

Preschool-Aged Children's Use of Directive Acts: A Case Study in *Bina Buah Hati* Preschool, Yogyakarta

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Abstract

Preschool-aged children start to use various types of speech acts, one of which is directive acts. This article discusses the use of directive acts by preschool-aged children, especially related to their types and fulfillment of the felicity conditions determining the success of the directive acts. The study was conducted by utilizing qualitative and quantitative data, involving 11 preschool-aged children in *Bina Buah Hati* Preschool, Yogyakarta. The results show that preschool-aged children mainly use the directive act of questioning, addressed to both their peers and teacher. The questions are intended to enrich their knowledge of the world around them. In addition to questioning, the directive acts are also used to request, command, invite, prohibit, and suggest. Meanwhile, related to the felicity conditions of their directive acts, it is observed that preschool-aged children have been able to meet the overall felicity conditions so that their directive acts can be perceived perfectly by their interlocutors. Aspects of power and control of the interlocutors have begun to be well-understood, so they already have the awareness to adjust the types of directive acts against the background of the interlocutors. In addition, seeds of politeness have begun to be seen through their use of directive acts.

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Introduction

Interaction with others is central in children's lives. As mentioned by Owens (2012) and Hoyte et al. (2014), children perform many socio-cultural functions through interactions with their peers. Various genres are used by children to build closeness when conversing with their interlocutor. During the preschool years, children begin to intensely build friendships to develop their social identity, although their parents remain their main speech partners (Davies, 2011). This period is a transition period in which

children learn to become social beings, who are actively able to understand the position and perspective of their interlocutor.

As with the development of other aspects of language, children's pragmatic abilities develop at different stages from one child to another. There are children whose language skills develop rapidly beyond other children, there are those whose development is at a moderate pace, and there are also those who experience delays. These circumstances are influenced by various factors, such as the environment and the parties involved in interacting with children.

On the other hand, Vygotsky emphasized that children develop their cognitive abilities, including language skills, through social interactions with people in their environment (Van der Veer, 2014). This is conveyed through his concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Del Río & Álvarez, 2007; Santrock, 2011), which is related to a set of skills that cannot be mastered by children alone but can be learned with the help of adults or other children through the scaffolding they provide. The extent to which a child of preschool age can develop his language skills depends on how much his environment gives him exposure and what the child thinks is strongly influenced by the cultural context in which he lives. Therefore, a mutually supportive system consisting of the people around the child, the cultural context, as well as the child's own knowledge, is called by Bruner (1983) as Language Acquisition Support System (LASS). It has a very vital role in the development of aspects of language in preschool-aged children.

The environment involved in children's language development is not only the family environment, although the family is the main environment for preschool-aged children. Apart from family, school is now one of the environments where preschoolers are located and spend a lot of their time there. The quality of daycare determines a child's cognitive development, language, and communication skills. Likewise, the suitability of the child-adult ratio and the level of teacher education (Burchinal dkk., 2000). The academic ability of children in elementary school is closely related to how teachers in preschools use vocabulary during free play sessions and use speech in interacting with children in groups (Dickinson & Porche, 2011; Gilly & Roux, 1993). For example, when reading a book, the teacher can help children learn new vocabulary and concepts and provide opportunities for children to talk about what they have just learned (Pentimonti dkk., 2017; Wasik & Iannone-Campbell, 2013). Therefore, it is important to create a positive climate in the classroom where children have more opportunities to interact with teachers and peers (Mashburn dkk., 2009).

When children's speech has developed in a more perfect direction, both in terms of its grammatical structure and the vocabulary used, many researchers then use Austin and Searle's theory of speech acts. Austin (1975) mentions that there are three types of speech acts, namely locutionary acts, illocutions, and perlocutions. Locutionary acts are speech acts in their formal form, in the form of lingual forms that are spoken orally. Meanwhile, illocutionary acts are related to the intent to be conveyed by a speaker through their locutionary acts. The next speech act is the perlocutionary act, which is a speech act related to the effect or influence of a speaker's locutionary act on his interlocutor (Leech, 1989).

From the various studies conducted regarding speech acts, it can be observed that among the three types of speech acts, the illocutionary act is considered the most important (Kissine, 2013; Nadar, 2009). In fact, sometimes the terms 'speech acts' and 'illocutionary acts' are seen to refer to the same thing (Kissine, 2013). In addition to functioning to convey the intention as desired by the speaker, illocutionary acts are also

often used to do something. Therefore, it is important to consider first who the speaker and his interlocutor are before being able to identify the meaning of a locutionary act (Musfiroh, 2017; Wijana, 2021).

Cameron-Faulkner (2014) mention that based on its functions, Searle (1976) classified illocutionary acts into five types. The first is the act of declaration, which is a speech act that causes a change in the world because of the speech. The speaker must have sufficient authority and power so that the meaning of the act of this declaration can be well received, for example a judge who decides the sentence for a defendant. Then, there are representative acts, namely speech acts that show the truth that is believed by the speaker, for example describing, making hypotheses, and predicting. Then there are commissive acts, namely speech acts that bind the speaker to do the things he mentions in the speech, for example promising, offering, and threatening. The fourth is directive acts, which are the speech act intended by the speaker as a medium to ask his interlocutor to do something he mentions, for example ordering, asking, inviting, and forbidding. The last is expressive acts, namely speech acts that show things that are felt by the speaker, for example apologizing, praising, and congratulating.

In order for a speech act to function as intended, there are several criteria that must be met, which are referred to as felicity conditions (Gualmini, 2005; Sbisà, 2002), for example, the appropriateness between the speech act produced and the context of the situation in which the speech act is used. According to Fetzer (2011), felicity conditions can be categorized into propositional content, preparatory, essential, and sincerity conditions. Observation of these four criteria will show how appropriateness to the context can be met by various types of speech acts. Therefore, the observation of speech acts in preschool age children cannot be separated from the study of how the felicity conditions can be met by these children in speaking.

In the context of preschool-aged children's utterances, several previous studies mention that preschool-aged children start to learn how to perform these five types of speech acts, with representatives and directives being the most dominant ones (Chejnová, 2015; Stiawati, 2012). Representatives are mainly used for sharing information to build a more complete understanding of the world of the children, while directives are performed for more various purposes (Sudartinah, 2022). Even though there are various functions of directives, there were not many studies highlighting the directives employed by preschool-aged children, especially in Indonesian preschool environment. Some to mention are studies conducted by Yuniarti (2010), Stiawati (2012), and Anjani & Devi (2019). Therefore, this study tries to address the issues on directives by preschool-aged children, that is to identify the types of directive actions carried out by preschool-aged children and to explain the felicity conditions that affect the success of these directive actions.

Method

This study used an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, in which quantitative analysis was done before a more detail analysis in qualitative manner. Leavy (2017) and Creswell & Creswell (2018) mention that this design is perfect for providing a more complete understanding of the research problems. In relation to this, the present study used qualitative data in the form of speech of preschool-aged children who were participants in this study and quantitative data in the form of the frequency of occurrence of each directive function performed by these children through their speech.

The data sources for this research were preschoolers aged 3-5 years whose language production is quite fluent, are Indonesian speakers, and generally come from an

equal socioeconomic family background. A total of 11 preschool-aged children from class B2 of the Bina Buah Hati Preschool Yogyakarta became participants in this study. The preschool was chosen due to the fulfillment of some criteria, such as the ratio of teacher-student and the children's family background.

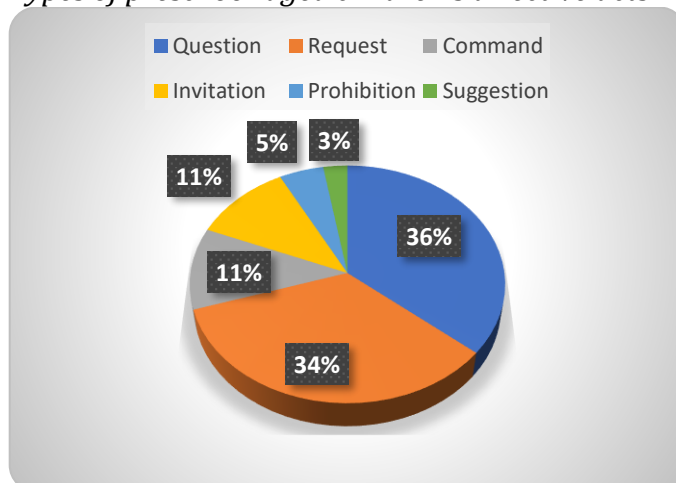
Because this study involved minors, to comply with research ethics, the researcher only started the research after all permission regarding the involvement of these children had been obtained from parents and the preschool principal. For this purpose, the researcher sent a letter of application for participation to the school and parents, a summary of the procedures for involving participants in the study, as well as a consent form signed by the parents.

In collecting and analyzing data, research instruments were used in the form of audio/video recorders, field notes, and data tables in .xlsx format. Data were collected by recording activities in class in one day, with a recording duration of 1 hour 38 minutes. The recording was then orthographically transcribed, and the data related to the directive actions taken by the participants were identified. The data were then analyzed to describe the types of directive acts and their felicity conditions. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of a descriptive narrative accompanied by a frequency diagram.

Results and Discussion

Directive speech acts are defined as speech acts that contain the intention of ordering, ordering, or asking the speech partner to do something as requested by the speaker (Alston, 2000; Kissine, 2013). In the context of speech discourse involving preschool-aged children as one of the participants in it, directive acts are quite common, although the frequency of their occurrence is not as much as representative speech acts. This is in line with the results of previous studies, for example those conducted by Ryckebusch & Marcos (2004) which also shows that directive speech acts are the most common after representative speech acts. In the conversations that took place between research participants and their teachers and peers at Bina Buah Hati Preschool, from all 877 utterances there were 261 directive acts, which appeared in 6 types, from the most dominant to the least frequent ones: (1) question, (2) request, (3) command, (4) invitation, (5) prohibition, and (6) suggestion, with the composition as in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Types of preschool-aged children's directive acts



Meanwhile, it was found that most of the directive speech acts produced by preschool-aged children have been able to achieve the desired effect on their speech partners. This is inseparable from the fulfillment of all felicity conditions, namely preparatory, sincerity, propositional content, and essential conditions. When producing directive utterances, preschool-aged children already have confidence that their interlocutor can and will carry out the activities as requested. To form this belief, before speaking, they have considered the aspects of power and control they have over their interlocutor, so that some types of directive acts are only addressed to their peers and not to their teachers, for example commands and suggestions.

Types of Preschool-Aged Children's Directive Acts

Question

In this study, questioning is the most important function found in preschool-aged children's directive acts. One of the things that makes this function quite significant in its frequency of occurrence compared to many other functions is the context of the situation that surrounds the entire speech, namely in the school environment (preschool), where the interaction pattern in the form of question and answer is the most important used both in interactions with their teacher and in interactions with their peers.

Given that the literally direct strategy is the most important one used by preschool-aged children, the questioning function is also most commonly realized in a literally direct manner with an interrogative mode that uses question words or inversion sentences. Some examples are found in the following conversation.

[the children were drawing a flower]

A: [to B] Kok kamu punya dua e? (1)
'How can you have two of this?'

[B does not respond to A]

Bu Guru, ini punya siapa? (2)
'Ma'am, who own this?'

Teacher: [cannot hear it clearly as other children are busy playing] Ha?
'What?'

A: Bu Guru, ini pensilnya punya siapa? (3)
'Ma'am, who own this pencil?'

Teacher: Ya dimasukin sendiri to.
'Please put it in yourself.'

A: Ha? (4)
'What?'

Because he did not get any answer, A then asked again about the same thing, but this time the question was addressed to the teacher (2). The question was repeated by inserting the word 'pencil' (3) because A felt that her previous question was not understood by her teacher who was busy with other children. The insertion of the word was intended to clarify the theme of the question posed by A. However, the teacher's response to this question was not as expected by A through her question. Being confused, he again asked the question, but this time it was intended for the teacher to provide an explanation regarding her previous response (4).

In the context of this conversation, the four utterances produced by A serve as a tool for asking questions, asking for information regarding the twin-colored pencils he saw: who owns them and why he/she has both. In A's mind, all children should only have one set of colored pencils provided by the school for each child to use when doing activities

at school. Therefore, he tried to get answers both from his friends and from his teacher. The function of asking is clearly revealed using interrogative sentences by A.

Based on the data obtained in this study, the function of asking questions is always realized through various interrogative sentences by the children. Complete interrogative sentences are the most important, then incomplete interrogative sentences. Meanwhile, the interrogative sentence mode does not always have a questioning function. In this case, the indirect strategy is the chosen strategy. Some of them are used to ask for confirmation and invite the interlocutor to do an activity with the speaker.

Request

Speech acts are also quite often used by preschool-aged children when they are involved in a discourse in preschool setting to request for something. This function is well accommodated especially through the type of directive acts. As stated by Searle (1976), supported by other researchers such as Read & Cherry (1978), Sealey (1999), Alston, (2000), Kissine (2013), and Cameron-Faulkner (2014a), directive acts are mainly used to ask the interlocutor to do something as requested by the speaker. In this case, it means that the function of asking for something (asking the interlocutor to give/do something) is one of the functions shown through the use of directive acts.

In requesting something from their interlocutor, preschool-aged children tend to convey it in a literal manner using complete or incomplete structures. Some examples of the use of this function in speech acts by preschool-aged children can be seen in some of the utterances in the following conversation.

[sometime before break]

A: [with B, approaching the teacher] Bu Guru, sendok. (5)

'Ma'am, spoon.'

B: Aku mau sendok. (6)

'I need a spoon.'

A: A yang, yang panjang.

'I want the, the long one.'

B: Aku yang besar.

'I want the big one.'

C: [joining them] Bu, aku mau sendok. (7)

'Ma'am, I need a spoon.'

In the conversation, there are three examples of the use of directive acts with the function of requesting something, i.e., in utterances 5-7. These three utterances, although each spoken by different speakers, are intended to request for the same thing, a spoon, to the same interlocutor, the teacher. The propositional contents of these directive acts are the same, but their formal realization is slightly different.

The main keywords in the three utterances are the same, a spoon, but the formal structures chosen are complete (6 and 7) and incomplete (5), either with address terms (5 and 7) or not (6). The address terms Bu Guru and Bu 'Ma'am' are mainly used by A and C to get the teacher's attention to what they are conveying, considering that the teacher is engaged in a conversation about different things with other friends.

In addition to attracting the teacher's attention, the address terms also function as a clue to refine their requests. As stated in some previous literature, greeting or address terms are one of the linguistic markers that can be used effectively to get the attention of potential interlocutors towards someone's speech acts (Gillen, 2003; Keel, 2016) and usually has been taught by adults around children (parents or caregivers) from an early

age because its use is related to aspects of politeness in the prevailing culture in which the speech is realized (Clark & Wong, 2002; Keel, 2016). This similar phenomenon is found in the speech of preschool-aged children in the conversation above.

The aspect of politeness in linguistic production of preschool-aged children has long been the subject of debate among researchers and educators in various socio-cultural settings, whether it has emerged and is clearly visible, or is it still vague and implicitly understood. For example, in the context of speech involving preschool-aged children in Japan, Tsuji & Doherty (2014) observed that at the age of 4 years, Japanese children have begun to be able to consider aspects of politeness in speech, especially when the interlocutor is an adult. Meanwhile, in the context of Western culture, Georgalidou (2008) found that behind the choice of the formal structure of directive acts, children must have considered the politeness aspect even though they had not fully realized this. Intonation and facial expressions are some of the things that also become markers in recognizing how children perceive the concept of politeness in language, both when they speak and when observing their interlocutor (Arani, 2012; Hübscher et al., 2020).

Command

The commanding function is not the main function brought about through the use of directive acts by preschool-aged children. The appearance of this function is not as many as the function of questioning and requesting for something. One of the possible causes of this phenomenon is the setting of the speech setting of preschool age children which is quite formal, namely in a school environment (play group) with the teacher as the main speech partner. This situation causes the existence of social distance and power that is wide enough between students and teachers so that the level of intimacy that is built between them is not as close as in a family environment which allows preschool-aged children to have higher freedom of expression. Therefore, instead of using their speech acts to command, preschoolers tend to use them to ask or just ask.

Differences in terms of social distance and power with their teacher seem to be recognized by preschool-aged children. This is evidenced by the absence of an order function used by these children to the teacher which only contains verbs. All directive acts produced by preschoolers to their teachers are always preceded or accompanied by the address terms Bu 'Ma'am' or Bu + guru/nama 'Miss + name' or other words such as tolong 'please' and articulated with lower voice and milder intonation. The existence of these kinds of words and intonations serves to soften the directive acts of the children, so that the intensity of the command is reduced, and the speech can be interpreted as a request, not an order.

The commanding function, therefore, is only found in the context of directive acts addressed to peers, not to teachers. An example of directive acts with the function of commanding can be seen in the following conversation.

[free play activities]

- A: [approaching B] B, B.
[pointing to C and D] Ini pura-puranya kamu adik, kalian adik ya! (8)
'Pretend to be the little brothers, you become brothers!'
[touching B's shoulders] Ini mamanya B.
'This is B, the mother.'
- B: Aku mau jadi ayah.
'I want to be the father.'

This conversation involves 2 preschool-aged children as participants. They are playing in the classroom, pretending to be a complete family with someone playing the

role of father, mother, and children. Through utterance 8, A tells his two friends to act as younger siblings. After telling the two friends to act as younger siblings, A also introduces B as their mother, but B refuses and instead asks to play the role of their father. In this conversation it is implied quite clearly that A has stronger power and control than other participants. The directive acts that appear mostly come from him and the illocutionary meanings contained in these directive acts are also mostly fulfilled by his interlocutors.

Invitation

The next directive act is to invite. An utterance is seen as an inviting utterance if through the utterance the speaker asks his interlocutor to carry out a joint activity, whether it is an activity that is currently being carried out or a newly planned one (Schegloff, 2007; Taguchi, 2012). In Indonesian, although not always, the utterances that function to invite usually explicitly contain the words *ayo* or *yuk* 'let's' in them. However, the utterance of invitation can be realized indirectly, for example through an interrogative sentence mode.

Some examples of speech acts that function to invite either directly or indirectly are found in the following conversation.

[playing]

A: [to C] *Kamu mau main ini nggak?* (9)

'Do you want to play this'

[to B] *Aku boleh minta nggak?*

'Can I have it?'

B: *Hm, boleh.*

Hm, yes you can.

A: *C, C, C.*

B: [to C] *Ayo, sini.* (10)

'Come here.'

Ini buat drumband.

'This is for drumband.'

[C does not give any response]

A: *D, mau main ini nggak?* (11)

'D, do you want to play this?'

This conversation takes place when children were busy carrying out various activities in small groups. A is holding a tambourine. He indirectly invites C to play the tambourine with him through utterance 9. The utterance is in a question mode even though it is intended to invite C for a joint activity. Because he only holds one tambourine in his hand, he then turns to B and asks the tambourine held by B to be given to C.

Besides A, B also invites C to play together (10). If A uses an indirect strategy to invite his peer, B uses a literally direct utterance. Unfortunately, C does not respond to the two invitations, so A then invites another friend, D, to play tambourine together. Again, he uses an indirect invitation (11) similar to his previous speech (9). It is just that this time A calls D with his name because at that time D was a little far from him.

Prohibition

Being part of the function brought by directive acts, the function of prohibiting is the next to occur in the data. When viewed from the percentage, this function is not too much raised by preschool-aged children when speaking. However, this function is easy to recognize when it is carried by a speech act. One of the main markers of this function in

preschool-aged children's directive acts is the existence of the word *jangan* 'do not' to show prohibitions. Some examples of utterances containing this function are found in the following conversation.

[the children were listening to their teacher's instruction]

- A : [seeing C cleaning the whiteboard] C, C, C!
B : [pointing to the words on the whiteboard] *Jangan dihapus, ini jangan dihapus!* (12)
'No, no, don't erase it!
Ini jangan dihapus! (13)
'Don't erase it!
B : *Nomernya lho A.*
'The number, A.'
A : *Apa?*
'What?'
B : *Jangan sampai kena nomernya!* (14)
'Don't erase the number!'
D : *Jangan dihapus!* (15)
'No, don't erase it!'

The conversation took place at the beginning of the learning activities in the preschool. The children were getting ready to start participating in the day's learning activities and the teacher asked them to sit down neatly. They observe if there are some writings on the whiteboard in front of the class. Spontaneously C tried to help the teacher to clean the writing on the whiteboard. However, some of his friends immediately shouted and told their teacher that C wanted to erase the writing on the whiteboard. It turned out that the writing had been prepared by the teacher for that day's activities.

B's and D's utterances clearly show the function of prohibiting. They explicitly use the word *jangan* 'don't' which is a typical marker of prohibition. In addition, the direct literal strategy is used by both, so that the mode of their directive acts is imperative. This indicates the urgency for the prohibition to be complied with by C.

Suggestion

The last type of directive acts of preschool-aged children is for suggesting/advising. This function appears in utterances addressed to peers. This function does not appear in their directive acts to the teacher, due to the difference in power between the two. Some examples of the directive acts of suggesting/advising are found in the following conversation.

[the beginning of the learning activities]

Teacher : *Dek B minum dulu. Ngomongnya nanti, ndak hok.*

'B, finish your drinking first. Talk later, otherwise, you will throw up.'

A: *Nanti, nanti ndak muntah.* (16)

'You will later throw up.'

Teacher : *Bicaranya nanti.*

'Talk later.'

A: *Nanti, nanti ndak muntah.* (17)

'You will later throw up.'

In this conversation, the function of suggesting/advising appear in utterances 16 and 17. It was still early in the day and the learning activities had not yet started because

only a few children had arrived. While waiting for the others, the teacher chatted with the children who were already present.

The teacher observed that one of the children, B, was drinking while talking to one of his friends. Then she advised him to stop talking when drinking because he may throw up. Hearing the teacher's advice to B, A, who had been near his teacher, then chimed in, saying something similar to what his teacher had said earlier (16). In this case, apart from giving advice to B, A also gave confirmation of what might happen if B continued to drink while still talking. Utterance 16 is repeated through utterance 17 in full, to connect the teacher's speech.

What the teacher and A do is giving advice and at the same time introducing the risks that might occur if the advice is not heeded. Although this consequence is also introduced, the speech act performed by A is not a speech act to threaten, because the intonation used is not high intonation like threatening. Moreover, the position as a peer does not make one (A or B) have a higher power, so what can be done is to suggest or advise.

Based on the directive acts data presented in this discussion, it can be observed if this type of speech act has been sufficiently mastered by preschool-aged children, especially when looking at the illocutionary meaning contained in it. Preschool-aged children have been able to ask their interlocutors to do something as they wished through their speech, including questioning, requesting, commanding, inviting, prohibiting, and suggesting. However, the politeness aspect in language seems not to be their main concern in speaking, especially to the teacher as one of their interlocutors. In his research, Georgalidou (2008) also found the same thing in the context of children's directive speech acts in Greek society.

Issues related to power and control in preschool-aged children's directive acts were also observed by Cutting (2002) and Georgalidou (2008). Cutting (2002) states that the aspect of power is one that plays a role in the selection of certain speech acts by a speaker. In addition, in his research, Georgalidou (2008) explains that there are several things that children consider when choosing one type of speech act, including the control over the interlocutors and the face they have to show to them.

Meanwhile, in terms of the formal structure and types of sentences used, directive acts are expressed in various ways. Some are very simple and consist of only one word, and some are structurally complete. The various ways used by preschool-aged children in expressing their directive acts indicate the development of linguistic aspects whose speed is not the same between one child and another. According to Owens (2012), the speed of acquisition of various aspects of language in children is determined by how the child is exposed to the language of the adults around him. Preschool-aged children learn the rules of grammar through the various markers they perceive through adult speech. Therefore, when a child learns a word or sentence, he or she also learns the meaning of the word, the class category of the word, and how the word is placed in a sentence.

The Fulfillment of Felicity Conditions in Preschool-Aged Children's Directive Acts

Felicity conditions are a set of prerequisites that enable the successful achievement of the illocutionary meaning of a speech act. This series of prerequisites consists of 4 conditions, namely preparatory, sincerity, propositional content, and essential conditions. Given a Speaker S, a hearer H, and an action A, then the felicity conditions are S sure if H can do A (preparatory condition), S wants H to do A (sincerity condition), S

asks H to do A (propositional content condition), and S's effort to get H to do A as he asked (essential condition) (Collavin, 2011).

Regarding the directive acts used by the participants in the present study, it can be observed that these preconditions have been met by the children so that their speech can produce the desired effect. Table 1 illustrates how the felicity conditions of directive speech acts are carried out by preschool-aged children.

Table 1

Felicity conditions of preschool children's directive acts

Directive acts	Felicity conditions			
	Preparatory condition	Sincerity condition	Propositional content condition	Essential condition
Question	The speaker believes that his teacher and/or peers have the information he seeks for	The speaker indeed wants to ask a question to his teacher and/or peers	The speaker asks his teacher and/or peers to answer his question	The speaker attempts to have an answer to his question from his teacher and/or peers
Request	The speaker believes that his teacher and/or peers will grant his request	The speaker sincerely wants his teacher and/or peers to fulfill his request	The speaker asks his teacher and/or peers to do what he requests	The speaker attempts to have his request granted by his teacher and/or peers
Command	The speaker believes that his peers will obey him	The speaker wants his peers to do what he commands	The speaker orders his peers to do as commanded	The speaker attempts to have his command obeyed by his peers
Invitation	The speaker is sure that his teacher and/or peers will accept his invitation	The speaker really wants his teacher and/or peers to join him in doing an activity	The speaker asks his teacher and/or peers to join him in doing an activity	The speaker attempts to involve his teacher and/or peers in doing an activity
Prohibition	The speaker believes that his teacher and/or peers will not do what he asks them not to do	The speaker sincerely wants his teacher and/or peers to not do what he prohibits	The speaker prohibits his teacher and/or peers to do an action	The speaker attempts to prevent his teacher and/or peers from doing an activity
Suggestion	The speaker believes that his peers will do what he suggests	The speaker really wants his peers to do as suggested	The speaker suggests his peers to do an action	The speaker attempts to make his peers do what he suggests

Table 1 clearly presents that preschool-aged children are aware of their interlocutors' stance, especially in terms of the power & control they have. This awareness is manifested in how these children use different types of directive acts. When questioning, requesting, and inviting, preschool-aged children have more freedom to choose how the speech act will be performed. This is because the speaker does not intend to show higher power and control over the interlocutors but positions himself as a party that has equal or even lower power than his interlocutors. Some lexical clues that they use to show this are the use of words such as *tolong* 'please', tag questions, and *ayo* 'let's', indicating the intention to soften the directive acts and maintain closeness with the interlocutors.

Meanwhile, commands and suggestions are two types of directive acts which are specifically addressed to their peers only, as these acts require the speaker to have a higher power and more control over the interlocutor. Therefore, these two types of directive acts can only be used in the context of peer-to-peer conversations and not in children-teacher ones. As in the case of the directive act of prohibition, it is interesting to see that this type of directive act is addressed to both peers and teacher yet performed differently. When prohibiting their peers from doing something, preschool-aged children directly state the prohibition using the word *jangan* 'don't'. On the other hand, when talking to their teacher, they start their utterances with the softener *tolong* 'please' followed by the prohibition marker *jangan* 'don't' to reduce the intensity of the prohibition and show some respect to the teacher.

Conclusion

Six types of directive acts are found in the speech acts produced by preschool-aged children. These directive acts are mainly used to ask questions to the interlocutors. In addition, directive acts are also used as requests, commands, invitations, prohibitions, and suggestions. Aspects of power and control can be observed implicitly in the directive acts performed by these children. In addition, although these children have not yet developed a full awareness regarding politeness, aspects of politeness in speaking have also begun to be seen in their speech, for example through the use of address terms and other lexical clues to refine the directive acts produced. The emergence of this awareness also influences the success of the directive acts, which can be observed from the achievement of the felicity conditions of each type of directive acts.

This study showed important results in terms of language acquisition and production in preschool-aged children who were participating in the present study. This implies the need for more research on the area, which will be beneficial for parents, teachers, and others interested in the field. Future research needs to be carried out on a wider scope by involving more participants to yield more complete results.

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