



Analysis of Imperative Speech Acts in Angga Dwimas Sasongko's Film *Today We'll Talk About That Day*

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ABSTRACT

Imperative speech acts play a vital role in various aspects of communication, both in daily interactions and in media such as films. These speech acts serve essential functions in regulating, controlling, and directing the actions of others. This study aims to identify and describe the functions of imperative speech acts in the film *Today We'll Talk About That Day* by Angga Dwimas Sasongko and to determine their relevance to learning Indonesian in high schools. The theoretical framework used in this study includes Searle's and Kunjana Rahardi's theories. The data source for the research is the film *Today We'll Talk About That Day*, which was released in July 2023. A qualitative method was employed, with data collection techniques including observation, documentation, and interviews. The data analysis process involved four stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and verification or conclusion. The results of the study revealed 42 instances of imperative speech acts in the film *Today We'll Talk About That Day*. These were categorized into five functions: (1) requests, (2) orders, (3) invitations, (4) granting permission, and (5) prohibitions. The data were further classified into four quality categories: (1) very good, (2) good, (3) sufficient, and (4) very lacking. The study also demonstrated the relevance of imperative speech acts in the film *Today We'll Talk About That Day* for teaching Indonesian to Grade 10 students, particularly in the context of discussion text material at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang.

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INTRODUCTION

The ability to communicate is a crucial aspect of human life, as it enables individuals to exchange ideas, build relationships, and collaborate in various contexts. Language plays a central role in this process, serving as the primary tool for interpersonal interaction (Hastomo & Aminatun, 2023). According to Saputri

(2020:250), language functions as a system used to convey meaning, while communication itself is the exchange of information or ideas through that language. This emphasizes how communication and language are intertwined in shaping human interactions (Oktarin & Hastomo, 2024).

In verbal communication, language often takes the form of speech. Speech refers to the verbal expression of language that occurs when someone speaks or delivers a message orally (Istiara et al., 2022). Every utterance contains an element of a speech act, which reflects the speaker's intention or purpose. As Chaer and Agustina (Akbar, 2018:29) point out, speech acts are a person's ability to use language effectively in particular situations. In this way, speech acts are not merely words but actions that the speaker performs through language, making communication a dynamic process of intention and interaction.

John Searle, an American philosopher, expanded the concept of speech acts with his theory introduced in his 1969 work *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Searle argued that using language is inherently a form of action, categorizing speech acts into three types: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary acts focus on the actual utterance and its literal meaning, while illocutionary acts reflect the speaker's intended function, such as making a request or giving an order. Perlocutionary acts, on the other hand, refer to the effects of the speech act on the listener. This classification helps to understand how language is not only a means of conveying information but also a way of influencing and interacting with others.

This study focuses specifically on imperative speech acts, a type of illocutionary act aimed at delivering orders, instructions, or requests to communication partners. Imperative speech acts are fundamental for directing, guiding, or requesting actions from others. According to Rahardi (2005:134-140), the functions of imperative speech acts can be divided into five main categories: (1) orders, which instruct someone to take an action; (2) invitations, which encourage participation; (3) requests, which ask for assistance or action; (4) granting permission, which allows certain actions; and (5) prohibitions, which restrict or forbid actions. By categorizing these functions, we can better understand how imperative speech acts facilitate clear and effective communication.

Films provide an ideal medium for examining imperative speech acts in action. Defined as a series of moving images that tell a story, films serve not only as entertainment but also as a form of mass communication that reflects and discusses the realities of everyday life (Supriatini & Surismiati, 2018). Films offer insights into human interactions, social norms, and cultural values, making them a valuable resource for analyzing the use of language. For this study, the film *Today We'll Talk About That Day* by Angga Dwimas Sasongko is used as the primary data source. The film incorporates various imperative speech acts and also conveys meaningful life lessons, providing an opportunity to explore how these acts function within a narrative context.

The relevance of imperative speech acts goes beyond their use in films, extending

to the field of education. Effective learning processes are those that align with the curriculum and successfully meet the intended learning objectives (Pramesti, 2021:5). In the context of Indonesian language education, imperative speech acts are particularly relevant under the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes the development of speaking and presentation skills. The curriculum encourages students to express ideas and messages clearly while adhering to norms of politeness in communication. This focus on imperative speech acts allows students to understand how language can be used to guide, request, and interact in both formal and informal settings.

By examining films like *Today We'll Talk About That Day*, educators can demonstrate the practical applications of imperative speech acts. Through the analysis of dialogue, students can learn how language functions not only to convey information but also to influence actions and manage social interactions. This method of integrating film into the learning process helps students engage with language in a more dynamic and contextually relevant way, bridging theory with real-world examples. The values presented in the film, such as respect, responsibility, and collaboration, align with the broader educational goals of the Merdeka Curriculum, aiming to equip students with the skills necessary for effective communication.

In conclusion, communication is a fundamental element of human life, and language serves as its essential tool. Speech acts, particularly imperative speech acts, play a vital role in shaping how we direct and influence interactions. By analyzing these acts in various contexts, such as in films, we gain a deeper understanding of their function in both daily communication and education. The study of imperative speech acts provides valuable insights into how language can be used to achieve specific goals, making it an important focus for Indonesian language education. Films like *Today We'll Talk About That Day* offer a rich source of examples that help students understand the practical application of language in real-life scenarios, further enriching the learning experience within the Merdeka Curriculum.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics that explores how language is used in social contexts. It investigates how various factors, such as context and communication goals, influence speech patterns. Bawamenewi (2020:201) describes pragmatics as the study of language use in interaction. Aulia Rahmah Zamzami (2021:5) and Prayitno (2017) also support this view, noting that pragmatics looks at the structure of language as a means of communication, considering both the speakers and their conversation partners, along with the external elements, referred to as context or language signs.

According to Bambang et al. (2021:3769), pragmatics specifically studies how language is used in communication. One important concept in pragmatics is speech acts, a term coined by philosopher John Searle to describe how language is used to perform actions. Hasnita (2021:2) elaborates that speech acts involve both the words

spoken and the reactions or actions required for conveying meaning. Picha (2020:8) further defines speech acts as statements that are made when acting in accordance with the content of the statement. Searle, as cited by Wijana and Rohmadi (2009:20), categorizes speech acts into three main types: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts.

Searle's classification of illocutionary acts, particularly direct illocutionary acts, includes three types based on both structural and communicative similarities. These types are declarative, interrogative, and imperative speech acts. Declarative speech acts convey information or messages, while interrogative speech acts involve questions designed to obtain information. Imperative speech acts, on the other hand, are used to give orders, make requests, or issue commands.

In the field of pragmatics, imperative speech acts are often referred to as command speech. Aji & Suroso (2023:2) note that imperative speech acts, or "imperative pragmatics," involve commands that are directed at the listener. According to Thamimi & Wiranty (2019:160), imperative speech acts are sentences that instruct the listener to act in accordance with the speaker's desires. Sulhan (2019:3) emphasizes that imperative sentences aim to direct or demand an action from the listener, typically in a clear and direct manner.

Searle explains that the purpose of imperative speech acts is to convey a directive message directly to the listener. Dian Safitri & Mulyani (2021:64) confirm that imperative speech acts are a type of direct illocutionary act, where the structure of the sentence is key to its function in communication. These speech acts often involve giving commands or requests to compel the listener to carry out a specific action. Examples of imperative speech acts include issuing commands or making requests, both of which aim to guide the actions of others.

Rahardi (2005:79), in his book *Kesantunan Imperatif Bahasa Indonesia*, provides an explanation of imperative speech acts, noting that they are used to request or direct the listener to do something according to the speaker's wishes. He classifies imperative speech acts into five categories: requests, invitations, orders, granting permission, and prohibitions.

First, imperative speech requests are used to ask or submit a request to the listener, often marked by politeness markers like "please" or "beg." Second, imperative speech orders are used to command or direct others to perform an action. These can be marked by politeness markers such as "come on," "let's," "please," or "should." Third, imperative speech invitations invite the listener to engage in an activity, commonly using markers such as "come on" or "let's." Fourth, granting permission is an imperative speech act that provides approval for the listener to carry out an action, often using markers like "you may" or "you are welcome." Finally, imperative speech prohibitions involve prohibiting or restricting an action, with specific markers that signal restriction (Hastomo et al., 2023).

Tuti Hidayah and Rochmat Tri Sudrajat (2020:74) explain that films are a form

of literature that is both concise and effective in conveying meaning. Films serve as a medium to communicate both explicit and implicit messages, sharing thoughts, feelings, and intentions with the audience (Widyawati, n.d. 2019:2). Since films allow viewers to directly observe the interaction between the speaker and their interlocutor, they are particularly effective for studying language use in context. Nurhalisa et al. (2023:187) assert that films provide valuable insights into how language functions in communication, making them an ideal source for examining pragmatic aspects such as imperative speech acts.

METHOD

According to Sugiyono (2022:2), the research method refers to a structured and scientific approach used to gather, analyze, and utilize data for specific objectives. It is a crucial part of any study, as it provides a systematic framework that guides the research process from start to finish. This research follows a qualitative descriptive approach, which is designed to describe and explain phenomena, facts, or conditions as they naturally occur in a particular context. As Sinaga (2019:25) points out, the descriptive research method seeks to collect and present data in order to address real-world issues and provide deeper insights into the subject matter under investigation. In this study, the film *Today We'll Talk About That Day*, directed by Angga Dwimas Sasongko, is analyzed, focusing specifically on the use of imperative speech acts, with an emphasis on understanding their functions within the context of the film's dialogue.

The primary data for this study is drawn from the words and dialogues that contain imperative speech acts in the film *Today We'll Talk About That Day*. This film, which was released in 2023, has a runtime of 1 hour and 58 minutes. The film serves as a rich source of data for examining the way imperative speech acts are used in communication between characters. The dialogues in the film are analyzed to identify instances of imperative speech, which include orders, requests, instructions, and other forms of directive communication. By analyzing these speech acts, the study aims to uncover how they function within the narrative, contributing to the development of the story and the relationships between characters.

To collect the necessary data, several techniques are employed. The first method is observation, where the researcher watches the film carefully, paying close attention to the dialogues and interactions between characters that involve imperative speech acts. This allows for the identification of specific instances where characters issue commands, make requests, or offer instructions. The second technique used is documentation, which involves transcribing the dialogues that feature imperative speech acts and organizing them for further analysis. Additionally, interviews are conducted with individuals who have expertise in language or film studies, to gain additional perspectives on the use and function of imperative speech in the film. These three data collection methods work together to ensure that the study is thorough and that the data gathered is comprehensive.

For data analysis, the study follows the approach outlined by Huberman (1984) and Sugiyono (2022:132), which consists of several stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and verification or drawing conclusions. The first step, data collection, involves gathering all the relevant data from the film, including the dialogues and scenes where imperative speech acts occur. Once the data is collected, the next step is data reduction, where the researcher identifies and filters out irrelevant or less important information, focusing only on the imperative speech acts that are essential for the study. Data presentation follows, where the findings are organized and presented in a clear and structured manner, often using charts, tables, or narrative descriptions to highlight the key patterns and trends observed in the use of imperative speech. Finally, verification or drawing conclusions involves analyzing the data to draw conclusions about the functions of imperative speech acts in the film and how they contribute to the overall communication and storytelling. This process ensures that the research findings are both accurate and meaningful.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis of imperative speech acts in *Today We'll Talk About That Day*, directed by Angga Dwimas Sasongko, reveals a diverse use of imperatives that reflect various communicative functions. A total of 42 imperative speech acts were identified and categorized into five distinct functions: requests, orders, invitations, granting permission, and prohibitions. The distribution and function of these speech acts illustrate the complexity of social relationships and power dynamics within the film's narrative.

1. Imperative Request

Requests are typically used to ask for assistance or express a need. In this film, 10 examples of imperative requests were identified. These requests often employ politeness strategies, such as the use of the word "please," which softens the directness of the request. For example, in one scene, Narendra pleads with a doctor, saying, "*Doctor, my brother, please!*" (00:01:07–00:01:08), highlighting a request for urgent help. Similarly, Bang Amper uses repetition and the word "please" to emphasize the importance of his request: "*Please sir, please take care of it, this is for our family*" (00:08:11–00:08:16). These requests serve to invoke empathy and urgency, showing how language can be a tool for seeking support and cooperation.

2. Imperative Order

Imperative orders, in contrast to requests, are commands or instructions that expect immediate compliance. In the film, 15 examples of orders were identified, showing a clear hierarchical communication pattern. For instance, the doctor's urgent command to the nurse, "*Nurse, please check and take the available blood supply A, now!*"

Hurry!" (00:01:21–00:01:23), exemplifies the directness and urgency associated with orders. Other examples include directives from authority figures, such as Ajeng's father commanding, "*Ajeng, you must still come along! Your relationship needs to be known to everyone immediately*" (00:29:59–00:30:31). These orders underscore the power dynamics at play, where individuals in positions of authority use imperative speech to maintain control and manage actions.

3. Imperative Invitation

Invitations in the film serve to encourage participation or offer opportunities to join in activities. A total of 9 invitations were identified, often marked by expressions like "come on" or "let's go." These invitations not only foster social interaction but also guide the behavior of others in a collaborative manner. For example, Wildan invites others to join him in exploring their surroundings: "*This is where we live in Jakarta, let's go!*" (00:17:10–00:17:12). Similarly, Ajeng's father invites her to return to a location: "*Ajeng, let's go home soon, come here again tomorrow, okay?*" (00:21:23–00:21:28), suggesting a desire for continued engagement. Invitations like these reflect relational dynamics and the speaker's intention to create shared experiences.

4. Granting Permission

The granting of permission is a specific type of imperative that involves allowing someone to take an action. This was observed in one instance in the film, where Father Ajeng permits his daughter to make a decision: "*Go ahead, this is your decision*" (00:20:23–00:20:27). Unlike orders, granting permission involves a relinquishment of control, indicating trust in the decision-making capacity of the individual being addressed.

5. Imperative Prohibition

Prohibitions, which function to forbid actions, appeared in 7 instances within the film. These speech acts establish boundaries and express disapproval of certain behaviors. For example, Angkasa forbids his father from addressing Ajeng in a particular way: "*Dad, don't talk like that to Ajeng!*" (00:40:34–00:40:37), while Narendra prohibits a certain action by saying, "*Don't touch that, it's my responsibility*" (00:30:47–00:30:50). Prohibitions often reinforce social norms or assert authority, and their usage in the film highlights moments of tension where characters attempt to control or regulate the behavior of others.

Discussion

The variety of imperative speech acts identified in *Today We'll Talk About That Day* serves as a reflection of how language functions within social interactions and power dynamics. In analyzing the data, it becomes clear that the use of imperative speech acts—requests, orders, invitations, granting permission, and prohibitions—helps to

illuminate key themes of power, authority, autonomy, and social relationships. These findings align with established theories in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis, where speech acts are seen as a central tool for understanding how individuals navigate social hierarchies, manage interpersonal relationships, and influence behavior.

1. Requests: Politeness and Power Dynamics

The 10 examples of imperative requests in the film are marked by polite forms such as the use of "please" or other mitigators like "okay" (e.g., "Please handle the administrative problem!" – Angkasa, 00:07:47–00:07:52). According to Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategies (1987), speakers employ politeness strategies to mitigate the potential face-threatening acts (FTAs) that requests can represent. In this case, the use of polite language softens the imperative force, signaling the speaker's awareness of the social hierarchy and the need to maintain positive relationships. The frequent use of "please" in requests, such as when Bang Amper pleads with hospital staff, "*Please sir, please take care of it, this is for our family*" (00:08:11–00:08:16), highlights the speaker's attempt to gain favor or sympathy, leveraging politeness to reduce the imposition on the listener.

Requests also serve as a means of seeking assistance or collaboration, reinforcing the social bonds between characters (Sukmawati et al., 2023). The data suggests that requests, while technically imperatives, are often softer forms of influence, employed by characters in situations where their power is less absolute. This aligns with sociolinguistic work by Holmes (2001), who notes that requests in everyday conversation are often shaped by a need to negotiate power and seek compliance without overt domination.

2. Orders: Authority and Control

Imperative orders, which make up the majority of the examples in the film (15 out of 42), are an essential tool for enforcing authority and social control. For instance, in a clinical context, the doctor's directive, "*Nurse, please check and take the available blood supply A, now! Hurry!*" (00:01:21–00:01:23), represents an immediate demand that reflects the hierarchical relationship between medical professionals and their subordinates. The use of "please" does not diminish the force of the order but rather ensures that the command remains somewhat polite and less abrasive, which resonates with the concept of mitigation in pragmatics (Searle, 1969).

The prominence of orders in the film also reinforces the social power relations at play. As Goffman (1955) suggests in his theory of facework, individuals in positions of authority, such as doctors or Ajeng's father, are more likely to issue direct imperatives because they have the power to impose their will. These speech acts are an assertion of control and a means of managing actions in high-stakes contexts, such as medical emergencies or familial obligations. Moreover, these orders can serve to reaffirm the speaker's position in the social hierarchy, reinforcing power dynamics.

3. Invitations: Building Social Bonds and Solidarity

Imperative invitations, although less frequent, play an important role in encouraging participation and fostering solidarity among characters. For instance, Wildan's invitations to explore Jakarta ("*This is where we live in Jakarta, let's go!*" – 00:17:10–00:17:12) and to relax ("*Come on, take a shower first so you're fresh after the long journey. Come on, let's go for a walk tomorrow*" – 00:18:28–00:18:32) are indicative of the speaker's desire to include others in shared experiences. These types of speech acts align with theories of solidarity in communication, particularly the work of Brown and Levinson (1987), who argue that invitations often function to enhance social connection and minimize social distance between speakers.

In contrast to the more hierarchical acts of request and order, invitations signal a more egalitarian or inclusive relationship. As Holmes (2001) suggests, invitations create opportunities for cooperation and collective participation, providing a means to strengthen social ties. This is particularly evident in the casual, friendly nature of Wildan's invitations, which emphasize shared enjoyment rather than command or control.

4. Granting Permission: Autonomy and Empowerment

The single instance of granting permission in the film, where Father Ajeng says, "Go ahead, this is your decision" (00:20:23–00:20:27), reflects a moment of empowerment and trust. By granting permission, the speaker relinquishes control and allows the addressee to exercise autonomy. This aligns with the concept of positive politeness in Brown and Levinson's theory, where granting permission can be seen as a way of affirming the addressee's positive face—that is, their need for autonomy and self-determination.

Granting permission also reflects the tension between authority and individual agency, especially in contexts where the speaker may hold a position of power (Nasution et al., 2020). In this case, Father Ajeng's permission signals a shift in the power dynamic, allowing Ajeng to make an independent choice. This act of permission is also a form of face-saving (Goffman, 1955), as it avoids imposing a direct order and instead allows the addressee to feel respected and in control of their decisions.

5. Prohibition: Boundaries and Social Norms

Prohibitions, which appear 7 times in the film, serve to establish limits and regulate behavior. For example, when Angkasa commands, "*Dad, don't talk like that to Ajeng!*" (00:40:34–00:40:37), he is imposing a boundary on his father's behavior, demonstrating a reversal of the typical hierarchical relationship. Prohibitions are typically associated with a strong assertion of power and social norms, as they are designed to maintain order and discourage undesirable actions.

From a theoretical perspective, prohibitions are often seen as a negative face

threat (Brown & Levinson, 1987), as they directly challenge the addressee's freedom to act as they wish. However, prohibitions in the film are not always one-sided; they also function as moments of resistance or negotiation, where characters assert their own agency or protect others from harm. For instance, when Narendra says, "*Don't touch that, it's my responsibility*" (00:30:47–00:30:50), he is defending his autonomy and control over a situation, thus reinforcing the idea that prohibitions are not merely about imposing limits but also about asserting individual rights.

CONCLUSION

The imperative speech acts found in the film *Today Today We'll Talk About That Day* by Angga Dwimas Sasongko are classified into five functions. A total of 42 instances of imperative speech acts were identified, categorized as follows: 10 instances of requests, 15 instances of orders, 9 instances of invitations, 1 instance of granting permission, and 7 instances of prohibition. The most frequent imperative speech act functions in the film are requests (10 instances) and orders (15 instances), making up the majority of the total 42 instances. This indicates that the characters in the film use imperative speech acts to create dramatic scenes, clarify the messages being conveyed, and foster intense interactions between characters. Based on the research findings, the use of imperative speech acts in *Today We'll Talk About That Day* is relevant to the Indonesian Language subject, particularly in the discussion text material for class X students at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang. This relevance can be seen in the teaching module used in the class, which includes learning outcomes that highlight the significant role of imperative speech acts in discussion-based learning.

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