THE REALIZATION OF REQUESTIVE SPEECH ACTS IN SUNDANESE

(A Case Study at SMUN 2 Kuningan)

A PAPER

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ICEU KUSMAWATI

022256

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS

INDONESIA UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Language is principally a tool for doing things. People use language to ask questions, request favours, make comments, report news, give directions, offer greetings and perform hundreds of other ordinary verbal actions in daily life (Wardaugh: 2000). Holmes (2001: 223) states that "language varies according to its uses as well as its users, according to where it is used and to whom, as well as according to who is using it".

Hidayat (2002) explains that good and appropriate patterns of requesting can reduce the imposition and limitation as the communication takes place. Inappropriate patterns of requesting can drive the communication to run not as expected. Thus, in the end will cause misunderstandings and therefore the aim of requesting cannot be realized. Holmes (2001: 224) adds that "the better you know someone, the more casual and relaxed the speech style you will use to them".

The concern of this research is requestive speech acts, especially on requestive speech act patterns in Sundanese. Sundanese is a language which is more complicated to learn because it has complex words and structures. Although many researches have investigated requesting speech act areas, but no research conducted in Sundanese requestive speech act. The writer as Sundanese who uses the Sundanese language as the mother tongue has deep interest in it. The use of inappropriate patterns in our utterances in daily conversation often causes

misunderstanding in communication. Thus, to realize what speakers say in requesting, the speakers must choose the appropriate patterns in realizing it.

The patterns used by the speakers will affect both the speaker in requesting and the hearer in responding it. Therefore, the success of requesting is heavily determined by the patterns used. In other words, different patterns will gain different concerns (Brown & Levinson: 1987).

Consider the following Sundanese sentences:

a.   *Cing eta uyah kadieukeun!*

(Pass the salt, please)

b.   *Teh...punten, tiasa teu pangnyandakeun uyah?*

(Could you pass the salt, please?)

c.   *Sayur teh pami ditambihan uyahna sigana langkung raos.*

(I think the soup would taste better if you had just added more salt)

These sentences will bring different impacts on the person who should accept and comply with the speaker's request. Hearer will perform different responses to the sentences. These requesting strategies are placed on direct-indirect scale, with strategy A being the most direct and strategy C is the least indirect. Sentences A, B, and C, can be interpreted as requests to bring salt, but in different ways. Sentence C is more indirect than the other sentences. In general, the more indirect people talk the more polite they are. Sentences B and C imply softer request, more polite and have lower rank of imposition than sentence A. So, the hearer will pay more attention to both sentences. Patterns of requestive speech

acts indeed need discussing as they have it has tight connection to the success of performing a request, level of politeness and culture of the speaker or hearer.

It is hoped that by conducting this research, the writer can discover the most commonly used patterns of requestive speech act performed by Sundanese people. Of course, the result of this research hopefully can strengthen the recognition and acknowledgment of Sundanese language.

1.2   Statements of the Problem

From the preceding explanation, this research is to answer these following questions:

1.   What are the most common patterns of requestive speech act in Sundanese?

2.   How do social variables influence the realization of requestive speech acts in Sundanese?

3.   How are the realizations viewed from linguistic politeness theory?

1.3   Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are:

1.   To investigate the most common patterns of requestive speech acts used by Sundanese.

2.   To investigate the influences which are contributed by the social variables in realization of requestive speech act in Sundanese.

3.   To view the realizations of requestive speech acts used by Sundanese from linguistic politeness theory.

1.4   Research Method

This research was carried out by using qualitative approach in its nature, but it does not mean that quantitative proceeding is neglected. According to Wray, *et al* (1998:95), a qualitative study involves description and analysis rather than counting of the feature. It emphasizes on exploring the types of strategy-the qualities in the data and ascertaining why particular speakers used them in specific contexts with particular people.

1.5   Population and sample

The population must be carefully chosen and clearly defined. The respondents of this research were 30 second grade students of SMUN 2 Kuningan, involving 18 males and 12 females for completing the Discourse Completion Tests (DCTs). The DCT consists of situation questions to gain the respondent's response in making a request to the lower and higher age and status. Because the research was taken in the senior high school, so the second grade students were chosen as the sample. They were selected because they have appropriate background for this study.

1.6   Data Collection

The data of this research were collected through questionnaire in the form (DCT). It contains a number of descriptions of speech act situations involving a speaker and his or her interlocutor. For every situation, the social factors and its imposition are clarified. Then the description is followed by the blank space that should be answered by the respondents. The expected answers are particular kinds of speech act that will occur when they are actualized in the real situation.

Questionnaires were given to the second grade students who use the Sundanese language as their mother tongue. They got some explanation of how to fill-up the questionnaire. Then the questionnaire must be submitted at least a week after it has been given.

1.7   Data Analysis

The data in this study were categorized based on the answer in the questionnaires. The writer analyzed the data using the framework which was adapted from Blum-Kulka (1989) and Searle (1969). The next step of analyzing the data was discussing the findings by correlating them with the related literature reviews in the theoretical foundation.

1.8   Clarification of the Terms

In order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, some terms are clarified as follows:

1. DCT. DCT is the test which consists of scripted dialogues that represent socially differentiated situations. Each dialogue is preceded by a short description of the situation, specifying the setting, and the social distance between the participants and their status relative to each other followed by an incomplete dialogue. Respondent were asked to complete the dialogue, thereby providing the speech act aimed at. (Blum-Kulka 1989: 13)

2. Supportive moves. According to Blum-Kulka (1989: 276) supportive moves is a unit external to the request, which modifies its impact by either aggravating or mitigating its force.

3. Head Act. Head act is the minimal unit which can realize a request; it is the core of the request sequence. (Blum–Kulka 1989: 275)

1.9   Organization of the Paper

The paper will be presented in five chapters. Those are:

Chapter 1 is Introduction. It contains background of the study, statements of the problem, the aims of the present study, research method, population and sample, data collection and data analysis, clarification of the terms and organization of the paper.

The next chapter is Theoretical Foundation. It explains the related theoretical frameworks, which are provided as the basis of investigating the research problems.

Chapter III discusses Methods of the Research. This chapter includes aims of the study, research method, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV is Findings and Discussions. It presents the data which have been collected and analyzed. Moreover, the findings are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter V presents Conclusions and Suggestions. Conclusions draw the core points of the research, whereas the suggestions bring suggestion benefiting the result of the research to all of audience in common and practitioners of pragmatics in particular.