

# Assertive Speech Acts as Strategy Revealing Impoliteness:

## *A Case of Translation Quality in Translated Novels The Silkworm and The Cuckoo's Calling*

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**Abstract**—This research is a translation study trying to explore how assertive speech acts could be used for revealing impoliteness. In many situation impoliteness as a strategy of speech act aims at disharmony interactions. The disharmony was indicated by their utterances used in interaction. The goals could be reached by using types of speech acts to confirm its impoliteness. Assertive speech acts found in this research were proved be able to use as a strategy to reveal impoliteness. The data is qualitative conveyed by some utterances revealing impoliteness and explored as descriptive method. Content analysis is used in analysing the data by purposive sampling to catch the research goal. The impoliteness theory proposed by Culpeper is used to determine impoliteness strategy. There are 5 strategies, i.e. bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, off-record impoliteness and withhold politeness. Otherwise, in assessing the translation quality refers to Nababan et.als assessment model including accuracy, acceptability and readability aspects. The results show that assertive speech acts could be used as strategy revealing impoliteness with high degree of translation quality. This research hopefully may contribute in discussion of impoliteness next time.

**Keywords**— *assertive; impoliteness; speech acts; translation quality; qualitative-descriptive*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Impoliteness is a booming issue discussed in the case of linguistic, especially pragmatic. Pragmatic studies some cores of linguistics which one of them is speech acts (Cruse, 2000; Bloomer, 2005). Impoliteness was known as a strategy used in communication interactions represented as speech acts. Culpeper defined impoliteness as communicative acts perceived by members of a social community (and often intended by speakers) to be purposefully offensive (Kecskes, 2015). Therefore, in communicative interactions impoliteness could be performed and found as speech acts among the participants. Speech acts expose as strategy for exploring the existing impoliteness in interactions.

In general, impoliteness was used by using utterances for expressing anger, dislike, hate and others in causing disharmony. We can easily capture the impoliteness as expressive utterances to destroy communicative interactions. Therefore, the utterance used in interactions intending for impoliteness is mostly a kind of expressive speech acts. Searle who developed what Austin called performative words classified speech acts into 5 (five), i.e. assertive, directive, expressive, commissive and declarative. Each type

of the speech acts has potentially contributed to perform the impoliteness in communicative interactions. This study focuses on assertive speech acts could be used as strategy for revealing the impoliteness in interactions. How the assertive speech acts were translated and their quality into Bahasa Indonesia as target text is the main purpose of this study.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The main goal of this study is exploring the impoliteness represented in assertive speech acts. This study tries to find out how they are translated as well as their translation quality. Therefore, it will be necessary to explore the terms to get the goal purposively.

### A. Impoliteness Phenomena

In many activities concerning with communicative interactions of participants in charge of the activity want to have a conducive situation. Speaker wants to have a kind response from the hearer and each other. A convenient conversation is hopefully gotten in many communicative interactions. Therefore, those expectations were accommodated in Politeness Theory (Felemban, 2012) proposed by Brown and Levinson. In this case the theory stated that '*politeness is a form of communicative behavior found very generally in human language and among human cultures; indeed, it has been claimed as a universal phenomenon of human society*' (Leech, 2014).

In other situation communicative interaction was intentionally aimed at destroying harmony among the participants. Sometimes speaker intentionally or unintentionally takes an action of aggravating-face to the hearer. In another context the hearer perceived what speaker said tried to threaten him/her. This situation included performing impoliteness phenomena. Impoliteness issue was phenomenal study in this era of linguistic-pragmatic studies. The arising impoliteness attempted to the same line with the politeness theory previously well-known. Although it could not be denied some linguists or scientists stated that impoliteness developed from theory of politeness. Therefore, they believed in opinion that impoliteness was digression of politeness in special situation and context. Impoliteness intentionally or unintentionally threatened the hearer's face meaning to break the principle of *politeness as a kind of behavior which has been developed in societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction* (Aliakbari, 2015, p. 981).

In the continued development impoliteness was not shadows of politeness but grew together with linguist and scientist tried to develop the phenomena of impoliteness as new perception. It can be read some scientist or linguist stated about impoliteness such as impoliteness was not a dichotomy of politeness (Haugh, 2012), impoliteness cannot be viewed as part of politeness (Dyner, 2015), impoliteness was more than a contradictive for politeness (Angouri & Tseliga, 2010), and Beebe said that impoliteness *was not (simply) failed politeness* (Culpeper, Bousfield, & Wichmann, 2003). The impoliteness discussed in this study refers to Culpeper's 5 strategies, i.e. bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, off-record impoliteness and withhold politeness (Culpeper, Haugh, & Kadar, 2017).

### B. Speech Acts

In understanding meaning of words there was three meanings point of view, i.e. locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts (Witek, 2015; Herman, 2015). These meaning represent what word meant to do. When someone said a word 'eat,' it will have three meanings, as locutionary act, eat is an activity of real eating. As illocutionary meaning eat meant as an order or command to do eating, and as perlocutionary meant as threat not to eat or it was a prohibition to do eating.

Referring the activities of words meaning resulted some utterances to represent performative meaning of the words. The utterances indicated what the performative words meant. The utterances were known in the activity of speech acts. Searle developed what Austin stated as performative words and classified the utterances into 5 (five) types of speech acts. They are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive dan declarative (Hiani, 2015). In the five types of speech acts utterances or performative word could be found its intentions. In this speech acts impoliteness could be found the intentionally or unintentionally a certain utterance.

### C. Translation Quality

This study is an exploring result of translation study. In translation study the main point is how a source text meaning could be translated or transferred into target language. The main purpose to study translation was to find quality of its translation. The quality referred to degree of equivalent meaning between source text and target text. In making easily indicated quality there was not only a qualitative value which was descriptive criteria but also a numeric or number in the same line. The criterions are in the

forms of qualitative parameter. When a translation had a quality gotten certain criteria, this was indicated by a certain number. For example, value of 3 represent a high quality, that high quality means fulfil some criteria, so when quality got 3 meaning the translation fulfil some criteria on high quality. This model was proposed by Nababan et.als. (Nababan, 2004; Nababan, 2010; Nababan, Nuraeni, & Sumardiono, 2012). Other theory of assessing translation quality used qualitative description.

### III. METHOD

This study is translation study. This study tries to reveal how assertive speech acts used as strategy to perform impoliteness and how it has quality when it is translated into target language, Bahasa Indonesia. Therefore, source and the data are qualitative caused they were some utterances existed in translated novel *The Silkworm* and *The Cuckoo's Calling*. The data was analysed and explored descriptively to gain the purpose of study. This method is suitable because novel includes setting, participants or character and events (Creswell, 2012; Santosa, 2017). Therefore, qualitative-descriptive method is used to explain the discussion to get main goals. The data was gotten in focus group discussion involving ratters and translation experts.

### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Result

The fact that offence may occur whether or not the language directed at the hearer is impolite (Tayebi, 2016). This gives an opinion that the action of offence is intentionally or unintentionally to aggravate addressee's face is impoliteness behaviour. Because there is an intention means undeniably emotional involvement. The emotive involvement could be conveyed by expression of anger, fear, disinterest, exclusion and others. In exploring the emotive expression can be indicated by using speech act revealed. In this regard, the kind of speech acts used to communicative interaction can be a sign to perform impoliteness.

In this study finds that assertive speech act is one of mostly used to reveal impoliteness. Assertive speech act is utterance to assert a certain statement. It can be found when someone claiming or swearing something will happen (Bayat, 2013). This speech acts reveals impoliteness for certain contexts. Although impoliteness mostly was found in expressive speech acts, caused its emotional involvement, assertive is another speech act which usually used for expressing impoliteness.

Culpeper categorized impoliteness into 5 (five) strategies, i.e. bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, off-record impoliteness and withhold politeness. This article shows how assertive speech act as utterances performing strategy reveals impoliteness for each strategy. Assertive speech act exist in the strategies as follows.

TABLE I. IMPOLITENESS STRATEGIES PROPOSED BY CULPEPER

	Impoliteness Strategy	Speech Act of Assertive	Percentage (%)
1	<i>Bald on Record Impoliteness</i>	60	16.26
2	<i>Positive Impoliteness</i>	12	3.25
3	<i>Negative Impoliteness</i>	53	14.36
4	<i>Off Record Impoliteness</i>	5	1.35
	Totally Assertive	130	35.23

Novel *The Silkworm* and *The Cuckoo's Calling* are detective stories telling about how a private detective namely Cormoran Strike investigating murder cases of artists. In investigating his case, the detective got some communicative interaction with other characters that had interests on the case. In his communicative interactions, he gave offence as well as got offence from other characters. The offences were performed as utterances representing types of speech acts.

Above table shows appearance of assertive speech act used a strategy to reveal all kinds of impoliteness found in the novels. All data of impoliteness found in novels are 369 data. It means impoliteness as a strategy in communicative interaction used for 369 times detected by appearing speech acts in the interactions. Among with 369 data assertive speech acts are used 130 times as shown on the above table. The 130 data of assertive speech acts are spread out for all strategy of impoliteness as proposed by Culpeper. The findings do not convey assertive speech act used for strategy of withhold politeness.

**B. Discussion**

As Searle stated that assertive speech acts were utterances used for claiming or swearing what is said will be accurate (Bayat, 2013). This utterance can be understood by comprehending linguistic meaning concerning with the speaker's intention (Jary, 2016). When this speech acts used for performing impoliteness it means the linguistic meaning conveys to do impolite something in concerning with the speaker's intention. The linguistic forms show a claim or swear that what is said will be done. When the linguistic forms show meaning of impoliteness the impolite things will be done as it is said.

Assertive speech act is used in the strategy of bald on record impoliteness. Bald on record impoliteness as a strategy of impoliteness which is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimised (Culpeper, Haugh, & Kadar, 2017). When assertive speech act used in this type of impoliteness utterances of claiming or swearing are clear, concise and not ambiguous for threatening face of the hearer. This is shown as example below.

BSu	BSa
"You <b>tried to fucking knife me.</b> (pg.324)	"Kau <b>berusaha menikamku, keparat.</b> (hlm.382)

Speech activity in the BSu column indicates utterances to do as the linguistic meaning. The linguistic meaning gives a message that the hearer will try to knife him/her. This is a claim or swearword that something will happen on him/her caused by the hearer. The utterance represents an aggravating face to the hearer. The utterance performs bald on record impoliteness understood explicit utterance content. Phrase 'tried to..knife me' explicitly show a threat from the hearer to speaker. The utterance interprets that 'tried to knife me' is as behaviour (Jary, 2016) performing impoliteness caused of aggravating face the hearer. In this situation the assertive speech act can be used to represent bald on record impoliteness.

Another situation that assertive speech acts can be as strategy to express impoliteness is shown in this interaction below.

BSu	BSa
" <b>I dunno,</b> " said Duffield, with a distinct overtone of malice. (pg.294)	" <b>Entahlah,</b> " ujar Duffield dengan nada keji yang terdengar jelas. (hlm.401)

Table consists of conversation in the context of performing positive impoliteness. This impoliteness strategy is designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants (Culpeper, Haugh, & Kadar; 2017). Utterances are used for ignoring, excluding, disinteresting and so on meant to underestimate other or hearer. When someone tries to get in close the other ignores, exclude, disinterest what he/she wants. This verbal action includes what Culpeper stated as positive impoliteness.

In the table, there is a conversation between the detective and Duffield. The detective wants to make conversation personally to get clues of his client's case. This detective wants is ignored or disinterested by Duffield. This verbal ignorance is a kind of positive impoliteness. What Duffield said is trying to aggravate detective's face who wanted to make communicative interactions. Intentionally or unintentionally what Duffield said make him, the detective, perceives as offence so that he cannot investigate Duffield. Therefore, what Duffield did is a kind of positive impoliteness which he disinterests in the detective's positive face wants.

Then, Assertive speech act also exists in performing negative impoliteness. Culpeper stated that negative impoliteness is a strategy designed to damage the addressee's negative wants such as frighten, scorn, condescend, ridicule and so on (Culpeper, Haugh, & Kadar; 2017). The existed assertive speech acts in this strategy of impoliteness is shown in the table of communicative interaction below.

BSu	BSa
You <b>haven't got a shred of proof</b> for anything you're saying—" (pg.366)	Kau <b>tidak punya sepotong pun bukti</b> atas apa yang kaukatakan—" (hlm.492)

Communicative interaction in above table shows how the speaker, one of the characters in the novel, a suspect, tries to refuse what the detective claims about him. The speaker reclaims harder than the detective's one. The refusal reveals negative impoliteness as Culpeper said in his classifications of impoliteness. The detective tries to give offence to someone use with whom he interacts. However, he gets a harder threat or offence.

The last evidence that assertive speech act is used for revealing the impoliteness is found in the strategy of off-record impoliteness. This strategy is designed by means of an implicature but in such a way that one attributable intention clearly outweighs any others (Culpeper, Haugh, & Kadar; 2017). The impoliteness intention is performed impliedly in the utterances. In getting the impoliteness intention must be found its contexts.

Using assertive speech act to represent strategy of off-record impoliteness can be read in this table below.

<b>BSu</b>	<b>BSa</b>
Why do you think I stayed? (pg.267)	Kaupikir kenapa aku tetap tinggal? (hlm.316)

Above table shows utterances performing off-record impoliteness. The situation of that speech act is that the speaker who is assistant of the detective replies what her boss said about her job loyalty. The detective suggests her to consider about the job. His suggestion disturbs her interests in doing the job. She asks her boss by using utterances expressing off-record impoliteness as stated in the table.

As described above those 4 strategies of impoliteness are exposed using assertive speech acts. This study does not find data of assertive speech acts existed in the withhold politeness strategy. Although, the number of assertive existences differ one strategy to others, it can be stated that impoliteness strategy mostly is performed using assertive speech acts.

Another discussion, it is a translation study, it will be described the quality of translation on the using assertive as a strategy to represent impoliteness. The translation quality refers to model assessment proposed by Nababan, et.als. in assessing a translation quality should fulfil 3 (three) aspects. They are accuracy, acceptability and readability. Each aspect is indicated by scoring number conveying the level of quality. Score of 3 refers as high level, score of 2 as medium and score of 1 as low level of translation quality.

On each score level there are some criterions as indicators that a translation is on that level. The criterions are described as qualitative parameter. When a translation quality gets score of 3 means the quality of translation is on high level caused fulfilling some criterions on that level. A translation quality is on medium level indicated by score level of 2, and on low level by having score level f 1.

Considering this levelling it will be shown the translation quality of using assertive speech acts revealing impoliteness. Table below shows the data.

No	Assertive on Impoliteness	Translation Quality Score		
		Accuracy	Acceptability	Readability
1.	Bald on Record Impoliteness	3	3	3
2.	Positive Impoliteness	3	3	3
3.	Negative Impoliteness	3	3	3
4.	Off-record Impoliteness	3	3	3

Table reveals that all aspects translation quality gets on high score. It means all criterions for each aspect are fulfilled. In accuracy dictions, terms and other linguistic elements are translated accurately. The result of translation does not distort meaning. This makes translated meaning understood well by the reader of target languages. Then, in acceptability result of translation shows some terms, dictions and other linguistic elements usually used or established in target languages. This makes the reader familiar with words written in the sentences. The pattern relies on the pattern of Bahasa Indonesia as target language. Finally, in readability the result of translation can be read by reader easily. The meaning is understandable by reader of target language. All qualitative parameter on the three aspects are on the track to cause the result of translation got high level of quality.

At last the goal of this study was described above. The description explains that assertive speech acts used in mostly strategy of impoliteness. The result of translation reveals assertive speech acts performing impoliteness translated into high quality. The assertive speech acts used for performing impoliteness strategy are translated accurately to make reader easily read and understand well the meaning.

## V. CONCLUSION

Impoliteness is virtually absence of linguistic discussion. Impoliteness tends to relate emotive involvement to get the intention. It considers the contexts and relations among the participant in communicative interactions. It makes expressive utterances suitably to perform the impoliteness. But in this study proves assertive speech acts is another speech act used for representing impoliteness. The assertive is another way as strategy to reveal impoliteness, mostly strategy proposed by Culpeper. The assertive take a good role to present meaning to performing impoliteness.

This study also proves that assertive speech acts used for performing impoliteness translated accurately. The result of translation gives understandable meaning for the reader of target language. The translation is on the track of pattern as usually used in target language, Bahasa Indonesia. All translation of assertive used for performing impoliteness fulfil all qualitative parameters.

Next study is available to discuss another speech act to perform impoliteness. Another topic will also be a good discussion which is about comparative utterances of expressive and assertive speech acts.

## Acknowledgement

I would say thankfully for ratters and supervisors guiding me discussing this subject. I can hopefully take the supervisors recommendation to make this subject discussed in properly dissertation.

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