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Directive Speech Acts of School Principals toward Teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa: A Sociopragmatic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examines directive speech acts used by school principals in educational leadership communication. It aims to describe the forms, functions, and social contexts of directive speech acts employed by the principal toward teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa. This research adopts a sociopragmatic approach using a descriptive qualitative method. Data were collected through direct observation, interviews, and recordings of communication interactions between the principal and teachers in various situations, including meetings, coaching sessions, and informal conversations. Data analysis was conducted by identifying types of directive speech acts based on Searle's theory and interpreting their social contexts through Leech's politeness principle. The findings reveal that the principal's directive speech acts take the forms of commands, requests, suggestions, prohibitions, and invitations. Their primary functions are to direct, regulate, and motivate teachers in carrying out their professional responsibilities. Socially, the use of directive speech acts is influenced by power relations, social distance, and communication settings. The principal consistently applies politeness strategies to maintain harmonious relationships and to enhance communication effectiveness within the school environment.

1. Introduction

Language is a fundamental instrument in human social life and serves as a reflection of cultural identity and social values within society (Devianty, 2017). It functions not only as a means of conveying information, but also as a medium for building social relationships, negotiating meaning, expressing emotions, and performing various social roles. In the context of interpersonal communication, language plays an active role in regulating actions, shaping perceptions, and reinforcing both individual and group identities. Language is a reflection of a nation's identity as well as the primary medium in the process of human communication (Mailani et al., 2022). Every individual continuously relies on language in various forms of

social interaction, whether to convey ideas, express opinions, or build interpersonal relationships. Within the context of social life, language functions not merely as a tool of expression, but also as an instrument that represents cultural values, systems of knowledge, and prevailing social norms. Historically and sociologically, language has developed as part of a cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. It has become an integral component of social traditions that strengthen solidarity within community groups (Dwitasari et al, 2025).

Sociopragmatics is a branch of pragmatics that emphasizes the relationship between language use and the social context of society. This field is closely related to sociology because it examines the meanings of utterances that emerge in social interactions (Hestiaty et al., 2025). It emphasizes that sociopragmatics focuses on analyzing language use within specific cultural contexts and social situations. One of the central concepts in pragmatics and sociopragmatics is the speech act, a theory first introduced by Austin (1962), which refers to communicative actions realized through utterances. Speech acts encompass various forms of linguistic actions such as giving commands, making requests, offering advice, expressing prohibitions, and others. In other words, through language, individuals not only convey information but also perform social actions.

Speech acts refer to statements or utterances that not only convey information but also function to perform actions, such as giving orders, making requests, or extending invitations (Austin, 1962; Purba, 2011). From a pragmatic perspective, speech acts are analyzed based on their intentions and contexts. Meanwhile, from a sociopragmatic perspective, speech acts are understood by considering how social factors influence their forms, word choices, and communication strategies. Thus, the relationship among these concepts lies in the effort to understand language not merely as a system of signs, but also as a medium of interaction shaped by situational and cultural contexts.

Speech acts constitute an important aspect of pragmatics that examines the relationship between the speaker and the hearer in a communicative interaction (Chaer & Agustina, 1995; Akbar 2018). In practice, speech acts involve not only the speaker and the listener (or the writer and the reader in written communication), but also various contextual elements that accompany the utterance at the time it is produced, such as situational background, social relations, communicative intentions, and emotional expressions. From the speaker's perspective, language may function as a means of personal or emotive expression, serving to convey attitudes, viewpoints, or feelings toward the topic being discussed. This function indicates that speakers do not merely transmit information denotatively, but also convey connotative meanings that reflect the emotions embedded in their utterances (Susanti et al., 2024). Through intonation, word choice, and manner of delivery, listeners are able to perceive emotional cues such as joy, sadness, anger, or disappointment contained in the speech.

Based on preliminary observations conducted by the researcher at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa, it was found that the principal actively employs various forms of directive speech acts in daily interactions with teachers. For instance, during meetings as well

as informal conversations in the teachers' room, the principal frequently provides directions or instructions aimed at regulating the implementation of administrative duties, maintaining discipline, and overseeing teaching activities (Anita et al., 2022). The researcher observed that the principal's manner of delivery is not always explicit, rather, it is often adjusted to the situational context, relational closeness, and the emotional conditions of the teachers (Mughofar, 2018). To date, numerous studies on directive speech acts within educational contexts have been conducted, particularly those examining interactions between teachers and students or among educators in classroom settings (Darwis, 2019; Mawaddah et al., 2020). These studies generally focus on pragmatic aspects of classroom communication, the use of polite language, and various forms of speech acts in teaching and learning activities (Sari et al., 2021). However, research that specifically investigates directive speech acts performed by school principals toward teachers as a form of vertical communication within the managerial structure of schools remains relatively limited, especially in secondary schools located in non-urban areas.

Furthermore, limited research has explored the variation of linguistic strategies employed by school principals in delivering directions, commands, or requests to teachers within formal institutional contexts such as SMA Negeri 1 Banawa. In fact, such interactions have significant implications for the working climate, instructional effectiveness, and even overall teacher performance. On the other hand, previous studies have tended to apply pragmatic approaches that generally focus on the meaning of utterances within specific contexts. In contrast, this study adopts a more in-depth analysis through a sociopragmatic perspective, a branch of pragmatics that integrates linguistic features with the social context of the speakers. This approach is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of language use in communication processes, particularly through the analysis of directive speech acts, by revealing the dynamics of power relations, politeness strategies, and message effectiveness in hierarchical relationships between superiors and subordinates (Wibawa et al., 2021). Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by focusing on the forms and functions of directive speech acts used by the principal toward teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa. This research not only aims to enrich the body of knowledge in sociopragmatics within the field of education, but also to provide practical contributions to the development of leadership communication within the school environment.

2. Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach as it aims to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the social and linguistic realities that emerge in communication practices between the school principal and teachers, particularly concerning the use of directive speech acts within the environment of SMA Negeri 1 Banawa. This approach does not focus on testing hypotheses quantitatively or on statistical measurement; rather, it emphasizes the exploration of meaning, context, and the intentions underlying each utterance produced. By analyzing spoken language data in contextual and naturalistic settings, the study seeks to capture authentic patterns of communication as they occur in real

interactions. Qualitative research is a research method oriented toward gaining an in-depth understanding of social realities and phenomena experienced by research subjects (Moleong, 2017; Sudaryono, 2018). These phenomena may include behaviors, perceptions, motivations, actions, and various other forms of subjective experiences that cannot be measured quantitatively. This type of research is conducted by emphasizing the wholeness or totality of meaning (holistic) possessed by a phenomenon within its natural context.

In its implementation, descriptive qualitative research relies on systematically organized verbal descriptions presented through narrative language, while utilizing various naturalistic methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The primary objective of this approach is not to generalize findings, but rather to explore in detail and comprehensively the meanings underlying human actions and experiences, enabling researchers to obtain a contextual understanding of social realities as they naturally occur. Through this approach, the present study seeks to reveal the forms of directive speech acts employed, as well as the functions of directive speech acts within leadership practices in the school environment (Nuraini et al., 2025).

This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa, which was selected as the research site based on the relevance of its educational institutional context to the sociopragmatic focus of the study, particularly directive speech acts in institutional interactions. The subject of this research was the school principal, with the primary focus on directive utterances used in oral communication between the principal and teachers within the school environment. Data were collected through direct observation and field note documentation of the principal's utterances in two communication settings: (1) formal situations, namely during official meetings with teachers, and (2) nonformal situations, namely in spontaneous daily interactions occurring within the school office environment. These two situational contexts were selected to provide a comprehensive depiction of the use of directive speech acts across different settings, both those that are structural and planned, as well as those that are more fluid and interpersonal in nature. Qualitative data analysis was conducted both during the field data collection process and after all data had been gathered, employing an interactive analysis model. Data analysis occurred simultaneously with the data collection process through several systematic stages, namely: data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification, and final conclusion formulation.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the research findings obtained through a series of systematic data collection procedures, including audio recording, direct field observation, note-taking techniques, and in-depth data transcription. The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa, focusing on the phenomenon of directive speech acts that emerge in interactions between the school principal and teachers. In this research, the principal acts as the speaker or performer of the speech acts, while the teachers serve as the interlocutors who are the targets of those utterances. All

collected data were analyzed using a sociopragmatic framework, an approach that examines the relationship between social aspects and pragmatic functions in language use. This analysis specifically focuses on the forms and functions of directive speech acts employed by the principal within the school communication context. The analysis encompasses not only formal situations, such as meetings and official school gatherings, but also nonformal situations occurring in daily school interactions, including communication through online media such as the school's WhatsApp group. The findings of this study are expected to provide a comprehensive depiction of the principal's directive communication patterns toward teachers across various situational contexts and communication media at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa.

Forms of Directive Speech Acts

Requests

Ibrahim (as cited in Sari et al., 2021) states that directive speech acts of the request type constitute a form of communication that represents the speaker's desires, expectations, or needs conveyed to the interlocutor with the aim that the interlocutor performs a particular action in response to the utterance. In this context, requests do not merely function as expressions of willingness; rather, they contain complex pragmatic elements, as speakers attempt to influence interlocutors through polite, persuasive, and contextually appropriate strategies (Ardiansyah et al., 2020). Therefore, request speech acts reflect the interpersonal relationship between speakers and interlocutors, in which social factors, situational contexts, and power relations influence how speakers convey their intentions so that they may be appropriately received.

Data 1

Principal : "Ladies and Gentlemen, I expect you to remain in the classroom during the final periods of instruction, as those hours are highly vulnerable to undesirable incidents." ("Bapak/Ibu saya harap dijam-jam terakhir pembelajaran agar masuk kelas, karena dijam begitu, sangat rawan terjadi hal yang tidak diinginkan")

Teacher 1 : "Yes, Sir." ("Baik Bapak")

The utterance, "Bapak/Ibu, saya harap di jam-jam terakhir pembelajaran agar masuk kelas, karena di jam begitu sangat rawan terjadi hal yang tidak diinginkan," is categorized as a directive speech act of request. This form is marked by the use of the phrase "I expect/I hope," which constructs a softened imperative structure and indicates guidance or a request conveyed politely to the interlocutors. The sentence is arranged using a formal and persuasive linguistic style, thereby remaining appropriate within the institutional hierarchical context and the norms of politeness prevailing in the school environment.

From a sociopragmatic perspective, the selection of the directive request form reflects the speaker's pragmatic awareness of the social structure and institutional hierarchy embedded within the school context. The principal, as the speaker, adjusts

the form of the utterance to align with his or her authoritative position while still taking into account linguistic politeness norms, communication ethics, and professional etiquette governing formal interactions with teachers. This utterance form demonstrates that the speaker considers not only the literal meaning of the sentence but also adapts linguistic strategies to the social conditions, status, and interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the interlocutors. Consequently, the chosen sentence structure remains polite, mitigated, and contextually appropriate within the institutional setting without reducing its level of directiveness.

Interrogative Form

In the context of directive speech acts used by the school principal toward teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa, interrogative forms are frequently employed as a polite and effective communication strategy in conveying instructions or directions. The principal may use questions not merely to seek information, but rather to encourage teachers to promptly complete assigned tasks. Thus, interrogative utterances function as a softened form of directive, maintaining interpersonal harmony while still carrying illocutionary force that directs teachers' actions. These findings indicate that in institutional communication practices, particularly within hierarchical relationships such as those between principals and teachers, directive speech acts realized through interrogative forms serve as a strategic means of exercising authority while preserving linguistic politeness.

Data 2

Principal : "Ladies and Gentlemen, who will serve as the teaching model for the instructional video production next week?" ("Bapak/ibu siapakah yang akan menjadi model ketika pembuatan video mengajar minggu depan?")

Teacher 1 : "For The Language subject, Ms. Angelina." ("untuk mata pelajaran bahasa ibu Angelina.")

Teacher 2 : "For Social Studies, Mr. Afriadi." ("mata pelajaran IPS Pak Afriadi.")

Teacher 3 : "For Science, Ms. Fadilah." ("untuk MIPA Ibu Fadilah.")

The utterance, "Bapak/Ibu, siapakah yang akan menjadi model ketika pembuatan video mengajar minggu depan?" is categorized as a directive speech act in the form of an interrogative. Linguistically, this form is marked by the use of the interrogative word "who," which signals a request for information from the interlocutors. The sentence is structurally constructed as an interrogative, thereby formally directing the interlocutors to provide a response or clarification regarding the selection of a teacher to serve as the model. This interrogative structure reflects the characteristics of a directive question, in which the speaker employs a polite questioning form that aligns with the institutional context and social hierarchy within the school environment.

Command

Ibrahim (as cited in Sari et al., 2021) states that in directive speech acts realized as commands, the speaker expresses his or her intention and will directly to the interlocutor, so that the interlocutor interprets that intention as a basis or impetus to perform a particular action. Thus, command forms do not merely represent the verbal expression of intention, but also carry a strong illocutionary force aimed at influencing the interlocutor's behavior in accordance with the speaker's expectations. Within a pragmatic framework, command utterances reflect an interactional relationship in which the speaker occupies a position of authority to direct actions, while the interlocutor responds by considering the prevailing social context and norms of politeness.

Data 3

Principal : "Ms. Risma, always coordinate with me regarding the Dapodik data." ("Ibu Risma selalu kordinasikan kepada saya tentang dapodik")

Teacher : "Yes, Sir." ("Baik bapak")

The utterance, "Ibu Risma selalu kordinasikan kepada saya tentang Dapodik," is categorized as a directive speech act of command. Linguistically, this form is marked by the use of the imperative verb "coordinate," which signals a direct instruction from the speaker to the interlocutor. The sentence structure is explicitly imperative, indicating that the speaker delivers the instruction firmly while remaining appropriate within a formal context. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this utterance reflects the speaker's awareness of the prevailing social hierarchy and norms of politeness in formal school communication. The principal employs a direct imperative structure that aligns with his or her institutional authority. Consequently, the sentence form remains consistent with the institutional context and the professional relationship between the speaker and the teacher as the interlocutor.

Prohibition

Ibrahim explains that prohibition speech acts fundamentally share similarities with commands or orders, as both aim to direct the interlocutor's behavior. The distinction lies in the expected direction of the action. In prohibition speech acts, the speaker expresses his or her intention for the interlocutor not to perform a particular action. Thus, prohibition constitutes a variation of directive speech acts that carries an illocutionary force aimed at restraining action rather than encouraging it. Nevertheless, it still reflects the social relationship and the speaker's authority over the interlocutor within a particular communicative context. The following section presents the findings related to directive speech acts in the form of prohibition.

Data 4

Principal : "Ladies and Gentlemen, no one is to leave before 4 p.m., as we serve as role models for our students." ("Bapak/Ibu tidak ada yang pulang sebelum jam 4 sore, karena kita ini adalah contoh bagi siswa-siswi kita")

Teacher 1 : "Yes, Sir." ("baik pak")

Teacher 2 : "Understood, Sir." ("siap Bapak")

The utterance, “Bapak/Ibu tidak ada yang pulang sebelum jam 4 sore, karena kita ini adalah contoh bagi siswa-siswi kita,” is categorized as a directive speech act of prohibition. Linguistically, this form is marked by the use of the negation marker “not/no one,” which constructs a negative imperative structure indicating restriction or prevention of an action. The sentence is delivered in a firm yet formal manner, aligning with the institutional context and social hierarchy within the school environment. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this utterance reflects the speaker’s adjustment to social status and prevailing norms of politeness in interactions between the principal and teachers. The prohibition is conveyed through an authoritative structure consistent with the principal’s institutional role, while the inclusion of justification (“as we serve as role models for our students”) functions to reinforce acceptance and compliance among interlocutors.

Granting Permission

Ibrahim (as cited Sari et al., 2021), explains that speech acts of granting permission share similar characteristics with commands and prohibitions, as all are grounded in the speaker’s authority within a communicative context. In this case, the speaker occupies a position endowed with social legitimacy or institutional authority to determine whether a particular action may or may not be carried out by the interlocutor. Thus, granting permission functions not merely as a form of linguistic approval, but also reflects power relations and social roles between the speaker and the interlocutor. The act of giving permission represents a form of behavioral regulation exercised within the boundaries of authority that are institutionally or socially recognized. The following section presents the findings related to directive speech acts in the form of granting permission.

Data 5

Principal : “Anyone may use the projector during teaching, but please always return it to its original place. This is simply to ensure that when the school needs to use it, the projector can be easily found.” (“Siapa saja boleh menggunakan proyektor ketika mengajar, tetapi selalu kembalikan ke tempatnya semula, bukan apa-apa bapak/ibu agar ketika sekolah mau menggunakannya proyektor mudah ditemukan le.”)

Teacher : “Understood, Sir.” (“siap pak”)

The utterance, “Siapa saja boleh menggunakan proyektor ketika mengajar, tetapi selalu kembalikan ke tempatnya semula ...” is categorized as a directive speech act of granting permission. Linguistically, this form is marked by the use of the modal “may,” which signals a positive imperative structure that allows or authorizes interlocutors to perform a particular action. The sentence is delivered in a formal and polite manner, aligning with the institutional hierarchy within the school environment. Notably, the utterance combines permission with a subsequent directive obligation (“please always return it to its original place”), indicating regulatory control over the permitted action. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this utterance reflects the speaker’s adjustment to social status and normative expectations in institutional communication. The principal exercises institutional authority to grant access while simultaneously maintaining order and

accountability. This demonstrates that granting permission not only conveys approval but also functions as a mechanism for behavioral regulation within socially recognized boundaries of authority.

Advising

Ibrahim (as cited in Sari et al., 2021) states that in certain contexts, what is conveyed by the speaker does not constitute an expression of a desire for the interlocutor to perform a specific action, but rather reflects the speaker's belief that the action will be beneficial or serve the best interest of the interlocutor. Thus, such utterances are not oriented toward imposing action, but instead function as implicit encouragement for the interlocutor to act based on personal awareness and consideration. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this type of speech act demonstrates a subtle communication strategy. The speaker employs illocutionary force not to command directly, but to influence the interlocutor through rationalization and appeals to shared interests. In this way, advising reflects both interpersonal sensitivity and awareness of social norms within hierarchical communication contexts.

Data 6

Principal : "Please also pay attention to your prayers. It should not be neglected. Even though we are extremely busy, prayers must still be performed, as our busyness should not make us forget our obligations." ("Sholatnya itu juga dilihat le, jangan begitu /sudah anu kita, sudah dilipa sholat, sholat tetap dilaksanakan meskipun kita sibuknya luar biasa, itu tidak mengurangi kita harus lupa sama kewajiban".)

The utterance above is categorized as a directive speech act of advising. Linguistically, this form is marked by the use of the prohibitive marker "do not" and sentence structures that suggest and remind interlocutors of actions that ought to be carried out. Rather than imposing an obligation through direct command, the speaker frames the message as moral and professional guidance. The sentence is delivered in a relatively informal style while maintaining an advisory tone, reflecting the communicative context between the principal and teachers. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this utterance illustrates a subtle directive strategy in which the speaker appeals to shared values and responsibilities. The principal does not rely solely on institutional authority but instead emphasizes collective moral awareness, thereby strengthening interpersonal rapport while still guiding behavior in accordance with social and religious norms within the school environment. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this utterance reflects the speaker's awareness of social status, politeness norms, and interpersonal relationships. The principal employs a linguistic form that delivers reminders in a subtle manner while still maintaining institutional authority, ensuring that the message is conveyed in a way that respects teachers as interlocutors.

Request Function

Data 7

Principal : “Please, Ladies and Gentlemen, class time has started. If there are other activities, kindly conclude them first, as teaching is a mandatory duty.” (“Mintol Bpk ibu, sekarang sudah masuk, kalau ada keg lain tolong sudahi dulu, mengajar tugas wajib”)

The principal’s utterance, “Mintol Bapak/Ibu, sekarang sudah masuk, kalau ada kegiatan lain tolong sudahi dulu, mengajar tugas wajib,” represents a directive speech act of request that functions to direct interlocutors to perform a specific action namely, to discontinue other activities and immediately carry out teaching duties. At the illocutionary level, the utterance conveys a requesting intention expressed through polite linguistic forms. This is marked by the use of the expressions “please” (mintol; tolong), which function as politeness markers within the hierarchical relationship between the principal and teachers. Although the directive carries institutional authority, the softened request structure helps maintain interpersonal harmony while ensuring compliance with professional responsibilities.

Interrogative Function

Data 8

Principal : “Ma’am, when will you conduct your research? So that it can be completed as well I always support teachers who pursue further education.” (“Ibu kapan juga penelitiannya? Biar sama-sama selesai saya selalu mendukung guru-guru yang melanjutkan pendidikan”)

Teacher : “This month, Sir.” (“bulan ini juga bapak”)

The utterance, “Ibu kapan juga penelitiannya? ...” is categorized as a directive speech act realized through an interrogative function. The interrogative word “when” linguistically marks a request for information directed to the teacher regarding the timing of the research activity. At the illocutionary level, the utterance carries a directive force in the form of prompting the teacher to provide certainty about the research schedule. Although structured as a question, the utterance implicitly encourages task completion. The additional supportive statement (“I always support teachers who pursue further education”) functions as a positive politeness strategy, reinforcing interpersonal rapport while maintaining the directive intent embedded in the inquiry.

Command Function

Data 9

Principal : “This morning I will be going to Labuan. Please look after the school, Ms. Hadijah, as well as the students.” (“Pagi ini saya mau ke labuan, jaga sekolah ibu hadijah dan juga anak-anak”)

Teacher : “Yes, Sir.” (“iye pak”)

The utterance, “Pagi ini saya mau ke Labuan, jaga sekolah Ibu Hadijah dan juga anak-anak,” functions as a directive speech act of command aimed at instructing the interlocutor to assume responsibility for safeguarding the school during the

principal's absence. Linguistically, this directive is marked by the verb "look after/guard" (jaga), which carries the meaning of ordering or instructing someone to perform supervisory or protective actions. The use of this verb indicates the presence of illocutionary force associated with command, reflecting the speaker's intention for the interlocutor to carry out a specific task. From a sociopragmatic perspective, the command form remains attentive to politeness norms and social relations between superior and subordinate within the school environment (Rahardi, 2005). Although directive in nature, the utterance is conveyed in a functional and contextually appropriate manner, balancing institutional authority with interpersonal consideration.

Prohibition Function

Data 10

Principal : "Do not leave the classroom during instructional hours, as this is usually the reason why students wander around when their teacher is not present." ("Jangan meninggalkan kelas bapak/ibu pada saat jam pembelajaran, biasanya itu penyebab anak-anak berkeliaran karena gurunya tidak di dalam kelas")

The utterance, "Jangan meninggalkan kelas Bapak/Ibu pada saat jam pembelajaran ..." functions as a directive speech act of prohibition, as the speaker (the principal) intends to forbid the interlocutors (teachers) from performing an action deemed inconsistent with their professional responsibilities. Linguistically, this utterance is marked by the use of the prohibitive marker "do not" (jangan), which lexically functions as an indicator of prohibition or negative imperative form. The use of this marker reflects a prohibitive illocutionary force, through which the speaker firmly emphasizes that leaving the classroom during teaching hours is not permitted. From a sociopragmatic standpoint, the prohibition is reinforced by the inclusion of causal justification namely, that teacher absence leads to students wandering. This explanatory element strengthens compliance while maintaining institutional legitimacy and professional accountability within the hierarchical structure of school communication.

Permission Function

Data 11

Principal : "Ms. Risma and the others may go to the hospital and the police office today to complete the PPG administrative requirements, but only for one day. Tomorrow you must return to school." ("Ibu Risma dan yang lain boleh kerumah sakit dan kantor polisi hari ini le, mengurus persyaratan PPG, tapi satu hari saja le besok sudah harus ke sekolah lagi")

Teacher : "Understood, Sir." ("siap pak")

The utterance above functions as a directive speech act of granting permission, as the speaker (the principal) provides approval and temporary freedom for the interlocutors (teachers) to leave the school in order to process PPG administrative requirements. Linguistically, this directive is marked by the modal "may" (boleh), which serves as an indicator of permission. The use of this marker signals that the

speaker authorizes the interlocutors to perform an action that requires institutional approval. However, the permission is accompanied by a limitation clause (“only for one day... tomorrow you must return to school”), which reinforces the speaker’s regulatory authority. From a sociopragmatic perspective, this utterance reflects the principal’s institutional power to grant conditional permission while maintaining professional accountability. The balance between allowance and restriction illustrates how directive speech acts of permission function not only as approval but also as a mechanism of institutional control within hierarchical communication.

Advising Function

Data 12

Principal : “If you are truly unwell, please request permission not to come to school. However, when we are in good health, we should always make the effort to come to school and fulfill our obligations.” (“Jika memang sakit bapak/ibu silahkan izin untuk tidak ke sekolah tapi ketika kita diberikan badan sehat selalu usahakan untuk ke sekolah memenuhi kewajiban”)

The utterance above functions as a directive speech act of advising, as the speaker (the principal) intends to provide guidance and moral encouragement to the interlocutors (teachers) to carry out their professional duties responsibly while still considering their health conditions. Linguistically, this directive is marked by the use of the expression “make the effort/should try” (usahakan), which signals a recommendation or encouragement to perform an action regarded as proper and expected by the speaker. This expression carries an advisory illocutionary force, as it does not impose obligation coercively but instead directs interlocutors to act consciously and voluntarily in accordance with institutional norms and professional responsibility. From a sociopragmatic perspective, the utterance reflects a balanced directive strategy that integrates institutional expectations with interpersonal sensitivity. The principal acknowledges teachers’ personal well-being while simultaneously reinforcing professional commitment, thereby maintaining both authority and relational harmony within the school environment.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study on the principal’s speech acts in interactions with teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa, it can be concluded that the forms and functions of directive speech acts employed reflect communication practices grounded in authority, politeness, and effectiveness within the institutional context of education. In terms of form, the principal’s directive speech acts are realized in six primary categories: commands, requests, interrogatives, prohibitions, granting permission, and advising. Each form is indicated by the use of linguistic markers such as please, must, do not, please feel free, may, and should try, which function to signal particular illocutionary forces aligned with specific communicative intentions. The selection of these forms demonstrates the speaker’s ability to adjust linguistic strategies by considering social relationships, situational contexts, and the level of formality in interactions between the principal and teachers.

In terms of function, the principal's directive speech acts serve not only as a means of administrative instruction, but also as a medium for teachers' moral and professional development. The identified functions include requesting, questioning, commanding, prohibiting, granting permission, and advising, all of which are directed toward fostering work discipline, enhancing responsibility, and strengthening professional ethos within the school environment. From a sociopragmatic perspective, the principal's directive speech acts demonstrate a balance between authoritative illocutionary force and linguistic politeness strategies. The principal employs utterances that are firm yet empathetic, while still maintaining social solidarity and interpersonal closeness. This is reflected in the use of mitigating particles, rational justifications, and respectful forms of address that signal regard for interlocutors. Thus, directive speech acts used by the principal at SMA Negeri 1 Banawa perform a dual function: as instruments of administrative regulation and as mechanisms for social and professional guidance. Through polite and contextually attuned utterances, the principal is able to optimize his or her role not only as a supervisory authority but also as a communicator who cultivates a harmonious, disciplined, and ethical work culture within the educational environment.

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