

**A Comparison Analysis of Speech Act Theory
in the Language of “Notice” Written in Indonesian and English**

by
Sokhira Linda Vinde M.Pd¹

Abstract

Notice adalah salah satu alat komunikasi tertulis. Notice biasanya digunakan di tempat-tempat umum untuk memberikan pemberitahuan, perhatian, perintah dan larangan untuk melakukan sesuatu. Maka menganalisis bahasa yang digunakannya pada notice sangatlah penting. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan teori tentang speech act pada notice yang digunakan pada bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia. Lebih spesifiknya digunakan untuk mengungkapkan makna locution, illocution, dan perlocution. Studi ini mengkaji makna yang tertera dalam beberapa notice pada tempat-tempat umum seperti restoran, mall, supermarket, jalan, dan Bank di Padangsidempuan. Untuk mengumpulkan data, studi ini menggunakan analisis dokumen. Setelah data dianalisis, studi ini menemukan bahwa terdapat kesamaan teori speech act dalam bahasa Indonesia dan Inggris. Notice yang diungkapkan dalam bahasa Indonesia dan Inggris biasanya dalam bentuk kalimat perintah dan pernyataan. Kemudian, fungsi notice tersebut untuk mengungkapkan makna perintah, arahan, dan deklarasi. Notice dalam bahasa Indonesia dan Inggris juga cenderung mengandung makna nonverbal. Yang artinya, notice memberikan pengaruh pada sikap dan tindakan orang yang membacanya. Kesimpulannya, notice yang dituliskan dalam bahasa Indonesia dan Inggris diungkapkan dalam bentuk kalimat langsung.

Key words:

Speech act, locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary, direct and indirect speech acts, short functional text, and notices.

A. INTRODUCTION

Language is mostly used to convey speakers' meaning to addressee in communication. Then, meaning of the utterances which speakers intend can be stated explicitly or implicitly in the utterances². Also, the meaning itself may be different related to the situation or context it is used. In reality, what speakers say is sometimes interpreted differently by the listeners. Thus, understanding the context is important in communication. Related to context of the communication, addressees sometimes find difficulty to relate the meaning with the intended

¹Writer is an English Department Lecturer of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty (FTIK), Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Padangsidempuan.

²Yule, George. 1996. *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press. New York.

context. It is probably because of the absence of the speaker at the time the utterances uttered³.

The absence of the speakers at time of the utterance is uttered can be seen in written communication, for instance: announcement, short message, invitation, letters, notices, etc. One of those types of written communication that is discussed in this study is notice. The investigation of notice language is regarded very important due to its construction, and function. The construction of language in notices as well as other types of written language is a little bit confusing and leading to ambiguous perception. It is because the notice is showed in written form and notice makers do not involve in the communication process.

Then, notice is usually created and showed with some crucial functions to be conveyed by the addressee. The function could be to give information, and instruction for what to do or not to do in a certain context. In that case, there is a need that the addressee can understand what notice makers intend to do by their utterances. That is why language of notices should be as understandable as possible and the language construction of notices should be taken into deep consideration. In other words, the confusing notice will lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication among the readers.

Smith argued that there is always misunderstanding or miscommunication occurs in communication which is mostly happen in written one.⁴ Then, he suggested some ways to avoid it including; make sure your written communications are clear, write all things down and repeat them, confirm all details and put them in writing, watch for potential misunderstanding, evaluate the clarity of your oral communication, and ask other to repeat what they heard. Thus, in order to avoid misunderstanding in written communication specifically, the writer of the message should write it in clear and detail construction, also repeat the most important message to be conveyed.

However, what has happened in reality is sometimes the utterance which is conveyed through written language including notice is not as clear as it supposes

³Grundy, Peter. 2008. *Doing Pragmatics*. Hodder Education, part of Hachette Livre UK: Great Britain.

⁴Smith, Todd (2010). *Six Ways to Avoid Misunderstanding*.
<http://www.littlethingsmatter.com/blog/2010/03/23/six-ways-to-avoid-misunderstandings/>

to be. In Indonesia where English is used as a foreign language, among notices which are written in Indonesian, there have been also some of notices written in English language. English notice is usually written in some public places which probably visited by foreigners such as super market, banks, campus, airports, restaurants, and streets. Even, English notices have been used universally in any places and any times.

Related to the meaning of the utterances or words including language in notice, Austin⁵ in Grundy⁶ proposed three aspects of meaning which is simplified into “speech act theory”. The three meanings are: locution; non ambiguous meaning, illocution; the intended meaning, and perlocution; the effect of the utterance. Therefore, this study is aimed to investigate how the meaning of notice conveyed in English and Indonesian as it related to theory of locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary force, direct and indirect speech act.

There are two statements of the problems which guide the focus of the study. First, how speech acts theory in term of locution, illocution, perlocution, direct and indirect speech acts used in notice written in Indonesian and English is. Second, in what aspects of speech act theory Indonesian notice differs from English notice. Finally, it is hoped that this study can give significances to the researcher’s knowledge itself and the readers. Then, hopefully, the result of the study could give a little contribution to the field of linguistics or pragmatics implementation.

B. Review of Related Literature

There are some related theories related to the aims of the research covering locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary act, direct and indirect speech act, speech act elements, short functional text and notices.

1. Speech Act

Every utterance has functions to be conveyed. It attempts to explain what speakers mean by his or her utterances, and how the addressees convey the intended meaning from the speakers. According to Austin⁷ stated also in Grundy

⁵Austin, J.L. 1962. *How to do things with words*. Oxford. Clarendon Press.

⁶Grundy, *loc. cit*

⁷Austin, *loc. cit*

⁸and Yule⁹, speech act is the actions which are performed from the utterance. In other words, what speakers say to others has actions or forces to be done. Also, it is used to reveal actual function and the meaning implied behind the utterances.

Austin also stated that speech act can be analyzed in three types of acts. They are: a locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act. Levinson had the same opinion with Austin and said that in uttering the sentences, the speakers do not only perform one act but simultaneously perform three types of speech act stated previously.¹⁰

1.1. Locutionary Act

The first type of speech act is locution. It is what is exactly said by the speakers. Grundy¹¹ argued that locutionary act is directed to basic or literal meaning of the utterances. Then, Austin¹² in called the term locutionary act as it is related to non ambiguous meaning. In line with Grundy and Austin, Yule¹³ said “it is a basic act of utterance, or producing a meaningful linguistic expression. Moreover, Locution is the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense and references. In analyzing locutionary act in this study, it is related to three basic structures of speech act described below!

1.2. General Structures of Speech Act

In order to see types of locution, Langacker’s stated in Kurniati¹⁴, general structures of speech act is used. He described locutionary act as it is related to the three types of sentences. They are:

1. Declaratives

Declarative sentences are sentences that present a predicate and with or without more phrases adjunct. They are closer to assertion and description.

Example: “It’s a nice day outside”

⁸Grundy, *loc. Cit*

⁹Yule, *loc. Cit*

¹⁰Levinson, Stephen, C. 1983. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹¹Grundy. *Loc, cit*.

¹²Austin. *Loc, cit*

¹³Yule. *Loc, cit*

¹⁴KurniatiWidhi M. 2000. *The study of speech acts used in comics strip of “Garfield” and “The Calvin and Hobbes”*. Published research. http://dewey.petra.ac.id/jiunkpe_dg_713.html

2. Interrogatives

Interrogative sentences can be characterized by two descriptions. They consist of alternative questions; yes or no questions, also questions which needs some alternatives answers.

Example: "May I come in, sir?"

"Where will you go, David?"

3. Imperatives

Imperative sentences are closer to request or order in sentences. They tend to restricted to sentences with second person subject and active verbs.

Example: "Kick the ball!"

1.3 Illocutionary Act

It is what speakers mean by their utterances. Austin ¹⁵ cited in Panggabean¹⁶ said that Illocutionary act is an utterance which has "performative" just in case it is issued in the course of the "doing of an action". Furthermore he said that illocutionary act is an act (1) for the performance of which the speaker must make it clear to some other person that the act is performed, and (2) the performance of which involves the production of what he calls 'conventional consequences' such as rights, commitments, and obligations.

Thus, for example, in order to successfully perform a promise the speaker must make clear to speaker's audience that the act of the speaker is performing a promise and in the performance of the act, speaker will be undertaking an obligation to do the promised thing; therefore promising is an illocutionary act in the present sense. For example, "I promise to attend your party tonight". Without using the word "promise", actually the speaker has made a promise to the hearer that speaker will do future action that is the speaker attends hearer's party.

¹⁵Austin, *loc. Cit*

¹⁶PanggabeanJuita Sari. 2011. *An Analysis of Speech Acts In Charles Dickens' a Tale of Two Cities: A Pragmatic Analysis*. Universitas Sumatera Utara.

1.4 Perlocutionary Act

It is the effect of speakers' utterances. Austin¹⁷ in Grundy¹⁸ called it as the effect of the utterance might have and it is not entirely foreseeable. In line with Austin, Yule¹⁹ the intended effect that the addressees recognize from the utterances. The effects of the utterances actually could be seen through verbal, non-verbal language.

Verbal language is defined as content of our messages, the choice and arrangement of our words. This type of language effect can be heard through listening to the utterances or words which are being conveyed. Meanwhile, nonverbal language refers to the message we send through our body language. The non-verbal language effect is also related to how we say what we say including the tone, pacing and volume of our voices.

For example;

A: This room is really hot!!!

B: *Don't worry! I'll turn on the fan.* (Verbal language effect)

Other possibility effects or responses

B: *(stand up and turn on the fan without responding A's utterance)*

(Non verbal language effect)

In the example given above, it can be seen that there are two possible actions that can become effect of the utterances. They are; verbal or words language (*Don't worry! I'll turn on the fan*) and non-verbal or gestures (*stand up and turn on the fan without responding A's utterance*).

1.5 Speech Act Element

Levinson²⁰ said that every utterance has speakers' implicit or explicit meaning to be conveyed. It means that those utterances have power to give effect to listener. According to Searle's²¹ theory, illocutionary act in speech act is directed to several elements of speech act.

¹⁷Austin. *Loc, cit*

¹⁸Grundy. *Loc, cit*

¹⁹Yule. *Loc, cit*

²⁰Levinson. *Loc, cit*

²¹Searle Searly, J. R. 1979. *The philosophy of language*. Oxford: oxford University Press.

They are:

1. Representatives

The utterances which commit the speakers to the truth of expressed proposition such as asserting, concluding, stating, telling, insisting, and swearing.

2. Directives

They are the utterances which attempt to get the addressee to do something such as requesting, commanding, suggesting, pledging, inviting, daring, and questioning.

3. Commissives

They are utterances which commit the addressee to some future actions such as promising, threatening, vowing, and offering.

4. Expressives

They are utterances which express psychological state such as thanking, congratulating, deploring, condoling, welcoming, greeting and apologizing.

5. Declaratives

They are utterances which effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and which to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institution such as declaring, blessing, firing, baptizing, marrying, arresting and bidding.

Sometimes, an utterance can potentially have quite different illocutionary forces. How can speakers assume that intended illocutionary force will be recognized by the hearer?. According to Yule also cited in Grundy, illocutionary force can be found through the verb that is used in utterance to show the illocutionary act. Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFID) is indication in the speaker's utterance of the communicative force of that utterance. It is an expression of the type where there is a slot for a verb that explicitly names the illocutionary acts being performed. Such a verb can be called a performative verb (Vp).

1.6. Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Yule stated that when there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function in the utterances, it is called direct speech act. Meanwhile, when there is no direct relation between them, it is called indirect speech act²².

For example:

1. Direct speech act

“I hereby pronounce you husband and wife” (declarative is used to make statement)

“You do not know you’re beautiful” (declarative is used to make statement)

2. Indirect speech act

“I want you to close the door” (declarative is used to make request)

“Can you pass the salt?” (Interrogative is used to make request or command)

2. Short Functional Text

Written in Sinau’s blog, Short functional text is “a text to give information or warning to the listener or reader that something is important to be known”.²³ It is also a short text covering something to be done or not to be done. There are several types of short functional text. They are: command, direction, prohibition, invitation, greeting cards, warning, announcement, shopping list, short messages, and notices.

2.1 Notice

It is information that tells us or warns us about something that is going to happen. It also means attention that people give to someone or something. Then, it is also a written or printed statement that gives information. Moreover, notices can be defined as a short piece of writing that gives an opinion about a play, books, etc²⁴. In line with the previous

²²Yule. *Loc, cit*

²³Sinau’s Blog. 2011. Short Functional Text.

<http://ayosinausinau.blogspot.com/2011/04/short-functional-text.html>

²⁴Learner’s dictionary. 2012. Definition of Notice.

definition, it is also explained that notice can be in form of warning or intimation.

From the definition of notices described above, it can be summarized that notice is showed in written or printed form. It has many function including giving warning, taking addressee's attention, informing something, forbidding some action, asking to do certain actions, asking the readers or addressee to do or not to do something.

According to Wikipedia classified notice into "actual; It is notice usually to a defendant in a civil proceeding delivered in such a way as to give legally sufficient assurance that actual knowledge of the matter has been conveyed to the recipient, and constructive notice; legal fiction used in the law of both common law and civil law systems to signify that a person or entity is legally presumed to have knowledge of something, even if they have no actual knowledge of it".²⁵ Related to these types of notice, this study will investigate constructive notice which is usually designed by certain people or community to acknowledge people about certain knowledge.

"The information given of some act done, or the interpellation by which some act is required to be done. It also signifies knowledge. Notices should always be in writing; they should state, in precise terms, their object, and be signed by the proper person, or his authorized agent, be dated, and addressed to the person to be affected by them. To avoid doubt or ambiguity in the terms of the notice, it may be advisable to give it in writing. The form of the notice may be as subscribed, but it must necessarily vary in its terms according to the circumstances of each case.

C. REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

There have been various research related to speech act theory in pragmatic and educational field. Wikjatmikostudied about the "Speech Acts in Sex and the City".²⁶ The aim of the study is to find the types of speech acts produced by Carrie Bradshaw and Aleksandr Petrovsky. The writer also wants to find the

²⁵Wikipedia. 2012. Notice. Published Article.

²⁶Wikjatmiko. 2006. *Locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary in Sex and the City*. Universitas Kristen Petra: http://dewey.petra.ac.id/jiunkpe_dt_5796.html

connections between Locutionary acts and Illocutionary Acts. The writer transcribes the film, classifies the utterance into types of speech acts. Finally the writer finds that Carrie Bradshaw produces speech acts less than Aleksandr Petrovsky. In addition, most of the Declarative Locution are connected to Representatives Illocutions and Expressives Illocutions, then Declarative Locution is connected to Directives and Commissives Illocutions, and most of the Imperative Locutions are connected to Directives Illocutions and Representatives Illocutions. The writer only finds that all of the Interrogative Locutions are connected to Directives Illocutions.

Then, Christine ²⁷ conducted a study about speech acts in one of Chinese Drama-Comedy film, Summer Holiday. She would like to find types of locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts used in 'Summer Holiday'. Then, she analyzed direct and indirect speech act theory derived from Hurford and Heasley's theory. Finally, she found out the classification of speech acts occurred in the conversations in "Summer Holiday". They are: Declarative, Representative, Directive, Expressive, and Commissive. Also, the writer has found out that the illocutionary acts in "Summer Holiday" are: requesting, giving help, expressing dislike, guessing, showing confuse, expressing angry, disbelieving, asserting, giving clarification, bargaining, refusing, showing curiosity, showing bored, showing worried, suggesting, admitting, and commanding. While about the perlocutionary, the writer found out that literally and non-literally perlocutionary act occurred.

D. METHODOLOGY

1. Approach and sources of data

In order to identify and describe types of speech act theory used in language of notice, the study used qualitative research which was directed to process and result in data analysis and description in a certain context. The data was mostly interpreted and described in form of words categorization rather than number.

The data was taken from language of notice which was derived from notice written in Indonesian and English. Public notice which there were in

²⁷Christine (2002). *An analysis of speech act on the conflict between Mo Mo Cha and summer in "Summer Holiday"*. Published research.
http://dewey.petra.ac.id/jiunkpe_dg_360.html.

Padangsidimpuncity become the specific object of the study. There were some places which become the context where the notice was chosen, such as supermarket, shopping center, banks, restaurant, and campus. Those places were considered the right setting where the notice is always written to provide information to many people who come there.

2. Data collection and data analysis method

Regarding types of data stated above, this study used only document analysis in data collection. First, the notice was captured with camera or rewritten in note. Then, the data was retyped and analyzed formally. Amount of notice were taken from the selected setting. There was no limitation of notice that was collected. Data collection process stopped when it was regarded enough.

In data analysis, firstly, the data related to notice written in Indonesian and in English were collected. Then, they were categorized into become two major types; notice written in Indonesian and notice written in English. After that, each of types was analyzed, codified and categorized into some speech act codification categorization. They are; locution; directed to three types of speech act, illocution; directed to five elements of speech act, and direct and indirect speech act. Specifically, in locution, data was divided into declarative, interrogative, and imperative; in illocution, the data was divided into representatives, directives, commissives, expressive, and declaratives; perlocution; the data was divided into verbal and nonverbal. Finally, data was divided into direct and indirect speech act. The simple data categorization and codification is displayed in table 1 appendix 1.

E. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

a. Data Description

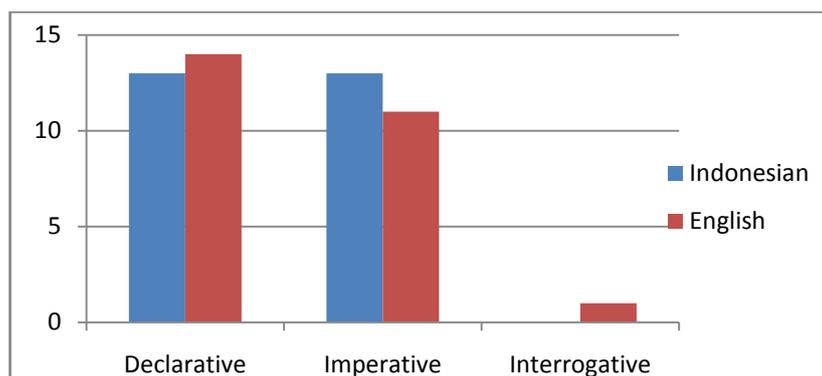
The aim of this study stated in the previous part is to analyze speech act theory used in the language of “notice” written in Indonesian and English. Regarding the aim of this study, the data in case of notice is described and elaborated in term of speech act categorization compared between notice written in Indonesian and English. Thus, the data was categorized into some categories.

They were:

1. Locution

The comparison and description of notices related to locution can be seen in appendix 1. The description of notice in that table is simplified in this graph form.

Table 1 Locutionary Act of Indonesian and English Notice



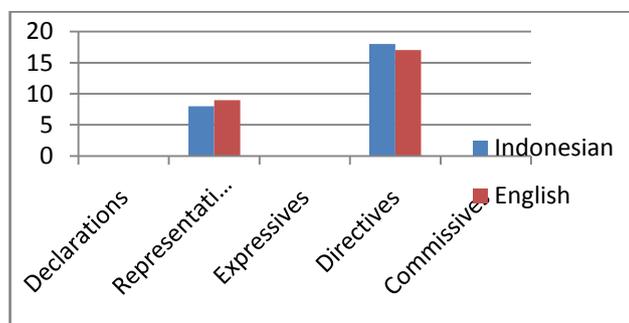
From the graph above, it is described that there are 26 notices in each notice written in Indonesian and English that is analyzed. Related to the notice written in Indonesian, 13 notices are in form of declarative; 13 notices are in form of imperative; and no notice is conveyed in form of interrogative. In comparing to the previous description, notice written in English; 14 notices are in form of declarative, 11 notices are in form of imperative, and only 1 notice is in form of interrogative. For example:

- “Escalator ini menggunakan system otomatis” (decalarative)
- “Baby changing room” (declarative)
- “Pecahkankacajikakondisidarurat” (imperative)
- “Keep off the grass”(imperative)

Thus, it can be concluded that from three types of locution that was analyzed, most of the notices whether written in Indonesian or English are in form of declarative and imperative. There is only one notice written in English conveyed in form of interrogative.

2. Illocution

Table 2 Illocutionary Act of Indonesian and English Notice



From the graph above, it is also described that there are 26 notices in each notice written in Indonesian and English that is analyzed. Related to the notice written in Indonesian, 8 notices are conveyed in form of representatives; 18 notices are conveyed in form of directives; and no notice is conveyed in form of declarations, expressive, and commissives. In comparing to the previous description, the notice written in English; 9 notices are conveyed in form of representatives, 17 notices are conveyed in form of directives, and no one notice is conveyed in form of declarations, expressive, and commissives. For example:

“Lampukamarmandimenggunakan sensor otomatis”
(representative)

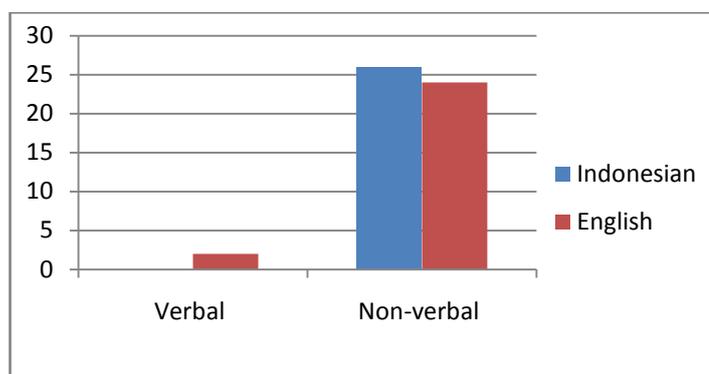
“keep door closed” (directives)

Thus, it can be concluded that from five types of illocution that was analyzed, most of the notice whether written in Indonesian or English are in form of representatives and directives. There is no one of notices written in Indonesian and English conveyed in form of declarations, expressive, and commissives.

3. Perlocution

In term of perlocutionary act, there are two aspects that were analyzed. They are verbal and nonverbal effect of utterances in notice written in Indonesian and English. Perlocutionary act of the utterances in notice written in Indonesian and English is described in the graph below.

Table 3 Perlocutionary Act of Indonesia and English Notice



The graph describes that from 26 notices that were analyzed, all notices written in Indonesian has non-verbal perlocutionary act which means that the effect of notice is in form of addressee’s physical actions, body languages, or gesture.

For example:

“Dilarangbelokkanan!” by reading this notice, the reader or addressee directly will not turn to the right side (physical action or body movement).

Related to notice written in English, there are about 24 notices which have non-verbal perlocutionary act which means that the effect of the notice is in form of addressee’s physical actions or body language. Then, there are 2 notices which have verbal perlocutionary act which means that the effect of notices is in form of addressee’s speech or words expression.

For example:

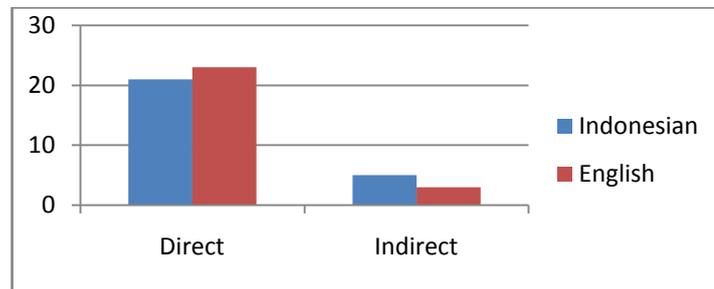
“Keep door closed!” by reading this notice, the readers will keep closing the door (actions)

4. Direct and indirect speech act

The data or notice was also analyzed in term of direct and indirect structure of speech act. The data description can be seen in the table below:

Table 4 Direct and Indirect Speech Act of Indonesian and English

Notice



The graph above describes that from 26 notices written in Indonesian, there are 21 notices which are conveyed in form of direct speech act. Then, there are 3 of the notices are conveyed in form of indirect speech act.

Example:

”Area bebasrokok” (indirect speech act), the basic structure of that notice is written in *declarative* form; but the function is to convey *command*.

In the other hand, from all of notices written in English, there are 23 notices conveyed in form of direct speech act. Then, there are 3 notices conveyed in form of indirect speech act.

b. Findings

After analyzing and describing the speech act theory in the notice written in Indonesian and English, there are some findings which are found. Of course, the findings are related to the speech act categorization stated previously in data description. First, in relation to locutionary act, it is found that almost half of notices whether written in Indonesian and English is conveyed in form of declarative form which probably means that the notice contains information to be conveyed. Then, the other half of the notice written in Indonesian and English is conveyed in form of imperatives locutionary act which probably means that the notice contains something to be done or not to be done.

The next finding is related to illocutionary act. This study finds that there are two types of speech act related to illocutionary act that is commonly used in language of notice written in Indonesian and English. They are directives and representatives. In term of directives, the notice contains two actions including

commands and prohibition. Simply, that notice contains something to be done or not to be done. In term of representatives, notice written in Indonesian and English commonly contains actions of assertion and description.

Moreover, this study also finds that in term of perlocution, almost all of notices written in Indonesian and English have non-verbal effect of speech act. In contrast, there are only few notices which have verbal effect of speech act. This finding means that the perlocutionary act of notice whether written in Indonesian and English is not only in form of non-verbal but also verbal effect.

Finally, related to direct and indirect speech acts theory, almost all the notices whether written in Indonesian and English are conveyed in form of direct speech act and only few of them are conveyed in form of indirect speech act. It means that seemingly the notices whether written in Indonesian and English really concern to clarity of the meaning which is conveyed to readers. They avoid misunderstanding and misperception by writing the notices in form of direct speech act (there is a direct relationship between the structure and function).

F. CONCLUSION

Regarding the purpose of this study, it concludes that speech act theory related to language of notice whether it is Indonesian or English notice is almost similar. Notices written in both Indonesian and English are usually conveyed in form of declarative and imperative sentences. Then, the functions of both notices are to convey meaning in form of directive and representatives. Both notices written in Indonesian and English also tend to have nonverbal effect of language. It means that notices get readers to act their body language or physical movement. Finally, both notices also tend to be constructed in form of direct speech act.

The limitation of references related to studies on the language of notices is regarded as one of weaknesses in this study. So, in relation to this type of research, it seems that the findings in this study cannot be generalized to all types of notices since the scope of notices which were analyzed is only derived from the notices in Bandung city. All speech act theories related to this type of notices probably would be different with what occur in other places. Thus, there should be many people investigating theory of speech act in the language of notices. It is because there is very limited research which can become references.

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