

## The Representation of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Identities in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Novels

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**Abstract.** This study aims to reveal the representation of indigenous and non-indigenous identities in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novels through the approach of speech act theory. This theory, developed by J.L. Austin and refined by John Searle, emphasizes the functions of speech in the context of communication, especially in the dimensions of locution, illocution, and perlocution. Pramoedya's novels, especially those included in the Buru Tetralogy, show the power relations, resistance, and stereotypes between indigenous and non-indigenous ethnic groups in the context of colonial and postcolonial Indonesia. By analyzing the speech acts of the characters, this study finds that ethnic identities are constructed and negotiated through language strategies that reflect the socio-political positions of each group. The speech acts of non-indigenous characters, such as the Chinese and Dutch, tend to reflect domination or efforts to maintain the status quo, while indigenous characters show forms of resistance or subversion through their speech. The results of this study indicate that ethnic representation in Pramoedya's works is not only present as a narrative theme, but is also manifested pragmatically in the interactions between characters.

Keywords: Pramoedya Ananta Toer, speech acts, ethnic representation, indigenous, non-indigenous, literary pragmatics

### 1. Introduction

Communication is a set of speeches that is used systematically to reach certain motives or goals. As a person says something in their speech, the intention is not merely counted on factual information, but also social acts that give impact to the addresser or addressee [1]. Language may function as fundamental apparatus in shaping social structure and constructing power relation in a society. Language may help individual not only to deliver messages but also to conduct social function, like giving command, persuading, refusing, and dominating. The studies of speech acts as formulated by [2] and developed by Searle [3] state that every single utterance contain pragmatical function tightly related to social position of the addressers and counterparts in a context of communication.

One of literary works in Indonesian literature demonstrating intercorrelation between language and power is *Tetralogi Buru* written by **Pramoedya Ananta Toer**, especially novel *Bumi Manusia*. Via these novels, Pramoedya introduces the practice of language to show ideology, symbol, and social position through the characters of *Minke*, *Nyai Ontosoroh*, and other figures of Deutch. According to [1] speech acts operate systematically in obtaining final goal. What is being deliver is not only factual information, rather social acts influencing the counterpart in the dialogue. Single dialogue made by the characters does not only

convey literal meaning but also represent ideological structure and social position in the form of binary opposition, such as colonial and indigenous, male and female, intellectual and common people. Speech acts in this novel function as a medium for negotiating identity, confronting, representing political and cultural power under the colony of Deutch Government.

The research on the speech acts to the novel *Bumi Manusia* aims to reveal how the representation of power is constructed through verbal interaction among characters. This research is significant to open understanding space that the literary works are not reflecting reality, but also representing symbolic field where the power is being negotiated. The pragmatic and critical discourse analysis are used to figure out how language is used as a tool of domination or confrontation in the full-ideologized narration by Pramoedya

## 2. Method

This study is a qualitative-research [4]. It uses a combination of two approaches, namely sociolinguistic and pragmatic frameworks. The main data of the study are taken from the utterances of verbal interactions among the characters in the novel representing related to social class among Dutch, Chinese, and indigenous people of Indonesia. Data collection was conducted using non participatory observation, including repeated novel observations, transcription of relevant dialogues, and record of context of utterances containing representation of relation among different country background of the characters.

Data research, then, were analyzed using a combination of sociolinguistic and pragmatic frameworks. This pragmatic analysis examines the utterances to gain the illocutionary acts and their social functions that represent the position of the addressers and addressees during the dialogue. Meanwhile, sociolinguistic contributes to the understanding how social contexts and cultural norms influence the way participants achieving specific conversational goals. By integrating these two approaches, this research aims to comprehensively understand the pictures of relation among the characters and motivations behind language use, describing a detailed representation of among the characters in various communicative settings.

A qualitative analysis of the dialogues and interactions of characters are employed in this research. The dialogues from the novels written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer serve as the data sources. From the data sources, the researcher hence collects the data using a non-participant observation method and note taking technique [5]. By applying these method and technique, the researcher observes how language is used by the subjects and is not in a state to directly involve in the act of the subjects, limited to only looking at the dialogue performed by the characters.

Researchers use heuristic analysis to examine conversation transcripts to identify the illocutionary acts and its function in a dialogue. The social and cultural context of the time and place are also significant aspects that are used to reveal culturally based-meaning of utterances. This research focuses on the characters

representing the Dutch, Chinese, and indigenous people of Indonesia. How these characters use speeches to negotiate their social hierarchies and interactions.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1. The Analysis of Illocutionary Act of Colonial Domination Discourse.

The result shows that the data contain full of narration describing colonial discourse in which the author of the novel is trying to picture the context of relation between colonial, represented by the Deutch and Chinese Ethnic, and indigenous people. The dialogues among the characters in the novel lead to the discourses confirming that speeches may not only function as a way of transferring information, but also deliver ideological representation supporting the structure of colonial domination. From the analysis, the researcher figured out four types of illocutionary acts, namely: representative or assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive. Each of them gives contribution to the reproduction of power and legitimation of social and culture domination through language. In short, the findings can be illustrated as the table below.

Table.1 Types of Illocutionary Acts

No	Types of Illocutionary Acts	Main Intention	Implication of Domination
1.	Directive	Ordering to learn Deutch Language	Maintaining culture dominance and Deutch language over the indigenous people
2	Representative / Assertive	Claiming inequality between indigenous and two superordinate citizens (Deutch and Chinese) Stating social fact and feelings of inferiority.	Performing the subordination of indigenous culture to western culture Showing inferiority to Chinese ethnics
3	Commissive	“Promising” progress	Confirming the narration that Deutch way will help indigenous get progress Ideologized domination, Restriction on alternative thinks

			and identity of indigenous culture
4	<b>Expressive</b>	Expression of frustrated feeling and surrender to unfair situation	Showing frustrated feeling, powerless, and inability to change own-fate.

### 3.1.1 Directive: Instruction as Instrument of Culture Domination

In term of political discourse, the authority frequently uses language to constitute and shape political behavior and policy. The use of language often reflects a diplomatic strategy. Leilei ZOU and Yiye ZHU (2023:36-44) stated that directive acts show the practice of power relation sharing between the person who has the authority to rule and people who has experienced to follow or obey the policy issued.

Descriptively, directive acts say simple principle, that is the intention to ask others to complete what the addresser requests (Searle, 1964). As the speeches are delivered by the person representing the regime and are directed to people under their control in term of political relation. These utterances are not as simple as requesting others to follow the order. Rather, they represent the domination of culture through language. As Jeane Marais said, *‘Itulah sebabnya kau harus belajar Bahasa Eropa. Hanya dengan itu kau bisa maju’* (“That is why you have to learn European language (the Deutch). This is the only way you get your progress”), responding the utterance made by Minke, the addresser, Jeane Merais makes use of his utterance to represent the domination of culture against the indigenous. The linguistic choice *learning European language* symbolizes modernity, while local language and culture are considered inferior and located in peripheral position. This also means that speaking well in Deutch is a requirement for obtaining higher social class and having access to modernity. The dialogues confirm that language is used to justify cultural hegemony in which the domination of one culture does not only take place physically and politically rather subtle installation of cultural values.

### 3.1.2 Representative Acts: Self-recognition of Social Inequality

The representative acts reveal explicitly non symmetrical relation between indigenous and two dominant ethnics, namely Chinese ethnic and the Deutch. The author shows non symmetrical social relation in which the position of indigenous is inferior in term of economy, symbol, and social. As Minke gives response to Jean Marais’s utterance *“Tapi, Tuan, bahasa kami sendiri tidak cukup untuk menyampaikan pemikiran kami”* “But, Sir, even our own language is not enough to

convey our thought". This utterance does not only inform the fact that indigenous is not able to deliver their intention to others because of their language but also frame the social reality ideologically. The indigenous language is considered ineffective or inferior compared to the colonial language. This is also supported by other data spoken by other part of the novel. Minke said, " *Orang Cina menguasai perdagangan, mereka punya modal dan jaringan luas. Kita, orang Jawa, terpaksa jadi buruh dan penjual kecil*" "The Chinese control the trade. They have capital and extended networking. We, Javanese, are forced to become laborers and small sellers" meaning that economically, indigenous has lower position in society. Thus, this representative speech act plays a role in normalizing the unequal social structure, as well as strengthening the subordinate position of indigenous people.

The representative acts also confirm that the asymmetrical social reality is not to confront but rather something normal and accepted. The social reality presented becomes part of the construction of a hegemonic discourse that legitimizes the domination of colonial culture and erodes the self-confidence and self-esteem of oppressed groups as seen from the utterance " *Iya, Pak Minke, kita hanya bisa berharap pada Tuhan. Mereka seperti raja di negeri sendiri.*" "Yes, Mr. Minke, we can only hope in God. They are like kings in their own land." Hoping in God is the last self-recognition symbolizing self-awareness to their fate.

### **3.1.3 Commissive Acts: Promise of Progress as Ideological Hegemony**

The commissive acts emerge in the form of promise of having progress to indigenous people as long as they obey colonial value systems and follow the lifestyle. The addresser, in this case, commits himself verbally to the act and change promised, like economic progress, educational achievement, and social status. Analytically, this speech is not neutral. The utterance " *Itulah sebabnya kau harus belajar Bahasa Eropa. Hanya dengan itu kau bisa maju*" ("That is why you have to learn European language (the Deutch). This is the only way you get your progress"). The given promise contains ideological narration the progress can be obtained by adopting a colonial lifestyle. It means the narration restricts alternative thinking space and narrow the possibility to indigenous people to develop their own cultural identity. In this case, commissive acts facilitate the hegemony since they manipulate expectation and aspiration of oppressed society to accept the promised domination that will give them benefit. In practice, the domination is manifested in subtle way since it works through consciousness and belief.

### **3.1.4 Expressive Acts: Frustration as a Controlled-Subjective Mirror**

The expressive acts emerge in the form of utterances revealing frustration, helplessness, and incapability of changing their fortune. This is represented by one of the utterances

**Surati:**

*“Kalau saja kita punya pendidikan seperti orang Cina, mungkin nasib kita tidak seperti ini.”*

“If only we have education like Chinese, may be our fate would not be like this”.

**Minke:**

*“Memang, Surati. Tapi yang menentukan bukan hanya pendidikan, melainkan juga kesempatan yang mereka dapatkan karena dukungan Belanda.”*

“ you are right, Surati. But what was decisive was not only education, but also the opportunities they received from Dutch support”.

The addresser expresses her emotional condition showing acceptance to the unfair reality, with no resistance. In the context of domination, this speech act reveals the psychological impact of colonial power.

The expression of the feeling witnesses the internalization of oppression, in which people have no expectation to change. This illustrates domination is not only working in the level of structure and culture, but also reaching mental and affective level. In other words, the indigenous people are not only controlled externally, but internally they are positioned as weak and helpless society.

### **3.2 Language as the Instrument of Power Reproduction.**

The illocutionary acts found in the research show that language has significant role in shaping dan reproducing power relation. Language does not mean delivering a message but also creates social meaning that functions to maintain domination and inequality relation.

Consequently, the analysis of speech acts in this colonial discourse reveals that colonial power is not shaped physically or politically, but also works symbolically and discursively. Language helps power may operate subtly and effective in formulating awareness, perception, and even dominated social identity.

In his novel *Bumi Manusia*, Pramoedya Ananta Toer, language is the most significant instrument of power in reproducing colonial, economy, social structure, and culture. Deutch language is a symbol economy class and colonial power. Those who have good capabilities in that language have greater access to education, workplace, and elite position in government office. Minke, an educated indigenous who writs in Deutch and studies in HBS has access to modern economy and colonial intellectual. Mastering Deutch gives her greater opportunity to the world restricted to indigenous to access. Local language, Javanese language, is considered inferior by the system of colonial. This makes the local economy marginalized and hinders the social mobility of native people who have no capability in speaking Deutch.

Language becomes social class marker and a dividing tool to differentiate the controller and the controlled. Among colonial society, mastering Deutch is

identical to having higher social status. Language symbolizes the superiority of European and civilization marker. Language is also a media for culture struggle between modernity and conservative, colonialism and nationalism awakening.

*Bumi Manusia* illustrates language as a multi-function instrument, that is, a tool of colonial domination, shaping social class, and ideological struggle. Deutch language symbolizes the power but at the same time it is used to against the oppressive structure.

#### 4. Conclusion

The dialogues among the characters of the novel, such as Minke and the Deuch figures often indicate power inequal power relation, mostly represented by the use of directive, representative and expressive acts.

These speeches reflect inferior feeling and helplessness of indigenou in facing the domination of other ethnics. Pramoedya employ the dialogues to illustrate complex and tense social reality in colonial society. The placement of characters' utterances not only strengthen the characterization, but also reflects the social structure which Pramoedya is criticizing.

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