



**REALIZATION OF PROMISES
IN A CONVERSATION CLASS AT LIA INSTITUTION
OF LANGUAGE AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION
SEMARANG CANDI**

a thesis

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by

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SEMARANG CANDI**

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Semarang, 15 Juni 2016

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Promises are statements of future commitment.

*To
Graduate Program
of Semarang State University*

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Finally, I realize that this thesis is still far from being perfect. I have a great expectation that my thesis will be beneficial and useful for anyone who is interested in reading this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

Kartikasari. 2016. *Realization of Promises in A Conversation Class at LIA Institution of Language and Professional Education Semarang Candi*. Thesis. English Language Education. Graduate Program of Semarang State University.

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This study was aimed at analyzing kinds of promise strategies realized by the students of an EFL conversation class at *LIA* Institution of Language and Professional Education Semarang Candi. The objectives were to find out whether the promise strategies are realized by the respondents, to describe the kinds of promise strategies applied by the students, to find out the probable factors influencing the realization of promise and to explain the reasons behind it.

This research is qualitative, descriptive. The data was gathered by two methods: DCT and role play. In conducting the research, the steps were transcribing the data, coding the data, classifying the data, interpreting the data, describing the finding and drawing the conclusions.

In this research, I analyzed two kinds of data from ten students, consisting 12 DCT situations and 12 role play situations with integrated probable factors (dominance, relationship and imposition). The result of this study showed that future-action is the most realized promise strategy. Non-strategy and promise-to-act came after that, while predictive-assertion is the least realized promise strategy.

In conclusion, students' schemata, which is influenced by the language learning process and their mother tongue, language transfer and their maturity influenced the realization of promise strategy more than dominance, distance and imposition.

TABLE OF CONTENT

	Page
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Tables of Contents.....	v
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Appendices.....	ix
 Chapter	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic.....	4
1.3 Research Questions.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	6
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	7
1.7 Definition of Key Terms.....	7
1.8 Organization of the Thesis.....	9
II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	10
2.1 Reviews of Previous Studies.....	10
2.2 Theoretical Review.....	24
2.2.1 Pragmatics.....	24

2.2.2 Speech Act	26
2.2.3 Speech Act of Promise	32
2.2.4 EFL.....	39
2.2.4.1 Language Transfer	40
2.2.5 Conversation	42
2.3 Theoretical Framework	43
III REASERCH METHODOLOGY	45
3.1 Research Design.....	45
3.2 Subject of the Study	45
3.3 Roles of Researcher.....	46
3.4 Techiques of Collecting Data.....	46
3.5 Methods of Analyzing Data	52
IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	54
4.1 Promise Strategies	54
4.1.1 Promise-to-act	55
4.1.2 Future-action	56
4.1.3 Predictive-assertion.....	57
4.1.4 Expressions Belonging to No Specific Promise Strategy	58
4.2 Factors Influencing Promise Realization	59
4.2. 1 Distance.....	59
4.2.1.1 Close Relationship	59
4.2.2.2 Distant Relationship.....	63
4.2.2 Dominance	66
4.2.2.1 Equal Status.....	67
4.2.2.2 Speaker Dominance	69

4.2.2.3 Hearer Dominance	71
4.2.3 Imposition	73
4.2.3.1 Low Imposition	73
4.2.3.2 High Imposition	75
4.3 Discussion	77
V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	80
5.1 Conclusion	80
5.2 Suggestion	81
Bibliography.....	83
Appendices.....	89

List of Figures

Figure	Page
1 Theoretical Framework	43
2 General Results from DCT and Role Play	54

List of Appendices

Appendix	Page
1. DCT Classification.....	90
2. Role Play Classification	90
3. Close Relationship Analysis	91
4. Distant Relationship Analysis	92
5. Equal Status Analysis.....	93
6. Speaker Domiance Analysis	94
7. Hearer Dominance Analysis	95
8. Low Imposition Analysis	96
9. High Imposition Analysis	97
10. Role Play Situations	98
11. Role Play Audio Data Transcript	101
11. DCT Data	107

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the beginning of the thesis which includes background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a unique human trait that is used as a communication device for a very long time. It uses systematic patterns in many forms and changes from time to time. The forms of languages evolve to what are now called spoken and written languages. Brown (2000: 5) defines a language as a system of arbitrary conventionalized vocal, written or gestural symbols that enable members of a given community to communicate intelligibly with one another. In order to be able to understand each other in communication, people must understand the language itself that is integrated in the four skills of language; listening, speaking, reading, writing. The crucial need to be able to understand each other in a worldwide scale is what brings people to accept English as the International language.

English (or '*Englisc*' in the old time) is originally a language of the people from 'Englaland', the land of three Germanic tribes of Angles, Saxons and Jutes that invaded Britain in the 5th century AD. In Britain, it was developed into the 'Old English' and used until 1100 AD before 'Middle English' took over until

1500 AD. It was not until 1800 that the Late Modern English was used, and still is until now by people around the world either as the first language, second language, or even foreign language.

English stands as a foreign language in Indonesia. Yet, we cannot deny the importance it holds in worldwide communication since it is also the most commonly used language in the world. In order to be able to communicate well in English, one must know how to pronounce words, how to form sentences from words, and also the strategies used in different contexts of situation. This includes the ability to apply English in our daily life. It deals not only with grammatical rules, but also with the meaning and how we apply the language in social life. This results in the rising issue of the importance of the communicative competence.

Communication, according to Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary (1993), can be defined as the various methods of sending information between people and places. Communication itself can be done one-way such as in television, radio and newspapers; and two ways just like what people do in daily conversation both spoken and written. Communicative competence, as stated by Ellis (1994, 13), includes knowledge the speaker-hearer has of what constitutes appropriate as well as correct language behaviour in relation to particular communicative goals. In a case of asking questions, for example, the speaker must know how to form a question correctly, and to whom the question is asked. Asking a question to a senior lecturer in a classroom requires different strategy from asking a question to a random stranger we meet on the street. The same case

happens not only in asking questions, but also in answering questions, inviting someone, making a request and offer, and many other situations.

In 1962 the term 'speech act' was introduced by Austin. The word 'speech' literally means the activity of talking, while the word 'act' refers to an activity of doing something for a particular purpose. According to Mey (1993: 111) speech acts are actions happening in the world, that is, they bring about a change in the existing state of affairs. Mey basically defines 'speech act' as utterance that can be seen as an action that has its own effect based on its intention and purpose. Whereas Richards, Platt & Weber (1985), defined speech act as an utterance of a functional unit in communication. From the definitions above I can conclude that speech act happens as a speaker communicates with others in the form of utterance that changes 'the existing state of affairs' (in which I borrow Mey's term) between the speaker and the hearer. Kinds of speech act, includes promise, request, apology, invitation, refusal, agreement and disagreement which can be performed when a speaker makes an utterance.

One of the most interesting kinds of speech act is 'promise' since it deals with something that may happen in the future and it deals with the commitment of the speaker. Mey (1993) quoted Searle that a promise should not be about things that are going to happen, or should happen anyway. This clears things up that someone cannot promise that the sun will rise tomorrow because it does not deal with commitment from the speaker, or in this case we call the speaker as 'promiser'.

When someone expresses a promise, he/she makes a commitment related to the future. The future commitment can be something the promiser does or something that will eventually be done in the future. Thus, the way in expressing promise determines the outcome of the promise itself.

English is structured in such a way that people will have to talk differently when they are speaking about things that are happening now, a story of the past, or even a plan for the future. When an Indonesian speaks in English, the person has to change his/her point of view of the way he/she uses a language since there is no time-related-pattern in Bahasa Indonesia, unlike in English. Thus, it is very interesting to see how Indonesian learners of English express a commitment for the future in their foreign language.

1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic

Several reasons underline my choice of “REALIZATION OF PROMISES IN A CONVERSATION CLASS AT *LIA INSTITUTION OF LANGUAGE AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION* SEMARANG CANDI” as the title of the study. Those reasons are elaborated below:

First, to promise is to tell someone/people that you will do something for them. It is one of the kinds of speech act that demands a commitment regarding the future. Promising something is not predicting the future, but making an effort to make certain things happen in the future based on the promise itself. This act is something that people actually do everyday, yet sometimes they are often ignorant of the way it is formed, done, and realized. That is why it is important to learn

how to apply promising strategies in order to be able to have a good communication with others, especially for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners.

Second, people are very familiar with the term ‘conversation’ because it is actually done continuously by everyone through written language, spoken language, sign language or even symbols. From the beginning of the existence of language, people had always tried to find ways to converse and communicate with others. It can be seen from ancient artifacts used by people of the past to preserve and send information to people of the future. Nowadays, communication and conversation can be done easier. However it does not mean that it becomes less important. While communication can be done one-way through television or magazine, conversation needs two parties involved in an exchange of thoughts, feelings, stories or news. Thus, anything can happen in a conversation, including a commitment of a certain future that is expressed through promises from one speaker to others.

Third, people’s awareness of the importance of English and how to communicate well in the language turns into an effort to learn more about English. Thus, many EFL learners who are not specifically majoring in English find ways in learning English through classes offering the skill in conversation from many places. LIA Institution of Language and Professional Education (Lembaga Bahasa dan Pendidikan Profesional “LBPP”) Semarang Candi is one of many English Language Institutions to offer EFL Conversation Classes where many people from students to workers (eventhough they are dominated by college students) come to

study conversation in English in a full classroom situations. That is why the respondents of the study are taken from one of these classes.

1.3 Research Questions

This section includes questions I deal with and try to answer through the research.

1. What strategies are used by Indonesian students of an EFL Conversation Class in realizing promises?
2. What factors influence those students in realizing promises?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

From the research questions above, I come up with three objectives of the study as follows.

1. To describe strategies in realizing promises by Indonesian students of an EFL Conversation Class.
2. To explain the factors influencing the students in realizing promises.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is described in three points of view; theoretically, practically and paedagogically.

1. Theoretically, the findings of this research will enrich the previous theories of speech act of promise. Moreover, the research findings will

also give detail description on how Indonesian students of an EFL Conversation Class realize promises.

2. Practically, the findings of this research will give contributions to university students who study English and English teachers or researchers to develop further reseach related to promise strategies. Furthermore, it will be a reference for people in general to learn more about speech act of promise.
3. Paedagogically, by introducing the findings of the research, teachers can interpret and criticize of how to teach the expressions of promise appropriately. As well, students can learn about how to express promises to enhance their communicative competence in English.

1.6 Scope of the Study

To focus on the study of promise strategies in speech act theory, I limit the study on the expressions of promise expressed by Indonesian students of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Conversation Class. I take students from an EFL Conversation class level 5 (advanced level) of LBPP LIA Semarang Candi as the respondents of the study. The class has 10 students.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions of key terms are used in this research.

1. Promise: A commissive speech act which commits the speaker to some future course of action (Levinson, 1983: 240).

2. Realization: the strategies used in performing the speech act (Afghari, 2007: 117).
3. Conversation: A talk between two or more people in which thoughts, feelings and ideas are expressed, questions are asked and answered, or news and information are exchanged (Woodford & Jackson, 2003).
4. EFL: English as a Foreign Language. An EFL classroom is in a country where English is not the dominant language. Students share the same language and culture. The teacher may be the only native English speaker they have exposure to. Outside of the classroom students have very few opportunities to use English (Agarwal, et.al. , 2011).

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

There are five systematically organized chapters in this thesis. The first chapter consists of background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, the research questions, the objective of the study, definition of terms, and the organization of the thesis.

Chapter two describes briefly previous studies and related literature , and theoretical framework. There are 19 reviews of previous studies that are related to promise, speech acts, and also the use of DCT in pragmatic researches. Theories of speech act, promise and also language transfer are also discussed.

Chapter three talks about the method of investigation including subjects of the study, the technique of collecting data, and the analysis of data. The subjects of the study are students of a conversation class. I also used two techniques of

collecting data: DCT and role play. The data was analysed through a series of transcription of audio, coding, classification and interpretation.

Chapter four is about the research findings and discussion, where the research questions are answered and discussed thoroughly. The three strategies of promise realization: promise-to-act, future-action, and predictive-assertion are discussed in this chapter along with their influencing factors.

Finally, the last chapter, chapter five, consists of conclusion and suggestion. The conclusion is about the realization of promise strategies by the students and the influencing factors. Moreover, the suggestions are dedicated to English language teachers, learners and researchers.