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Use of Implicit Performative Utterances at University of Padjadjaran and at University of Pennsylvania

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Abstract

The use of implicit performative utterances can be found in some announcements at Universitas Padjadjaran (Unpad) in Bandung, Indonesia and at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) in Philadelphia, U. S. A. In linguistics, there is a form of speech known as performative utterances (Austin, 1962). The word comes from the verb 'perform' and refers to the noun 'action'; it is said that the word refers to a speech for performance or action. Performatives cannot be regarded as right or wrong statements, but refer to appropriate or inappropriate, legitimate or illegitimate actions. Implicit performatives are performative utterances with performative verbs but they are not explicitly stated. With an implicit performative, the sentence does not have an explicit performative verb, but it has illocutionary force which is known from the context. Knowing the context, the hearer assumes the performative verb that appears. The use of this kind of utterances in notices at Unpad and at UPenn is quite different. This paper examines the differences and the similarities between the announcements at Unpad and at UPenn which use implicit performative utterances.

Keywords: Implicit performative utterances, illocutionary force, announcements.

1. INTRODUCTION

Performative utterances are a form of speech act, and these are a natural phenomenon used by speakers, in this case, speakers of Indonesian and of English. The use of implicit performative utterances through various announcements or notices spread across the campuses in Unpad and at UPenn gives an overview of how the two languages apply these utterances in the form of information notices, prohibitions, and commands in a variety of different situations. Although the announcements are taken from the campuses, the cultural differences between the two countries provide different

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contexts for the meanings that emerge from these utterances. This refers to the concept that language has variation due to how it is used by groups of people to collaborate and communicate (Kridalaksana, 2009).

Pragmatically, the results of this study can immediately be applied either by the users or learners of Indonesian or of English to find out how to use implicit performative utterances through these languages in various announcements on campuses by speakers of either language. Based on this rationale, some problems of identification can be formulated as follows: (1) What type of sentences are contained in the announcements?, and (2) How does the context influence the intended meaning of the announcements?

Some studies on performative utterances have been done by researchers including Ваврінчик Р. Я. (Vavrinchik, 2011). He is a Russian national linguist who wrote an article with the title “Performative utterances in recent newspaper feature articles”. The objects of this research were the titles of articles in the English newspapers “The Times” and “The Daily Telegraph” in the period 2009-2010. At the same time, two linguists conducted a research with the object of studying performatives in the written form and refuted the theory that performative speech cannot be separated from illocutionary acts (Cohen & Levesque, 2010). Then, another research by García-Carpintero (2013) was conducted a form of proof of the concept of explicit performative utterances stated by Austin (1962).

Although research on performative utterances in English has been done by experts before, no one had ever done research on implicit performative utterances in the announcements on two campuses in different countries, namely Unpad and UPenn, and thus, this research intends to fill in this gap.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of the meaning of speaking. According to Yule (1996, p. 3), “pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)”. This type of study necessarily involves the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and the context influences what is said. Based on Levinson (1983, p. 27), “pragmatics is the study of deixis, implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and aspects of discourse structure”. What Levinson (1983) has stated is a central topic in pragmatics.

In the world of sound and meaning, there is a context which affects the harmonious system of a language. In linguistics, pragmatics is known as one of its affiliates relating to the meaning of language that deals with context. Referring to the definition given by Yule (1996), pragmatics is the science of the meaning conveyed by the speaker and the meaning interpreted by the listener. Parker (1986), in Wijana and Rohmadi (2009), gives the definition of pragmatics as a branch of linguistics that studies the external structure of the language, namely how units of language are used in communication. The meaning studied in pragmatics is the intent of the speaker (the speaker’s meaning). Regarding the definition of pragmatics based on linguists, it can be concluded that pragmatics is the study of the use of language in communication, especially to do with the context and situation.

Pragmatics emerges due to awareness amongst linguists that an effort to uncover the nature of language will not bring the expected results without understanding based on pragmatics, that is, how the language is used in communication. The study of language cannot be done without considering the context of the situation involving participation, participation measures (both verbal and nonverbal acts), the characteristics of other situations that are relevant to the ongoing communication, and the effects of the speech acts that are realized with other forms of change arising from the actions of the participants.

2.2 Context

Context is one aspect of a speech situation. A different context can create a different meaning for the same speech act. According to Yule (1996, p. 128), “context is the physical environment in which a word is used”. Showing agreement with what is taught by some linguists in defining context, McManis, Stollenwerk, and Zheng-Sheng (1988, p. 197) have defined several different aspects of context:

1. Physical context: this includes where the conversation takes place, what objects are present, and what actions are taking place.
2. Epistemic context: this tells us about the background knowledge shared by the speaker(s) and the listener(s).
3. Linguistic context: this relates to utterances previous to the utterance under consideration.
4. Social context: this relates to the social relationship and setting of the speaker and the listener(s).

Therefore, understanding the context will help speakers and listeners in getting the right meaning from the speech.

2.3 Performative Utterances

The use of language in announcements displayed at Unpad and UPenn is linguistics that embodies the concept of implicit performative utterances. The terminology performative sentence or performative utterance comes from Austin (1962); even he often shortens it to “performative” (Austin, 1962, p. 6). The word comes from the verb ‘perform’ and refers to the noun ‘action’, it is said that the word refers to a speech act that shows performance or action.

A first person singular subject is followed by a performative verb in active present form (Austin, 1962, p. 5). Performative utterances, sometimes just simply called performatives, have several characteristics. First, this speech cannot describe or report and cannot be interpreted as a statement of right or wrong. Second, this utterance or part of the speech refers to the action and does not describe or say anything about something.

Performative utterances are divided into explicit and implicit ones (Austin, 1962, p. 61). In explicit performatives, the performative verb(s) appears explicitly, while in implicit performatives, the verb(s) does not appear, but the verb can be interpreted from the speech that appears. An example of an explicit performative utterance is (1) “I promise to repay you tomorrow” because at the time of saying it, the speaker perform(s) an action that exists or that has been described in speech. Thus what will be acted is a promise. If the speaker is not able to keep his promise due to one reason or another,

then this will not be a wrong statement but a misstatement. Therefore, in performative circumstances, appropriate or suitable (felicitous) conditions are needed to make it a true statement. Another example is this speech, (2) "I christen this ship the Imperial Flagship Mao"; this sentence will be considered legitimate and appropriate when all circumstances at the time the speech is uttered are in accordance with the approved procedures for naming a ship, for example, it is at a formal event, and it is spoken by an officer or authorized person. Austin (1962) names the conditions or situations that support(s) the performative utterance or sentence as 'felicitous conditions'.

The following speech is an example of an implicit performative: (3) "Stay with me! Stay with me!" which is very dependent on the context surrounding the speech. This conversation is based on a movie, when a commander orders his soldiers to war, and then the full sentence can be "I command you to stay with me". The verb 'command' appears and is adapted to the context when and where the speech takes place, based on the indicators which are - who the speakers and the listeners/addressees are, the relationship between them, and the situation where the speech takes place. When the command comes from a commander in a war situation, then the command, legally, must be followed by the soldiers. Based on McIntosh (2000), the verb "command" has meanings: 'to give someone an order, to control someone or something and tell them what to do'.

Performative utterances that are categorized as illocutionary acts consist of five categories, they are: declarations, representatives (or assertives), expressives, directives, and commissives (Searle, 1976). They are explained below:

- Declarations are those kinds of speech acts that change the world through their utterance.
- Representatives are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be the case or not.
- Expressives are those kinds of speech act that state what the speaker feels.
- Directives are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to get someone else to do something, and
- Commissives are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future actions. They express what the speaker intends to do.

Moreover, the types of sentences based on their communicative value may be divided into declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamative, and empathetic sentences (Rahardi, 2002, p. 74).

3. METHOD

Announcements that are in a particular location are a form of application of a language. The use of language in one place may be different from in other places. The data for this study was taken from announcements around the campus of Padjadjaran University (Unpad) in Bandung, Indonesia, and also around the campus of the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn), Philadelphia, U. S. A. Ten announcements were taken as data from the buildings of the Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Economics and Business, and the Postgraduate School at Padjadjaran University and ten announcements were taken from the Department of Linguistics, Colen Hall and the Library at the University of Pennsylvania.

The method used in this research is a descriptive method. According to Djajasudarma (1993), a descriptive method aims to make descriptions; make pictures, paint a systematic, factual and accurate picture of the information or data, properties, and phenomena under study. The steps of this research were: (1) literature review, (2) the collection of data, (3) data analysis, and (4) conclusions. In doing the analysis, the writer used a comparative method to find similarities and differences between the groups of data.

4. RESULTS

The data below comes from the campus of Unpad, Bandung, and from the campus of UPenn, Philadelphia. The author analyzed 10 sets of data from each campus on a variety of different topics. Below are the analyses of four sets of data from each campus. The classifications were made according to the location of the data.

4.1 Data from Unpad

Data 1: *Kepada mahasiswa Program S1 dan DIII Fakultas Ilmu Budaya yang mengenakan T-Shirt (Kaos Oblong) dimohon untuk menggantinya dengan kemeja atau kaos berkerah. Atas perhatian Anda, kami ucapkan terima kasih. Jatinangor, 18 Mei 2012. Pembantu Dekan 1.*

[To Bachelor and Diploma III students in the Humanities Faculty who wear T-shirts are requested to change them into shirts with collars. Thank you for your attention. Jatinangor, May 18, 2012. Assistant Dean 1]

The sample in Data 1 was found on the information board in the Humanities Faculty, Unpad. This data was categorized as an implicit performative utterance because the performative verb does not appear but the context of the utterance shows the intention that the speaker wants to be done by the readers. The complete utterance should be “I, the Assistant Dean 1, hereby order Bachelor and Diploma III students in the Humanities Faculty who wear t-shirts to change them for shirts with collars”. The utterance comes in a directive sentence, but the intended meaning was to ask the students to obey the dress code for classes. As it is in the imperative form, it turns the utterance into an indirect speech because the utterance has a different form in this kind of sentence, which is directive with the intended meaning that is imperative.

There is a clear social distance and social status that is present between the speaker and the readers. In this case, the speaker has a very high authority, so if this rule is violated, then the readers may be subject to academic penalties. The topic is particular to Indonesia, because the appropriateness of clothing worn by students is something that people in the Indonesian’s culture are concerned about. This explains why this kind of announcement can only be found at Unpad, and not at UPenn.

Data 2: *Dilarang duduk di atas meja!*

[Do not sit on the table!]

Data 2 was found on the table at the front of a lecturer’s room in the Economics and Business Faculty at Unpad. It is a prohibition not to sit on the table. Supported by

the context, the complete utterance is “I, hereby, forbid anyone to sit on this table”. The utterance can be categorized as a direct speech imperative sentence, because what is written and the kind of sentence is the same as what was intended by the speaker, that is a prohibition to sit on the table. Because the announcement contains the intention that the speaker wants and is to be done by the readers, so we can say that the intent of the utterance is directive.

Based on the context, the announcement can be categorized as a social directive, because the topic is not specifically about an academic problem or rule even if it is located in an educational institution. It is related to a polite behavior in the Indonesian culture where people who sit on tables are regarded as impolite.

Data 3: *Layanan Komputer ini hanya untuk mahasiswa pascasarjana Unpad.*
[The use of this computer is for Unpad post-graduate students only]

Data 3 is taken from the Postgraduate Studies building at Unpad. It is in the lobby of the Postgraduate office close to two computers on a bench attached to the wall. The announcement is an implicit performative utterance because by context, the complete utterance is “I hereby state that these computers are only for the use of post-graduate students from Padjadjaran University.” This kind of sentence is declarative and it is included as indirect speech because what is written does not have the same meaning as the intent of the utterance, because the intent of the speaker is directive. This happens because the intention that the speaker wants to be done by the readers, is that these two computers are only to be used by postgraduate students from Unpad. The purpose of this utterance is actually a warning to the undergraduate students at Unpad not to use these computers, because they are only for use by the postgraduate students. Based on the location of the announcement and the topic, it can be concluded that the announcement comes into the field of education, because it talks about services provided on the campus.

Data 4: *Demi Keamanan dan Kenyamanan Seluruh Ruangan Program Pascasarjana Unpad Telah Dipasang CCTV 24 Jam. Terima Kasih.*
[For security and conveniences, all rooms in the Postgraduate School Building at Padjadjaran University have a 24 hour CCTV. Thank you]

This announcement is on the wall in the lobby of the Post-Graduate office, close to two computers is related to the security system in the building. It says in a directive sentence that all rooms in the Post-Graduate School Building at Unpad have a 24 hour CCTV installed. While the sentence is categorized as a declarative sentence, the intended meaning is a directive or a warning to everyone using the building to always behave properly and to avoid any criminal actions. There is no performative verbs so the utterance is classed as an implicit performative. Based on the context, the complete utterance could be “To whom it may concern, a 24 hour CCTV has been installed in every room in the Post-Graduate Program Building at Padjadjaran University”.

Based on the location of the announcement and the topic, it can be concluded that the announcement comes into the field of education, because it talks about a security system installed in the campus.

4.2 Data from UPenn

Data 5: Snow Emergency Route. Snow Tires or Chains Required. No Parking/Stopping During Emergency. Vehicles Subject to Towing/Ticketing. Snow Tow Information. Vehicle Location. 686-Snow.

The topic in Data 5 is very specific, it can only happen in a place with four seasons which gets heavy snow falls (in winter) and cannot be found at Unpad. It is a notification regarding a route that can be used when there are heavy snowfalls; vehicles using it must be fitted with snow tires or chains and cannot park or even stop during a snow storm emergency. Vehicles that do park there can be towed away and ticketed (i.e. fined). If a vehicle breaks down or gets stuck in the snow, a towing vehicle can be called up with an SMS sent to 686-Snow stating the vehicle location. The information in the announcement is an implicit performative utterance. The complete sentence can be: "To whom it may concern. This is a Snow Emergency Route. Drivers must use snow tires or chains. Vehicles must not park/stop during (a heavy snowfall) emergency, any that do can be towed away and ticketed. If your vehicle breaks down or gets stuck in the snow, a snow tow can be called up with an SMS to 686-Snow stating the vehicle location". Some sentences in the announcement are declarative followed by the imperative. The intent of the writer is to warn readers or people, and then it becomes direct or indirect speech. Then, the intent of the utterance is directive; this notification refers to the desire of the speaker to warn readers or people not to park their vehicles on the route in the event of a snow emergency. If they do, the vehicle can be towed away and the owner can be fined. If a vehicle gets stuck, a tow can be called up by sending an SMS to '686-Snow' with the location of the vehicle. This announcement does not say whether the writer has the authority to state these rules, so it can be said that this speech does not meet the requirements for authenticity.

Data 6: Do not attach bikes to this area. They will be removed by University Police.

This announcement appears on the UPenn campus on the way to the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library. It is a notification prohibiting the parking of bikes (i.e. bicycles) in that area. The utterance is an imperative sentence and the intended meaning is to prohibit students from parking their bikes there. The utterance can be categorized as direct speech. This notification refers to the authority of the institution to stop everyone from parking their bikes in that area. If they do, then the bikes will be taken away by the University Police.

There is no obvious performative verb, but based on the context, the utterance could read such as "You are warned not to park your bikes in this area, because they will be taken away by the University Police". This announcement is marked with the UPenn logo to show that it was issued by the administration of UPenn that has the authority to make the rules for all people on campus.

Data 7: Any person who believes that they have, individually, or as a member of any specific class of persons, been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin may file a complaint with SEPTA.

This announcement is posted at the trolley (bus) station in Spruce St. This notice relates to discrimination that could occur in the SEPTA trolley (bus) stations or system. The authority that issued the announcement was SEPTA as it is marked with the SEPTA logo. This announcement is addressed to all users of SEPTA. The utterance can be categorized as an implicit performative because there is no performative verb in it but it is supported by the context. Thus, the complete sentence could be “I hereby state that any person who believes that he/she has, individually, or as a member of any specific class of persons, been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin may file a complaint with SEPTA.” Because the sentence is declarative and the intended meaning is about telling the people who experience harassment or discrimination because of race, color or nationality (and/or religion), that they are entitled to file a complaint with SEPTA, this utterance is regarded as direct speech. It is a direct warning that people, who discriminate on the basis of race and skin color differences and so on, will face serious legal consequences.

This topic concerns a big social problem in the U. S. A. which differs from such problems in Indonesia. That is why this kind of notice can only be found in the U. S. A. e.g. at UPenn. Although the announcement does not talk about an academic subject, as it was located near to the campus, the author put it into the data for this research because the bus also enters the campus area.

Data 8: Room is on Alarm. Please do not enter.

This announcement was on the 3rd floor of the Williams Hall building at UPenn. It can be categorized as an implicit performative utterance because there is not a performative verb. Based on the context, the utterance could read as: “You are hereby warned not to enter this room, because it is on alarm”. This was a warning for people not to enter the room, because if they do, an alarm will ring. Because there is no performative verbs, obviously the utterance can be regarded as an implicit performative, which is supported by the context. Hence, in full it could read: “You are hereby warned not to enter this room, because it is on alarm. If you enter, an alarm will ring”.

The utterance is a declarative (‘Room is on Alarm’) with an imperative sentence (‘Please do not enter’). It makes the utterance into a direct sentence because the intended meaning for the whole sentence is directive. The topic is in the education field and the context is very specific, because that condition cannot be found at Unpad.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the data collected from Unpad and UPenn, there are some differences and some similarities found. The utterances or announcements from UPenn are dominated by declarative sentences where the intended meaning is directive, so they can be regarded as indirect speech. Hence, the announcements from Unpad are dominated by imperative sentences with direct imperative meanings. All the data found can be classified as warnings, appeals, notices or orders.

There are also some differences in the topics. At UPenn, announcements are associated with extreme weather conditions that may occur there and the problems of discrimination that may still happen in the campus environment. Neither of these topics appears in announcements or signs at Unpad. Regarding the notice about not sitting on

the table, this prohibition is for academics at Unpad, while at UPenn, no similar announcement can be found since sitting on a table in Western culture is not regarded as impolite. A prohibition not to talk in the library is only found at Unpad, while at UPenn there is no such prohibition. At the UPenn library there is a special room for students to have discussions in or to talk together. Talking about similarities, the smoking ban is a topic that was found on both campus areas.

The announcements at UPenn all have the subject in the form of institutional speech, while just a few announcements at Unpad use such speech. It is desirable to see the authority for an announcement; if the announcement is made by persons who are not authorized, and then there will be low compliance with the announcement. Lastly, analyzing the collected data from both places, it appears that the use of language is strongly influenced by the cultural contexts, and the situation in which and where the language is used. There are announcements that are typical of local cultures, so that such announcements cannot be found in other cultures.

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