LINGUISTIC REALIZATION OF REQUESTS IN ENGLISH AND JAVANESE PERFORMED BY JAVANESE EFL LEARNERS
(The Case of The Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Pemalang)

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Info Artikel	Abstract
_____ *Sejarah Artikel:* Diterima Oktober 2014 Disetujui Oktober 2014 Dipublikasikan Juni 2014 _____ *Keywords:* *request, request head act, request peripheral elements, speech act* _____	_____ The present study focuses on describing the linguistic realization of requests in English and Javanese performed by Javanese EFL learners, emphasizing the request head act and its peripheral elements occuring in particular situational contexts given. The subjects of the study were eleventh grade students, fifteen males and fifteen females. Data were collected by means of roleplay. The students were asked to performed in roleplay comprising twelve context of situations based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) variables common to most speech act situations: Power (P), Social Distance (D), and Ranking of Imposition (R). The students' performances were then videotaped and analysed based on Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Blum-Kulka et al (1989). and Trosborg (1994). Results of the study show that, according to the level of directness, most of the students focused on the hearer oriented and used to Direct Requests either in English or Javanese. They modified their requests internally by using *Syntactic Downgraders* and *Supportive Reasons* externally. It can also be inferred that the higher the social power the more direct the request strategies will be, the wider the social distance and rank of imposition the more indirect request strategies will be. The higher the social distance the more usage of *krama* in Javanese request.

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INTRODUCTION

Generally, this study concerned about the interface between pragmatics and sociolinguistics, that is the use of language in its social context which is appropriate with the structure of language, the context in which the communication takes place, the background knowledge pertaining to the relationship of both language users (the speaker and the hearer), the topic engaged and the type of behaviour that is permitted during the communication process.

In particular, the author was interested to investigate on how Javanese EFL learners use one kind of speech act which have been mostly investigated in the field of crosscultural pragmaticscalled "request". Request refers to "an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to the hearer (requestee) that s/he wants the requestee to perform an act, which is for the benefit of the speaker" (Trosborg, 1994:187). Furthermore, this study was focusing on delineating the linguisitic realizations of speech act of request in English and Javanese performed by Javanese EFL learners, emphasizing the request head act and its peripheral elements occuring in particular situational contexts given.The situational contexts were constructed based on Brown and Levinson (1987:74). They characterized three pragmatic variables common to most speech act situations: Power (P), Social Distance (D), and Ranking of Imposition (R) between the speaker and the hearer.

Request head act is the main utterance with the function of requesting and can stand by itself. Yet core requests may be preceded and/or followed by peripheral elements, which mitigate or aggravate the propositional content (Campillo, 2007:211). Peripheral elements of request can be realized in the form of internal or external modification devices. Internal modification devices refers to linguistic elements within the same speech act, whereas external modification is achieved by devices which occur in the immediate linguistic content rather than in the speech act itself.

Two major parts of request head act examined are request perspectives and request strategies. Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:203) distinguished request categories from the point of view of 4 perspectives (1) Hearer-oriented, Example: Could you tidy up the kitchen soon? (2) Speaker-oriented, Example: Do you think I could borrow your notes from yesterday's class? (3) Speaker and Hearer oriented (inclusive), Example: So, could we please clean up? (4) Impersonal (the use of people/they/one as neutral agents or passivization), Example: So it might not be a bad idea to get it cleaned up.

Request strategy is defined by Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989:278) as "the obligatory choice of the level of directness by which the request is realized. Directness is defined as the degree to which the speaker's illocutionary intent is apparent from the locution. There seem to be three major levels of directness that can be expected to be manifested universally by requesting strategies, they are the most direct, the conventionally indirect level, and the nonconventional indirect level. The three level of directness of request are then subdivided into nine request strategies - Mood Derivable, Explicit Performatives, Hedged Performatives, Obligation Statements, Want Statements, Suggestory Formulae, Query Preparatory, Strong Hints, and Mild Hints (Blum-Kulka, 1984:201).

The speaker's requests are modified internally and externally. Internal modifications are devices which operate within the Head Act. They function to soften or increase the impact a request strategy is likely to have on the hearer. There are markers which either tone down the impact an utterance is likely to have on the hearer, downgraders, or which have the opposite effect of increasing the impact, upgraders (Trosborg, 1994:209-215).Some syntactic devices as 'will", "could", "I hope", and " I was wondering" are useful to soften or mitigate the impact of a request is likely to have

on the part of the requestee (Syntactic Downgraders).

Another Downgraders used to modify the request head act is Lexical/Phrasal Downgraders. At the lexical/phrasal level a number of devices are available which lower the requester's expectations to the fulfilment or the outcome of the request, such as Politeness Marker (Could you close the door, please?); Consultative Device(Maybe you wouldn't mind helping me?); Downtoner (Could you possibly let us know by tomorrow.); Understatement (Would you wait just a second?); Hedge (Couldn't you sort of forget the whole matter?); Hesitator (I er, erm – I wonder if you'd er …); Interpersonal Marker (Could you pass the glass, okay?).

Upgraders increase the impact of an utterance on the hearer. Typical are adverbial intensifiers modifying part of an utterance, do-constructions, sentence modifiers, and lexical intensification such as Adverbial intensifier (You reallymust come and see me next week.); Commitment upgrader (I'm absolutely positive that you'll lend me your car.); Lexical intensification (You'd be such a darling if you'd give me a hand in the kitchen.)

Whereas, external modifications consist of such preparators, disarmers, sweeteners, supportive reasons, and cost minimizing as Preparators (There is something I'd like to ask you.); Disarmers (I hope I'm not disturbing you but …); Sweeteners (You have excellent taste in clothes.); Supportive reasons (Could you take in the washing, please? It looks as if it's about to rain.); Cost Minimizing (Could I borrow your car tonight? I'll have it back in time for you to drive to work tomorrow.); Promise of reward (If you do the dishes I'll give you a ticket for the cinema.)

Javanese EFL learning a foreign language do not have many opportunities to be exposed to natural and authentic language use. They have to deal with different languages in their everyday communication, Indonesia language as national language and English as a foreign language. Javanese language as their first language.As Geertz (1976) stated that the Javanese culture is said to require dissimulation and pretence: people are expected to conceal their feelings, wants, and thoughts, in order to achieve harmony and peaceful interpersonal relations (Cutting, 2008:66).

Unlike Javanese the use of bahasa Indonesia does not necessarily have to pay attention to the level of appropriate wordings, facial expressions and gestures. Whereas, English is simply seen as a compulsory subject in academic setting, not to be used in their everyday life. According to Permendiknas No.23, 2006 the general purpose of learning English in Indonesia is that the students should be able to demonstrate skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking in English. Furthermore, based on Standard of Content (Permendiknas No.22, 2006) the students of Senior High School have to achieve three objectives in learning English, they are (1) The students are able to develop the communicative competence both orally and in the written form to reach informational literacy level; (2) The students are able to own the awareness about the nature and the importance of English to compete in the global society; (3) The students are able to develop understanding between language and culture.

It is commonly found that EFL often faced difficulties while learning the appropriate ways of expressing language functions and structures in English. This might possibly happen due to the lack of exposure of English use – hardly to listen, speak, read, and write in daily interaction. They were often unable to recognize or produce appropriate strategies or patterns in English and they mostly transferfrom their first language to the target language for the recognition, comprehension and production of different pragmatically proper sentences.

Hence, this study investigates how do Javanese EFL learners realize requests in English and Javanese, and what are the differences and similariteis found in the Javanese learners' request realizations in

English and Javanese and provides pedagogical of the study to English language teaching and learning.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study had an explicit comparative descriptive qualitative purpose. However, a few numeric data was also presented to count the percentage of linguistic realizations of speech act of request performed by Javanese EFL learners emphasizing the request head act and its peripheral elements. There were thirty eleventh grade students participated in this study, fifteen males and fifteen females. Their first language was Javanese (in this case Pemalang dialect) and English was taught as a compulsory subject.

The research instruments consisted of three major parts. First, Student Consent Form which seeked for the agreement of the students to participate in this study. Second, Personal Education History which aimed to construct the general background information of the subjects of this study such as age, gender, education, etc. Third, a task consisted of twelve situational contexts designed to elicit speech act of request in English and Javanese performed by Javanese EFL learners. The students were asked to perform the twelve context of situations presented in English and Javanese through role play. To make the data analysis more convenient, the students' performances in eliciting the speech act of request were videotaped and then transcribed. The description of the situational contexts was based on Brown and Levinson (1987:74). They characterized three pragmatic variables common to most speech act situations: Power (P), Social Distance (D), and Ranking of Imposition (R) between the speaker and the hearer. The description of the situations in English is presented below.

(1) You are a school teacher. This is the first day in the semester and you are teaching an English course for eleventh grade students. You come to today class but you forget to bring the books and the documents you need. You want a student to help you to get the books and the documents from your office. What would say to your students?

(2) You are now shopping in a department store. You are looking for a pair of shoes. You see something in a display case that attracts your attention. You ask the salesperson to show you the shoes. What would you say to the salesperson?

(3) Because of your busy schedule you do not have time to wash your dirty clothes. You ask your sister to help to wash a bucket of your dirty clothes. What would you say to her?

(4) You are trying to study in your room for English test tomorrow. However, your younger brother are watching television. The TV sound is too loud. You want your younger brother to turn down the television. What would you say to him?

(5) You are supposed to be picked up by your brother. You are waiting for your brother in the bus stop for almost an hour. You intend to call him but you are running out of pulse. Finally, you want to borrow a cell phone from a person who seem as old as you standing next to you. What would you say to her/him?

(6) You are in the school library taking a note for your study. Suddenly your pen stops working. You want to borrow a pen from a student sitting in front of you. However, you do not know the student very well. What would you say to her/him?

(7) You want to borrow money for your school tuition from your friend. What would you say to her/him?

(8) You are reading a book in the classroom. Suddenly you feel hot. You ask your friend sitting nearby the window to open it. What would you say to her/him?

(9) You are going to your friend's new house. You thought you knew the direction to his/her house, but it seems that you are lost. You see a police officer and then ask

for direction. You want the police officer to accompany you to find the address. What would you say to him/her?

(10) You want to take a math informal course at one of your teachers. However, you do not know her/him very well. You brace up yourself to ask for her/his phone number. What would you say to her/him?

(11) You walk in a Biology class half an hour late and interrupt the teacher. Everyone stares at you. You want to know if you can join the class. What would you say to the teacher?

(12) You are now discussing your assignment with your teacher. Your teacher speaks very fast. You do not follow what s/he is saying, so you want to ask your teacher to say it again. What would you say to him/her?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are discussed in three main parts: requests realization in English, requests realization in Javanese and the differences and similarities of requests realizatioon in English and Javanese.

Requests Realization in English

The students' performances in role play were examined carefully several times in order to get the desirable data. A total of 1002 request sequences were gained from the students' roleplay in English and Javanese, 512 request sequences were gained from the students' roleplay in English and 490 request sequences in Javanese.

In delivering the requests in English, the students often focused on the hearer oriented. A total of 356(69.5%) request sequences were identified focusing on the hearer oriented. Related with the request strategies in English, the students opted all request strategies. According to level of directness, the students chose *Direct Request (DR)* as the most preferable request strategies used in delivering their requests in English. However, *Query*

Preparatory was chosen as the most request strategy used in English with the total number of 175 (34.2%) request sequences.

In performing role play containing speech act of request, the students showed a significance preference of *Syntactic Downgraders*whichwas used 533 (67.9%) timesAnother request modification device examined was *External Modifications*. They chose to used *Supportive Reasons* as the most request external modification used in delivering requests in English. It was used 178 (55.6%) times.

Requests Realization in Javanese

Request sequences identified from the students' performance in Javanese were lesser in number than those performed in English. There were 490 request sequences successfully identified from the students' performance of role play in Javanese. Similar to English, according to the level of directness, the students opted to use *Direct Request* in delivering their requests in Javanese. They mostly appliedMood Derivablestrategy which was applied with a total number of 194 (39.6%) request sequences.

In modifying their requests internally, the students mostly chose *Syntactic Downgraders* which was mentioned 366 (64.7%) times. *Supportive Reasons* was chosen as the most request external modification used in Javanese. It was mentioned 172 (54.2%) times.

Differences of Requests Realization in English and Javanese

Several differences of request realizations that can be found in English and Javanese are as follows:

(1) The prominent difference in the students' request realization in English and Javanese is the number of request distribution. It is indicated that there were 512 request sequences produced in English, while in Javanese, the students produced 490 request sequences, lesser than those produced in English.

(2) The students used *Query Preparatory (QP)* mostly in applying their requests in English. It was notified that 175 request sequences used *QP strategy* or 34.2% of all request sequences identified in English.In applying their requests in Javanese, the students often used *Mood Derivable (MD) strategy.* It was amounted to 194 request sequences or 39.6% of all request sequences identified in Javanese.

(3) The least request strategy used was Explicit Performatives (EP) strategy which was amounted to 1.6% of all all request sequences identified in English with the total number 8 request sequences.The students seemed reluctant to use Obligation Statements (OS) strategy in delivering their requests in Javanese. It was realized 0.2% all request sequences identified in Javanese with the total number of 1 request sequence.

(4) The students's requests in English were modified more than those requests in Javanese internally. Respectively, a total number of 784 modifications were applied in the students' requests in English.While the students' requests in Javanese were modified 566 times internally.

(5) There were found 320 request external modifications in the students' requests in English.The students' requests in Javanese were modified externally 317 times.

(6) In modifying their requests externally, the students opted Promise of Reward (PR) as the least external modification device to be used in English. It was mentioned 10 times or 3.1% of all request external modification identified.Whereas Cost Minimizing (CM) was chosen as the least external modification device to be used in modifying their requests in Javanese with the total number of 7 utterances or 2.2% of all request external modification identified.

(7) In English, in order to make the requests sounded more polite, the students used all either internal or external modification devices.In conveying requests in Javanese,

the students seemed reluctant to apply *Taq Question, Past Tense, ING Form, Consultative Device* and *Hedge* device. They were able to use neither *Past Tense* nor *Ing Form* when converying requests in Javanese*.* It was due the fact that grammatically in Javanese there are no exact thing called *Past Tense* or *Ing Form* respectively. In Javanese, there are only polite wordings levels to be used to show politeness towards others. The higher the polite wordings level the more polite it will sound. The lowest polite wordings level is called *ngoko,* whereas the highest level of polite wordings is called *krama.*

Similarities of Requests Realization in English and Javanese

Here, the author tried to reveal the similiraties can be found from the request realizations in English and Javanese the students performed in roleplay. They are as follows:

(1) Though different in numbers, the requests conveyed were mostly focused on the hearer oriented either in English or in Javanese. Both in English and Javanese, request perspectives of Hearer Oriented was mostly occured in situation 3 (Washing dirty clothes, S > H, - SD, R High). And *Inclusive* (the speaker and the hearer oriented) was chosen as the least request perspective the students used in delivering their requests.

(2) Overall, according to the level of request directness, the students mostly applied their requests using Direct Request either in English or Javanese.

(3) The students used mostly Syntactic Downgraders to modify their requests internally either in English or in Javanese.

(4) Adverbial Intensification *(AI),* included into *Upgraders* whose function to increase the impact a request strategy on the hearer, was the only *Upgrader* chosen by the students in conveying their requests.

(5) Overall, in terms of request external modification, the students' requests were mostly modified externally in situation 3 (Washing dirty clothes, S > H, - SD, RHigh) in spite of the different numbers and percentage.

(6) The students opted Supportive Reasons (SR) device as the request external modification devices mostly applied in all twelve situations they had to perform.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the result of tha data analysis showed that the students often focused on the hearer oriented in delivering their requests either in English or Javanese. According to the level of directness the students mostly applied *Direct Request* either in English and Javanese. They particularly chose to use *Query Preparatory* in delivering their requests in English and *Mood Derivable (MD)* in Javanese.

The students showed a remarkable preference of *Syntactic Downgraders* in modifying their requests internally. In conveying requests in Javanese, the students seemed reluctant to apply *Taq Question*, *Past Tense*, *ING Form*, *Consultative Device* and *Hedge*. They were able to use neither *Past Tense* nor *Ing Form* when converying requests in Javanese. It was due the fact that grammatically in Javanese there are no exact thing so called Past Tense or Ing Form respectively. In Javanese, there are only polite wordings levels to be used to show politeness towards others. The higher the polite wordings level the more polite it will sound.As for request external modification used, the students mostly applied *Supportive Reasons* in modifying their requests externally either in English or Javanese.

It can also be inferred that the higher the social power the more direct the request strategies will be, the wider the social distance and rank of imposition the more indirect request strategies will be. The higher the social distance and the rank of imposition the more usage of *krama* in Javanese request.

It needs to be pointed out that special care should be taken into consideration that mastering speech act of request will be beneficial so that either the students or the teacher will not hamper their daily communication activity and somehow still maintain their cultural identity and able to avoid culture shock as minimum as possible. ESL/EFL teachers particularly can use the findings to anticipate and thus to reduce the incidence and severity of situations wherein learners experience cultural and language miscommunication that leads to communication breakdown.

Having known how requests are realized in English and Javanese is important to make a better understanding and raise the awareness of the importance of delivering appropriate requests in everyday life. Some attention also need to be paid to the differences and the similarities of request realization in English and Javanese so that either the teacher or the students can successfully conveying their requests by employing appropriate request strategies and its modifications and hence they will be able to build a harmonious relationship with other people.

As for textbook designers may find it as a beneficial input to design better materials to incorporate into ESL/EFL curricula. Support materials should be designed for both teachers and students with the appropriate cultural context of the country of origin. Therefore, the culture of either the ESL/EFL learners or the teachers should be valued and respected.

This study also provides beneficial data for researchers to conduct other researches concerning speech act of request and as for specialists and those involved in teaching and learning either in Javanese or English as a second/foreign language with solid data to better understand English and Javanese communication patterns and style.

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