ANALYSIS OF LOCUTION, ILLOCUTION, AND PERLOCUTION SPEECH ACTS IN SOME HADITHS

Wahyu Unggul Widodo

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the application of the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary speech acts within selected Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him). The research explains how the Prophet's sayings give not only informational content but also, they carry intended meanings and specific effects to Muslim. The study is qualitative using content analysis to selected Hadiths retrieved from https://sunnah.com. Four Hadiths were examined to identify the literal utterance (locution), the Prophet's intended meaning (illocution), and the impact on the listener or Muslim (perlocution). These analyses reveal that Hadiths sometimes use figurative language that need a deeper interpretation and understanding to get their full communicative function. This study explores how speech act theory provides a powerful point of view through which Islamic texts can be understood beyond their literal meanings. By decoding the intentions and effects embedded in prophetic sayings, readers are encouraged to engage more reflectively with religious teachings. The study confirms that Hadiths are rich linguistic sayings capable of guiding both spiritual understanding and ethical behavior through layered speech acts.

Correspondent Authors;
1) Lecturer of Universitas An Nuur, wahyuunggulwidodo@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Language has an important role in our life. When we want to communicate with other, we need language. Communication in everyday life becomes more effective if people who engage in communication use a language which is easily understood by each other. According to Leech (1981) language has five functions Informational, expressive, directive, aesthetic and phatic. Informational function concentrates on the message. It is used to give new information. It depends on truth and value. Expressive function; that language can be used to express its originator's feelings and attitudes – swear words and exclamations are the most obvious instance of this. Speakers can reflect his or her impression. This function could give a clear image for the personality of the speaker or writer. The directive function which we use to influence the behavior or attitudes of others. The most straightforward instances of the directive function are commands and requests. The aesthetic function of language focuses on the message and how it is delivered, emphasizing the beauty of language itself. Phatic function is about establishing, maintaining, or ending contact, and it doesn't necessarily convey any meaningful information. Instead, it focuses on ensuring that the connection between speakers remains open.

In his work *How to Do Things with Words* (1962), British philosopher J.L. Austin first systematically offered speech act theory, a fundamental idea in pragmatics and the philosophy of language. Austin questioned the conventional ideas that language's main purpose is to state facts or describe reality. Rather, he maintained that when people talk, they frequently use their words to carry out actions. This realization led to the categorization of utterances as speech acts, which are actions in and of themselves rather than just informational conveyers. Austin distinguished the locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act as the three main elements of a speech act. Making sounds, words, or sentences with a specific and literal meaning is known as the locutionary act. For instance, stating "It's cold in here" to denote a low temperature is an example of the propositional or literal content of an utterance. The speaker's intention when making the utterance is known as the illocutionary act, which is arguably the most important component of Austin's theory. Claims, queries, directives, assurances, and other communication goals are all included in this act. Therefore, asking someone to close the window by saying, "It's cold in here," may be an illocutionary act. The impact of the utterance on the listener is the subject of the perlocutionary act. It has to do with the behavioral or psychological reaction that the speech act evokes. Using the same example, the speaker has successfully executed a perlocutionary act if the listener shuts the window after hearing the statement, "It's cold in here." This component emphasizes how speech is performative and consequential.

Austin's theory was improved by Searle (1979), who also highlighted the significance of conventions and intentions in illocutionary acts. According to his theory, speech acts are subject to a set of constitutive and regulative rules that specify when and how specific illocutionary acts should be performed. This advancement offered a more methodical framework for speech analysis in real life settings (Searle, 1969). Since then, speech act theory has gained importance in a

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number of disciplines, including linguistics, discourse analysis, and communication studies. It facilitates comprehension of the construction of meaning in linguistics that goes beyond syntax and semantics. It describes how language use mediates social interactions in communication studies.

In summary, the ideas of locution, illocution, and perlocution have shed light on how language serves as a means of performing actions and forming interpersonal relationships in addition to being a tool for information transmission. In fields related to language, these categories still have an impact on both theoretical and applied research.
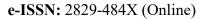
Speech act theory can also be used to analyzed, the meaning of the saying of prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him), since the saying itself is a part of language. The saying of prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) well known as Hadith is a record of the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him), his family, and his companions. It is the second most important text in Islam next to the Quran. Although not regarded as the spoken Word of God like the Quran, the Hadith is an important source of doctrine, law, and practice. (Shinta et al., 2023)

In some hadiths Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) used figurative language to explain or describe something. Figurative language is a language that uses figures of speech which deviate from the normal use of the literal meaning of a word to achieve particular meaning (Amina, 2015). The figurative may leads to several possibilities of meaning; they consist of its literal meaning and the intended meaning. The literal meaning of figurative could be

understood as a regular utterance that has no other meaning except the utterance itself, while the intended meaning of figurative, it can lead to several effects to the hearer.

Consider the following example: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), "By Allah, if a single person is guided by Allah through you, it will be better for you than a whole lot of red camels." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) (Book 13:4). If people go for the literal meaning, it could be that the Prophet (peace be upon him) talked about the real red camel, but when people go deeper to an intended meaning, they will find that red camels (at that time) were the most valuable camel in Arab world, equivalent to gold in this era (Amina, 2015). Furthermore, for people who understand the intended meaning of what the prophet (peace be upon him) proposed will be motivated to guide other people to a right path in order to gain the red camel. The similar hadiths, with the literal and intended meaning as well as the implication that can affect the hearers or the readers, can easily be found in other hadiths narrated by some companions.

This study explains the literal meaning of the hadith, the literal saying of prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) is the locutionary act. Prophet Muhammad's intention when making the saying is illocutionary act and the impact of the saying on the listener or Muslims is the subject of the perlocutionary act. The hadith in this study are retrieved from *http://sunnah.com*.

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RESEARCH METHOD

The research is qualitative research. According to Moleong, (2005) qualitative research is an approach that requires more process than results. This is because the relationship between each part of data being studied will be clearer in the process being observed. The data research is the translation of hadith retrieved from *http://sunnah.com*. Data management analysis techniques as follows;

1. select the hadith from http://sunnah.com (2025) that meet the criteria (for example, they are observed, at glance, tend to have the literal and intended meaning).
2. analyze and determine literal and intended meaning of the hadith.
3. classify the locution, illocution and perlocution speech acts of the hadith
4. describe and conclude the results of the analysis of research data.

The research provides results in the form of text or descriptions that have been analyzed.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Findings

The research focuses on discussions about the hadith retrieved from https://sunnah.com/ that meet the criteria (for example, they are observed, at glance, that they have the literal and intended meaning) locution, illocution, and perlocution speech acts.

Hadith No 1

Narrated 'Umar bin Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him):

I heard Allah's Messenger saying, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended. *So, whoever emigrated for worldly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration was for what he emigrated for.*"

Reference   : Sahih al-Bukhari 1
In-book reference   : Book 1, Hadith 1
USC-MSA web (English) reference : Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 1
http://sunnah.com/bukhari/1

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) as narrated by 'Umar bin Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him) said that people who emigrated because of the worldly things, they would get the advantages of those things or people who emigrated for marrying woman, they would get what they want, i.e. successful in marrying that woman.

Hadith No 2

It was narrated from 'Uqbah bin 'Amr, Abu Mas'ud, (May Allah be pleased with them): that the Messenger of Allah (Peace be Upon him) said: "Among the words that people learned from the earlier Prophets are: '*If you feel no shame, then do as you wish.*'"

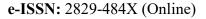English reference   : Vol. 1, Book 37, Hadith 4183
Arabic reference   : Book 37, Hadith 4323
http://sunnah.com/ibnmajah/37#

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) said that people could do anything,

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including the forbidden ones if they had no shame.

Hadith No 3

Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her): narrated that:
The Messenger of Allah (Peace be Upon him) said: *"Whoever innovates something in this matter of ours (i.e. Islam) that is not part of it, will have it rejected."*

Arabic / English book reference: Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 14

http://sunnah.com/ibnmajah/introduction

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) said that people who innovated something which didn't exist in Prophet era, that innovation would be rejected.

Hadith No 4

It was narrated from Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with him): that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:
"The disbeliever eats with seven intestines and the believer eats with one intestine."

English reference   : Vol. 1, Book 29, Hadith 3257
Arabic reference   : Book 29, Hadith 3380
http://sunnah.com/ibnmajah/29

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) said that disbelievers have seven intestines while the believers have one intestine.

2. Discussion

Hadith No 1
Narrated 'Umar bin Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him):

I heard Allah's Messenger saying, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended. *So, whoever emigrated for worldly benefits or for a woman to marry, his emigration was for what he emigrated for.*"

At glance the Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) seems to only give information to his people that everything they get will depend on their intention. For example, if a man wants to marry a woman, he will do anything he can do, to get what he wants, marrying woman. All of his efforts are supposed to be for his will only; in other words, the hadith teaches people in doing something they should have an intention, so they will be rewarded with something according to their intention. This is the locutionary meaning of the hadith.

Muslim should know that this hadith is the information from the Prophet (Peace be upon him) that Activities will be counted based on purpose and are not counted if they have no purposes. The matter is what the purposes are, they are for worldly things or for Allah or else. It seems to be that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) left the Muslim to choose whether their intention, emigration or else is for Allah or else. This hadith explains that the rewards for our deeds depend on our intentions. It is important to have not only good intentions when doing something but also Muslim should place Allah and then His messenger (Peace be upon him) before their worldly intention. For example, if a man emigrates for worldly gain or to marry a woman then he will only receive a reward based on what he intended to do, but if his intention of marrying woman for the sake of Allah, *e.g.* to do it because of *sunnah,* then it is followed by worldly things, because of his love for his spouse, so it is the

better action and an intended meaning of Prophet's (Peace be upon him) saying, people get what they emigrate for, marrying woman, and the more important they get Allah's mercy . The intended meaning lies in the hadith is called the illocutionary meaning.

The above hadith shows Muslim that intentions lead the result. The result means what they will get from a certain action they do. If they do a thing for the thing itself, they will only get thing, but when they do it, firstly because of Allah then it is followed by worldly reason. Every Muslim who understands this concept, the intended meaning of the hadith, they must try harder to purify every intention of their doings. The action of purifying the intention which is affected by understanding of the hadith, it is affected the Muslim's behavior in term of how to have a right intention, it is a form of perlocution act.

Hadith No 2

It was narrated from 'Uqbah bin 'Amr, Abu Mas'ud, (May Allah be pleased with them): that the Messenger of Allah (Peace be Upon him) said: "Among the words that people learned from the earlier Prophets are: '*If you feel no shame, then do as you wish.*"

At the level of literal or locution meaning, the hadith gives an information, people can do anything, right or wrong doing, if they don't feel shame about it. The hadith is also like an allowance to do anything someone want. However, at the level of illocution act, the hadith is a sarcastic way to satirize Muslim, since the shyness is a part of Faith. Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported, Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) said, "Iman has

sixty odd or seventy odd branches. The uppermost of all these is the Testimony of Faith: *'La ilaha illallah'* (there is no true god except Allah) while the least of them is the removal of harmful object from the road. And shyness is a branch of Iman.

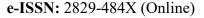Muslim should understand the hadith above by connecting it to another relevant hadith.
'Imran bin Husain (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) said, "Shyness does not bring anything except good.". By saying *if you feel no shame, then do as you wish,* then in another occasion the prophet said that shyness brings good, the two hadith aren't in a contrary but the former is a sarcastic. However, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) in the former hadith warned the Muslim before doing a thing they should think and consider that it is a good thing, and when they want to do a bad thing, they have to remember, the action will bring a shame to them. Feeling shameful when people want to do a bad thing, it leads to fear Allah, because, as it says in hadith reported by Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him), shyness is a branch of Faith. It is the illocutionary meaning of the hadith.

Knowing the intended meaning of the hadith, Muslim should seriously consider before doing something whether the things are good or bad. This understanding will lead them to be more careful in taking an action, the intended meaning of the hadith has affected their behavior. They will put the faith at the first place. This behavioral action belongs to perlocution act.

Hadith No 3

Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her): narrated that:
The Messenger of Allah (Peace be Upon him) said: *"Whoever innovates*

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something in this matter of ours (i.e. Islam) that is not part of it, will have it rejected."

The hadith in a surface seems to accuse that everything isn't found in the prophetic era is forbidden and it should be rejected. In prophetic era, there were no microphones, cars, planes etc., so all of them should be rejected according to the hadith. The opinion, in a locutionary act level, seems to be logic and true, but the intended meaning of the hadith, the illocution act, the opinion is such a misunderstanding.

The hadith teaches Muslim that introducing new practices, beliefs, or rituals into Islam that are not supported by the Quran and Sunnah, are forbidden, and they will not be accepted. But everything which is rejected, in this case, is everything dealing with the belief or rituals in Islam. Things which aren't found in prophetic era but now they exist and they aren't dealing with belief or rituals; they are excluded from the warning of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). Nowadays, we can easily find cars, phone, plane etc., which didn't exist in the prophetic era, all of them are innovations, but this kind of innovations aren't forbidden or rejected in Islam, because they aren't dealing with belief or rituals. The intended meaning of the hadith is Muslim in practicing Islam should be in accordance with what has been taught by Allah and His Messenger (Peace be upon him) and they must avoid anything else which is dealing with belief and rituals, which has been invented by people. Muslim should also be careful when following religious practices as some may have been introduced by people without any basis in Islamic teachings. They must ensure they are following the true teachings of Islam and reject any innovations which have no basis in our faith.

After knowing the intended meaning of the hadith, Muslim should seriously consider about the rituals they perform. They must be sure that what they perform have been supported by al Qur'an and the Hadith. They will be selective in choosing what will they perform and which will not in their rituals. Their behavior affected by their understanding of the hadith is a form of perlocution act.
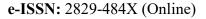
Hadith No 4

It was narrated from Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with him): that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said:
"The disbeliever eats with seven intestines and the believer eats with one intestine."

At the level of literal or locution meaning, the hadith tells Muslim that the disbelievers have seven intestines and the believers (Muslim) have one intestine. Schulman explains, people have two intestines, they are small intestine and large intestine. Small intestine is divided into three different parts; duodenum, jejunum, and ileum, while the large intestine consists of several different parts; cecum, colon, rectum and anus. Considering to the hadith, at the surface it can be understood that disbelievers use all part of their intestines and believers use only several parts in the digestion process after they eat something.

Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi (2025), former President of the Islamic Society of North America and Director of the Islamic Society of Orange County, Garden Grove, California commented about the hadith, he stated that the scholars of Hadith explain this to mean that a true believer is a contented person. He takes little from the material world. The non-believer is greedy and is never satisfied with what he has. The

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scholars say that one should not take the number seven literally; it is used in Arabic to indicate large number or quantity. "Eating in seven intestines" is a metaphorical way of saying "eating too much or being too greedy." It also includes the way how the believers should eat. They eat so it gives them more energy so that they are able to pray standing up and make it easy for them to fast. This is the intended or illocution meaning of the hadith.

Muslim who has understood the intended meaning of the hadith will realize the importance of moderation in all aspects of life, including eating. If so, they will always try to be a contented people, they will feel enough with what they have and get. Behaviors affected by the intended meaning of the hadith are categorized into a perlocution act. However, their behavior of being contented doesn't mean that they neglect efforts and anything that support the effort.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him), as found in selected Hadiths, encompass rich layers of meaning that can be effectively analyzed through the lens of speech act theory. By classifying the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) into locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, it becomes evident that Hadiths not only deliver literal information but also bring deep intentions and result behavioral effect among listeners or Muslim. Each Hadith examined in this research reveals powerful communicative tools with moral, spiritual, and social implications.

The research confirms that understanding the intended meaning (illocution) and the resulting effect on listeners (perlocution) allows a deeper understanding of religious texts. This approach helps prevent misunderstandings of literal meanings and stimulates a more reflective engagement with Islamic teachings.

The application of speech act theory in analyzing Hadith not only enriches the study of language in religious discourse but also strengthens the understanding of messages the hadiths bring. The research may be grounded broader research dealing with Islamic text and speech act theory.
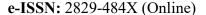
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