Request Expression Used by The English Department Students of University Muhammadiyah of Bengkulu

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Abstract
In this research the researcher want to know what are the forms and what it the request strategy that frequently used by the English department students of UMB. The objectives of this research were to know and describe the form of request expressions used by the English department students of UMB, and also to find out the request strategy that frequently used by the first semester students of English Department of UMB, Academic Year 2010-2011. The design of this research was descriptive method. The population of this research was the first semester of English Department students of UMB. The sample was 37 students from each class. The data were collected by using the cards, and the samples expressed the instruction based on the cards. The data were analyzed based on the category framework of request strategies proposed by Blum-Kulka et al (1989). The result of this research showed that most English department students of UMB in the first semester Academic Year 2010-2011 expressed the request by using the form of request such as ‘can you’, ‘could you’, would you’, and there were some students who add the word ‘please’, at the beginning or at the end of sentence when they expressed their request. From the three categories of request strategies written by Blum-Kulka et.al (1989), Direct level, Conventionally Indirect Level, and Non-Conventionally Indirect level, the students only used the conventionally indirect level when they expressed the request to the hearer, there were ‘can’, ‘could’, and ‘would’ that involves in query preparatory. From the result of this research, the researcher can conclude that there are some forms of request expression that used by the English Department students, such as can you, could you, and would you. From the categories of request strategies written by Blum-Kulka et.al 1989, the students only used the conventionally indirect level when they expressed the request to the hearer, there are can, could, and would. Based on the result, the researcher suggest the students to study more about speech act especially in request expression. The researcher also suggest the other researcher to do further research about request expression based on the strategy in request. The researcher also suggests the lecturers to motivate their students to use speech act with appropriate grammar when they expressed the request in real life communication.

Keywords : Speech Act, Request, Expression

1. Introduction
Communication is one important thing that always use in daily activity. People need communication to interact to the other, and of course, conversation is a tool that frequently uses by many people. Conversation is a social skill that is not difficult for most individuals (Wikipedia: 2010). Conversation are the ideal form of communication in some respects, since they allow people with different views, on a topic to learn from each other. A speech, on the other hand, is an oral presentation by one person directed at a group. A successful conversation includes mutually interesting connection between the speakers or thing that the speakers know. Those engaging in conversation naturally tend to relate the others speaker’s statement to themselves. They may insert of their lives into their replies, to relate to the other person’s opinions or points of conversations.
Everyday, everyone always does communication by using speech act. Speech act is a technical term in linguistics and the philosophy of language. A speech act is an utterance that serves a function in communication. According to Tomic (1978) speech act is a very helpful foundation for examining the actual language used by real people people in real events of life. Speech acts include real life interactions and require not only knowledge of the language but also appropriate use of that language within a given culture. According to Jannedy (1994), speech act use to convey information, request information, give orders, make request, make threats, give warnings, make bets, give advice, and others. Almost same with Jannedy, Yule (1985) state that the use of the term speech act covers action such as requesting, commanding, questioning and informing.

Request is one kind of speech act that frequently used in daily communication. Request is an expressions where the speaker expect the hearers to do something to benefit the speaker. According to Celce (1991), the speech act of requesting is realizes when the speaker verbalizes a wish which can be carried out by the hearer. Thus, a request, if it is complete with requires, the hearer to carry out an act or to provide some information or goods for the speaker wants. Request is the clearest example of face threatening speech acts. In fact, it explicitly express the speaker’s intention that the hearer perform an actions, and this fact triggers the default rule, moreover the request actions have usually to be perform for the sake of the speaker.

Take a look one example adopted from English, in requesting, in which there are ways to go about getting the things what the people want. When someone with a group of friends, he/she can say to his/her friends, (“get me that book!”, if you don’t mind?), and (“I’m sorry, I don’t mean to interrupt, but I am not able to hear the speaker in the front of the room”). In different social situations, it is obligated to adjust or use of words to fit the occasions. Furthermore, when the people need to take a thing from someone else, they should use politeness strategies, such as what would you do when you see some pens on your teacher desk, and you one to use one, would you say “oh, I want to use one of these!”

From the description above, it is very important to use the appropriate sentence in every situations, because it can make the speakers or the hearer to avoid a misunderstanding. From the reason above, the researcher interested to investigate the request expression used by the English Department students of UMB especially the request expression that used by the students outside of the class.

2. Literature Review

Speech act as the domain of pragmatics is an attempt at doing something purely by speaking (Trask 1999). Speech act is a technical term in linguistics and the philosophy of language. According to Giglioli (1972) speech acts sometimes called language acts or linguistics acts is essential to any specimen of linguistics communication that involve a linguistic act. As has generally has been supposed, the symbol or word sentence, which is the unit of linguistic communication, but rather is production of the token in the performance of the speech act that constitutes the basic unit of linguistics communication.

According to Austin and John Searle in Paltridge (2000:15) speech act theory from their observation that language is used to do things other than just refer to the truth or falseness of particular statement. In general, speech acts are acts of communication. To communicate is to express a certain attitude being expressed. For example, a statement express a belief, a request express a desire, and an apology express regret. As an act of communication, a speech acts succeeds if the audience identifies, in accordance with the speaker’s intention, the attitude being expressed.
3. Austin’s theory
Austin in Paltridge (2000) argues that speech acts can be analyzed on three levels such as:
1. Locutionary Act; the performance of an utterance: the actual utterance and its ostensible meaning.
2. Illocutionary Act; the semantic illocutionary force of the utterance, thus it’s real, intended meaning.
3. Perlocutionary Act; its factual effect, such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring, or otherwise getting someone to do or realize something, whether intended or not.

Austin identifies three distinct levels of action beyond the act of utterance itself. He distinguishes the act of saying something, what one does in saying it, and what one does by saying it, and dubs these the ‘locutionary’, the ‘illocutionary’, and the ‘perlocutionary’ act, respectively.

4. Searle Theory
Searle in Bach (http.www.speechact.com) has set up the following classification of speech acts:
a. Assertive: speech act that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g. reciting a creed.
b. Directives: speech act that are to cause the hearer to take a particular action, e.g. command, advising, admonishing, asking, begging, excusing, forbidding, instructing, ordering, permitting, requesting, requiring, suggesting, urging, warning.
c. Commisive: speech act that commit a speaker to some future action, e.g. agreeing, guaranteeing, inviting, offering, promising, swearing, volunteering.
d. Constantive: affirming, alleging, announcing, answering, attributing, claiming, classifying, concurring, confirming, conjecturing, denying, disagreeing, disclosing, disputing, identifying, informing, insisting, predicting, ranking, reporting, stating, stipulating.
e. Declarations: speech act that change the reality in accord with the proposition of declarations, e.g. baptism, pronouncing someone guilty or pronouncing someone husband and wife.

5. Request
Keovilay in Apriyanti (2001) defines request as pre-event acts where these acts express the speakers expectation of the hearers performing in action, verbal or non verbal. According to Ellis (1994) request are attempt on the parts of speaker to get the hearer to perform or to stop performing some kind of action. A number of general were interactional, illocutionary, and sociolinguistic features of request. A request is also expressed to give an order to the listener. However, using request is more polite than using commands, even though the listener is also expected to follow the order. Based on definition of request, it is clear that request is a speech acts where the speaker expect the hearers to do something to benefit the speaker.

In addition, according to Searle in Ellis (1994) request can be expressed directly and indirectly. Direct request can be expressed such as in, “would you show me your passport, please?”. Moreover, indirect request can be expressed such as in he/she asked to see my passport.

In other opinion, Thomson and Martinet (1980) state the are several forms of request. First, the use could you in question, for instance, “could you clean the board?”. Second, will/would you+ please form, whereas ‘would’ is more polite than ‘will’, example : would you please listen to me. Third, the use of perhaps you would…..from which implies
confident that the other person will perform this service, such as perhaps you would let me know when our new stock arrives. The fourth is if you would from, for instance, if you’d signed the register follow the porter. The fifth is the used of I should/I would …and also would you be good/kind enough form. The sixth is would you mind signing this form? While the last form is the use of you might as, e.g. you might post these letters for me.

Hughes (1986) introduce several forms of request, one of the commonest forms of request in English involves the use of modals auxiliaries (can, could, will, and would), for instance: could you share with Anna today, can you say that again. An extremely common variations involving the modal auxiliaries use a tag, like ending such as clean the board, would you?. Modal Auxiliaries (can, could, will, and would), are very frequently accompanied by please, such as could you please try questioning no 5, would you come out the front, please?. According to Krohn (1990) the word please make the request sentence more polite. Please may also be inserted at the end, instead of beginning of the sentence. The next form is the use of phrases (I wish you would / if only you would + verb sand can’t you even + V) that express despair, anger or frustration. Command also can be turned into a request by adding the word please. The next form, the use of want and like in question such as, would you like to write it on the board?, or do you want to try the next question?

Brown and Levinson in Moehkardi (1993) define request as threatening because request can be interpreted as intutive impingement on freedom of action, or even as a show in the exercise of power by hearers. Based on Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness theory, request are Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), since a speaker is imposing her/his will on the hearer. Brown and Levinson (1987) propose that when confronted with the need to perform a FTA, the individual must choose between performing the FTA in the most direct and efficient manner or attempting to mitigate the effect of the FTA on the hearer’s face. The strategy an individual chooses to employ depends upon the weightiness or seriousness of FTA. Weightiness is an assessment of the social situation calculated by the speaker. (www.ccsenet.org/journal.html).

6. The Strategies in Request

Blum-Kulka, House, and kasper (1989) distinguished three degrees of directness in request, depending on the extent to which the illocution is transparent from locution: direct request, conventionally indirect request, and non-conventionally indirect request. In direct request, the illocutionary force of the utterance is indicated by grammatical, or semantic means (for example, “leave me alone”). Conventionally indirect statements express the illocution via fixed linguistic convention established in the speech community (for example, “how about cleaning up?”). Non conventionally indirect request require the addressee to compute the illocution from the interaction of the locution with its context (for example, “the game is boring”). The request strategies in the following classification are ordered according to decreasing degree of directness.

According to Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper at (www.ccsnet.org/journal.html) the combination of level of directness and strategy as follows:

a. Direct level

1. Mood Derivable: utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force (for example, “leave me alone”)
2. Performatives: Utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named (for example, “I tell you to leave me alone”) 
3. Hedged Performatives: Utterances in which naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions (for example, “I would like you to ask you to leave me alone”)
4. Obligation statement: Utterances which state obligation of the hearer to carry out the act (for example, “Sir, you’ll have to move your car”).

5. Want statements: Utterances which state the speaker’s desire that the hearer carries out the act (for example, “I want you to move your car”).

b. Conventionally Indirect level

1. Suggestory formulae: Utterances which contain a suggestion to do something (for example “How about cleaning up?”)

2. Query-preparatory: Utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions (e.g., ability, willingness) as conventionalized in any specific language (for example, “Would you mind moving your car?”)

c. Non-Conventional Indirect level

1. Strong Hints: Utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act (for example, “The game is boring”).

2. Mild Hints: Utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context (for example, “We’ve been playing this game for over an hour now”).

3. Finding

The researcher took the data from class A, B, C, D, and E, at the first semester of English department students of UMB in Academic Years 2010/2011. The researcher collected the data from the third of January 2011 up to the eighth January 2011. The researcher distributed the cards that had the instructions of request to the students. There were 5 cards that had 5 kind of different instructions. Then the researcher recorded the students voice when they were expressing the instruction of request from card in English. Based on the recorded of the students voice’s, the researcher found the result.

**Situation of the problem in point 1**

In this situation, students generally expressed the request by using the modal auxiliaries (can and could). While other students express the request by utter the reason first, then he expressed the request by saying word please.

**Situation of the problem in point 2**

In this situation, all students in each class using the same expression by used the modal auxiliaries (can), when they need a help from their friend in preparing his birthday party.

**Situation of the problem in point 3**

In this situation, students generally expressed the request by using the modal auxiliaries (can, could, and would). While other students express the request by utter the reason first, then he expressed the request by saying word please.

**Situation of the problem in point 4**

For this situation, almost all students also used can, could, and would when they express their request, but some students introduce themselves first before they expresses the request.

**Situation of the problem in point 5**

Still used the modals can, could, and would, students express their request. But for some students, for this situation, they express apologize first, then the request expression.

7. Discussion

Based on the result, there were five points that can be discussed by the researcher. Generally, the students at first semester expressed the request based on the instruction by using simple expression, but, they still used the grammatical error. It might be some factors, such as:
1. They did not master English grammatical, because there were still at the first semester.
2. They did not master about pragmatics, especially in speech act, because they have not learned this subject yet.

The data that has been collected from the subject will discussed based on Blum-Kulka et al (1989).

**Request expression used by the students for the situation in point one**

The situation that happen in point one is a context where there is a woman who take a student queue in a bank. For this situation, the students give request by using the modal auxiliary (could and can), and they add the word please at the beginning or at the end of the sentence. Students 1 in class A and students 1 in class E using the modal auxiliary (can) when they give the request, while the other students such as the students 2, in class A, and the students 1 in class B expressed the request by using the word please and they give apologize before or after they give request, and there are two students in class A and class C using the modal auxiliary (could) when they expressed the request. Actually, in this situation they should used the appropriate request sentence, because they speaks to a woman who is older than them.

Based on Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness theory, request are Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), since a speaker is imposing her/his will on the hearer. Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed that when confronted with the need to perform a FTA, the individual must choose between performing the FTA in the most direct and efficient manner or attempting to mitigate the effect of the FTA on the hearer’s face. In this case, the strategy that used by the students in this situation is conventionally indirect level, because they use “can you and could you”.

**Request expression used by the students for the situation in point two**

The situation in this point is a situation where the speaker request to hearer who need help from the hearer to help them to celebrate birthday party. In this part, most of students use the modal auxiliary (can) in expressed the request. When the students give request to their friend, they popularly used the basic forms of politeness strategy with ‘can you’. It seems that students were correctly able to asses the level of politeness. Not different with the native speakers, in fact, the English department students at UMB especially at first semester, also used the request form ‘can you’, when they expressed the request, so, it can conclude that they were also use the conventionally indirect level, as the request strategy. While, not different from the situation in point one, in this situation the students also use the request form ‘can you’ when they expressed the request. It appropriate with the opinion from Hughes (1986), where one of the commonest forms of request in English involves the modal auxiliary (can).

**Request expression used by the students for the situation in point three**

In this situation, the students expressed the request by using modal auxiliary can, could, and would, and only the student 2 in class D and both of student in class E expressed the request by using the word please. The situation that happen here was the situation where the speaker (manager) give the request to the hearer (secretary) to prepare a meeting with his partner. In this context, not different from the two situation before, the request strategy that use from the students is the conventionally indirect level, because the speaker (student) used can, could, and would to expressed the request based on the context. It also can be concluded that the request forms that used by the students were the modal auxiliary can you, could you, and would you, Hughes (1986). While there were three students expressed the request by using the word please, without using the form of request.

According to Krohn (1990), the word please makes the request sentence more polite, but
in this case the students did not use the form of request, because they only used the word please when they expressed the request to the hearer.

**Request expression used by the students for the situation in point four**

In this situation, the student 1 in class A expressed the request by using modal auxiliary (could), but first she introduced herself and then she told what was her purposed. The other students, such as the students 2 in class A, and the students in class B, C, and E used the modal auxiliaries (can) when they gave the request. But, the students in class D just used the word please when he gave the request.

Actually, they should use the appropriate request sentence when they give a request, because the hearer is a lecturer who is teaching in the classroom. So, it is very important if the speaker (students) use polite sentence to the hearer (lecturer), the polite form such as, ‘would you mind’, ‘would I’, ‘could I’, ‘could you’. It is important to use more polite forms of request due to the formality between the lecturer and the students. But, in this situation only one student used the appropriate request sentence, ‘could’. While the other students used can, whereas in this situation they speaks with the lecturer. Certainly, they should be used more polite forms of request sentence, such as could and would. According to Thomson and Martinet (1980), could and would are more polite than ‘can and will’. Same with the 3 situation before, the request strategy that the student used is the conventionally indirect level, because they used can and could.

**Request Expression used by the students for the situation in point five**

The situation that happened here is the situation where the students as the speaker give request to the presenter (hearer), to repeat his explanation, because the student (speaker) did not understand about his explanation. For this situation, the students (speaker) should be use the modals could or would the express the request in formal situation, because they speaks to the speaker (presenter). The students in class A and B, add the word please at the end of sentence, while the students 1 and 2 in class E, used the modal auxiliaries can and could to express the request to the hearer. According to Krohn (1990) the word please make the request sentence more polite. Please may also be inserted at the end, instead of beginning of the sentence. Similarly with the other situation before, the students used the conventionally indirect level, where they used can and could. As the form of request, they also used the modal auxiliaries ‘can you and could you’.

**8. Conclusion**

From the result of the research, the researcher can conclude as follows: 1. From several form of request expression that used by the English department students of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu such as: can (can you help me to prepare my birthday party?), could (could you wait for a moment please?), would (I would like to make an experiment research, and I need a help from one of the students, could you mind to help me in to do the research?) 2. from the three categories of request strategies written by Blum-Kulka et.al (1989), the students only used the conventionally indirect level when they expressed the request to the hearer, there are can, could, and would, that involves in query preparatory.
REFERENCES