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## THE DYNAMICS OF NEIGHBORHOOD SPEAKING: A SOCIOPRAGMATIC STUDY

by

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### Abstract:

Neighboring life is a type of social interaction that shows many symptoms of social conflict. The social conflict appears in various illocutionary speech acts found in neighboring social interactions. This study examines illocutionary speech acts using listening and speaking techniques in collecting data and translational and pragmatic equivalent methods in processing data. Data was obtained naturally through mutual interaction with neighbors. This study shows variations and rich pragmatic features in neighborly interactions. All speech acts have hidden meanings that deserve to be studied. The realization of illocutionary speech acts in this study is manifested in five ways: directive speech acts of ordering, expressive speech acts of mocking, commissive speech acts of offering, assertive speech acts of boasting, and declarative speech acts of confirming. In contrast, the speaking strategy obtained from the research data is divided into four parts: speaking frankly without further a do, speaking candidly with positive Politeness, speaking candidly with negative Politeness, and the strategy of vaguely speaking. - vague. Furthermore, the factors that influence the realization of speech acts are speech situation, age, kinship, gender, social status, and social relations. This research has implications for kinship relations between neighbors. Understanding speech acts can prevent social conflict and create closeness between neighbors.

**Keywords:** Neighbors, Politeness, Social Situation, Sosiopragmatics, Speech Act

### Abstrak:

Kehidupan bertetangga adalah jenis interaksi sosial yang menunjukkan banyak gejala konflik sosial. Konflik sosial muncul dalam berbagai tindak tutur ilokusi yang ditemukan dalam interaksi sosial tetangga. Penelitian ini mengkaji tindak tutur ilokusi dengan menggunakan teknik menyimak dan berbicara dalam mengumpulkan data serta metode translasi dan ekuivalen pragmatis dalam mengolah data. Data diperoleh secara alami melalui interaksi timbal balik dengan tetangga. Penelitian ini menunjukkan variasi dan fitur pragmatis yang kaya dalam interaksi bertetangga. Semua tindak tutur memiliki makna tersembunyi yang layak untuk dipelajari. Realisasi tindak tutur ilokusi dalam penelitian ini diwujudkan dalam lima cara: tindak tutur direktif memerintah, tindak tutur ekspresif mengejek, tindak tutur komersif persembahan, tindak tutur asertif membual, dan tindak tutur deklaratif menegaskan. Sebaliknya, strategi berbicara yang diperoleh dari data penelitian dibagi menjadi empat bagian: berbicara terus terang tanpa melakukan lebih lanjut, berbicara terus terang dengan kesopanan

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*positif, berbicara terus terang dengan kesopanan negatif, dan strategi berbicara samar-samar. -samar. Selanjutnya, faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi realisasi tindak tutur adalah situasi bicara, usia, kekerabatan, jenis kelamin, status sosial, dan hubungan sosial. Penelitian ini berimplikasi pada hubungan kekerabatan antar tetangga. Memahami tindak tutur dapat mencegah konflik sosial dan menciptakan kedekatan antar tetangga.*

**Kata kunci:** *Tetangga, Kesopanan, Situasi Sosial, Sosiopragmatik, Tindak Tutur*

## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) has become a multidimensional disaster that has occurred in various countries, including Indonesia. This pandemic impacts crucial sectors such as health, education, the economy, and social interactions in people's lives, which require an adaptation process to prevent virus transmissions such as social distancing or physical distancing (Aufar & Raharjo, 2020). People who used to work all day outside should get used to working from home, which causes a reasonably intense interaction with neighbors, especially in Medan. It means that even though each other must implement health protocols, the intensity of meetings is becoming more frequent due to the work-from-home (WFH) system.

Medan City is included in one of the red zones due to the high spread of the coronavirus. Since the announcement of the first positive Covid-19 in Indonesia, many interaction changes have occurred. Even though Indonesian people are known to have the habit of gathering or getting together and can not be separated from manners (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). Changes in interaction can be seen in communication or neighborly interactions.

Neighbor life is one type of social interaction that shows many symptoms of social conflict. The existence of dissociative symptoms in social interaction can be seen in competition, contradiction, and conflict. Competition is an effort made by a person or group of people to compete in order to get great results. Meanwhile, contravention is a social process marked by uncertainty, doubt, rejection, and denial that is not expressed openly. Furthermore, disputes are an advanced form of contradiction, meaning disputes are already open.

Meanwhile, conflict is a social process in which individuals or groups try to fulfill goals by challenging opposing parties accompanied by threats or violence (Soekanto & Sulistyowati,

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2015). In terms of competition, the effort that should be used is to win the hearts of many people without causing physical games such as fights. That is why competition sometimes tends to appear in speech acts. Therefore, neighborly life is one of the social forums for finding natural speech acts.

Speech acts are actions (without involving physical) displayed in speech (Yule, 2006; Searle, 1979). The term "Speech Act" is not limited to the communication dimension in the communication process. As mentioned before, both speaker and listener must speak the same language and have insight into using that language for communication. Speech act theory is considered under the study of pragmatics (Putri et al., 2020). However, this action is not empty but carries a specific purpose. Likewise, advising, inviting, ordering, inviting, hoping, asking, and even forbidding are speech acts without physical action but intending to 'tell or ask others to do something.' Usually, all types of speech acts appear naturally in everyday life, including interactions between neighbors.

The basis of speech act theory is pragmatics, namely studies that consider non-communicative situations (Saifudin, 2010). In this case, pragmatic power is formed by illocutionary and rhetorical power. Rhetoric power is the meaning of speech seen from the speaker's adherence to rhetorical principles (for example, where the speaker is telling the truth, speaking politely, or in an ironic tone (Kreidler, 1998 as cited in Fatmahwati, 2021). Pragmatic power is related to the interpretation of speech (Leech, 1993). In this regard, pragmatic power is likely related to the impact or influence of speech that is significant for readers or listeners.

Therefore, this study examines two things, namely:

- 1) How are the dynamics of speech acts in neighboring interactions?
- 2) What are the speech act strategies used in neighborly life?

## METHODS

### *Design*

This study refers to the socio-pragmatics concept. In simple terms, referring to the socio-pragmatics concept, this study discusses speech act and community response (pragmatic

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power). The study of pragmatics is based on the situation's context, while socio-pragmatics is based on social and situational contexts. So, socio-pragmatics can be interpreted as the study of the meaning of speech related to social aspects that cover the occurrence of the speech, such as culture and society, language, social situations, social classes, and so on (Rahardi, 2009).

***Instrument***

This study employed qualitative research with a sociopragmatic research design. The instrument was the researcher as main tool to gather the data of speech acts. The data in this study are the utterances of neighbors and researchers in Bahasa Indonesia, which contain illocutionary speech acts. The utterances were obtained from the observations of the researcher's participation in recordings and field notes. Thus, we participated in the social interaction tangible. Data were collected from August 2021 to May 2022 in Medan, North Sumatra.

***Participant***

Three neighbors were involved, but the speech of one neighbor dominated the data in this study. The neighbor is female or the same as the researcher, aged 48 years or 14 years older than the researcher. In addition, these neighbors have a higher position than researchers in the clan genealogy of the Toba Batak tribe. It affects the type of communication between researchers and neighbors. So far, these neighbors tend to be outspoken in communicating with researchers, so they tend to produce illocutionary speech acts. Illusory speech acts are usually identified with explicit performative sentences (Hanifah, 2019).

***Data collecting technique***

Data was collected using participatory observation techniques because it was conducted in natural conditions, involving researchers as observation participants. For this reason, listening to conversations is used by participating in tapped conversations (Sudaryanto, 2015).

***Data analysis technique***

In analyzing the data, an interactive technique was used by Miles and Huberman (2014), which started from the data collection stage in the form of the researcher's speech with

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neighbors. Then, reducing the data by selecting data that contains the structure and strategy of illocutionary speech acts. Next, analyze the data by considering and adjusting the data that has been collected. For this reason, other factors besides language must be considered, namely speakers, speech partners, speech situations, speech objectives, and other things that mark speech events. For this reason, the translational equivalent and the practical methods are used ( Indonesian to English). The equivalent translational method translates the Toba Batak speech in the data into Indonesian. At the same time, the pragmatic equivalent method is used to identify the markers of each speech act contained in the data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### ***Result***

The speech act data presented in this article were obtained naturally from neighboring life for a certain period, transcribed, and then displayed as follows. Context is very influential in presenting and explaining the data in this study. Therefore, understanding the context will help speakers and listeners understand the speaker's meaning (Amalia, 2017).

### ***The dynamics of speech acts in neighboring interactions***

#### ***Directive speech acts***

(1) Context: One afternoon, my two children, namely Rhea and Rapha, were brought by their grandmother to hang out with their neighbors. Just before I arrived, the neighbor gave my two children a piece of bread, and they seemed to enjoy it. Then, when I arrived, the following conversation took place.

*Speaker (Neighbor): Mak Rhea, look at your children. They love to eat this bread, you know. I bought this fruit from Berastagi Buah.*

*Listener (I am): Oh yes. (Smile).*

Speech data (1) is a form of directive speech act telling. The speech in bold is an indicator of the directive made by the speaker telling the listener to buy the fruit from Berastagi Buah. Berastagi Buah is a supermarket that is quite well-known and tends to be visited by the upper middle class. Through that conversation, the speaker directly conveyed

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that the bread was purchased from a good and quality place. So, the concept of directive speech acts appears in the speech data (1).

Neighbor life is one social interaction that allows members to exchange information and share. In this case, the 'neighbor' speaker performs one of his functions in sharing information, as shown in the speech act above.

***Expressive speech acts***

(2) Context: One afternoon, I picked up Rapha from my neighbor's house to bathe. After being bathed, I returned to take Rapha to be carried by his cycle to the neighbor's house.

*Speaker (neighbor) : Well, your clothes are beautiful, Rapha. It is pink.*

*Listener (I am) : Yes, Oppung. This is a gift when Rapha was born. Many love Rapha.*

Speech data (2) is a form of mocking expressive speech act. The non-linguistic context that occurs when the conversation takes place shows clearly that the expression in the form of praise is conveyed in a mocking tone. Rapha is a boy who should not be wearing pink clothes. In social situations, the color pink is usually worn by women, so it is scarce for men to wear pink clothes. In this case, the listener uses a frank speaking strategy with positive Politeness. That is, there is an affirmation to the speaker that using pink is not her desire.

***Commissive speech acts***

(3) Context: One morning, while sunbathing, there was a conversation about the lecturer's activities, and the style lecturers usually use.

*Speaker (neighbor): You already have much money, Mom Rhea. I often see you participating in the Guru Penggerak activities. Share with us! Isn't that right, sis? (while elbowing another neighbor). You know, Mom Rhea, there are many discounts on Raden Sirait's clothes at RLO (Rumah Live Online). Have a look, don't be like that.*

Speech data (3) is a form of the commissive speech act of offering obtained in neighboring life. The non-linguistic context, which is a situation outside the conversation, must be explained to reveal the hidden meaning of the utterance. Neighbors are housewives with middle to upper economic conditions. This situation allows speakers to follow trends and styles that apply in the social environment. Another thing is shown by the listener who works

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as a lecturer but needs to keep up with developing trends and styles. That is why neighbors offer trends and styles to the listener (me).

***Assertive speech acts***

(4) Context: Our sofa was broken, so we called to service it. The neighbors joined the conversation between the in-laws and the service provider when I had just got home from campus.

*Speaker (I am): How much does it cost, Mam?*

*Listener (neighbor): Ah, it doesn't really matter to you, Mom Rhea. Small times are the same as you.*

*Speaker (I am): Hehe, even if it's a little, it's still called an expense*

Speech data (4) is a form of proud assertive speech act. According to the speaker, this speech act determines or explains something as it is. This speech act also binds the neighbor to the truth of what she said. The social situation behind the speech refers to the previous conversation. The listener (neighbor) thinks a lecturer is a profession with money. When a lecturer can finance his doctoral studies independently, the lecturer has good financial capabilities. It is the basis for the speaker to reveal the speech act in bold print above. The speech act is also an indicator of proud assertive speech acts. Furthermore, in the data above, the speaker (I am) uses a smile and laugh 'hehe' to maintain intimacy.

**Declarative Speech Acts**

(5) Context: My two children and I returned from church one afternoon.

*Speaker (neighbor) : Well, how come you are home?*

*Listener (I am): These kids are bored, ma'am.*

*Speaker (neighbor) : But we have yet to give gifts.*

*Listener (I am) : Come on, Mam. This guy has made a lot of noise.*

*Speaker (neighbor) : "Oh, Mom Rhea, children like gifts." It is not a matter of price, but he must be proud to get a gift from the church. Just be patient and wait a little bit. Surely Rhea has got it.*

Speech data (5) is a form of validating declarative speech acts found in neighboring life. The intent of 'neighbor' speakers is good at giving endorsements and decisions about children's wishes, and this is motivated by common social situations and listeners' experience in educating their children.

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***Neighborhood life speaking strategy***

Speech strategy is a person's way of conveying an utterance that must be adjusted in terms of who, where, and about what so that in the speech, there is no 'face threat' from both the speaker's and the addresser's point of view. The strategy of speaking is divided into four parts, namely, the strategy of speaking frankly without further ado, the strategy of speaking frankly with positive Politeness, the strategy of speaking frankly with negative Politeness, and the strategy of speaking vaguely.

**Strategy to Speak Frankly with Negative Politeness**

(6) Context: During the Lebaran season, several neighbors gathered while sunbathing during a pandemic.

*Speaker (neighbor) : My husband just got THR (Tunjangan Hari Raya). I told him to let him share a little with his family—the same in-laws, brothers, and sisters-in-law. The important thing is that everyone gets.*

*Listener (I am) : That is fine, ma'am.*

*Speaker (neighbor) : Oh yes, I am like that. If there is a blessing, it must be shared equally with all, and I am not a stingy person. Anyway, let us not make a fuss. Isn't it?*

The above utterance is a strategy to speak frankly with negative Politeness. This strategy is used by speakers to fulfill the speaker's desire so that everything in him is considered excellent or positive. The use of the sentence 'I am like that....' is an affirmation of the strategy used by the speaker. It is one of the indicators of self-defense that is not shown directly in this verbal conversation. The speaker does not show his intention directly, unlike the Batak culture. It is also the uniqueness of this research.

***The strategy of speaking frankly without further ado***

(7) Context: One morning, while sunbathing in front of the house, we gathered in front of the veranda of a neighbor's house.

*Speaker (neighbor) : Mom Rhea, can I use your cash? Two and a half; I will transfer it later.*

*Listener (I am) : Two and a half; what host? Million?*

*Speaker (neighbor) : Oala, you also say million. Two hundred and fifty thousand. I do not have a million more money in my ATM, so I am lazy to take money to the ATM.*

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In general, financial problems are not a common thing to discuss in neighborly life. However, based on the speech above, it was conveyed in public frankly. That is why speakers use the strategy of speaking frankly without further ado. When a neighbor says 'two and a half,' it is easy for the listener to understand because of the use of non-standard language that is commonly used. However, it must require confirmation so as not to be misunderstood.

***The strategy of speaking frankly with positive politeness.***

(8) Context: One afternoon, I brought my two children together at a neighbor's house while my parents-in-law were traveling.

*Speaker (neighbor) : You are lucky, Mom Rhea. Your mother-in-law is good; it is a shame for her grandson. Isn't it?*

*Listener (I am) : Yes, ma'am, praise God.*

*Speaker (neighbor) : Yes, I saw that too. Your in-laws are not nosy or fussy, so you are not depressed.*

*Listener (I am) : Yes, Ma'am. That is why we continue to live under the same roof as the in-laws.*

*Speaker (neighbor) : Yes, that is why the key is actually in-laws. Son-in-law just went along. If the daughter-in-law is okay taking care of her husband and children, there is no need for the in-laws to make a fuss here and there. Is it not?*

*Listener (I am) : Yes, my mother-in-law is really good. I am lucky to have her.*

The utterance above shows how a speaker convinces the addressee about their discussion. In this case, the speaker uses the strategy of speaking frankly with positive Politeness. This strategy refers to a person's self-image who wants what he does, has, or believes can be accepted and recognized by others as something good. In the speech data (8) above, the speaker uses his experience to convey his belief about something respectfully marked by the sentence, "... that is why the key is actually the mother-in-law..." and in polite language so that his request does not seem forced.

**Strategy of Speaking Vaguely**

(9) Context: One afternoon, while accompanying children to play in front of a neighbor's house with other children.

*Speaker (neighbor) : Where were you last night, Mom Rhea?*

*Listener (I am) : Shopping, Ma'am.*

*Speaker (neighbor) : Buy Rhea and Rapha's clothes? Where to?*

*Listener (I am) : Plaza Medan Fair, Ma'am.*

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*Speaker (neighbor) : Oh yes, I saw a lot of children's clothes there yesterday. We were from there yesterday but in the morning. I used to buy my children the Princess brand, which was the top one there.*

Speech data (9) shows a vague speech strategy. This vague speech strategy is indirect by letting the interlocutor decide how to interpret the speaker's utterance. As in the speech data (9), the speaker said that the Princes brand children's clothes were good and told me to buy the Princes brand. Speakers use the style of speaking in speech every day. Sometimes it is conveyed implicitly. Sometimes it is explicit. Sometimes when they request something or produce utterance, they do not use a command expression or the purpose of what they say to each other, and the other needs to be clarified (Oktadistio, F., Aziz, M., dan Zahrid, 2018).

***Factors affecting speech acts***

Based on several speech acts found in interactions, the following factors influence the speech acts, including 1) Kinship relationship with the speech partner, 2) Social status, 3) Age, 4) Social relations, 5) Gender, and 6 ) Speech situation (Dyah, W., Sudepa, dan Suparwa, 2018). In this study, all of these factors affect the speech produced by the speaker and listener. The age difference between neighbors (speakers) and listeners is 13 years, and it causes the speaker to be confident in conveying his speech to the listener. In addition, in social relations and clan relations in Batak culture, the speaker is the in-laws of the listener so that the speaker can speak freely. Then, the speaker is a good friend of the listener's parents-in-law, making him equal to the listener's in-laws. This situation makes the speech acts expressed by the speaker respond well to the listener.

***Discussions***

Based on the research results described above, it appears that there are five types of illocutionary speech acts found in neighboring interactions, namely (1) directive speech acts, (2) expressive speech acts, (3) commissive speech acts, (4) assertive speech acts, and (5) declarative speech acts.

In directive speech, the listener tends to do what the speaker says because it follows the directive's intent. Although on the other hand, he knew there was another purpose in the conversation (Tutuarima, Nuraeningsih, and Russiana, 2018). Data (1) shows that in social situations that often occur, children prefer food provided by other people to food provided by

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their parents. However, in this utterance, the situation is ignored, and a directive speech act asks the listener (me) to buy the same bread at the place designated by the 'neighbor' speaker.

Expressive speech is a speech act produced by the psychological condition of a speaker based on conditions in the environment. The psychological state can be in the form of an expression of pleasure/ happiness (such as saying 'thank you' and praising), disappointment (such as speech blaming), pain (such as speech complaining), and sadness (such as speech condolences) (Defina, 2017). In this case, the listener expresses his disapproval by praising his son. The listener's dislike of the speaker's opinion makes the listener show a sweet expression to maintain the implementation of the cooperative principle. In expressive speech acts, there are types of expressions of dislike. Disliking is when a speaker expresses their dislikes towards something. Usually, it has negative nuance, which is used to express things that are not good (Widyowati, 2019).

The discussion of expressive speech acts can also be related to the principle of irony. An irony is a form of martial arts that combines the art of attacking with naivety. So, the function of irony occurs when the politeness principle is not can be defended, and the destruction will hit both sides parties, both speakers and listeners. Accusations will be met with accusations; threats will be met with threats, and so on. That is where irony can be used. Thus, this irony is used to Avoid aggression when conflict is approaching. Through irony, someone can speak impolitely through polite speech. The trick is to give the impression of violating cooperative principles but obeying them (Prayitno, 2014). One example of typical irony in English is: "He took a much-needed vacation, backpacking in the mountains. Unfortunately, he came back dead tired". It means that the person has done a pointless thing. Back to the data of speech 2, the listener answers, "This is a gift when Rapha was born. Many love Rapha". It confirmed that Rapha's mother did not buy the clothes. Rapha uses it to honor those who love him.

In this regard, Guirand et al. (2011) (as cited in Astami, 2021) also mentions a relationship between speech acts, emotions, and logic. The study also concluded that certain emotions could show certain expressions. In addition, Yoon (2018) also shows that color can reveal a particular person's expression. From speech data 2, many things can be obtained that can be interpreted and concluded based on scientific reasons about speech acts.

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Commissive speech acts offer implicit devotion because performative speech verbs are invisible. However, it can be in terms of the meaning that is spoken is offering devotion to the partner said (Mulatsih et al., 2018). A commissive speech act seeks to offer or propose something the speaker conveys to be considered by the listener. In this case, data (3) neighbors change their appearance according to their profession, and the speaker (neighbor) assumes that the listener (me) can do his bidding.

In Eastern Cultures, such expressive speech acts are usually done to respond to the interlocutor even though the substance of the speech is not in line with the speaker's wishes (Anggani, 2017). The speaker expressing an assertive act is mainly used to inform what the speaker believes to be the case (Chakim & Haris, 2019).

In general, conversations are influenced by local cultural contexts that are static or the contexts that are embedded in speech when the speaker is talking. For example, the culture of the speaker, the background, the speaker's social situation, the environment, the interlocutor, the time of the speech, and the meaning to be conveyed (Afandi, 2020). However, the context of Batak culture could be more visible in this conversation. Batak people are known as people who speak directly, but in some of the data found, both speakers often use unspoken words. Both seemed sarcastic and defended themselves with implicit sentences.

All the data in this conversation is expressed in Indonesian, even though they are Batak Toba speakers. It can be why it is difficult to express the contents of the mind through a second language (Hidayat, 2016). Speakers are adapting expressions through Indonesian so that Batak cultural norms are not so visible. This is what was stated by Allan (in Wijana, 2021) that everyone must follow certain conventions of a language in social activities. Each person is responsible for the expressions and utterances he utters in a context. In this case, there could be an adaptation of the speaker while on the plantation. At the plantation, before the speaker moved to Medan, most of his neighbors were not Bataknese. It could be brought so that the way of communicating tends to be implicit following the situation in the plantations.

For this reason, this study revealed that culture, language, and the social environment influence one another in social life. Socio-cultural values must guide each individual's interaction (Hoppenbrouwers, Sandarupa, & Donzelli, 2017). The socio-cultural values of

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each region are characteristic and even become a heritage of national cultural values (Sudarsi et al., 2021). In this regard, humans who live with socio-cultural values express their thoughts through language (Gowasa, Radiana, & Afifah, 2019). Socio-cultural and language values then appear in the style of spoken conversation (Garim, Hutami & Jasmianti., 2020).

Then, through this speech data, the characteristics of conversations also appear, of them, namely 1) using incomplete sentences, 2) using non-standard language, and 3) using simple phrases (Nisa & Gigit, 2021).

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

### ***Conclusion***

Speech acts in neighborly life vary, and all speech acts have hidden meanings that deserve to be studied. The realization of illocutionary speech acts in this study is manifested in five ways: directive speech acts of ordering, expressive speech acts of mocking, commissive speech acts of offering, assertive speech acts of boasting, and declarative speech acts of confirming. In contrast, the speaking strategy obtained from the research data is divided into four parts: speaking frankly without further ado, speaking candidly with positive Politeness, speaking candidly with negative Politeness, and the strategy of vaguely speaking. - vague.

In general, the speech acts obtained are a form of competition in social interactions in a particular scope, namely neighbors. Conflicts in neighborly interactions often create conflict with each other but are usually not appropriately resolved. It affects communication in daily interactions.

### ***Limitation***

However, this research still needs to be expanded in revealing speech acts that contain illocutionary in neighboring situations and has not been able to reveal whether factors outside of languages, such as age, social status, social relations, and kinship relations, really affect speech. For this reason, further research is needed to reveal this link in neighborly interactions.

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***Implication***

This research has implications for the kinship between neighbors in society in Indonesia. Neighbors are the first to help if there is distress in our home, so we should maintain good relations with neighbors. Speech acts are expressions of thought, so we must also take care of our thoughts so that our speech acts have a good impact on others.

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