



## Pragmatic Force Behind the Commissive Utterances of the Merchants at Pasa Bawah Market in Bukit

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### Abstract

The research intends to discuss the pragmatic force of the commissive utterances of the merchants during interaction with the purchasers at Pasa Bawah Market in Bukittinggi city, Indonesia. The data were collected by recording any utterances of the merchants containing the speech act of commissive. Interviewing was also conducted with some random merchants to ensure their intentions. The concept of commissive speech acts, illocutionary acts, and context was used to analyze the data. The result of the analysis indicate that there are at least three kinds of pragmatic forces in commissive utterances. They are to promise, offer, and make vows.

Keywords: merchant, Pasa Ateh, pragmatic force, purchaser, the speech act of commissive

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### 1.0 Introduction

Pragmatics is a field of science the data can be found in every human interaction in language anywhere and anytime (Revita, 2018; Revita et al., 2012). In interacting, a person will place himself and adjust the context of the language depending on the time and place where each individual cannot be separated from the SPEAKING approach. The acronym stands for setting and scene, and participants, ends, acts sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms of interaction and interpretation, and genre (Hymes, 2013). Besides, different aspects of language use are commonplace for humans who can adapt to the dynamics of language according to the conditions and situations experienced.

Language interactions in everyday life quite a lot occur in public places such as schools, offices, or markets. Pragmatic research with the language interaction that occurs at the Pasa Bawah Market, Bukittinggi, becomes the focus of this study. It is the market able to provide a lot of speech data for research. The market is the most crowded place and used to use speech freely, especially in Bukittinggi City, which is one of the centers of tourism crowds. Therefore, this research is suitable for conducting in Pasa Bawah Market. Moreover, the main focus of this study is to look at the forms of commissive speech acts that have the potential to occur in Pasar Bawah Market in Bukit tinggi.

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## 2.0 Literature Review

A speaker is expected to convey the meaning and purpose of speech that listeners can understand and accept. However, not all utterances could be properly understood as the participants do not communicate in the same context. Pragmatics, thus, is defined variously by many experts. As stated by Yule et al. (2010) that (a) Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning; (b) Pragmatics is the study of the interpretation of what speakers mean in specific contexts and how that context affects listeners; (c) Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning. Pragmatics is the study of meaning or aspects beyond the meaning of the utterances uttered; (d) Pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated than is said.

Pragmatics is identical to speech act (action via utterances). There are three pillars of the speech act. They are the locutionary act (the act of saying something), the illocutionary act (the act of doing something), and the perlocutionary act (the effect of the utterance) (Austin, 1962). The basic unit of the three pillars is the illocutionary act (J. R. Searle, 1968).

The Illocutionary act is the leading business in the speech act. In the illocutionary, there is a force called pragmatic force (Ike Revita, 2013) as the Types of illocutionary speech acts are categorized into five: assertive, directive, expressive, declaration, and commissive (Searle, 1979; Vuori & Searle, 1980; Ike Revita, 2013).

Commissive speech acts are utterances that entrust the action to be carried out by the speaker (Geoffrey Leech, 1993). The commissive speech acts may function to express promises and offers (Yule, 2006). For example, they are promising, swearing, and offering something.

To promise means to make a promise. The speaker promises the speech partner to do as he says (Kissine, 2013). To offer implies that the speaker provides something (J. R. K. F. Searle & Bierwisch, 1980). To vow means to promise to do something (if the request is granted and so on) (Revita, 2020).

## 3.0 Methodology

This study analyzes commissive utterances used by the merchants in *Pasa Bawah* Market in Bukittinggi. The data are any utterances containing commissive speech acts uttered by the merchants when there was an interaction between them and the purchasers. An observational method with the participatory and non-participatory techniques was used in collecting data. Recording and interviewing practice was also implemented. The author recorded every interaction that occurred using a recording device. The recording device is an audio recording device and a camera. The interview was conducted to ensure the speakers' intention when committing things to the purchasers. All the utterances were transcribed to make the data classification easier. The data in the Minangkabau language are translated into English to present the analysis result (Sudaryanto, 2015).

## 4.0 Finding

When interacting with the purchasers, the merchants at *Pasar Bawah* Market in Bukittinggi also used the speech act of commissive. There are at least three forces of the utterances containing commissive. They are:

### 1. to Promise

In commissive utterances, there are also promises to convince the hearers. In this context, speakers are merchants, and hearers are purchasers. Promises are everyday things that merchants do at *Pasar Bawah* Market in Bukittinggi. It intends to make its customers believe in the products they sell. This commissive speech act expresses a promise to agree or fulfill the speaker's words, as seen in the following data:

Dialog 1

Purchaser : Pak, lai ado jedai ( a kind of hairpin)

'Sir, is there any jedai?'

Merchant : Ko jedai ma

'It is jedai

Purchaser : Bara ko, Pak

'How much is it, Sir?

Merchant : Tiga ribu

'Three thousand rupiahs?'

Merchant : Kalau nan rancaknyo sepuluh

'The better one is ten thousand?'

Purchaser : Apa bedanya, Pak?

'What is the difference, Sir?'

Merchant : Ori, rancak, kareh, taba, padek

'It is original, good, tough, thick, and perfect.'

**Lah jaleh kon nan rancak, kuek**

'It is seen that this one is much better and also strong

Purchaser : Oh iko nan ori, ko?

'Is it the original one?'  
 Merchant : *Ah cubo nan kaca nan murah*  
 'The cheap one is made from mirror'  
 Purchaser : *Oh iko kaco.*  
 'Is it from the mirror?'  
 Merchant : **Lah jaleh kon nan rancak, kuek (konteks jedai ori)** '  
 'It is obvious that this one is good and stronger.'  
 Purchaser : *Kuranglah lai, Pak. Ndak, duo limo baleh!*  
 'Can the price be reduced, Sir? Two jedai is fifteen thousand rupiahs?'  
 Merchant : *Ah, lapan, lapan, anam baleh se lah*  
 'Eight, eight, just sixteen.'  
 Purchase : *Lima belas saja, Pak*  
 'Is it find if it is fifteen thousand rupiahs, Sir?'  
 Merchant : *Ko ambiaklah*  
 'Oke'

The data above indicates that the merchants tried to assure and persuade the purchaser to buy a piece of cloth. The purchaser got confused about choosing the original one with good quality and the standard clothespin. The merchant had an effort to convince the purchaser of the quality of the goods he sold. The original goods have a higher price than the standard ones. The seller also often emphasizes that the original is stronger and much better. This can be found in the speech of the seller, '*lah jaleh kon nan rancak, kuek*' (It is clearly seen that this one is much better and also strong). Through this speech, the seller indirectly promises that the original *jedai* is much better and stronger. To ensure the purchaser, a similar utterance was delivered twice.

Dialog 2  
 Merchant : *Iko se lah ambiak, kak*  
 'Why don't you take this one, Sister'  
 Purchaser : *Iko gadang jo akak ko, ketek jo awak*  
 'This one is big for me but small for her.'  
 Merchant : *Iko nan nomor 7*  
 'It is number 7'  
 Purchaser : *Indak ado nan 7,5, kak?*  
 'Do you have number 7.5?'  
 Merchant : **Bisuak wak buekan, kak**  
 'I will make it for you tomorrow.'  
 Purchaser : *Kak ambiak iko se lah*  
 'I will take this one.'

Dialog 2 takes place in the ring shop. The purchaser wants to buy a ring, but none of the rings match her finger. When the buyer tries ring number 7 ring, the merchant immediately advises her to buy it. However, because she wants to save money by buying a ring that is arranged in four, she plans to split it in two. Buying one ring but getting two pieces. When fitting the rings, the purchaser stated that *iko gadang jo akak ko, ketek jo uda* 'The size is too big for him but small for mine). Therefore, the purchaser asks whether there is a ring with the number 7.5. The merchant then promised to make it tomorrow by saying *Bisuaklah awak buekan, Kak* 'I will make it tomorrow, Sis'.

The promise to create the new ring based on the purchaser's request is a commissive utterance. The merchant will do that for future action. This promise influences the purchaser. She finally buys the ring though a little bit smaller on her finger. The two data above indicated that *Pasa Bawah* Market merchants use many commissive utterances with a promise function. It is categorized as the strategy to convince the purchasers and maintain those purchasers to go back for transactions at their store.

Dialog 3  
 Merchant : **Kak, sanjai kak? Sapuluah ribunyo**  
 'Please buy this *Sanjai*, Sister! Only Ten thousand rupiahs.'  
 Purchaser : *Lai lamak ko?*  
 'Is it delicious?'  
 Merchant : **Kalau indak lamak, pulangan se lai kak**  
 'If not delicious, you can return it here, Sister.'

The dialog occurs between the merchant of *Karupuk Sanjai* (traditional and specific crackers made from cassava) and the purchaser. The merchant tries to offer the *Sanjai* by saying **Kak, sanjai kak? Sapuluah ribunyo**. This offer is supported by further information related to the price. The situation categorizes ten thousand rupiahs for a pack of *Sanjai* very cheaply. Moreover, the merchant even guarantees that the cracker is very delicious. Otherwise, it can be returned

Such a way of communication is often found in the interaction between the merchants and the purchasers in *Pasa Ateh* Market in Bukittinggi. This is regarded as the strategy for the merchants to make the purchasers believe that what they say is correct. Even they let the purchasers taste the crackers and other foods they sell. Thus, the purchasers will not be disappointed as they have already sampled.

A similar example is also displayed in dialog 4 as the merchant tries to persuade the purchasers to buy the goods he sells by giving a discount. Discount is one tool to attract the purchasers to buy. The merchant, in this case, offers a discount if the purchaser buys three pieces of baby pants.

Dialog 4

Merchant : *Kalau awak ambiak 3 (celana bayi) awak agih diskon. Pacah talua, Kak.*  
'As you take three pieces, I will discount the price. Bestseller.'

### 2. To offer

An offering is an action taken to show something to be bought, taken, or received (Norrick, 2015). This is very easy to find in market trading activities, especially in traditional markets like *Pasa Bawah* Market. It can be seen in the following dialog 2.

Dialog 5

Merchant : *Balilah patai apak ko, Nak!*

'Please buy this *petai*, Girl!'

Purchaser : *Indak, Pak.*

'No, Sir'

Merchant : ***Kamek mah.***

'It is very delicious.'

Purchaser : *Awak ndak pandai masak do, Pak*

'I do not cook, Sir.'

Merchant : *Maso iyo padusi indak pandai masak?*

'How come that the girl cannot cook.'

The conversation involving the merchant of *petai* and the purchaser is one of the acts of offering. The merchant offered his goods, even though the purchaser flatly refused. However, the merchant is still trying to provide the wares by showing the advantages, as stated in the utterance '*kamek ko mah*' (It is very delicious). The statement indicates that the merchant also uses the commissive function of offers.

Dialog 6

Merchant : *A nio, Nak? Lai nio ikan indosiar ko?*

'What are you seeking, Girl? Do you want the Indosiar fish?'

Purchaser : *Indak, Mak. Awak mancaliak se nyo*

'No, Uncle. I just take a look.'

Merchant : ***Caliak-caliaklah! Mano tau ado nan k tuju***

'You can see. Who knows if you want to buy some.'

Purchaser : *Iyo Mak*

'Yes, Uncle.'

Dialog 6 occurred at the fish seller's kiosk. When the purchaser comes, the merchant immediately offers her to buy *Indosiar* fish. This fish has semicircular fins that surround its upper body vertically. This fish is called the *Indosiar* fish because it is similar to the flying fish logo on the Indosiar TV station, one of Indonesia's private TV stations. Then the merchant also follows the purchaser's will, namely, sightseeing. However, the merchant also offers her to look at the fish. He expected that the purchaser would be interested in buying some.

Thus, the commissive speech act of offering always functions well among merchants. Merchants are the main actors in making offers to the purchasers. Therefore, commissive speech acts still function very well for merchants in transactions.

### 3. to Vow

A vow is a promise that is made if a wish or request is obeyed (Revita, 2009). Usually, speakers make their vows for special wishes, but they have not been fulfilled. He will carry out his vow if the speaker's will can be realized. From the data obtained at *Pasa Bawah* Market in Bukittinggi, the merchant used it to influence the purchaser to buy their goods.

Dialog 7

Purchaser : *Bara ko kak?*

'How much is it, Sist?'

Merchant : *Untuak akak ambiak se lah tujuh puluh*  
 'For you is only seventy thousand rupiahs.'  
 Purchaser : *Indak kurang lai kak?*  
 'Can you reduce the price?'  
 Merchant : *Bara kurangnyo?*  
 'How much??'  
 Purchaser : *Limo puluh lah kak*  
 'Fifty thousand, Sist?' Merchant : *Bara banyak ka akak ambiak?*  
 'How many pieces will you buy?'  
 Purchaser : *Ciek*  
 'One piece'  
 Merchant : *Akak ambiak duo, awak agiah sagitu*  
 'When you take two pieces, I will give as much as that.'

The dialog above shows a vowed speech act performed by the merchant. The context of this conversation is in a clothing store. The purchaser wanted to buy clothes but the price was too high for her. There is a bargain. Finally, the merchant vows that if the purchaser acknowledges two shirts, the cost of the clothes will be reduced according to her wishes.

### 5.0 Discussion

The speech act of commissive is the action that the speaker will do in the future. The commissive speech act is a futuristic action of the speaker. Different from other types of speech act, the one responsible for acting is the speaker.

In *Pasa Bawah* Market in Bukittinggi, many merchants sell various goods, from cloth to food. The utterances of the merchants are also various because the main end of the merchants are the goods sold out. Thus, they try to be creative to attract the purchasers. One of them is by using commissive utterances. These commissive utterances are assumed to have distinctive forces on the purchasers. Based on the analysis, the occurrence of the three forces is quite balanced. No different significant number of the certain using of each force. It can be described in the following chart.

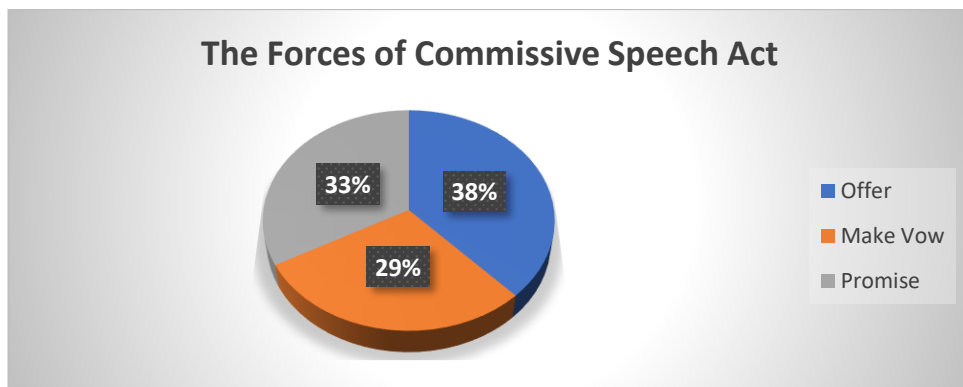


Figure 1. The Occurrence of the Force of Commissive Speech Act

Offer occurs at 38%, followed by the promise at 33%, and make a vow at 29%. Offer occurs more than the other two is caused of the fundamental principle in the trading activity, the merchants are expected to offer the product. It is a strategy to declare the products they sell. Moreover, offering the product is a kind of reminder to the purchaser if they need to buy those goods. Being humble and hospital in trading activity might give an excellent impression to the visitors of the shops. Initially, they might not be willing to buy, but as the merchants show friendly service, it can change their minds. They even spend all their money in the shop because of the commissive utterances containing pragmatic force.

### 6.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

In the realm of trade, the process of transaction is the main action. To do it, the way the participants are involved is very challenging. It implies that the merchants must be able to ensure the purchaser for the transaction can be smoothly done. Pragmatic force is one strategy used by the merchants in *Pasa Bawah* Market in Bukittinggi, Indonesia. There are three pragmatic forces that the merchants have when the transaction is done. They are to offer, to promise, and to make a vow. These three forces belong to the commissive utterances that the speakers will do activities in the future.

