trying their best to find ways to contain this epidemic. According to Prof. Dr. Erwan Agus Putranto, M. Si, the efforts made by the community include complying with government regulations, raising funds, making donations, making PPE for health workers, or becoming volunteers (Elysia, 2020). Responding to this crisis, the government also issued regulations and appeals that changed civilization and the order of people's lives. This shift is contained in the new normal policy. This policy is an effort to control and break the chain of transmission of Covid-19.

In addition to the government, scholars also have an important role. With their duties as *Warosatul Ambiya*, ulema are responsible for educating the public to comply with government rules and policies (Abror, 2020). The ulema are fully responsible for whether there are other *ulil amri* elements (Zahratunnisa, 2020). People who feel afraid and experience culture shock make the ulema a reference regarding this outbreak. Moreover, this epidemic has changed the habit of communal worship procedures because of the prohibition on gatherings. Therefore, the speech acts of ulema are in the spotlight because they will have implications for the mindset and order of people's lives in dealing with this virus outbreak.

For this reason, the researcher intends to analyze the speech acts of ulema related to the appeal for the prevention of COVID-19 in the Friday

sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung. This election was based on the fact that as of February 23, 2021, COVID-19 cases in West Java Province experienced the most additions among other provinces, with 4,334 new cases (Ulum, 2021). The author believes it is important to conduct research in the province and Bandung as the capital city of West Java Province to represent the province of West Java.

Research related to speech has been done in various fields, such as movies (Ramayanti & Marlina, 2018; Sembiring & Ambalegin, 2019), religious text in video (Fauziyah & Fadlilah, 2019), audio (Gunawan, Thahara, & Risdianto, 2019), and speech (Lutfiyah, 2017). Specifically analyzing the directive speech act, the researchers applied it to the teaching-learning process (Alakrash & Bustan, 2020; Haryanto & Mubarok, 2020; Qomariyah, 2017), political text (Rosyidi, Mahyuni, & Muhaimi, 2019), and literary works (Setyawan, 2018).

The number of studies related to speech acts proves this study is important because it can explore what is behind someone's speech with varied data. Texts with ancient and religious nuances are being echoed to remain sustainable and enrich scientific treasures. This research differs from other research, which uses religious texts in the form of Friday sermon texts by elaborating on *Ushuluddin* studies by classifying the arguments used to support directive speech acts related to the call for prevention of COVID-19.

This study aims to determine the speech acts that appear in the Friday sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung related to the COVID-19 prevention appeal and to find out the types of directive speech acts that appear in the Friday sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung regarding the appeal for COVID-19 prevention. This research is evidence that scholars have an important role in preventing COVID-19; The scholars also directed the same thing that aligns with the government's recommendation to make efforts that must be made by the community so that this epidemic will end in our country soon.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study is a descriptive study to describe the use of speech acts of ulema in Friday Sermons at the Great Mosque of Bandung. The method used in this study is a qualitative research method with the text of the Friday sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung as the data. This research consists of 3 stages: data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2014). The steps are:

1. Collecting data, the author must conduct observations and interviews to get the Friday sermon script. The data available is a video, so the author must do the transcription.
2. Data analysis is interactive analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.
  - In data reduction, eight videos from 33 Friday sermon videos from the Bandung Official Mosque YouTube discuss how to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - The transcription of the eight manuscripts was originally in the form of a video into a script or written form.
  - Each utterance of the eight texts was analyzed for the type of speech.
  - From the directive speech act data, it is regrouped based on its function.
  - Then, the researcher analyses the arguments used by the ulema in the directive speech acts related to the appeal to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
3. Data interpretation, in this stage, the writer interprets the findings.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

To reveal the role of scholars in the appeal of preventing COVID-19 Linguistics is a pragmatic linguistic study. Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning conveyed by speakers (or writers) and

interpreted by listeners (or readers) (Yule, 2006). According to Leech in Jumanto (2017), pragmatics is the study of how speech has meaning in certain situations. Of course, pragmatics is closely related to context. The context strongly influences the speaker's intention in interacting with the interlocutor. In other words, pragmatics is the study of how language is used in certain situations to achieve the speaker's goals or the study of the speaker's intentions.

Speech is an utterance that is conveyed by the speaker to the interlocutor in communicating. In pragmatic studies, speech is a form of speech act and the product of a speech act itself (Nadar, 2009). Speech can be interpreted as an utterance that results from a speech act process that contains a certain meaning and is used in certain situations. A speech act is an activity in which participants interact with language in conventional ways to achieve a result (Yule, 2006).

The theory of speech acts was first coined by Austin (1962) and was later developed by Searle (1969). Austin states that when someone says something, he or she also does something. Yule states another definition of speech acts in Ramayanti & Marlina (2018); speech acts are actions displayed through speech. Austin in Friday (2017) introduced three kinds of speech acts, namely locutionary acts (Locutionary Act), illocutionary acts (Ilocutionary Act), and perlocutionary acts (Perlocutionary Act).

According to Yule (2006), locutionary acts are the basic acts of speech or producing a meaningful linguistic expression (the act of saying something). Illocutionary acts are speeches used to carry out an action. According to Wijana and Rohmadi in Rosyidi, Mahyuni, & Muhaimi (2019), an illocutionary act is an utterance that serves to say or inform something; it can also be used to do something (the act of doing something). Meanwhile, perlocutionary acts are actions the speaker wants to achieve (Nadar, 2009). In other words, the effect or influence of the resulting speech (an act of affecting someone).

According to Searle in Ramayanti & Marlina (2018), speech acts are classified into five types, namely representative, directive, expressive, commissive, and declaration speech acts. Representative speech acts are speech acts that bind the speaker to the truth he tells, for example, stating, boasting, suggesting, claiming, or complaining. Directive speech acts are speech acts that are carried out so that the speaker does what the speaker says, for example, ordering, ordering, advising, requesting, and recommending. Expressive speech acts are speech acts that express, express, or inform the psychological attitude of the speaker, for example, congratulating, thanking, apologizing, praising, blaming, and condolences. Commissive speech acts are speech acts that bind the speaker to carry out the things mentioned in the speech, for example, promising, offering something, and swearing. Declaration speech acts are acts carried out to create new conditions, such as firing, surrender, baptizing, excommunicating, naming, appointing, and punishing.

According to Yule (2006), directives are speech acts speakers use to tell others to do something. This speech act states what happens to the speaker's or interlocutor's wishes. These speech acts include orders, requests, and giving suggestions, and the form can be positive and negative sentences. When using the directive, the speaker tries to adapt the world to the word (through the listener). Bach and Harnish in Ibrahim divide directive speech acts into six types (Qomariyah, 2017), which consist of:

- a. Requestives are speech acts in which the speaker asks for the interlocutor to do an action.
- b. Questions mean that the speaker asks a proposition to the interlocutor.
- c. Requirements are speech acts which mean that the speaker wants the interlocutor to perform an action.
- d. Prohibitives are speech acts that imply that the speaker forbids the interlocutor to take action.

- e. Permissions are speech acts that indicate that the speaker allows the interlocutor to perform an action.
- f. Advisories speech acts that indicate that the speaker is advising the interlocutor.

Ibrahim also divides the functions of the six types of directive speech acts as follows (Qomariyah, 2017):

- a. Requestives function to ask, plead, pray, press, and invite.
- b. Questions function to ask and interrogate.
- c. Requirements function to require, command, demand, dictate, direct, instruct, regulate, and require.
- d. Prohibitive functions to prohibit and limit.
- e. Permissives function to approve, allow, bestow, and forgive.
- f. Advisories function to advise, counsel, and advise.

A directive speech act is divided into two types: direct directive speech act, expressed as imperative sentences. In other words, according to the mode of the sentence with the function of the sentence. When we aim to command, then we use the imperative sentence mode. On the other hand, if the command function does not match and the sentence mode is not imperative, it is called an indirect directive speech act (Searle in Qomariyah, 2017).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Based on data reduction, the data in this study amounted to 8 of 33 Friday sermon texts at the Great Mosque of Bandung during the period New Normal. Based on an interview with the Head of **the Blood Service Division** of the Great Mosque of Bandung, Uwoh Saepulloh, MM., the Great Mosque of Bandung held Friday prayers according to the government's decision. Of course, following the rules issued by the government, including maintaining 1 meter and a maximum of only 30% of capacity. The Friday prayer congregation includes employees working in offices, shopping areas,

shoppers, and tourists. With many visitors from all over the archipelago and some even from abroad, the Great Mosque of Bandung has become a reference for other provincial mosques on whether to hold Friday prayers or not (Personal interview, Uwoh Saepulloh., MM., August 30, 2021).

The eight manuscripts were then analyzed based on the theory of speech acts (Austin in Cutting, 2003); and Searle (1982) for two points. One, explore the speech acts of ulema related to preventing COVID-19 to answer the dominant speech acts. It is, of course, related to the Friday sermon, a religious text that contains many propositions/truths related to the teachings of Islam. Is there a balance with the directive speech act, which shows a call to prevent the COVID-19. Two, explore the speech acts of the ulema's directive regarding the prevention of COVID-19 to answer how the *Khatib's* style is in inviting the congregation to follow the government's recommendations regarding the prevention of COVID-19.

### **Ulema's Speech Act in Friday Sermons at the Great Mosque of Bandung related to the Appeal for Prevention of COVID-19**

Based on the analysis of the eight Friday sermons, the speech acts used by the preachers included assertive, directive, and expressive speech acts. It is described in detail in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Ulema's Speech Act in Friday Sermons

No	Type of Speech Act	Function	Quantity
1.	Assertive	<i>Expressing, explaining, mentioning, reporting, arguing, claiming, agreeing, commenting and telling</i>	251
2.	Directive	<i>Ordering, instructing, advising, requesting, suggesting, prohibiting, confirming</i>	156
3.	Expressive	<i>Greeting, thanks, condolences, blame, and apologies</i>	15

Based on Table 1 above, the dominant speech act is the assertive speech act (251 times). Assertive speech acts, or known by other terms



representative speech acts, are speech acts in which the speaker expresses a proposition or a truth. Of course, the proposition conveyed by the ulema in the Friday sermon was related to the teachings of Islam, which adhered to the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. This dominance is strongly influenced by the form of the data, which is the Friday sermon text is a religious text. In addition, the Friday sermon pattern is also an oral language that is delivered in one direction (monologue) or lecture. Examples of assertive speech acts:

Data 1: *Ada orang mengatakan ini (Virus Corona) bukan alami, virus ini ya alami, semua selain Allah, alam. Yang disebut alam itu, “كُلُّ مِ سِوَالله”, alam itu.*

Based on data 1, it is clear that the *Khatib* conveyed a proposition regarding the Corona Virus based on religious views. He stated that the Corona Virus was natural by adhering to the proposition that other than Allah is nature.

Data 2: *50.000 tahun sebelum dunia ini tercipta langit dan bumi dengan isinya, Allah sudah merencanakan apa yang terjadi seperti yang kita alami saat ini.*

Based on data 2, *Khatib* explained a proposition that everything that happened in this world had been planned by Allah tens of thousands of years before this world was created. In this sentence, the *Khatib* explained that even the COVID-19 that is currently befalling humankind has already been determined by God.

In addition to assertive speech acts, directive speech acts are also widely used by preachers in Friday sermons (156 times). Directive speech acts are speech acts that ask the opponent/partner to do something. This request is related to the ulema's obligation to invite Muslims to fear Allah PBUH, follow all His commands, and stay away from all His prohibitions. The *Khatib* explained and outlined what to do and what Muslims should stay away from. Examples of directive speech acts:

Data 3: *Kita tetap menjaga diri sabar untuk menggelar rahmat Allah, kita sabar menghadapi cobaan ini.*

Based on data 3 above, *Khatib* invites the congregation to pray Friday to remain patient during this COVID-19 appeal. In the sentence above, the *Khatib* explained that patience is solely aimed at getting us the grace of Allah. With a tremendous impact on human life, *Khatib* called on Muslims to keep themselves, to remain patient.

Data 4: *Untuk itulah, kesempatan Jum'at ini, mari kita semua merenung untuk membaca diri kita tanpa putus asa.*

From data 4 above, *Khatib* invites the congregation to pray Friday to do *muhasabah*, self-introspection without despair. In this case, *Khatib* called for the emergence of the Corona outbreak to be used to self-evaluate, improve oneself. Although the existence of this plague is very haunting because it can take human lives, the *Khatib* called on the congregation not to despair.

In addition to both Assertive and Directive speech acts, expressive speech acts also appear in the data (15 times). Expressive speech acts are speech acts that show the attitudes or feelings of the speaker. It is related to *Khatib's* greetings/greetings to the congregation, *Khatib's* thanks and apologies to the congregation, and condolences for the emergence of COVID-19. Examples of Expressive speech acts:

Data 5: *Dengan wabah corona, diri kita juga mencekam karena kita dihadapkan dengan berbagai macam pembatasan. Perekonomian kita juga terganggu, rusak, bukan cuma yang kecil, yang besar juga ikut merasakan dampak dari wabah corona.*

Based on data 5, *Khatib* expressed his condolences for the epidemic that hit almost all parts of the world and also had a domino effect on human life. The impact includes the many restrictions to prevent the spread of the virus, and the economy was disrupted tremendously.

Data 6: *Selama Ramadan yang silam, masih dalam suasana bencana dunia, kita telah di selamatkan oleh Allah bisa melaksanakan pada shaum dengan sempurna sampai Idul Fitri.*

Based on data 6, *Khatib* expressed his gratitude because even after a disaster struck by the Corona outbreak, Muslims could still carry out their obligations to fast during Ramadan. Therefore, the above speech is categorized into expressive speech acts.

In short, the speech acts used by the preachers in the Friday Sermon regarding the Covid-19 prevention appeal are assertive, directive, and expressive speech acts. The dominant is assertive speech acts. Directive speech acts and expressive speech acts follow it.

### **The Ulema's Directive speech acts in the Friday Sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung regarding the COVID-19 Prevention Appeal**

In the Friday sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung, directive speech acts often appear to be used by preachers. The types of directive speech act that appear are Requestive, Questions, Requirement, Prohibitive, and Permissive. There is no directive speech act data in the form of Advisories. It is described in detail in Table 2.

Table 2. The Function of Ulema's Directive Speech Act in Friday Sermons

No	Type of Directive speech acts	Function	Quantity
1.	Requestive	<i>Requesting, requesting, inviting, praying, encouraging</i>	94
2.	Questions	<i>Asking</i>	14
3.	Requirements	<i>Ordering, directing, instructing, arranging</i>	33
4.	Prohibitive	<i>Forbid, restrict</i>	11
5.	Permissive	<i>Allow</i>	2

Based on Table 2, the directive speech act is dominated by Requestive and Requirement in the second position. It shows that the *Khatib* prefer to ask, beg, invite, pray, and encourage others. It aims to show the congregation is close to the preacher, has the same position, and has the same obligations in the eyes of Allah Almighty. Requirements are also in the second position, which dominates the type of directive speech act in the

Friday sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung. It is related to absolute rules on Islamic religious laws.

From all the above data, the directive speech act is categorized into direct directive speech act and indirect directive speech act. According to Searle in Qomariyah (2017), the directive speech act is divided into two types: direct directive speech act, which is expressed in the form of imperative sentences. In other words, according to the mode of the sentence with the function of the sentence. When we aim to command, then we use the imperative sentence mode. On the other hand, if a mismatch between the commanding function and the mode of the sentence is not imperative, then it is called the indirect directive speech act.

Table 3. The Types of Ulema's Directive Speech Act in Friday Sermons

No	Type of Directive speech acts	Quantity
1.	Direct	25
2.	Indirect	84

Table 3 shows only 25 direct directive speech act data, while 84 data are indirect directive speech acts. It shows that in terms of asking the congregation to do something, the *Khatib* prefer declarative or negative sentences to imperatives. It relates to the impression of ordering when using imperative sentences.

Example of direct directive speech act:

Data 7: *Mari kita hadapi dengan iman, bahwa kejadian ini bagian dari takdir Allah.*

In data 7, *Khatib* invites the congregation to pray Friday to face this Corona outbreak with faith. *Khatib* expressed the above utterance in the form of an imperative sentence. So, the function and sentence mode are appropriate so that the above speech is categorized into direct directive speech acts.

Data 8: *Untuk itu, maka tidak ada yang pantas kita lakukan, kecuali bersyukur, beriman bahwa Allah begitu sayang kepada kita.*

In data 8, *Khatib* invites the congregation to pray Friday to be grateful and have faith in Allah SWT. The above utterance was expressed by *Khatib*, not in the form of an imperative sentence but a declarative one. So, the function and sentence mode do not match, so the above speech is categorized into indirect directive speech acts.

In short, this study found that the preachers' speech acts in the Friday Sermon regarding the Covid-19 prevention appeal are assertive, directive, and expressive. The dominant assertive speech acts are due to religious text that precisely an order of Islam teaching to obey Allah Almighty based on the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. Its dominance is also due to verbal and monologue language. Meanwhile, directive speech acts to place the second rank, and expressive speech acts place the third rank.

The dominant directive speech acts are requestive to request, invite, pray, and encourage the congregation to do something. It is followed by requirements to order, direct, instruct, and arrange the congregation of the Friday sermon to do something. The rest are questions to ask, prohibitive to forbid and restrict, and permissive to allow. The indirect speech act dominates the direct speech act. It shows that in terms of asking the congregation to do something, the *Khatib* prefer declarative or negative sentences to imperatives. It relates to the better impression of ordering without using imperative sentences.

This study aligns with the research of Rosyidi et al. (2019) on political debate and Lutfiyah's thesis (2017) analyzing Said Aqil Siroj's Religious Speech that the assertive speech act is in the first rank, then followed by the directive speech act in the second rank. Even though the data of the three research is verbal language, the difference is that political debate is dialogue while Friday sermons and religious speeches are monologues. It shows that the purpose of both speech (monologue) and debate (dialogue) is to make the audience/listener believe and obey what the speaker is saying.

In comparison, the previous studies that analyze speech acts in movies found directive speech acts dominate other speech acts (Ramayanti &

Marlina, 2018; Sembiring & Ambalegin, 2019). The dominant speech act is a directive showing that the character wants others to do more. Meanwhile, in the teaching and learning process, directive speech acts will make communication between teachers and students more interactive and meaningful (Qomariyah, 2017). It also contributes to the types of learning process, whether teacher-centered or student-centered (Haryanto & Mubarok, 2020). The more directions expressed by the teacher, the more teacher-centered learning. On the other hand, the fewer directives expressed by the teacher, the less teacher-centered learning.

The use of direct and indirect directive speech acts serves to encourage people to act. Setyawan's research (2018) implied that direct speech acts show the order of the one who has the higher power to the lower power, such as the king to his people. Differently, based on the result of this research, the dominant indirect directive speech act in the religious speech discourse shows the approach used by the preachers to their congregation. This approach becomes the distinctive method of each preacher. Each preacher chooses to use a direct directive speech act that shows their higher power or an indirect directive speech act to be more polite and make listeners aware of what the speaker means without offending the person (Alakrash & Bustan, 2020).

This study gives new color to the study of speech acts that focuses on a religious text, specifically the Friday sermon. In addition, this study also proves the ulema's role in the prevention of Covid-19 scientifically in a pragmatic study lens.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the speech act data analysis in the Friday sermon during the new normal at the Great Mosque of Bandung, it can be concluded as follows:

The types of speech acts in Friday sermons at Masjid Raya Bandung are assertive, directive, and expressive. Assertive speech acts dominated the Friday sermon. This dominance is strongly influenced by the form of data which is a sermon text which is a religious text whose contents are Islamic teachings (containing propositions). In addition, the Friday sermon pattern is also an oral language that is delivered in one direction or lecture.

The types of speech acts in the Friday sermon at the Great Mosque of Bandung are Requestive, Question, Requirement, Prohibitive, and Permissive. Requestive directive speech acts are more dominant. It shows that the scholars, in this case, the *Khatib*, chose to use the invitation method rather than orders. The indirect directive speech act was more dominant than the direct directive speech act. It shows that the *Khatib* prefers the sentence mode other than the Imperative in conveying Islamic religious rules.

The arguments used by the preachers regarding the prevention of COVID-19 illustrate that COVID-19 can be a test or a disaster. Of course, it is all based on the decree of Allah SWT. The efforts to overcome this epidemic are two physical and mental efforts. Efforts were born as regulated by the government, including 5M, physical distancing, etc. The mental effort can be made by repenting, pious, praying, dhikr, trusting, and patient. In addition, we must believe that God will help us because God is always with us. There must be a way out of this problem.

This research is scientific evidence that the ulema plays a role in preventing COVID-19 in line with government regulations. The analysis of speech acts in the study of Pragmatic Linguistics proves it.

This research is limited to only one place: the Great Mosque of Bandung. Of course, further research is expected with wider coverage of

locations and using the mix-method method to cover comprehensive research results.

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