

RELIGIOUS MODERATION REFLECTED ON STUDENTS’ DIGITAL COMIC: A SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS

Fourica Yanottama¹, Andhika Optara Kusuma², Aris Hidayatulloh³

Universitas Duta Bangsa, Surakarta, Jl. Pinang Raya No. 47, Cemani, Sukoharjo, Central Java, Indonesia
¹210415006@mhs.udb.ac.id, ²210415001@mhs.udb.ac.id, ³aris_hidayatulloh@udb.ac.id

Abstract

This study discusses speech acts in Digital Comic created by students of UIN (State Islamic University) Surakarta who are members of the Creative Digital Skills Development Class. The comic campaigns for the importance of tolerance both from religion and fellow human beings. By using Searle’s theory, this speech acts analysis in discourse is carried out. Searle provides further categories of illocutionary speech acts into representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. This research is based on the phenomenon of intolerant in society which happened in Indonesia, especially in Surakarta. From the phenomenon, the researchers try to see the meaning through Digital Comic. The data from this study are the utterances uttered by the leading comic characters. In addition, images from the comic become secondary data of this study because the discourse consists of two units; text (verbal) and images (non-verbal). The data was processed and classified into several speech act classifications proposed by Searle, then was described qualitatively. The results of this study indicated that the speech acts reflected in digital comics by UIN Surakarta students have topics that refer to tolerance and maintaining harmony between religious communities or among people. From the 15 data, there found directive, expressive, and representative speech acts with dominant directive speech acts. The results showed that the use of directive speech acts becomes the main and the most effective reference in conveying the moral message of invitation to maintain harmony. While expressive speech acts are used to reflect empathy between friends or religion.

Keywords: Digital Comic, Religious Moderation, Speech Act

INTRODUCTION

The existence of digital comics is related to nowadays situation where all people can access all information and entertainment through digital media. The situation also makes the creation of digital comics more varied. One of them is the story about tolerance which is framed in a religious moderation. Religious moderation is an interesting focus in a multicultural society. A study by Sinaga (2022) showed that religious moderation is understood as a perspective, attitude, and action outside of extreme or discriminatory paths when believers express their religion. In addition, Moderation is an important indicator of community diversity. Not only in terms of worship, moderation is applied, but it is also applied in everyday life.

Religious moderation can not only be conveyed through verbal communication but also can be conveyed through written communication. There are several alternatives in this case, one of which is by choosing the right media whether printed or digital media. The media in this case acts as an intermediary so that messages can be channeled effectively and can be accessed by anyone at any time. The emergence of gaps between generations will add to the distraction of messages of diversity. In this case, the role of

universal media is very important. The use of digital comics is an option as a medium to convey messages and tends to be relevant to current trends where people are familiar with the digital world. In addition to conveying messages with pictures and dialogue narration, comics can be an attractive medium.

Broadly speaking, digital comics have the characteristics that comics are published digitally which consist of several panels, including serial images and a semi-guided reading flow (Anggleton, 2019). The combination of these elements is arranged into a digital comic discourse. With regard to the object of research, the researchers see that there are interesting studies in comic discourse that contain messages of religious moderation. The comic discussed in this study is illustrated in a storyline of young people who want to convey religious moderation to the general public through digital comics. The comic contains religious tolerance and maintains harmony between religious communities.

The existence of digital comics cannot be separated from the role of speech acts. This makes the dialogue in digital comics an important message about the intended meaning. Broadly speaking, the study of speech acts is included in the realm of pragmatics. Speech acts are verbal actions that occur in the world (Austin in Mey, 2001). This is an important basis for conducting this research so it was focused on the study of speech acts in a discourse. Because the object of this research was a discourse, the image element becomes an additional marker to see the meaning that the creator of digital comics wants to convey.

The study of speech acts was first introduced by a philosopher, Austin, who stated that all speech acts are speech acts, both spoken and written. Searle (1969) added that there are at least 3 types of speech acts; locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary act is a speech act to express something while illocutionary act is the intended meaning of the utterance. It is different from locutionary act; the illocutionary act focuses on the intended meaning of the speaker. According to Wijana (1996) illocutionary acts tend not only to be used to inform something but also to do something as long as the situation is spoken and carefully considered. Cummings (2007) added the additional statement that since the meaning of the utterance is intended by the speaker, there must be a strong appeal to factors such as context and the speaker's intent. Perlocutionary speech acts are speech acts whose utterances are intended to influence the interlocutor. According to Austin (1962), "Perlocutionary is when by saying something an action is carried out " .

Searle and Vanderveken (1985) began to divide illocutionary speech acts into five types. The basis of branching refers to illocutionary power or speech situations that cause the utterance refers to illocutionary speech acts. These speech acts include 1) representative, 2) directive, 3) commissive, 4) declarative, and 5) expressive. Referring to what was developed by Searle as Ground Theory; researchers will focus on classification based on Searle. This theory is relevant to the object of study which focuses on the five classifications and each classification is described to be the sub-classification. This makes the theory important to apply.

METHOD

This research focused on descriptive qualitative which emphasized the description of language phenomena that occur in the object of research. The data source for this research is the digital comic, series one to four, by UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. Data is described by qualitative methods.

The data from this research are the speech acts of the main characters in the comic series. The technique of collecting data was a note-taking technique, in which the researcher records the types and the use of speech acts in digital comic discourse at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta.

The data of this research is the utterances from the 1st comic series of UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. The data was then recorded by the researcher into the Data Tabulation which was expected to make it easier to process the data. The data in tabulation then were processed based on the type of speech act of the main character which was classified based on Searle's classification. Then by researchers the data was further divided into sub-classifications from Searle.

This analysis also involved describing the speech situation that exists in each utterance. In accordance with the realm of speech act study, the involvement of speech situations is very important to see clearly the implicates of the processed digital comic discourse analysis. The data analysis involved the classification of speech act. The analysis was written in each data based on their category. The coding was also applied to make it easier to be analyzed including the types of speech act and the gender. The sub-classification will be applied in knowing the implied meaning.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There are several types of speech acts used by the character which indicate religious moderation. The detailed explanation can be seen as follows:

Directive

Datum 1/Dir/Woman

Amber : Oh! Azan ! Maybe I'll sit here until it's done.

Rio : Excuse me (Rio comes)

Amber : **Yes? Do you need something?** (1)

The main character of the series focuses on Amber. The situation started when Amber came home from school. In a park, she is waiting for *iftar*. Another new person appeared, Rio, a non-Muslim. In the story, Rio saw Amber looking tired so Rio offered food or drinks to Amber. In the dialogue, when Rio arrives, Amber gives a response in which can help the other person. The illocutionary speech act uttered by Ambar is included in the type of indirect directive speech act. She said that she offered to help, but underneath it, Amber was more likely to just want to be open to new people.

Datum 5/Dir/Man

Amber : Thank God

Rio : **Oh, you are fasting?** (5)

When Amber breaks her fasting, Rio knows that she is a Moslem. From that situation, Rio realized that Amber was fasting. Amber confirmed this. At first, she didn't tell him that she was fasting. In this story, the illocutionary act is told in a directive manner, because previously Rio did not know that Amber was fasting. The utterance (5) is classified as the directive speech act.

Datum 7/Dir/Man

Rio : **Ah so I came on time then.** (7)

Amber : Hahaha. Yes. What a coincidence!

The utterance (7) is categorized as a directive speech act in which the illocutionary act from the utterance is to make the situation more intimate by using the funny utterance. When a person with a different religion can be together and avoid discrimination, it becomes a reflection of religious moderation to keep harmony. The utterance (7) reflects a joke or an effort to keep in touch between different religions or different gender.

Datum 9/Dir/Man

Rio : I almost forgot. **May I know your name?** (9)

Amber : Sure, my name is Amber.

The utterance (9) was spoken by Rio. It is a type of directive speech act which is included in the category of asking. Rio wants to know more about the woman beside him by asking her name. From this, it can be concluded that women tend to feel more open when they get to know someone.

Datum 12/Dir/Woman

Amber : Nice to meet you too. **So are you fasting too?** (12)

Rio : No. I'm not. I'm a non-Muslim.

The context of this story is when Amber doesn't know that Rio is a non-Muslim. Amber, who at that time started to be closer, asked if Rio was also fasting. Rio answered honestly that he is not a Muslim. The utterance (12) indicates the direct speech act in which the meaning is directly said by the speaker. There is no different meaning between the locutionary act and illocutionary act. It says the speaker wants to do something with the hearer.

Datum 15/Dir/Man

Amber : I'm Sorry for asking that question.

Rio : **It's okay.** (15) No problem.

The situation is still in the park when Amber has her *iftar*. Rio is a non-Muslim student. Amber does not know about that fact so she apologizes to Rio. The utterance (15) reflects a good response to keep the friendship in religious interfaith. It is classified as the directive speech act because the speaker states it directly to the hearer. The utterance (15) is also near the essence of tolerance.

Representative

Datum 2/Rep/Man

Amber : Yes? Do you need something?

Rio : **I just bought a drink but the seller gave more so I want to give you one because you look exhausted (2).**

The utterance (2) is one of the reflections of religious moderation which includes the tolerance between religions. It is classified into the representative speech act which has the meaning of informing something. Rio does not give a judgment about someone's appearance or religion. He is still kind to other people. Amber's words reflect the nature of women who are more likely to care and not be apathetic when there are new people. This is also influenced by female digital comic creators who have the same background.

Datum 6/Rep/Woman

Amber : **Yes, and I have just had my Iftar. (6)**

Rio : Ah so I came on time then.

The situation takes place in the park and both Amber and Rio have a good conversation. The conversation becomes more intimate so that they are closer. It is marked by Amber's next words. Women tend to convey information when is needed and tend not to convey it directly. The utterance (6) shows the response to the question from the hearer to provide affirmation which is classified as a representative speech act. As stated in the theory that representative speech acts are speech acts that connect the speaker's speech with the facts he believes.

Datum 10/Rep/Woman

Rio : I almost forgot. May I know your name?

Amber : **Sure, my name is Amber. (10)**

The utterance (10) also reflects the representative speech act which reflects informing something. The information is about the name of the woman. The situation becomes closer and the people become more open after they get to know each other. It is a natural situation when two or more people started to know each other they will share their personal information. They tend to have more conversations to keep in touch with one another.

Datum 11/Rep/Man

Amber : Sure, my name is Amber.

Rio : Oh. Hi, Amber. **I'm Rio. Nice to meet you. (11)**

The utterance (11) also reflects the introduction by using the representative speech act. Rio shares his name as the changing information because Amber also tells her personal information. This situation also reflects the good manner of mutual respect. The locution and illocution are the same that is to inform about the name of someone.

Datum 13/Rep/Man

Rio : No. I'm not. **I'm a non-Muslim. (13)**

Amber : I'm Sorry for asking that question.

The utterance (13) is categorized as the representative speech act which reflects informing something. The information is about Rio's beliefs. Rio informs that he is a non-muslim person so he does not do the fasting. Rio knows that Amber is Muslim but he

does not differentiate the religions and beliefs. This situation reflects tolerance and it deals with the terms of religious moderation.

Expressive

Datum 3/Exp/Woman

Rio : I just bought a drink but the seller gave more. So I want to give you one because you look exhausted. Don't worry I don't mean anything bad.

Amber : **Thank you** (3).

The utterance (3) becomes the situation reflecting the attitudes or norms practiced by people who get something from other people. It is categorized in the expressive speech act in the subcategory of *thanking*. Even though the utterance (3) has already represented one *turn-taking*, but it can be responded with other responses. Besides the categorization of the expressive speech act, the utterance can be proof that the nature of expressing the *thanking* is by thanking the hearer.

Datum 4/Exp/Woman

Rio : Can I sit next to you?

Amber : **Sure** (4)

The utterance (4) is also the reflection of religious moderation which reflects the welcoming. In this case, Amber is the one who says the word which is welcoming Rio to sit beside her. It reflects the positive response to one another religion. Even though the characters have different beliefs, they still have a good tolerance including not to offense. This situation becomes proof that religious moderation can be the way to keep religious interfaith.

Datum 8/Exp/Woman

Rio : Ah so I came on time then.

Amber : **Hahaha. Yes. What a coincidence!** (8)

The utterance (8) gives a positive response about the previous dialogue which reflects a joke. Amber responds it well by laughing and uttering the utterance (8). It is a natural situation when a person with a different religion is more cooperative in the conversation. In this case, utterance (8) has the position of solving the situation. The context of his speech is also no longer a conversation between two people who do not know each other. The utterance (8) will be a good communication strategy for the speaker to give the impression that he is not a rigid or apathetic person. Utterance (8) includes in the category of expressive speech acts emphasizing on giving the impression that the speaker has accepted what the speech partner has done.

Datum 14/Exp/Woman

Amber : **I'm Sorry for asking that question.** (14)

Rio : It's okay. No problem.

The utterance (14) is the correct response which is included in the type of expressive speech act reflecting the apology. This is uttered by the speaker so that the friendship

cannot be separated due to religious differences. The utterance (14) reflects a good response to keep the friendship in religious interfaith. It is classified as the directive speech act because the speaker states it directly to the hearer.

CONCLUSION

The speech acts reflected in digital comics by students of Islamic State University of Surakarta have topics that refer to tolerance and describe how harmony between religious communities or among people can make a peaceful life. The stories of the characters also influence the storyline which mostly emphasizes caring and concern for others, especially for women of different religions or different backgrounds.

From the 15 data, there are directive, expressive, and representative speech acts with dominant directive speech acts. There are 6 data reflecting the representative of the male and female characters. There are 4 data uttered by the male character which reflect the directive strategy in communication. Besides, 2 data is uttered by the female character in conveying the direct message. The 5 data reflect the representative speech act which has the male character as the dominator. The 3 data reflect the male's representative which is dominated by the informing subcategory. In the other hands, the expressive is dominated by the female character. The 4 data reflect the thanking and apology in the sub-category.

This can be concluded that the male character is more directive and dominating when he believes in conversation. On the contrary, the female character is more dominant in expressing the apology and thanking. The whole results show that the use of directive speech acts is the main and most effective reference in conveying the moral message of invitation to maintain harmony. While expressive speech acts are used to reflect empathy between friends or religion.

REFERENCES

- Austin, JL 1962. *How to Do Things with Words*. London: Oxford University press
Cambridge: University of Cambridge press
- Creswell, John W. 2009. *Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches Third Edition* . Californian: Sage Publications.
- Cummings, Louise. 2007. *Pragmatics: A Multidisciplinary Perspective (Version translation)* . Yogyakarta: Student Library.
- Mey, Jacob. L. 2001. *Pragmatics: an introduction 2nd ed* . Oxford: Blackwell publishing Movement. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico press.
- Searle, John. R. 1969. *speech Act: An Essays in the Philosophy of Language* . Pennsylvania: The University of Pennsylvania press.
- Wijana, I Dewa Putu. 1996. *Basics of Pragmatics* . Yogyakarta: Andi Offset .