



**GAMBITS FOUND IN THE CONVERSATIONS OF *LOOK AHEAD 2*
(An English Textbook for Senior High School Students Year XI
Published by Erlangga)**

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Abstract

This is a descriptive qualitative study aiming at finding out what speech acts and gambits found in the conversation models of Look Ahead 2 (an English textbook for senior high school grade XI published by Erlangga). This study was conducted in line with the important roles of gambits in spoken communication. Searle (1969) classified speech acts into five: directives, commissives, representatives, declaratives and expressive with further sub-classified by van Ek (1998) into six functions and 132 sub-functions. These speech act functions have become the basis of English curriculum in Indonesia. The speech acts realizations in utterances are usually hedged by gambits or discourse markers aiming at downgrading, upgrading, intensifying or avoiding a Face Threatening Act. The data were collected from the textbook Look Ahead 2 written by Th. M. Sudarwati and Eudia Grace. The study was focused only on five speech acts: asking for an opinion, giving opinion, agreeing to an opinion, disagreeing to an opinion, and giving suggestion/advice. Therefore, the data taken were only the sentences which indicate those five speech acts. 16 conversations were taken as the data. There were 38 clauses belonging to 11 speech act functions specified for XI grade students. The speech acts found were: asking for an opinion, giving opinion, expressing satisfaction, dissatisfaction, giving suggestion, warning, expressing relief, pain, sorrow, anger, and annoyance. There were 34 gambits found in five speech acts: four gambits were found in asking for an opinion, six in giving opinion, five in agreeing to an opinion, ten in disagreeing to an opinion, nine in giving suggestion/advice. Of the five speech acts understudy, there were three types of gambits namely opening, linking, and responding gambits. There were nine gambits belong to opening gambit, three gambits belong to linking gambit, and 22 data for responding gambit. The finding indicated that among 14 speech acts required by the curriculum, 11 speech acts were found but the other three were not. They are expressing pleasure, expressing love and expressing embarrassment. The gambits found in five specific speech acts were used appropriately based on both Keller's and Dörnyei's classifications. Among three types of gambits, opening gambit was the most frequently used (52.9%). Responding gambit was the second frequently used (38.2%), and the least frequently used gambit was the linking gambit (8.8%).

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INTRODUCTION

English is the most influential language. It is taught all over the world under many different circumstances. It is the most frequently used language in international communication. Almost all important international affairs use it as a medium to communicate.

As many other languages, English has four skills which have to be learned by students. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. According to Brown (2004:186), listening and reading belong to receptive skills in which learners are receiving stimuli to make them understand the language, while speaking and writing are productive skills in which learners are expected to produce spoken and written texts.

Speaking is generally considered as a difficult skill to master in a language. Halliday (1994:76) says it is because speaking is spontaneous. The time to process a language input and to process how to respond it is very limited. According to Nunan (2003:48), many people feel that speaking in a new language is harder than reading, writing, and listening for two reasons. First, unlike reading, speaking happens in real time: usually the person you are talking to is waiting for you to speak right then. Second, when you are speaking, you cannot edit or revise what you wish to say, as you can do if you are writing.

Along with this, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1992:ix) say that "... even the best language learners often complain that they feel at a loss when meeting and native speakers and engaging in real-life conversation".

Since English is the first international language which is spoken by most of people all over the world, students are better to learn it more than theoretically. As in the School-based Curriculum, the learners must learn English for communication. This is along with Jones (1993:3) says that for students to acquire this communicative competence, they must learn more than just grammar and vocabulary. They must learn which structures are appropriate to

the situation they are in and the people they are with.

When we speak, we produce stretches of utterances. A stretch of utterance usually has a head-act (which function to reveal the communication purpose or the speaker's intend) and hedges (in the form of gambits to smooth the conversation). Therefore, to make students speaking flows more natural, they need to learn gambits. In line with this, Hughes (2002:37) says that gambits oil the wheels of talk, and conversation without them will seem very 'cranky'.

School-based Curriculum divides English speaking materials for senior high school into some speech acts. Grade XI students are to learn fourteen speech acts: asking for an opinion, giving opinion, expressing satisfaction, expressing dissatisfaction, giving suggestion/advice, warning, expressing relief, expressing pain, expressing pleasure, expressing love, expressing sorrow, expressing embarrassment, expressing anger and expressing annoyance.

Based on the curriculum setting of speaking material into those speech acts and by seeing the fact that English natives include gambits in their speaking, it is important to provide gambits for all the speech acts specified by the curriculum. Realizing the importance of gambits in conversations, and textbooks as the media in English teaching and learning, I choose the topic "Gambits found in *Look Ahead 2* (An English Textbook for Senior High School Students Year XI Published by Erlangga)" that hopefully can give a description of the importance of gambits to be provided in textbooks.

Since my study is targeted to an English textbook of XI graders, I focused my study on analyzing speech acts as given by the School-based Curriculum for grade XI students. Further, I focused only on gambits in five speech acts: asking for an opinion, giving opinion, disagreeing to an opinion, agreeing to an opinion, and giving advice/suggestion.

METHOD

In this study, I chose conversation models given in the *Look Ahead 2* (An English Textbook for Senior High School Students Year XI Published by Erlangga) as the object of the study. I wanted to find out what speech acts are found in the conversations of *Look Ahead 2* which are compatible with the curriculum. I also wanted to find out what gambits were found in the five specific speech acts (asking for an opinion, giving opinion, agreeing to an opinion, disagreeing to an opinion and giving suggestion/advice).

I applied some steps in collecting the data.

(1) Reading

I read all the conversations given in *Look Ahead 2* normally as general readers do to comprehend the information of the texts.

(2) Retyping

The conversations were printed in the book separately. Thus, to make the research go easier, I retyped all of the conversation models complete with their information (the chapter, page, and the purpose of each conversation).

For the techniques of analyzing the data, I took two steps of analyzing. Those are as follows:

(1) Identifying and coding conversations

I identified the conversations contain all the speech acts specified in the School-Based Curriculum for XI grade students and gave them codes (C1, C2, C3 and so on).

(2) Identifying and numbering clauses

I identified the clauses belonging to speech acts compatible with the curriculum and gave numbers in front of each clause.

(3) Identifying gambits

I identified the gambits found in five speech acts: asking for an opinion, giving opinion, agreeing to an opinion, disagreeing to an opinion and giving suggestion/advice.

(4) Analyzing the appropriateness of the gambits

I analyzed whether the gambits found in the five speech acts under the study are used appropriately according to the theories of

Dörnyei and Thurrell (1992) and Howe and Burton (in Kurniawan and Artiningsih, 2008).

(5) Classifying gambits

I classified the gambits based on their type according to the classification from Keller and Warner (1988).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data of this study were collected from sixteen conversation models of *Look Ahead 2*. I found speech acts compatible with the School-Based Curriculum. I also found gambits in the five specific speech acts I concerned. There were 38 clauses belonging to 11 speech act functions specified for XI grade students. The speech acts found were: asking for an opinion, giving opinion, expressing satisfaction, dissatisfaction, giving suggestion, warning, expressing relief, pain, sorrow, anger, and annoyance. Three speech acts specified by the curriculum are expressing pleasure, expressing love and expressing embarrassment. The following table gives details of the speech acts found.

From the speech acts listed above, I can see that there are thirty eight clauses belonging to the speech acts specified for senior high school grade XI. The speech act of giving suggestion/advice found in the most conversations (eight data found). The second most frequently found speech act is giving opinion (seven data found).

Since this study is concerned in finding gambits in only five speech acts: asking for an opinion, giving opinion, agreeing to an opinion, disagreeing to an opinion and giving suggestion/advice, I identified the gambits in those speech acts.

There were 34 gambits found in five speech acts: four gambits were found in asking for an opinion, six in giving opinion, five in agreeing to an opinion, ten in disagreeing to an opinion, nine in giving suggestion/advice. Gambits of asking for an opinion can be found in C1, C2 and C7; gambits of giving an opinion were found in C7, C9, C10 and C15; gambits of agreeing to an opinion are found in C4, C7 and C15; gambits of disagreeing to an opinion in C1, C7, C8, C9 and C10; and gambits of giving

suggestion/advice are found in C1, C2, C3, C7, C12, C14 and C15. The following table gives the detail of the gambits found and their classification according to Keller and Warner classification of conversation gambits (1988).

There are four gambits found belonging to gambits of asking for an opinion. They are found in conversation no. one, two and seven. I can see that the gambits used the same phrase *what do you think...* and *don't you think...* Three of the four gambits belong to opening gambits and one belongs to linking gambit. Five gambits found belong to gambits of agreeing to an opinion. They are found in conversation no. 4, 7 and 15. All the gambits found in agreeing to an opinion are responding gambits (according to Keller and Warner classification). Gambits in disagreeing to an opinion are found more than in any other speech acts. There are ten gambits found, eight belong to responding gambits and two belong to linking gambits. Gambits of disagreeing to an opinion are found in conversation no. 1, 7, 8, 9 and 10. The last speech act being analyzed in this study is giving suggestion/advice. As given in the table 4.1 before, speech act of giving suggestion/advice is found in the conversation no. 1, 2, 3, 7, 12, 14 and 15. The following table gives the detail of the finding gambits and their classification based on Keller and Warner (1988). There are nine data found belonging to gambits of giving suggestion/advice. Based on their functions, all of the gambits found in giving suggestion/advice are opening gambits.

According to the theory of Dörnyei and Thurrel (1992), the gambits found in the five speech acts under this study are used appropriately. The chart below shows their percentages according to their classification based on Keller and Warner (1988).

There are four gambits found in asking for an opinion. Three of them belong to opening gambit (8.82%) and another one belongs to linking gambit (2.94%).

The opening gambits are *What do you think...?* (in C1); *Mrs. Alison, what do you think...?* (in C2); *Don't you think...?* (in C7). While the linking gambit is ... *don't you think...?* (in C1). According to Keller and Warner (1988), speech

act functions of asking for an opinion can be opening gambit or linking gambit.

From the conversations being analyzed, I can see that the opening gambits are placed in the front of sentences to signal that the speakers are expecting the listeners' opinion about certain cases. Linking gambit is found to link between the speaker's opinion and the question to the listener's opinion.

In giving opinion, all the gambits found are opening gambit (17.65% of all gambits found). This is in line with Keller's theory which classifies giving opinion into opening gambits. It is because when we are giving our opinion, we are giving new ideas, new discourse in our conversation.

As given in the figure 4.2, there are 14.71% gambits in agreeing to an opinion. All of the gambits belong to responding gambit. Their uses are appropriate since after we listen to other's opinion, they expect our response. They are wondering if we agree or disagree with their opinion. Thus, agreeing means that we are responding other's opinion.

Disagreeing to an opinion is found in ten clauses. Each clause contains of each gambit of disagreeing to an opinion. Eight of the gambits belong to responding gambit (by 23.53%) and the other two belong to linking gambit (5.88%).

Gambits of giving suggestion/advice are found more than other gambits (26.47%). All of the gambits function to give suggestion belongs to opening gambits. This is in line with Keller's classifications of gambits says giving suggestion means giving new idea to solve a problem. In C1, a husband is giving suggestion to his wife; in C2, Mrs. Wilson is giving her advice to her student; in C3, Eve is giving her opinion to her friend; in C12, a shopkeeper is giving his suggestion to a customer; and in C14 and C15, there are also suggestions to the speakers' spouse.

Table 4.1 Speech Acts of Look Ahead 2

No.	Speech Acts	Conversations No.	Data No.	Sum
1	asking for an opinion	C1, C2, C7	(1), (3), (4), (24)	4
2	giving opinion	C7, C8, C9, C10, C15	(20), (21), (23), (29), (31), (32), (34), (46)	7
3	expressing satisfaction	C11	(36), (37)	2
4	expressing dissatisfaction	C12	(38)	1
5	giving suggestion/advice	C1, C2, C3, C7, C12, C14, C15	(2), (5), (6), (7), (27), (39), (42), (45)	8
6	Warning	C14	(43)	1
7	expressing relief	C5	(15)	1
8	expressing pain	C5	(10), (12)	2
9	expressing pleasure	-	-	0
10	expressing love	-	-	0
11	expressing sorrow	C5, C13, C16	(11), (13), (16), (41), (48)	5
12	expressing embarrassment	-	-	0
13	expressing anger	C5, C6, C12, C16	(14), (16), (19), (40), (49)	5
14	expressing annoyance	C6	(17), (18)	2
			Sum	38

Table 4.2

Gambits Found in the Five Speech Acts

Speech Act	Conversation No.	Data No.	Gambits Used	Kind of Gambit
Asking for an Opinion	1	(1)	<i>What do you think...?</i>	Opening
		(3)	<i>... don't you think...?</i>	Linking
	2	(4)	<i>Mrs. Alison, what do you think...?</i>	Opening
	7	(24)	<i>Don't you think...?</i>	Opening
Giving opinion	7	(21)	<i>I think ...</i>	Opening
		(23)	<i>In my opinion, ...</i>	Opening
	9	(31)	<i>I don't think that ...</i>	Opening
		(32)	<i>Well, I personally believe that...</i>	Opening
	10	(34)	<i>I believe that ...</i>	Opening
	15	(46)	<i>I think ...</i>	Opening
Agreeing to an opinion	4	(8)	<i>Okay, deal.</i>	Responding
		(9)	<i>Deal.</i>	Responding
	7	(28)	<i>Yes, I suppose you're right.</i>	Responding
	15	(45)	<i>Yes.</i>	Responding
		(47)	<i>I agree with you because ...</i>	Responding
Disagreeing to an opinion	1	(3)	<i>Well, I was thinking of that, but...</i>	Responding
	7	(21)	<i>I don't think so.</i>	Responding
		(22)	<i>Maybe so, but...</i>	Linking
		(24)	<i>Yes, that's true, but...</i>	Linking
		(25)	<i>Not at all.</i>	Responding

		(26)	<i>Sure, I agree, but...</i>	<i>Responding</i>
	8	(30)	<i>Not at all.</i>	<i>Responding</i>
	9	(33)	<i>I see your point, but...</i>	<i>Responding</i>
	10	(34)	<i>I don't think so, ...</i>	<i>Responding</i>
		(35)	<i>I can see your point, Komar, but can't you see...</i>	<i>Responding</i>
<i>Giving suggestion/advice</i>	1	(2)	<i>Why don't you ...</i>	<i>Opening</i>
	2	(5)	<i>I think it would be a great idea for you to...</i>	<i>Opening</i>
		(5)	<i>Try ...ing</i>	<i>Opening</i>
	3	(7)	<i>I think you shouldn't...</i>	<i>Opening</i>
		(7)	<i>You can...</i>	<i>Opening</i>
	7	(27)	<i>It should</i>	<i>Opening</i>
	12	(39)	<i>Why don't you ...</i>	<i>Opening</i>
	14	(42)	<i>Let's...</i>	<i>Opening</i>
15	(45)	<i>Let's...</i>	<i>Opening</i>	

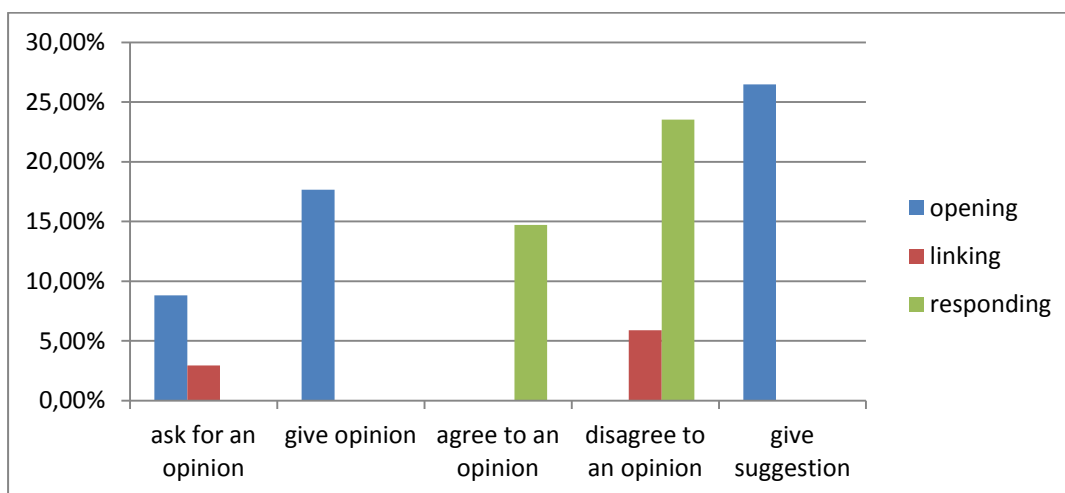


Figure 4.1 Kinds of Gambits in Five Speech Acts

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