

# RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa

Vol. 9, No. 2 August 2023, Page 211-217

P-ISSN: 2406-9019 E-ISSN: 2443-0668

Available Online at https://ejournal.warmadewa.ac.id/index.php/jret

# Assertive Speech Acts in the Book of Genesis in Indonesian Translation of the Bible

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Published: 31/08/2023

# How to cite (in APA style):

Libriananda, R.M., Darmayanti, N., & Lukman, F. (2023). Assertive Speech Acts in the Book of Genesis in Indonesian Translation of the Bible. *Retorika: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(2), 211-217.

**Abstract** - The Bible is one of the religious discourses that contains forms of speech acts. One type of speech act which dominates in the Bible is assertive speech act. It is supported by the statements contained in the Bible are dogmatic and filled with a proportion of validity that is believed to be true. One of the scriptures in the Bible is The Book of Genesis. Genesis is the first chapter of the Bible and begins with the story of the creation of the heavens, the earth, and everything in it. Genesis is very important in the history of biblical periodization. Genesis contains a variety of types and forms of assertive speech acts. This research is a qualitative-descriptive study. The data were collected using the read and write technique, then classified and analyzed using the pragmatic equivalent method. Then, the data are presented with descriptive procedure. This research reviewed 20 data of assertive speech acts in the Genesis with details: assertive speech acts-acknowledging amounted to 2 data, assertive speech acts-demanding amounted to 5 data, assertive speech acts-declaring amounted to 6 data, assertive speech acts-giving testimony amounted to 3 data, assertive speech acts announcing amounted to 2 data, and assertive speech acts-reporting amounted to 2 data. Based on the form, assertive speech acts in the book of Genesis are detailed into 15 forms of direct speech acts and 5 forms of indirect speech acts.

Keywords: Assertive Speech Acts, Book of Genesis, Direct Speech Acts, Indirect Speech Acts

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a very important media for each individual to interact. Language cannot be separated from individual human life in society. Language is divided into verbal language and non-verbal language so that it has an important role in the sustainability of life. Nuraini et al., (2020, p. 1) stated that in linguistics term, interact can be defined as an spoken or written between the speaker and the hearer by presenting linguistics symbols to communicate a message. Verbal language is composed of meaningful words so that it is possible to form complete sentences. According to (Setiawaty, 2018, p.

283), language also reflects the speaker's identity so that language is an expression of the speaker's mind. Language according to Kridalaksana (in Chaer, 2012, p. 32) is an arbitrary sound symbol system used by members of social groups to work together, communicate, and identify themselves. Both of verbal language and non-verbal language have their own characteristics and the placement of their respective uses. Verbal language can also be found in spoken language. Spoken and written language involves the speaker, utterance, and the hearer. Thus, language, speaker, and utterance are a unit that forms a circle and cannot be separated. In addition, the situation, context,

media also influence the understanding of the interlocutor in communication based on pragmatic phenomena. Linguistics is the knowledge of language that is studied scientifically, and pragmatics is a field of linguistic study.

The meaning of a communication or an interaction (as an verbal activity) between the speaker and the hearer uses a linguistic system that contains meaning. The speaker is very possible to bring "mean" which is conveyed beyond the literal meaning. The speaker and the hearer are connected through a language code that is delivered through context. Context can be interpreted as a part that follows or supports clarity of meaning. Context is a special situation related to events that are understood by the speaker and the hearer. Pragmatics deals with the provisions that connect the speaker and the hearer. Shaharuddin & Harun (2022, p. 221) opined that pragmatics perspective expresses connotations ideologies and concepts using communication interact. or Pragmatics determines the harmony of language use in communication. The determinants compatibility are dominated by external sources of language. So that, pragmatics is determined by the context. Zulianti & Nurchurifiani (2021, p.60) states that the relation between the linguistics form and the communicative function of language is the main topic of discussion in the discipline of pragmatics.

Van Dijk (in Al-Hindawi & Hmood Ali, 2018, p. 43) stated that pragmatics has an important role, namely revealing the true meaning of utterances that are sometimes hidden, and thus, cause misunderstanding on the part of the speaker. When discussing about pragmatics, we cannot exclude the existence of speech acts. Leech (1983) states that pragmatics is a linguistic study regarding the process of speech having meaning in that situation. Criteria determining the success of utterance in pragmatics are the context of utterance, the purpose of utterance, and the hearer. Yule (1996) classifies pragmatics into four scopes, namely: (1) Pragmatic as the study of the meaning of speakers; (2) Pragmatic as a study of contextual meaning; (3) Pragmatic as a study of the communication process becomes more than the form that is spoken; and (4) Pragmatic as the study of relative distance expressions. In expressing the main ideas delivered through an utterance, the speaker expresses it with a speech act.

Dewi (2019, p. 23) defines speech act as individual symptoms that are psychological in nature and are determined by the speaker's language ability when faced with certain situations. The main purpose of speech acts is understand each other so that communication work effectively. In the process of achieving that goal, several aspects of communication are needed. Leech (1983) divides these aspects into the speaker and the hearer, context of speech, purpose of speech, speech as a form of action, and speech as a product of verbal action. Pragmatic studies are entirely related to context. Wijana (1996, p. 11) states that context is the whole background knowledge that is shared by the speaker and the hearer. Speech acts are divided into three classifications, namely locutionary speech acts (the act of saying something), illocutionary speech acts (the act of doing something), and perlocutionary speech acts (the act of effecting someone). This statement implies that when people talk, they are using language to achieve a wide variety of functions like expressing different emotions, starting from opinions, or even insulting someone. All things that have been explained before can be said as speech acts in the process of speaking. (Budiasih, 2018, p. 42).

Searle (1969) in his book entitled "Speech Act: An Essay in The Philosophy of Language" classifies illocutionary speech acts into 5 types, namely assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declaration speech acts. Rustono (in Anam et al., 2019) states that an assertive speech act is a speech act that binds the speaker to the truth of what they say.

Assertive speech acts describe the situation as perceived by the speakes in terms of fact or truth (Kone, 2020). Assertive speech act are also known as representative speech acts which are characterized by the types of proposing, admitting, demanding, declaring, giving testimony, and reporting. Assertive speech act emphasize assertiveness in their utterances. The function of assertive speech is to deliver the truth of an utterance.

The use of written language also allows speech act to occur because speech act can be found in each conversation. One of its applications is in novels, short stories, drama scripts, and books. Submission of stories in writing in these forms occurs in two directions. Telling stories in two directions or more deserves to be used as an applicable method for delivering purpose. One of them is in the scriptures. The

Christian scriptures apply this. Many descriptions of the stories of creation heaven and earth, the fall of human into sin, the prophets, are conveyed in two directions. Therefore, speech act play an active role in this matter.

Based on the structure and function, speech act recognize the form of direct speech act and indirect speech act. Yule (2006, p. 95) divides the structure of language into three groups, namely, declarative, interrogative, and imperative. While the function of language communication is classified into functions of statement, question, and command. In summary, Yule determines that direct and indirect speech act can be proven by similarities between language structures and their communicative functions, such as declarative structures that are spoken as statements will be classified as direct speech acts, as well as interrogative and imperative.

Pragmatic study that refer to linguistic activities emphasize their orientation towards achieving speech objectives. The purpose of speech is one of the determinants of pragmatic meaning, because verbal actions that refer to these goals affect the success of the interlocutor's Therefore. interpretation. Leech (1983)distinguishes between speech mean and speech purpose. Rahardi et al., (2018) highlighted the difference between speech mean and speech purpose, because mean is present before speech is spoken, in other words, mean is not yet in the form of action. While the purpose is present at the same time as uttering a speech.

The application of speech act in the Bible deserves further investigation, apart from the lack of studies that combine linguistics with theology, speech act in the Bible are very varied because they contain various purposes which are carried out with certain "powers" or "purposes". Speech acts occur because basically it is the desire of the speaker to make the hearer do something. It needs to be associate to the aims and objectives of the scripture of all religions that are recognized in Indonesia, namely the rules or foundation of spiritual life that directs adherents of religions to live righteously and are believed to be good. Things that are believed to be good and lead to the right path are forms of speech act, both direct and indirect, directive, assertive, commissive, expressive, and declaration. Therefore, the forms of speech act and their types can be found and studied through the object of the Bible.

One of the books in the Bible is the book of Genesis. According to the Hebrew language,

the book of Genesis is translated as "in the beginning". Wardoyo (2021, p. 33) states that the book Genesis summarizes the origins of the world, the origins of humanity, the origins of sin, and the origins of the people of Israel. The Book of Genesis has a key word to prove the structure of this book, namely the *tôledôt* formula. This formula has two definitions, namely "*inilah daftar keturunan...*" or "*inilah keturunan...*" and "*inilah riwayat atau cerita...*". The first definition tends to be followed by the names of the children, for example the name of the son of Adam. The second definition refers to an event.

Through the narrative aspect, Wardoyo classifies the book of Genesis into two major parts by making the event of the flood as the limit. Therefore, the book of Genesis can be classified into pre-flood and post-flood schemas. In addition, other forms of classification can be divided into four written traditions, namely the early history of the world and humans, the story of Abraham, the story of Yakub, and the story of Yusuf.

This paper aims to describe and classify the types of assertive speech acts contained in the Book of Genesis (in the Indonesian translation of the Bible) into assertive types: acknowledging, demanding, declaring, giving testimony, announcing, and reporting. After being classified into the types of speech acts, the utterances are further classified into direct speech acts and indirect speech acts.

#### II. METHODS

Sudaryanto (2015) distinguishes the definitions of method and technique. Method is a way that must be implemented or applied; while technique is a process of implementing and applying what is contained in the method. Methods and techniques are two things that cannot be separated from a research.

The object in this research is one of the books in the Bible which is a written source and is primary. One such book is the book of Genesis. The Book of Genesis (*Kitab Kejadian*) (abbreviated: *Kej.*) (*Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia*, 1983) was written by Musa. This book contains the beginning of the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in it, the history of human creation, the fall of human into sin, and much more. The book of Genesis has a total of 50 chapters. The Bible which is the object of this research is an Indonesian translation.

This research is descriptive qualitative in nature, so that the data presented are in the form

of a description. According to Strauss & Juliet (2003, p. 4), qualitative research is a type of research whose findings are not obtained through statistical procedures or calculations. The approach used in this study was carried out using a series of methods of collecting data, analyzing and presenting data.

The data collection in this study used the read-and-note method which was taken by reading it periodically and then recording it again in the form of data ready for analysis. Then after the data are recorded, the data are ready to be classified.

The data are classified and analyzed based on the assertive speech acts of acknowledging, demanding, declaring, giving testimony, announcing, and reporting because the utterances used as data are utterances that present the fact. Then, in addition to being classified into types of speech acts, the data are also analyzed directly using forms of speech acts, which are direct speech acts and indirect speech acts.

The data that have been classified and analyzed are ready to be presented in the form of a formal description, because the forms of conversation used in sentences are not informal conversations that cannot be found in everyday life.

#### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Following are the types of assertive speech acts which are divided into assertive speech acts of acknowledging, demanding, declaring, giving testimony, announcing, and reporting along with their markers. Then, as for the description of the form of speech acts which are divided into direct speech acts and indirect speech acts.

#### **Assertive-Acknowledgeing**

- (15) "Lalu Laban menjawab Yakub: "Perempuan-perempuan ini anakku dan anak-anak lelaki ini cucuku dan ternak ini ternakku, bahkan segala yang kaulihat di sini adalah milikku; jadi apakah yang dapat kuperbuat sekarang kepada anakanakku ini atau kepada anak-anak yang dilahirkan mereka?" (Kejadian 31:43)
- (17) "Berkatalah Firaun kepada Yusuf: "Akulah Firaun, tetapi dengan tidak setahumu, seorang pun tidak boleh bergerak di seluruh tanah Mesir." (Kejadian 41:44)

The act of acknowledging can be used in the form of admitting guilt, truth, validity, right

to themselves. Acknowledging is interpreted as admitting the things that are actually done or stating ownership in one's own name. The act of admitting belongs to the assertive form, because there is a form of attachment between the speaker and the hearer with statements that can be accounted for on behalf of the speaker. Data (15) (17) are two types of assertiveacknowledging speech acts. The difference that appears in the form of acknowledging data (15) and (17) is an object that admitted by the speaker. Data (15) displays a form of acknowledgment of the speaker's ownership (seen from "anakku", "cucuku", and "ternakku"), while data (17) displays acknowledgment of the speaker's self (seen from "Akulah"). It is this form of ownership and acknowledgment that is a marker of accountability for the validity of speeches that focus on speaker. The speech acts in data (15) and (17) are classified as direct speech acts because there is similarities between the structure of language and the communicative function.

#### **Assertive-Demanding**

- (4) "Lalu berfirmanlah TUHAN Allah kepada ular itu: "Karena engkau berbuat demikian, terkutuklah engkau di antara segala ternak dan di antara segala binatang hutan; dengan perutmulah engkau akan menjalar dan debu tanahlah akan kaumakan seumur hidupmu." (Kejadian 3:14)
- (12) "Lalu Abimelekh memberi perintah kepada seluruh bangsa itu: "Siapa yang mengganggu orang ini atau isterinya, pastilah ia akan dihukum mati." (Kejadian 26:11)

Demand is something that is obtained when "someone" doing something. Something in this context is usually associated or has a negative connotation or is known as a mistake. The assertive-demand is similar to the directive speech act because both of them contain requests. The difference between the assetive-demanding and directive speech act are in the verb used to demand that a request is strictly obligatory, and is synonymous with a lawsuit. Demanding is a request that comes because of something that follows it. This can be said to be a form of cause and effect. Therefore, the demand belongs to the assertive form. It can also be categorized into context, because context supports an utterance. Data (4) and (12) are assertive-demanding speech acts. Demand in data (4) and (12) are the reasons that will be reaped when committing a "infringement" which has been determined to be a provision. "terkutuklah engkau" (data 4) and "ia dihukum mati" (data 12) are examples of discontinuities between language structure and the communicative function, so they are classified as indirect speech acts. In data (4), the imperative structure in speech is expressed by the communicative function of statements, while data (12) have an interrogative structure with the communicative function of statements.

#### **Assertive-Declaring**

- (1) "Lalu berkatalah manusia itu: "Inilah dia, tulang dari tulangku dan daging dari dagingku. Ia akan dinamai perempuan, sebab ia diambil dari laki-laki." (Kejadian 2:23)
- (10) "Dan Allah berfirman: "Inilah tanda perjanjian yang Kuadakan antara Aku dan kamu serta segala makhluk yang hidup, yang bersama-sama dengan kamu, turun-temurun, untuk selama-lamanya." (Kejadian 9:12)

A statement can be interpreted as a notification that contains an clarification to suggest something that is considered true or valid. The validity of an utterance is one of the main characteristics of assertive speech act. Assertive-declaring speech acts focus on the form of information that is a marker of reality. Assertive-declaring is a prominent type of speech act in the Bible. Assertive-declaring speech act is also the most frequently found form in linguistic practice, especially in assertive acts. The statement becomes the main marker and dominates in an assertive speech act. Data (1) and (10) have a similar form of statement, namely telling or describing an object. Data (1) describes the first woman created by the God to accompany Adam. Whereas data (10) is a statement describing the sign of the agreement between Allah and Nuh (in this case the sign is a rainbow). Data (1) and (10) have the same form of speech act, namely direct speech act. Both are structured declarative by using the communicative function of statements.

#### **Assertive-Giving Testimony**

(7) "Kemudian manusia itu bersetubuh dengan Hawa, isterinya, dan mengandunglah perempuan itu, lalu melahirkan Kain; maka kata perempuan itu: "Aku telah mendapat seorang anak

- laki-laki dengan pertolongan TUHAN." (Kejadian 4:1)
- (14) "Tetapi Laban berkata kepadanya: "Sekiranya aku mendapat kasihmu! Telah nyata kepadaku, bahwa TUHAN memberkati aku karena engkau." (Kejadian 30:27)
- (16) "Yehuda memeriksa barang-barang itu, lalu berkata: "Bukan aku, tetapi perempuan itulah yang benar, karena memang aku tidak memberikan dia kepada Syela, anakku." Dan ia tidak bersetubuh lagi dengan perempuan itu." (Kejadian 38:26)

Applicatively, giving testimony is an act of taking responsibility for the utterance proposition of something that actually happened. One of the materials to test the validity of an assertivegiving testimony is evidence. This evidence can be presented physically and digitally (following the era). Testimony is information spoken by someone who is believed to know an incident or event. Data (7), (14), and (16) are assertive speech acts-giving testimony seen from the speaker's attempt to deliver something about the object spoken. As in data (7) testifying to God's help in the speaker's life, it is proven from the utterance, "dengan pertolongan TUHAN." Data (14) also testifies that the sense of blessing obtained from GOD is evidenced in the story, "Telah nyata kepadaku, bahwa TUHAN memberkati aku." In contrast to data (7) and (14), data (16) testifies that the truth are in the object being spoken, as evidenced by, "perempuan itulah yang benar". These three data are classified as direct speech acts, because there is continuity between the structure of language and its communicative function, namely in a declarative structure with statements as the communicative function.

#### **Assertive-Announcing**

- (9) "Sebab tujuh hari lagi Aku akan menurunkan hujan ke atas bumi empat puluh hari empat puluh malam lamanya, dan Aku akan menghapuskan dari muka bumi segala yang ada, yang Kujadikan itu." (Kejadian 7:4)
- (18) "Ketika diberitahukan kepada Yakub: "Telah datang anakmu Yusuf kepadamu," maka Israel mengumpulkan segenap kekuatannya dan duduklah ia di tempat tidurnya." (Kejadian 48:2)
  Announcement is something that is

distributed with the aim of informing certain information to a handful of people. Announcements also tend to deliver information that will or has not occurred, as in data (9) as evidenced in the speech, "Sebab tujuh hari lagi,". However, the announcement that occurred as in data (18) is that it has occurred, but the time statement has just occurred, as evidenced in the utterance, "Telah datang anakmu". Data (9) and (18) also bind the speakers and the hearer with "certainty". Both of these data are in the form of direct speech acts because of the similarity in structure language and communicative function, that is, they are declarative in structure with statements as the communicative function.

# **Assertive-Reporting**

- (3) "Kemudian berfirmanlah TUHAN Allah kepada perempuan itu: "Apakah yang kauperbuat ini?" Jawab perempuan itu: "Ular itu yang memperdayakan aku, maka kumakan." (Kejadian 3:13)
- (13) "Pada hari itu datanglah hamba-hamba Ishak memberitahukan kepadanya tentang sumur yang telah digali mereka, serta berkata kepadanya: "Kami telah mendapat air." (Kejadian 26:32)

Reports can be associated to news so that their truth can be accounted for. Everything that is reported is classified as assertive speech. The report contains assertiveness that is deliberately delivered with the aim of binding the hearer with the validity of the news. Data (3) and (13) contain reports in their speech. Data (3) reported that the snake was the cause of the woman (Hawa) eating the fruit that was forbidden by GOD, seen from "Ular itu yang memperdayakan aku". Data (13) Ishak's servants report to Ishak that they have got water after digging a well, seen from the saying, "Kami telah mendapat air." Both of these data have a declarative structure with a statement communicative function, so they are classified as direct speech acts.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Assertive speech acts in the Bible tend to dominate in line with dogmatic forms in the Bible which contain statements about things that are considered true and believed by Christians. In addition, the Bible contains utterances that accountable for the proportion of utterances, so that truth or validity can be trustworthy. The statements that are present as utterances or in the form of words become the data in this study,

especially the book of Genesis (*Kitab Kejadian*). The book of Genesis contains strong religious discourse with the beginning of creation because the book of Genesis is the opening book in the Bible. In addition to the story of the creation of the heavens, the earth and everything in it, the book of Genesis also tells the story of Abraham, Yakub and Yusuf.

Based on the data of 20 assertive speech acts contained in the book of Genesis, it is classified into types of assertive speech acts: acknowledging, demanding, declaring, giving testimony, announcing, and reporting. The data is classified with details of assertive speech actsacknowledging amounted to 2 data, assertive speech acts-demanding amounted to 5 data, assertive speech acts-declaring amounted to 6 data, assertive speech acts-giving testimony amounted to 3 data, assertive speech acts announcing amounted to 2 data, and assertive speech acts-reporting amounted to 2 data. Based on the form, assertive speech acts in the book of Genesis are detailed into 15 forms of direct speech acts and 5 forms of indirect speech acts.

This research that combines aspects of linguistics and theology complements several earlier studies by adding to the collection of religious discourse research from a linguistics point of view. In addition to complementing the existing ones, there are also some novelties that are formed and appear in this study, which is to find patterns of types and forms of assertive speech acts in religious aspects, especially in the Bible (book of Genesis).

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