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Speech Variations of Male and Female Students: the Case of German Language Education Program, State University of Makassar

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ABSTRACT

This research intends to discover variations, characteristics, and causes of speech variations used by male and female students in German language department. Data obtained from the speech of students during class discussion through, talking, recording and notes technique and analyzed by the qualitative method. Research results shown: 1) Speech variations used by female students included representative, commissive, directive, expressive, and declarative, whereas male students used only three types of variations which were representative, directive, and expressive. 2) Speech characteristics of female students included more question asking, use of an apologetic expression preceding questions, and expressing thanks, whereas male students more often tended to make statements to and reject utterances of speaking partners, as well as express facts and opinions. 3) Causes of the occurrence of speech variations in male and female speech include cultural background and character as well as embedded biological and psychological factors that underlie their speech usage.

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INTRODUCTION

Gender-based diversity in language emerges because language, as a social indicator, is closely tied to the social demeanor and culture of the speaker. Men and women are different physically, and these differences invite society to establish different social roles and patterns of conduct – including conduct in speech. Research on speech variations of male and female students during class discussions in the German Language Education faculty at the State University of Makassar is an interesting topic to study. This is because university level students as educated members of society that required having the ability to speak and interact in formal situations without neglecting linguistic norms, moreover these students are a diverse group representing various ethnicities, cultures, languages, and social roles.

Speech variations emerge because of the process of social interaction between diverse speakers. A speech variation is a type of speech used by a speaker adjusted to the function and situation without producing basic valid principles in the language being used. Speech variations can appear due to a number of factors, one being based on who the speaker is and for example, their gender. In other words, gender is one cause for the appearance of speech variations. One is able to discern the gender

of a person only by observing their use of language (Sunahrowi 2007). In addition, Sumarsono in Daeng (2007) stated that the wider and more rigid gap between male and female roles in a given society, likewise the wider and more rigid differences in linguistic tendencies will be.

One function of language is to aid interaction between individuals in a community. Language is a means by which to communicate feelings, ideas, and thoughts to others. Besides being a communicative tool, language is also used to express individual, group, and cultural identity. It has been suggested by Harre in Nurhayati (2009) that personal human experience is shaped and compiled through spoken and written acts as well as acts of discovering the condition of society. All of this is possible through the use of language. Regarding the role of language, it was also discussed by Hodge and Kress in Nurhayati (2009). He stated that language has an important role in shaping reality. Language is a tool that can be used to manipulate objective reality and choose which aspects of reality should be communicated and be distorted. In this context, reality also includes an individual's identity. In other words, a person can choose which identity they want to use to create their self-image through the use of language.

According to Yule (2006) that acts which are revealed through speech are called speech acts. It is further explained that at a given moment, an act which is performed with the production of speech will contain three interrelated acts. The first is known as a locutionary act which is a basic speech act or will produce a significant linguistic utterance. The second is an illocutionary act which appears through communicative emphasis of an utterance which is taken into account by the emphasis. The third is a perlocutionary act which states that an utterance created with an inherent function will surely have a consequence. In other words, a perlocutionary act is the result or effect that is revealed by an utterance in accordance with the situation and condition.

Speech act has become a known term because of the fact that in expressing an utterance or statement, a speaker will not merely make a statement, but there can also be a meaning behind the utterance. An utterance is the sentence stated at the moment a speaker is communicating. Austin in Nababan (1992) states that normally a formal utterance is a statement that provides information, but there are some that contain different functions, namely performing a particular speech act. Speech acts are fundamental in pragmatic discussion and are the basis for the analysis of other pragmatic topics such as preconception, entailment, implication, discussion, cooperative principle, and unity principle.

When an individual speaks, he/she performs one of three acts: locutionary, illocutionary, or perlocutionary. A locutionary act is a speech act with a particular meaning and reference similar to "connotation". An illocutionary act is an act that contains a particular power or force and functions according to the context of the utterance, for example declarations, commands, prohibitions, etc. Perlocutionary, on the other hand, is an act that evokes an effect. This effect can bear influence on the feelings, thoughts, and behavior of the speaker, conversation partner, or others involved in the situation in the form of apprehension, joy and so forth (Anggreni 2008).

Speech acts fall in the realm of pragmatic analysis, the branch of linguistics which discusses language from the aspect of actual usage. Cruse in Cummings (2007) explained that pragmatics can be considered as having to do with aspects of information (in the broadest sense) that are conveyed through language that (a) is not coded by generally received conventions of the linguistic form being used, but rather (b) naturally occurs from and is dependent upon conventionally coded meaning in the context where the forms are used.

In addition, Kushartanti (2007) suggests that pragmatics studies the meaning influenced by abnormal matters. It enable us to understand what is occurring within a given conversation, for example, knowing all of the participants, the social

relationships and gaps between them, and the relative status among them.

Speech act theory was first introduced by Austin basically when someone says and does something as well (Nadar, 2009). This theory was further developed by Searle (Leech, 1993) when he looked at a theory of language as a subset of the theory of action. Furthermore, by Searle made an effort to systematize the speech of act theory and an aspect of this systematization developed its own taxonomy group which has five main types of speech acts: (1) Representative speech acts which show the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition uttered (including statements and conclusions), (2) Directive speech acts which show the speaker's effort to influence the person to whom they are speaking to do something (including requests and questions), (3) Commissive speech acts which show the speaker's commitment to an act which is to be performed (including promises, threats, and offers), (4) Expressive speech acts which reveal psychological attitudes (including expressions of thanks, praise, expressions of welcome, and expressions of congratulations), and finally (5) Declarative speech acts which show direct change of the status of something by an authoritative, non-linguistic institution (includes terminations of employment, declarations of war, declarations of marriage, and discharges from employment) (Hasibuan, 2005).

In many ways, the form and meaning of speech often reveals differences both small and large. Differences in the form and meaning of an utterance produce modes and variations of speech. Speakers are in a heterogeneous society and therefore the realization of utterances (parole) will vary. Variation in this regard refers to mode and genre. The presence of speech variations is not necessarily caused by the speaker, but also factors of social interaction carried out by the speaker. Language variation according to C.A. Ferguson and J.D. Gumperz in Sunahrowi (2007) are equivalent patterns of language that can be analyzed descriptively. These language patterns are limited by connotations used by the speaker in order to communicate.

The purposes of study is to understand the types of variations as well as the characteristics of speech acts used by the students in class interaction, particularly students in the German Language Education Program of Study at the State University of Makassar.

Method:

This research used qualitative descriptive approach. The subject of study was class 2010/2011 students in the German Language Education Program of Study at the State University of Makassar with the total 38 subjects which can be classified 12 male and 26 female students. While, the object of research

was the speech variation of students both male and female in class discussion during university courses.

The source of data was the oral speech of students taken from their interaction during university courses by using face to face conversation technique and direct contact between the informant and the researcher. Recording and note-taking techniques were also used to complete the needed data which directly occurred at the moment of the conversations of male and female students during class, meanwhile note was taken during the observation to complete data gathered through recordings and to obtain sufficient speech data from students.

Student speech was analyzed and interpreted in the first phase and in the second phase, the product of

Table 1: Female Speech Variations.

Type of Speech	Speech	Translation	Explanation
Representative Speech Act	Eseperti yang kita ketahui bahwa fonetik adalah ilmu yang mempelajari tentang bunyi bahasa. Nah yang anda sebutkan tadi ada fonetik eorganis, aku stiksama auditorit	Um... as we know, phonetics is the study of linguistic sounds. So, what you said earlier was that there are um... organic, acoustic, and auditory phonetics	The utterance shows the speaker trying to express what she knows about phonetics. Therefore, it can be said that the speech variation used falls under the category of a representative speech act
Directive Speech Act	Tunggu dulukan tadi kita (anda) bilang eeeotomatis ada perbedaanmakna, jadi saya minta apabila kan die Lampe tidak samadengan die Lampee jadi kalau die Lampe apa, apa artinya? Kankita mengatakan perbedaan makna	Hold on, I thought you said earlier that um... automatically there is a difference in meaning, so if die Lampe is not the same as die Lampee, so what... what is the meaning of die Lampe? Because you said 'difference in meaning	The speaker utterance is requesting the person to whom she is speaking to explain again the meaning of die Lampe, and therefore the type of utterance used falls under the category of a directive speech act since she is making a request/asking a question
Commissive speech Act	Apakah ada yang ingin bertanya?	Would anyone like to ask (a question)?	This utterance falls under the category of a commissive speech act. The speaker is making an offer to another group to ask questions to her working group
Expressive Speech Act	Terima kasih atas kesempatannya eefonemik adalah ilmu bahasa yang membahas bunyi-bunyi bahasa yang berfungsi sebagai pembeda makna	Thank you for this opportunity. Um... phonemics is the study of linguistic sounds that function to differentiate meaning	it can be observed that the speaker exhibits a psychological attitude in the form of an expression of thanks for the opportunity given to her. From this observation it can be concluded that this utterance falls under the category of an expressive speech act
Declarative Speech Act	Emm...sebelumnya kami memutuskan untuk akan menjawab pertanyaan dari kelompok 3	Um... before that, we have decided that we will answer the question from group three	The utterance shows the speaker deciding to answer a question from group three before answering questions from other groups. From this we can conclude that this utterance falls under the category of a declarative speech act

Figure 1 above shows the speech act variations used by female students during class discussion were

analysis was classified into specific categories and then codes in order to denote gathered data. After classifying and coding data, the conclusion drawn in accordance to the analysis and classification of research data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results:

After analyzing the data gathered through conversation, recordings, and note-taking during class discussion of 25 female and 13 male utterances of students, then it is classified according to the type of speech act represented which can be seen in the following examples.

representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. One of these five types of speech

act was most used by female students during class discussion that is expressive. In speech, female students more often used expressions of thanks to their conversation partners. This can be seen by the fact that of 25 utterances gathered, expressive utterances appeared 9 times. Therefore, it can be concluded that most female students prefer to use

expressive speech acts more than other types of speech acts. In addition, female students also more often used directive speech acts, in which they often suggest or make a request to conversation partners. This can be seen by the fact that directive speech acts occur 8 times.

Table 2: Male Subject Speech Variations.

Type of Speech	Speech	Translation	Explanation
Representative Speech Act	Baik, Asalamualaikum saya akan menjawab pertanyaan dari saudari Desi mengenai tahap- tahap perkembangan linguistic	Okay. Peace to you (Islamic greeting). I will answer the question from our sister Desi regarding the stages of linguistic development	We see that the speaker is declaring that he is prepared to answer the question from another group. Therefore, the above utterance is a type of representative speech act
Directive Speech Act	Dapatkah anda menjelaskan mengenai system bahasa manusia secara umum dan sisitem bahasa manusia secara tertentu dan tolong diberikan contohnya!	Can you explain the general human language system and the specific human language system and give examples?	It is apparent that the speaker is requesting the presenting group to example and give examples about language systems. Therefore the above utterance is a directive speech act
Expressive Speech Act	Baik, terimakasih atas kesempatan yang telah diberikan kepada kelompok kami	Okay. Thank you for the opportunity given to our group	The utterance above is an expressive speech act. We can see in this utterance that the speaker is expressing thanks for the opportunity that he has been given

Discussion:

After analyzing the utterances of male and female students, the usage of speech variations can be depicted in the figure 1:

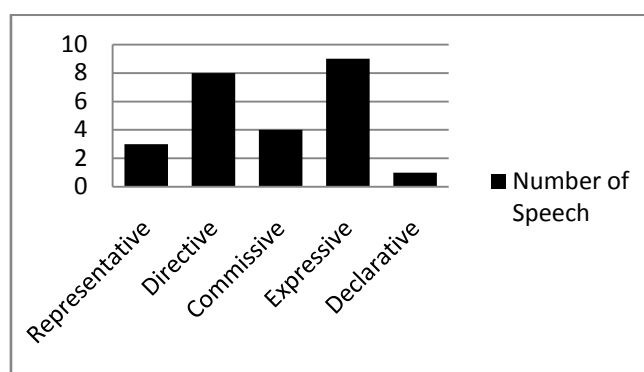


Fig. 1: Speech Act Variations of female students.

From the figure 1 above, we can also see that the usage of commissive, representative, and declarative speech acts by female students is minim. Out of the utterances gathered, commissive speech acts appeared 4 times, representative appeared 3 times, and declarative only appeared once. Declarative utterances used by female students during

discussions were only intended to nullify answering questions from another group. The lack of using these three types of speech acts, in fact of matter, is caused by the fact that female students are more prone to be hesitant to confirm utterances from conversation partners or confirm the truth of an uttered proposition.

Types of speech acts used by male students during class discussion can be seen Figure 2.

Figure 2 shows that the male during discussion use more representative speech, especially assertive or indicative. Representative speech acts were used 7 times. In addition, male students often used directive speech acts which were normally in the form of suggestions and requests to their conversation

partners. Directive speech was used 5 times, while expressive speech was only used 3 times. This is quite different that female students used expressive acts with the most frequency, 9 times. The commissive and declarative speech acts were never used by male students.

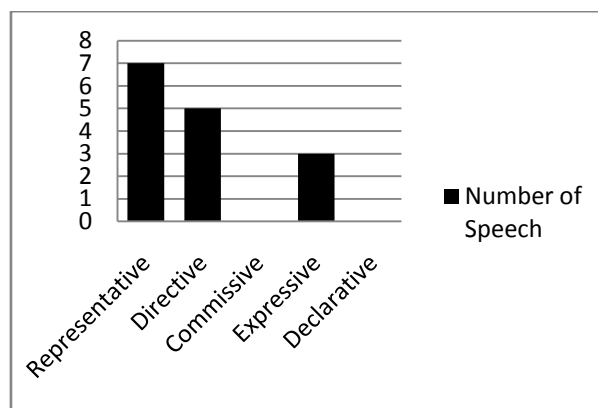


Fig. 2: Speech act variations of male students.

Based on the data in Figure 1 and Figure 2 above it can be understood that speech act variations of female and male students has a few similarities and differences. Female students tend to used more expressive in nature, in particular to express thanks. On the other hand, male students were more prone to using speech which was representative in nature, particularly to assert something conveyed in the form of an utterance. Besides the difference, it can also be seen the similarities in speech act variations of male and female students both of them tend to not use declarative utterances, which with the goal of creating something new, for example, making a decision, cancelling, or prohibiting.

The differences in speech variations used by male and female students result a cultural background and the character of the students as well that underlies their use of language. Additionally, it impacts also to biological and psychological factors. Male students are more prone to speak in the realm statements and explanations such as assertions, conveyances, suggestions, and indications, whereas female students more often express feeling and attitudes in a polite manner, for example, apologizing, expressing thanks, etc.

Conclusion:

Based on the discussion above, the conclusions of the research can be remarked some conclusion. Firstly, speech variations used by female students in the German language class are representative, commissive, directive, expressive, and declarative, whereas male students used only three types of variations which are representative, directive, and expressive.

Second, speech characteristics of female and male students of the 2010/2011 German Language Education faculty were: (a) Speech characteristics of female students included more question asking, use of an apologetic expression preceding questions, and expressing thanks, and (b) male students more often tended to make statements and to reject utterances of speaking partners, as well as express facts and opinions. 3) The occurrence of speech variations in male and female speech is caused by some factors, including cultural background and character, and embedded biological and psychological factors as well.

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