

# BIPA Learners' Perceptions on Teacher's Speech Act in Indonesian Language Learning Process

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## ABSTRACT

Focusing on pragmatics and BIPA studies, this study aims to describe the learners' perceptions and the form and function of the teacher's speech act in the learning process. This study employed a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The data were gathered from teacher speeches and learners' perceptions. Using observation techniques of field notes, records, and questionnaires, the data were analysed after they were collected, reduced, and validated by the experts before drawing conclusions. The results of this study indicated that learners' perceptions of the teacher's speech acts tend to be good or positive. Meanwhile, the form and function of the speech act used by the teachers varied considerably. The forms and functions of the speech act include (1) declarative, interrogative, and imperative locutions, (2) assertive, directive, and expressive illocution, (3) perlocution in the form of agreeing, following orders, being embarrassed, and motivated, (4) direct speech act are declarative, interrogative, and imperative, (5) declarative and interrogative indirect speech act, (6) declarative, interrogative, and imperative literal speech act, (7) declarative and interrogative non-literal speech act, (8) the functions of assertive, directive, and expressive speech act. Through this research, teachers can understand the perception of learners and use appropriate speech strategies so that learners do not experience misunderstandings about speech delivered.

**Keywords:** Level II BIPA learners, perceptions, speech act.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian for speakers of other languages, *Bahasa Indonesia bagi Penutur Asing* (BIPA), is a way of teaching Indonesian language for foreigners who want to learn Indonesian language as a foreign language or a second language. BIPA teaching consists of four language competencies: listening, reading, speaking and writing. BIPA is divided into three different levels, beginner (*novice*), middle (*intermediate*), and skilful (*advanced*) (Kemendikbud, 2017). BIPA teaching is also different from Indonesian language teaching for Indonesian native speakers. This is due to the different characteristics and pedagogical norms between them, namely (1) generally, BIPA learners are well educated; (2) they have different learning style which is dominated by their own cultural background; (3) they have strong interest and motivation towards Indonesian language; (4) they have different education background; and (5) their native language may have different language system from that of Indonesian language (Suyitno, 2000). These differences will surely affect the competence of BIPA learners to communicate.

Language difference is one of the problems that often occur in the BIPA teaching process. Therefore, misunderstanding of messages or meanings spoken by the teachers to learners often happens. Especially in this research, the learners being discussed are in the basic level, which is level II BIPA learners. In *CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference)*, it is explained that BIPA learners at basic level are judged by their minimal communication skill. This is matched with the qualification based on the ministerial decree number 27, 2017 which is, level II BIPA learners must be able to express their feelings as simply as possible, describe their surroundings, and communicate their daily needs and routine. This is an interesting discussion to be researched as interaction between teachers and learners is a natural realization of language learning process. Teachers are expected to be competent in communicating so messages or meanings being delivered can be understood by the learners. Therefore, teachers must be able to adapt and deliver teaching materials appropriately.

Regarding the appropriate delivery of material and messages, teachers and learners are involved in speech

acts. Chaer (2010) and Suwito (1983) said that speech act is categorized as a psychological individual symptom, and its existence is determined by language skill of the speaker when facing a particular situation. It can also be stated that when using the language, the meaning of the language spoken is more important than the intention of the occasion. In relation to speech act, Searle (1969) said that pragmatically, there are three kinds of language act, locution, illocution, perlocution.

Research on speech acts in Bahasa Indonesia and BIPA has been done by some researchers. For example, Rukmana, Suryadi, and Diani (2017) described the form of directive illocutionary speech acts used by teachers for disabled in *bahasa Indonesia*. In the area of BIPA, Siagian (2018) investigated the speech acts of BIPA's learners from Poland in an Indonesian college. The study was motivated by the fact that many expressive speeches were used by the foreign speakers when interacting in BIPA learning. In addition, there is also a research by Rudi and Mujianto (2021) about speech acts of BIPA's teachers in an audio visual mode of learning. The main problem discussed in the study is the form of expressive speech of teachers in the teaching and learning process.

However, based on the relevant research, there has not been any research to discuss BIPA learners' perception towards the speaking act of the teachers. Walgito (2010) explained that perception is a process that involves senses, which is the process when stimulus is received by an individual through the senses or a sensory process. Therefore, the perception process cannot be separated from the sensory process. In line with the opinion of Walgito, Thoha (2005) said that perception is a cognitive process that is experienced by everyone when understanding the surrounding through seeing, hearing, feeling and smelling. The previous studies tend to discuss only the speaking act of the learners and teachers, while it is also important to understand how BIPA learners perceive the teachers' speech acts. Thus, this research is conducted so that teachers understand the form of speech acts that are good or appropriate to be used to level II BIPA learners. This is important to know because if the teacher's speech is not in accordance with the ability of learners at that level, it will have an impact on misunderstandings that can lead to a maximal learning process.

Based on this issue, this research is intended to describe the form and function of BIPA teachers' speaking act, and to see the implication of the Indonesian language learning process.

## 2. METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Descriptive method research is a method to look for information about an event that is currently occurring. The aim of this descriptive research is to draw variables or the actual condition. Descriptive research is not to test a particular hypothesis, but rather to describe a variable as it is (Arikunto, 2006). Qualitative research is not only discussing data gathering techniques, but an approach to the empirical world. Taylor and Bogdan (in Moleong, 2009) stated that qualitative approach refers to a wide understanding of research that creates descriptive data, in the form of words, and behavior of the person observed in verbal and nonverbal ways.

The participants in this research are teachers and learners of BIPA level II. The study was conducted at a private school in Bandung. The participants in this study were a teacher and nine students of BIPA level II. The teacher has some years of experience teaching BIPA, especially at the beginner level. Meanwhile, BIPA level II learners consist of nine people from different countries, including: Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Scotland. This research was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic so that the data collection process was done virtually using the Zoom application. The data collection technique used in the study was a nonparticipation observation technique using field records, questionnaires, and video recordings through Zoom.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of questionnaires and observations that have been done, the researchers found quite diverse responses. The questionnaire that was distributed consisted of 10 closed questions and 1 open question about the perception of the learner of the teacher's speech. This questionnaire was developed independently based on observations as well as fundamental perception theory, namely that perception is the experience of objects, events, or relationships obtained by inferring information and interpreting messages (Rakhmat, 2007). In addition, this questionnaire has also been validated by an expert in pragmatics and two BIPA teaching experts with results worthy to be used as an instrument in this study. Here are the results of the questionnaire on the perception of learners of the teacher's speech.

***Question 1: Does the teacher explain the material well during the learning process?***

On this question, a uniformed result was achieved. Nine responded "Yes" to the question. The Percentage was 100%. This indicates the learners feel that the teacher can explain the material well. This is also strengthened by the field notes. The learners seemed enthusiastic which indicates they paid attention to what the teacher

delivered during the learning process. One example is as follows.

Teacher : “Everyday stories can be interesting, like *The World of The Married*. If you watch that Korean one. Yes. It's about cheating, right? The cheating husband, right?”

Learner : “In Indonesia it was a box office famous movies. It was originally a British film, a British series.”

In the dialogue, the teacher gives examples and suggestions to the learner that even everyday stories can be made into short stories. The fact that the learner could respond and add information about the topic shows the teacher's explanation was understood.

***Question 2: Is it easy to understand Bahasa Indonesia used by the teacher during the learning process?***

There are various responses to this question. The percentage of the “Yes” answer to the question was 56,6%, meanwhile the “sometimes” answer was 44,4%, and 0% for the “No” answer. This result shows that the learners feel that the *Bahasa Indonesia* used by the teacher tends to be understandable, but often hard as well. This is in accordance with the *CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference)* reference which states that Entry level BIPA learners are marked by minimal communication skills. Aside from that, the teacher used simple vocabulary. An example is as follows.

Teacher : “Don't turn into a woman like that. And he's a man. It doesn't make sense, right?”

Learner : “Yeah, ok!”

Teacher : “So, there has to be a cause and effect, ok!”

In the dialogue, the teacher provides an explanation and an illustration using simple Indonesian. However, the short response made by the students may indicate uneasy choices of words.

***Question 3: Does the teacher always allow you to give remarks or ask a question if something is not understandable?***

Various results also appear on this question. The Percentage of the “Yes” answer to the question was 88,9%, meanwhile the “sometimes” answer was 11,1%, and 0% for the “No” answer. This shows that the teacher is open and almost always lets the learners give a remark or a question if they do not understand. The learners even don't hesitate to ask questions when they don't understand something. For example:

Learner : “Mr. D?”

Learner : “What do we need the folder?”

Teacher : “What do you mean? Can you share your screen, M?”

In that dialog, the learners did not hesitate to ask the teacher. Vice versa, the teacher responded to every question well and tried to answer questions.

***Question 4: Does The teacher always give you a chance to ask the questions?***

Based on that point, a uniform response was achieved. Nine respondents answered “Yes” to the question. The achieved percentage was 100%. This shows that the teacher was open and gave the learners a chance to answer the questions. Besides that, based on the learners' field notes, the teacher always gives questions after the teacher and asks the learners to repeat the given materials or information. Example:

Teacher : “Ok, K. Could you explain what are we going to do today?”

Learner : “Aaaa... You have to make an aaa outline... And there has to be a character. His name should be in this class, these people and make an outline.”

In that dialogue, the teacher gives the learners a chance to answer the question while checking the understanding of the learners about the material or information given during the learning process.

***Question 5: Does the teacher reprimand you when you are too loud during the learning process?***

This question generates unanimous responses. Nine respondents answered “No” to the question. The percentage was 100%. This shows that the teacher did not reprimand at all when the learners made the class noisy during the learning process. Based on field notes, the teacher did not reprimand the learners when the class was noisy because of adjusting to the material. In that meeting, the teacher gave a short story material. In the process, the learners were asked to discuss with each other about a character they chose.

***Question 6: Does the teacher ask you to do something?***

Again, this question generates unanimous responses. Nine respondents answered “Yes”. The percentage was 100%. This shows that the teacher always gives orders to the learners to do something in the class. Based on the field notes, the teacher often ordered or asked the learners to do something regarding the implementation of learning material. One of the examples are:

Teacher : “Ok. I will set the rules. In 10 minutes, you finish the opening. Then, later the random father and picker. Then, later must the selected the name must tell the opening, ok! Can talk yes. 10 minutes starting from now. Please. So, at 2 o'clock there will be opening the story.”

Learner : “We translated template for the story that?”

In the dialog, the teacher ordered the learners to complete the story introduction.

***Question 7: Does the teacher order you to do something indirectly (satirizing)?***

There are various responses to this question. The “Yes” answer percentage was 11,1%, while the “Sometimes” answer was 0%, and 88,9% for the “No” answer. This shows that the teacher tends to order the learners to do something directly compared to ordering the learners in directly. One example is as follows.

Learner : “This is in the Indonesian?”

Teacher : “What do you think? In Sundanese.

Learner : (*just smile and nod*)

Based on field records, in the dialogue, the teacher was actually just joking, but the tone of the speech sounded less fitting so that one of the students felt offended. Context in dialogue is when one of the learners asks about the language used in guessing the word in the game to be played at the beginning of learning.

***Question 8: Does the teacher always say thank you when you are helpful or when you respond?***

This question also generates various responses. The percentage of the “Yes” answer was 44,4%, while the “Sometimes” answer was 56,6% and 0% for the “No” answer. This shows that the teacher sometimes tends to say thank you when helping or receiving a response for a learner during the learning process. Example:

Teacher : “Ok, everybody. *Thank you for today.* It's been a long time actually today. Usually we're done in an hour, but today we took a little bit longer.”

Learner : “Thank you.”

In that dialogue, the teacher says thank you to the learners for following the class well, which goes to the learners as well.

***Question 9: Does the teacher state his hopes towards you?***

There are also various answers to this question. The percentage of the “Yes” answer was 55,6%, while the “Sometimes” answer was 11,1%, and 33,3% for the “No” answer. This shows that the teacher shows his/her hopes towards the learners. Example:

Teacher : “I'll see you again in August. Stay healthy with your family.”

Learner : “Thank you.”

In that speech, the teacher hopes that learners will remain healthy again in August.

***Question 10: Does the way the teacher communicates affect your perception during the learning process?***

Nine respondents answered “Yes' ' to the question. The percentage was 100%. This shows that the way the teacher communicates during the learning process affects the learners perception.

There is an open question suggested by the researcher and it showed a positive result from the learners. The learners think that the teacher can communicate well, but think that the teacher can improve his communication.

The first thing is the usage of in-direct speech act and non-literal forms of satire used by the teacher. This is proven with one of the learners remarks, which is “The communication is good but I think I asked the wrong question when he said in Sundanese, but he is a good teacher”. This shows that one of the learners was offended by the teacher. Based on the field notes, the teacher was actually joking. But a misunderstanding from the learners happened. The context in this case is the same context as the explanation of question number 7. In line with this case, the learners' perception was affected by an external factor outside of the individual that shows a resistant object with its background or its surroundings (Thoha, 2005).

The second thing is that the learners feel the teacher is too fast in delivering the material. One of the learners said that the teacher is good at communicating in the class, but talks too fast. This shows that the teacher is viewed too fast in his/her speech, while the learners in this case are Level II BIPA or can be categorized as entry level. However, as a whole, the learners' perceptions towards the teacher's speech act in the learning process can be said as good or positive.

In addition, in this study also found forms of speech actions used by teachers during the learning process. As seen in Table 1, there are (1) locutionary speech act (declarative, interrogative, and imperative), (2) illocutionary speech act (assertive, directive, and expressive), (3) perlocutionary speech act (approving, following orders, and congratulating or praising), (4) direct speech (declarative, interrogative, and imperative), (5) indirect speech (declarative, interrogative, and imperatives), (6) literal speech act (declarative, interrogative, and imperative), and (7) non literal speech act (declarative, interrogative, and imperative).

Moreover, it was also found that the speech function used by teachers is in the form of assertive, directive, and expressive functions. The number of forms of speech spoken by teachers shows that teachers are trying to convey messages to learners in different forms. The form and function of the teacher's speech in the learning process is as presented in Table 2.

Based on the results, the speech act forms and functions that are mostly used by teachers in the learning

**Table 1.** Forms of teacher speech acts

Speech Act Form	Speech Category	Point and Frequency	
		Point	Total
Locution	Declarative	Informs	145
	Interrogative	Questions	85
	Imperative	Orders	43
Illocution	Assertive	States, Suggests, and gives a point of view	140
	Directive	Orders, Forbids, Begs, etc.	128
	Expressive	Apologizes, Thankful and Congratulations or Praises.	20
Perlocution	Effect		Total
	Agreeing, Obeying or Request, Embarrassed, and motivated		188
	Speech Category	Point	Total
Direct	Declarative	Informs	129
	Interrogative	Questions	75
	Imperative	Orders	41
	Imperative	Orders	41
In Direct	Declarative	Orders	30
	Interrogative	Orders	17
Literal	Declarative	Informs	130
	Interrogative	Questions	74
	Imperative	Orders	40
Non-Literal	Declarative	Informs	28
	Interrogative	Satirizes or giving a statement	16

**Table 2.** Teacher speech act functions

Speech Act Functions	Total
Assertive	140
Directive	128
Expressive	20

process is the Assertive Illocution Speech Act. The findings in this study are different from previous relevant studies. While Rukmana et al. (2017) showed that the form of directive speech to be the dominant speech act appeared compared to the form and function of other speech acts, the present study found the assertive form is more dominant. Searle (in Dardjowidjojo, 2003) states that assertive or representative speech acts are statements regarding the truth. Assertive speech act is divided in two, Statement and explanation. Statements are speeches with information, while explanations are speeches that have an informing nature or explanation of something. In this research, it is proven with the amount of speeches that are statements or explanations from teachers to the learners during a learning process.

During the learning process, assertive speech act forms and functions appear more than directive or expressive speech acts. This is due to the online learning system. Although the online learning process via Zoom is quite effective, the truth is, the teacher's portion to

explain is more dominant compared to a learning process in a normal condition. Therefore, assertive speech act forms and functions become more dominant than other illocution speech acts. In addition, based on the results of observations, the use of dominant assertive speech also has an impact on the enthusiasm of learners in following learning. This is because the learner listens more to the material delivered by the teacher than doing activities such as group discussions, and so on.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research shows that level II BIPA learners' perceptions on teacher speech acts can be categorized as good or positive. The learners' perceptions tend to be unanimous. All the learners think that the teacher's speech act in the learning process in class is good, which is caused by the teacher mastering two languages: *Bahasa Indonesia* and English. Then, the teacher can deliver the material using understandable *Bahasa Indonesia* and always asks and tells the learners to do something during the learning process. However, there are complaints from the learners towards the teacher's speech act. This causes the learners to be shy. Besides that, Sometimes the teacher's speech is too fast, while the level II BIPA learners' skills are still at a minimum, if viewed from a language aspect.

Based on the identification of the forms and functions of speech acts used by the teacher, it was found that the use of dominant assertive speech also has an impact on the enthusiasm of learners in following learning. This is because level II BIPA learners listen more to the material delivered by teachers.

The findings imply that the teacher is expected to understand the characteristics of the BIPA learners which are different from *Bahasa Indonesia* native speaker learners. The teacher is advised to use a direct speech act strategy so that the learners don't get the wrong perception towards the delivered point. Then, the teacher is advised to minimize the usage of satire in the learning process. This highly affects the success of the expected learning process.

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