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Research Article

## How Does a Young Adult with Autism Respond to Directive Speech Acts conveyed in a Podcast?

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### KEYWORDS

ASD;  
 Directive Speech Act;  
 Response.

### A B S T R A C T

Autistic Spectrum Disorder is a mental development disorder that can affect the ability to communicate and behave. This study has an aim to find out what kind of DSA uttered by the host DC and how a young adult Youtuber with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) responds to speech acts focused on directive speech acts. The method of this research was descriptive qualitative. The data were collected from the conversation between DC and NF, a Youtuber with ASD in the 'Close the Door' podcast on his YouTube channel in 2021. From the results of dataanalysis, it can be seen that DC uttered questions mostly among other DSA types initiated by Allan (1986), the type that appears the most was questions, it appears 52 times during 16 minutes and 17 seconds conversation with various responses, with actions, one- or two-word answers, repetition, and unrelated long answers.

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## INTRODUCTION

Humans are born not all perfect. There are some with physical disabilities but are still able to communicate and behave normally, but there are also those who have disabilities related to neurodevelopmental, one of which is ASD. Prasetyono in Sumarti and Salamah (2015) stated that autistic children are not able to express their desires spontaneously both verbally and nonverbally. In fact, often the speech delivered does not match the context. Conveyed by Dompas (2008) that autistic children use very simple verbal behavior as one or two words followed by nonverbal behavior to convey their wishes. This means that there are limited vocabulary and expressions owned by people with

ASD. The number of repetitions of words, the use of lexical hedges that function as fillers such as 'eng', 'mm' too often as a time span to find the next words to be conveyed.

In regard of communication disabilities, it is important for people closest to them to know and understand what obstacles people with ASD experience and how they can interact optimally with their best potential so that they can convey simple intentions and also respond.

Autism or Autistic/Autism Spectrum Disorder is a disorder of emotional development and social communication. According to Mash & Wolfe (2016) Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by abnormalities in social communication and unusual behavior and interests. Meanwhile, Copeland

in Arini and Kurniawati (2020) argued that ASD is a complex developmental condition that involves persistent challenges in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, and limited/repetitive behavior. The same thing was conveyed by Rosli et al (2021) that ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder with a biological basis that appears in the third year of life. Cummings (2008) added that in ASD, communication defects occur together with deficiencies in socialization and imagination, which Wing and Gould (1979) called the Triad of Impairments. The American Psychiatric Association (2013) defined Autism Spectrum Disorder as a developmental disorder characterized by verbal and nonverbal communication difficulties, as well as social interaction difficulties (Valentia, Sani & Anggreany, 2017).

This research is based on speech act theory in which the subject demonstrates a response to a directive speech act presented by the host of the Close the Door Podcast. Speech acts according to Finegan (2008) are parts of speech events in which all actions are carried out through language. This becomes clear because people use language as a tool or media to do many things such as asking for help, promises, seeking information etc. Austin divides speech acts into three divisions; locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. Locutionary is the use of words by speakers with a certain meaning or in other words non-taxic meanings and references. Illocutionary is the action performed by the speaker when conveying the locution; or in other words, illocutionary materializes the intention of the speaker in making speeches. Perlocutionary or illocutionary effect is how the speaker recognizes the intent of the speaker so as to produce an action. According to Müller et al (in Ball et al, 2008) the effect or strength of an utterance is a source of meaning that can be distinguished from the truth or falsity of a statement. That is, a proposition 'It's raining' will be considered true if it is raining at the time it is said. Searle in Ball et al (2008) further specified illocutionary acts into five criteria; (1) assertiveness makes speakers confirm the truth of a proposition expressed; (2) the directive shows the effort made by the speaker so that the speech partner does something. (3) commissive, making the speaker take action in the future (4) expressive, expressing a psychological state with the requirement of being sincere about a situation, expressing feelings towards the speech partner (5) declarative, making changes to the status or condition.

Whereas Finegan (2008) argued that speech acts are divided into 6 focuses; (1) representative: which represents a situation and can be characterized as a true or false statement such as affirmation, statement, claim, hypothesis, description, suggestion; (2) commissive: makes the speaker perform an action such as a promise, oath, threat; (3) the directive is uttered so that the speech partner performs an action such as an order, request,

challenge, invitation, request; (4) declarative makes a condition as mentioned, for example, blessing, dismissal, baptism, arrest, marriage; (5) expressive indicating a psychological state or behavior such as greetings, apologies, congratulations, condolences, thanks; (6) verification, namely making assessments and assessments such as ranking, rating, forgiving.

According to Searle, a directive speech act is a speech act that asks the speech partner to take an action, while Finegan clarified it in the form of a directive speech act such as an order, request, challenge, invitation, etc. Yule (1996) stated directive speech acts into commands, orders, requests and suggestions, while Allan (1986) categorized directive speech acts into (1) **requestive**, directive speech acts (DSA) with performative verbs such as ask, beg, implore, insist, invite, pray, summon and urge; (2) **question**, DSA which asks something to the speech partner with performative verbs such as ask, inquiry, question, quiz; (3) **requirement**, DSA which requires the speech partner to do something with performative verbs such as charge, command, demand, dictate, order, require; (4) **Prohibitive**, DSA which prohibits the speech partner from doing something with a verb such as enjoin, forbid, prohibit, proscribe, restrict; (5) **Permissive**, DSA which allows the speech partner to do something, with verbs such as agree to, allow, excuse, permit, etc.; and (6) **advisories**, DSA which the speaker advises the speech partner to do something, with verbs such as admonish, advise, caution, recommend, suggest, etc.

Several studies have been conducted in relation with ASD and DSA. As what Rosli *et al* (2021) stated that DSA are critical in eliciting meaningful responses from autistic children and that the subject was observed to produce more feedback and comprehend better in DSA compared to other speech acts. Based on study conducted by, children with ASD have tendency to use DSA in the interaction between the teacher. This study intends to find out what DSA uttered by the host Dc and how a 21-year-old male with ASD responds to directive speech acts conveyed by the host on the Close the Door Podcast on Dedy Corbuzier's YouTube channel which was aired in 2021. Thus the specific objective of this research is that how the young adult with ASD tends to respond given short and long directive speech acts.

## METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative study which aims to explore the responses of a young adult with ASD to questions posed in a podcast programme. The author used case study research and the subject is a young adult with autism, initials NF, aged 21 years old. It uses purposive sampling for gaining the objective of the study. NF is the first autistic Youtuber to have a podcast show and has

received an award from MURI. He was also a student of a university. The data are taken from the "Close the Door Podcast" event that was broadcasted on Deddy Corbuzier's Youtube channel in 2021, entitled " *Kaget Loe nonton ini!! Naufal Anak Autis Keren!!*". The talk show lasts 16 minutes and 17 seconds and shows how a young adult with autism reacts to the host's directive speech act. The podcast was downloaded and listened several times. Then it was transcribed and analyzed, to identify DSA uttered by the host and focused on the responses given by NF.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the analysis, it is found that the types of directive speech acts delivered by the host of Close the Door are dominated by DSA with the type of questions (questions) appearing as many as 52 times.

1. The DSAs data initiated by Allan, DC uses

**Tabel 1.** The DSAs data initiated by Allan

Types of Directive Speech Act	Frequency
Requestive	2
Questions	52
Requirements	0
Prohibitives	0
Permissive	4
Advisories	1

2. The types of DSA given by the host DC and the responses given by the NF in the Close the Door podcast are as follows:

### a. Requestive

Requestive is a one if DSA that use performative verbs such as ask, beg, implore, insist, invite, pray, summon and urge. In this podcast, the host delivered two types of this, such as:

*"Pake dong."*

**Context:** The host is asking NF to put the headset on

**Response:** In the above utterance, NF responded directly with the action of grabbing the headset and then putting it on his ear. In this of a requestive directive speech act, NF did not give a verbal response.

*"NF, deketan sama mikrofon."*

**Context:** The presenter asked NF to move closer to the microphone so that his voice could be heard clearly on the audio recording.

**Response:** NF moved closer to the microphone and replied "Ya... ya". For this simple sentence, NF understood and was able to carry out the action immediately.

### b. Questions

There are two types of questions provided by DC hosts, open questions (WH questions) and closed questions (such as yes/no questions).

### - Open questions

*"NF, kenapa kok belakangan om liat di tempat NF, bikin podcast juga? Kenapa tuh?"*

**Context:** NF has a podcast show on the channel AKU NAUFAL (Autistic Boy) which is also on Youtube. He has a private studio at home, built by his father RH, to record the show. DC asked what was the reason for NF to do the show.

**Response:** For this type of DSA, NF replied with "Emm saya emm ee saya suka podcast ini emm emm saya juga ga tau". In this response there are several hedges such as emm and ee both at the beginning and in the middle. NF may have had difficulty responding to a rather long utterance, although NF could still understand it. The question beginning with ' why (kenapa)...' asks for a reason from the interlocutor and was answered by NF with 'saya suka podcast'.

### - Closed question

*"Oke, coba Pa DC mau tanya sama NF, kalo NF sayang ga sama ayah?"*

**Context:** The question asked by host DC is the type of question that really only requires a yes or no answer. Here DC asked about NF's feelings towards his father. The question was followed by two similar questions asking if NF loved the other two family members (mother and sister).

**Response:** For this type of question, NF responded with a full sentence "Saya sayang sama ayah", not just a yes or no answer. Even though people with ASD are told that they are emotionally restricted, feeling affection is something fundamental that all people have regardless of their situation. In terms of what was asked, the answers were also correct.

*"NF suka nontonin ayah?"*

**Context:** NF's father is a Youtuber and has a podcast on the Youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/c/ReflyHarunOfficia> 1, so the presenter DC asked NF this question.

**Response:** In this question, the verbal answer given by NF did not answer the intention of the host. By saying "emm ya aku suka nonton mamah di Youtube", NF did not confirm the host's question and gave an answer that did not relate. Nevertheless, we may conclude that NF watches shows on his mother's YouTube channel and not his father's.

### c. Requirement

Requirements require the interlocutor to do something with performative verbs such as charge, command, demand, dictate, order, require. In the 16 minutes and

17 seconds of conversation, there were no elements that fulfilled this requirement.

#### d. Prohibitive

Prohibitives that forbid people from doing something with verbs such as enjoin, forbid, prohibit, proscribe, restrict. In this podcast episode, the writers do not find this type of directive speech acts conveyed by the speakers. They do not prohibit or forbid their interlocutors from doing something.

#### e. Permissive

Permissive, with verbs such as agree to, allow, excuse, permit, etc., means to allow the interlocutor to do something. The following examples of this type of speech act have been taken from the data:

*"Oh iyalah, terserah NF. Orang yang mau tidur NF. Aduh pertanyaannya emang yang salah berarti. Jadi abis dari sini terserah ya NF mau ngapain ya"*

**Context:** The presenter asked about the activities that NF would do after the podcast event, whether he would go straight home or go somewhere else, and received the answer 'mm saya terserah pa'. This answer was then clarified by the host and confirmed by NF: '*ya terserah saya*'. The word 'whatever (terserah)' shows a sense of permissiveness, allowing interlocutors to do whatever they want. As people with ASD tend to be emotionally unstable, this can be managed by understanding when they are relaxed, so that they can follow instructions or respond as they wish.

**Response:** NF gave a verbal response that was not really to the host's point.

*"Kalo Pak D manggil NF apa dong? Ade atau apa? Manggilnya apa? NF maunya dipanggil apa?"*

**Context:** The host asked NF's approval for the nickname to be applied to NF, as NF himself nicknamed the host Pak D.

**Response:** NF replied "Pak D aja". The answer shows a misinterpretation of the host's statement, where the host asked NF what he preferred to be called. However, NF's interpretation of the question was that the host was asking NF for a nickname.

#### f. Advisories

Advice is a type of DSA where the speaker suggests something to the interlocutor, using verbs such as admonish, advise, caution, recommend, suggest, etc. Example:

*"Kenapa NF ga mau bikin jadi Youtuber aja, Youtuber yang revidu makanan kaya NF udah bikin? Bagus tuh NF."*

**Context:** In the previous conversation, DC asked NF about his dreams. NF replied that he wanted to be a pilot. DC then suggested that NF pursue activities as a YouTuber with a focus on food reviews, taking into account the fact that NF already has a YouTube channel with more than 50,000 subscribers and has a MURI certificate.

**Response:** The verbal answer given by NF indicated that he didn't want to become a YouTuber by saying "*em eh em saya engga pak*" and confirmed that his goal was to become a pilot who flies planes.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, DC uttered questions as the most type of DSA in the podcast with a young adult with Autism, followed with permissive. There are two types of DSA with zero frequency which mean that the researchers did not find any of those in the conversation. NF's responses to the DC host's questions were dominated by one or two words such as *iya, ga tau, belum..*, while repetitive or repeated such as '*ya aku..ya aku..*', .. The longest response was to the host's question about whether NF had ever met DC and had seen DC's show on TV. When NF replied that he did not know, the host confirmed this and replied "*Saya pernah sadar. Saya bekerja cuman di rumah saja.. emm..emm entar kalo tahun depan eeee.. sebentar lagi tahun depan lulus kuliah, Pa Dedi.*" This answer is long but does not confirm what the host meant. It can be said that there is an answer which is not related to the question asked.

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