

Research Article

Speech Acts of Protest Expressed by Followers of the World Health Organization Instagram Account

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Abstract. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the world, the World Health Organization (WHO), as a frontline organization, provides education and information about COVID-19 regularly. The WHO uses Instagram as a social media platform to share information about COVID-19. This Instagram account garners many responses from its followers who express their comments in different ways. The pros and cons of COVID-19 policies have caused protests from people around the world. In this study, the researchers observed the speech acts of protest expressed by the followers of the WHO Instagram account. The data for this study were taken from the comments of WHO followers directed to two posts related to COVID-19 that received many responses. This was qualitative research and the theoretical concept used referred to the theory of speech acts, co-text, contexts, and function. The results showed that the function of the speech acts of protest was to express a sense of blaspheming, slandering, or judging. The results of this study are useful for scholars who observe speech acts, especially those that have functions to express emotions using various strategies.

Keywords: expressive speech act of protesting, function, context, WHO Instagram

1. INTRODUCTION

It has been more than a year since the world has been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic diseases for which there is no cure. Starting from Wuhan, China, at the end of December 2019, the first Covid-19 patient was found. This is very surprising to the world because this new virus has hit almost all countries in the world. COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease 2019) is a new type of disease caused by a virus from the coronavirus class, namely SARS-CoV-2 which is also often referred to as coronavirus. COVID-19 is a disease caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The level of danger of this disease causes almost all countries in the world to implement social restrictions to lockdown, forcing some economic, educational, corporate, and even religious activities to be done virtually.

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No wonder most people use their gadgets more aggressively due to that. This has led to an increasing number of social media users such as WhatsApp, YouTube, especially Instagram. Instagram (abbreviated as IG or Insta) is a photo and video-sharing application that allows users to take photos, take videos, apply digital filters, and share them on various social networking services, including on Instagram. Many Instagram accounts are uploading about Covid-19. One of them is an organization entitled World Health Organization that has responsibility for educating the society and public about the dangers of Covid-19.

The World Health Organization (henceforth WHO) also uses Instagram to socialize health protocols that everyone in the world must follow. The WHO's official account is followed by more than 11 million followers on Instagram. WHO often uploads videos about how we can avoid the Covid-19 virus, such as videos on how to wash hands properly according to WHO recommendations, photos of Covid-19 research developments, to the process of finding a vaccine for this.

Discussion of speech acts is part of pragmatics that refers to a scientific study of meaning based on contexts. The use of language is not only to convey the information but also to ask people to do action. The interesting thing about studying pragmatics is that intention or implied meaning behind the words used can reflect many things such as politeness principles, ideology, and power. The meaning of words has power and functions. Pragmatic science is needed for everyday life. Pragmatics is the study of the speaker's meaning, contextual meaning, and how much more is communicated by what the speaker is saying, and the study of relative distance relationships [1].

Studying the expressive speech act of expression pragmatically gives valuable things to understand the intended meaning and contextual meaning. Speech acts can be words that contain a request, question, protest, or claim for something. Speech acts relate to descriptions of actions such as 'asking', 'ordering', 'questioning', or 'informing' [2]. Austin distinguishes speech acts into three types, namely locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Searle (1976) develop Austin's theory into a certain type of illocutionary action. Searle divides the illocutionary acts into five categories namely directive, representative, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Speech acts that are more frequently encountered in everyday life are expressive speech acts because they relate to the words used to express feeling. Expressive is speech acts carried out with the intention of the speech are interpreted as an evaluation of the things mentioned in the speech [3]. Where through expressive speech acts can show the speaker's feelings.

In this study, on the WHO Instagram, two posts have the most likes and comments from the WHO Instagram followers. In this post, the writers observe the expressive

speech acts of protesting and analyze the function of each expressive protesting used by WHO Instagram followers in their comments. For example, the first post on the WHO Instagram account about Covid-19. This was responded by one of the WHO Instagram followers who wrote: "Tedros for prison". This expressive protesting speech act shows that followers judge Tedros as the head of WHO according to the context of followers' background knowledge who judged Tedros to be imprisoned. In analyzing this, the writers refer to the theory of language functions by Leech (1974) developed by Holmes (2013), namely expressive function which aims to express the feelings of speakers [4],[5]. This study also refers to the theory of speech act functions proposed by Siregar. Obtaining the function of a speech act cannot be separated from the elements of language sensitivity and context-sensitivity [6]. Language and context-sensitivity are the basic things in acquiring language by adjusting the context to analyze according to context, the context in this study uses context theory which consists of three types of contexts that is situational context, background knowledge context, and co-textual context [7].

Furthermore, Cutting says that "speech acts and their linguistic relations are culturally bound". The ways and strategy of expressing speech acts will vary from country to country, and from culture to culture. The words 'How fat you are' will create different expressive speech acts, in India, the words refer to the speech act of praising or congratulating somebody due to weight is an indicator of prosperity or health. However, in Britain, these words express a speech act of deploring or criticizing because the fashion and diets reflect thinking "slim is beautiful".

This paper explores the speech act of protesting expressed by the followers of WHO Instagram that has different functions.

2. METHODOLOGY

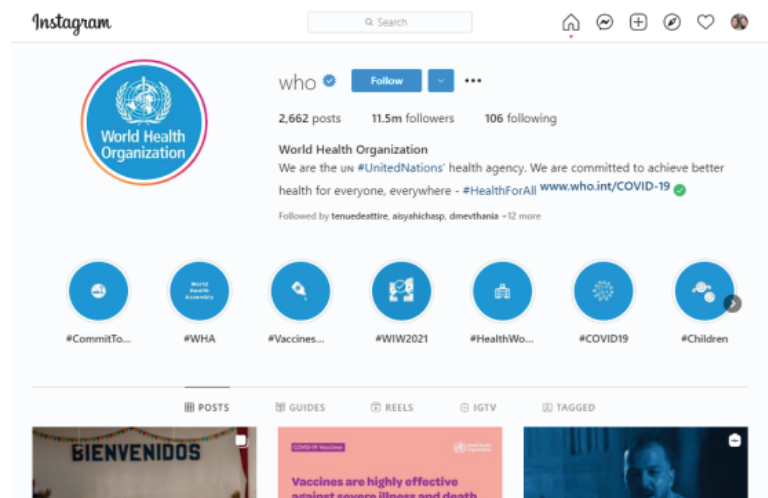
In this study, the writers use qualitative methods. Qualitative research is a research strategy that does not emphasize the quantification of data collection and analysis but emphasizes more on words [8]. Qualitative research means a method that uses words as material for analysis, not numbers. This qualitative method analyzes the words that are the topic of research and the results of the analysis are presented by describing the results of the analysis that has been carried out.

The source of data was taken from the WHO Instagram account. This WHO Instagram account has 11.2 million followers, 106 followers, and 2,662 posts. In this account, WHO uses Instagram as a medium to inform all things related to health. The data was taken

from comments provided by WHO Instagram followers who responded to WHO posts discussing COVID-19. The writers found 52 data showing expressive speech acts of protesting. The comments from WHO Instagram followers are what researchers analyze to find out the types of expressive speech acts, analyze the functions of the types used to find the most used functions by WHO Instagram followers.

To analyze the data in this study, the writers determine the WHO post to be observed, the writers observe the post uploaded by the WHO, then the writers classify the data which is an expressive speech act of protesting, after that the data were put into a table to make it tidier, the classified data were analyzed according to the Speech Acts, Contexts, and theory of function. The results of the analysis are then displayed in the form of a chart.

On the following, this is the account of WHO IG (Picture 1) and the data sample from the follower (Picture 2).



Picture 1: WHO Instagram Account.



Picture 2: WHO Instagram Column Comment. (Source: <https://www.instagram.com/who/>)

Next, the following Picture 3 is the first post about Covid-19 uploaded by WHO on its Instagram account. This post is a photo with a blue background with the words "CORONAVIRUS" in white. With a caption that contains information if the coronavirus can cause common to severe diseases. WHO also provides tips to protect people from the dangers of coronavirus. Every posting will make the followers give comments and responses. On the following data sample that makes the followers give comments or responses.

Status Post 1: WHO Posted about Covid-19 for the First Time.



Picture 3: WHO Post on Instagram About Covid-19. Status Post 1&2. (Source: <https://www.instagram.com/who/>)

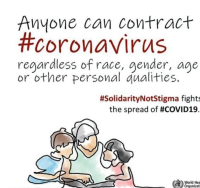


Photo (a) explains that the coronavirus can infect anyone without exception

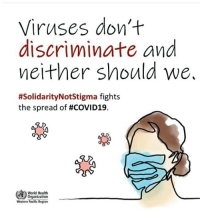


Photo (b) it is explained that the coronavirus does not discriminate against anyone and we should also not discriminate against anyone related to this outbreak.

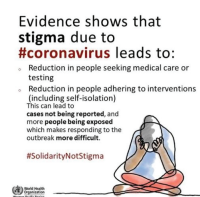


Photo (c) explains some of the causes that arise due to the stigma against coronavirus sufferers.



Photo (d) is the caption given by WHO for his post, this caption contains an invitation to respect and encourage people with coronavirus.

TABLE 1: Expressive Speech Act of Protesting Used by WHO Instagram Followers.

NO.	Followers	Examples
1	james.a.soup	You guys are CRIMINALS and should be held accountable in US Congress
2	antipodeangardener	WHO are a disgrace
3	antipodeangardener	You FAILED to do your job!
4	maryamotarjem	Shame on you
5	marizagross	You haven't done your job!
6	rizki_alfh	Covid-19 is real Your games
7	anaoc1977	You have no regard for human life!
8	gundersonzhana	You're right @who the victims of COVID-19 didn't do anything wrong. But you awful idiots did.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the data analysis, the results show the expressive speech acts of protest, such as lamenting and judging presuppose that what is represented by the propositional context is bad. Protests are expressed in various ways by WHO's Instagram followers. Some expressed the type of protest that is immediately marked by judgmental words and usually using swear words, as seen in Table 1.

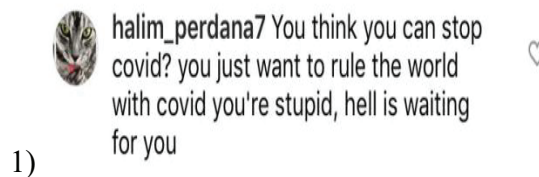
Table 1 shows the result of the expressive speech acts of protesting used by the followers towards the WHO Instagram post. Those are classified as protesting expressive speech acts because of the presence of swear words, words that demean something, and words that express negative emotions as representative in the example (3 and 8) the words "FAILED" and "idiot" used by the followers.

3.1. Speech Act of Protesting and Its Functions

Almost all speakers have a purpose in communicating, an intention that everyone who speaks has a purpose or function when speaking or expressing something [9], [10]. Likewise, WHO Instagram followers commented on WHO posts about Covid-19 with a specific purpose or function. In this study, the writers describe the function of protesting expressive speech acts used by WHO followers. The functions protesting speech acts reflect the information provided by WHO is received correctly by its followers or vice versa. This research shows some functions in the followers' comments, such as expressing blasphemy, slandering, and judging. These will be described in brief as follow.

3.2. To Express Blasphemy

Writers found words expressing blasphemous feelings in comments made by WHO Instagram followers who commented on COVID-19 on posts uploaded by WHO. By analyzing it according to the context, writers can state that one of the functions of expressive protesting speech acts is to express blasphemous feelings. In this case, followers use expressive protesting speech acts to blaspheme WHO's performance in dealing with covid-19, to blaspheme WHO because it feels irresponsible in overcoming the covid-19 outbreak. Some of the protesting expressions aimed at blaspheming the WHO differ according to the context of their respective followers. Look at the example in picture 4.



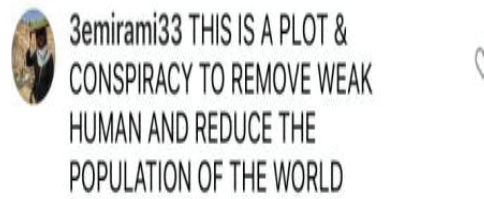
Picture 4: WHO Followers Comment That Serves to Express Blasphemy. (Source:<https://www.instagram.com/who/>)

From this comment (1), we can see the freedom of expressing opinion by the follower, he used the impolite word "stupid" and "hell". The follower criticized that WHO cannot stop covid 19 and bravely accused the organization rudely. The screenshot is one of the comments from WHO's Instagram followers who was expressing an expressive protesting speech act that serves to blaspheme WHO. From the background knowledge context of the follower, in his mind, he blasphemes that WHO cannot stop covid-19, he emphasizes his emotion by the use of words "...hell is awaiting for you".

3.3. To Express Slandering

There are so many cons that arise regarding the discussion of COVID-19. The writers found a lot of comments from WHO Instagram followers who accused and slandered WHO. The slander is expressed directly through words that are not proven true. These comments that serve to slander WHO can influence other WHO Instagram followers to distrust WHO or even take the blame and slander WHO. Below is one of the comments that serve to slander the WHO.

Comment (2) is an expressive protesting speech act. This follower with an account named 3emirami33 said that this covid-19 was a conspiracy from the WHO to reduce the human population in the world. Followers reveal this based on their background



(2) 61w Reply

Picture 5: WHO Followers Comment That Serves to Express Slandering. (Source: <https://www.instagram.com/who/>)

knowledge. This serves to slander WHO because there is no justification for the statements given by followers. And this expression can influence other followers to slander and even blame the WHO for what is happening with covid-19 in the world.

3.4. To Express Judging

The last function that has been found is judging. On this issue, the followers judge WHO directly. Many words are used to judge the WHO, not only based on the situational context but also the background knowledge they have. The followers not only judge WHO based on the information shared on their Instagram but also have an impact on the image of the organization and the role of WHO officials who are also judged as seen in the followers' comments.



Picture 6: WHO Followers Comment That Serves to Express Judging. (Source: <https://www.instagram.com/who/>)

The expressive speech act of protesting (3) is not intended for WHO in general but against Tedros who is the head of the world health organization. In this comment, nickyb_123 judges Tedros that he needs to be jailed. This is a form of followers' protest against Tedros as the head of the WHO who handles COVID-19 where of course all decisions made by WHO must be following Tedros's decision. This form of protest serves to judge Tedros as the head of WHO who is considered worthy of imprisonment by WHO Instagram followers. From the comments of followers on WHO Instagram, we can see the freedom of expression by people without considering the politeness principles [11] and violating maxim of manner (Grice, 1975).

3.5. To Express Emotion

The Covid-19 pandemic causes people to be confused, angry, scorned, and emotional in whatever they face and see tend to be reacted reactively rather than proactively. The functions of the expressive speech act found in this study also to express emotions, such as anger, dislike, and disappointment towards the information posted by WHO on Instagram.

This WHO post caused many responses and express negative emotions in the expressive protesting speech acts. The emotions are expressed in terms of using vulgar words that violate politeness principles [12]. They do not consider the social factors and contexts influence when delivered the speech. (Cutting, 2002; Siregar, 2011; Holmes 2013, Leech, 1974).

To summarize the function of the speech act of protesting can be seen in Figure 7.

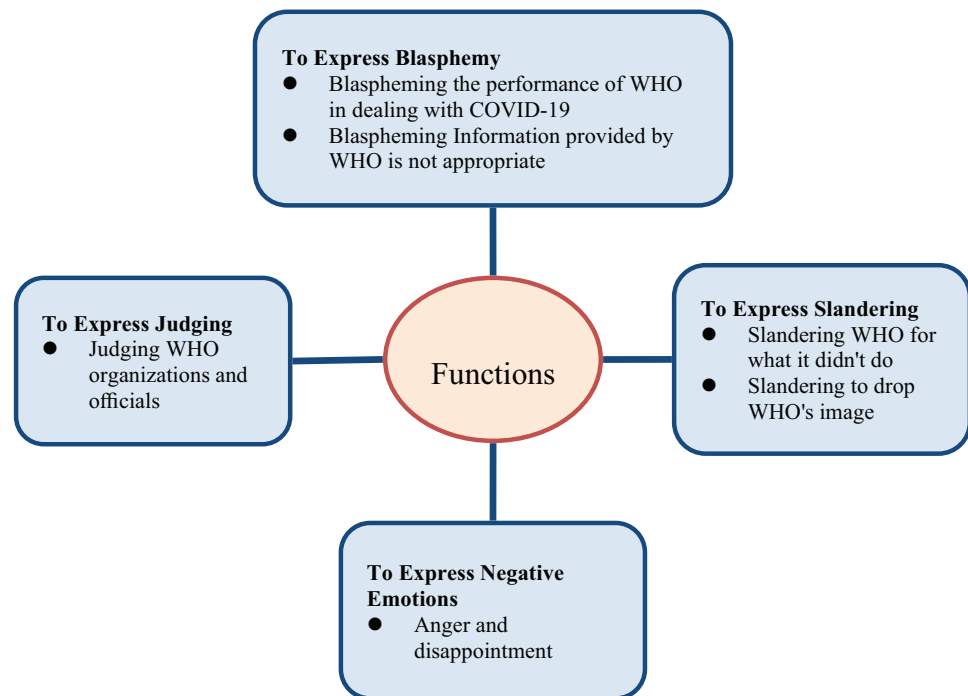


Figure 7: Functions of Expressive Speech Act of Protesting.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

For more than one year COVID-19 hit the world, all human activities have been carried out online. From school, work, shopping, etc. This has caused WHO as a health organization also use one type of social media, that is Instagram as a means to share information about COVID-19. WHO on its Instagram account shares almost everyday

information in the form of photos, videos, and even writings that contain education in dealing with COVID-19. The information provided by WHO on its Instagram account is certainly very useful for its followers during this pandemic. This information certainly aims to be well received by his followers. But what the writers found was different.

The results of the analysis of the expressive protesting speech act function indicate that WHO followers do not fully accept this information well, because the protest attitude is shown in the comments column on WHO posts lead to a negative attitude. This expressive speech act used by WHO Instagram followers serves to express blasphemy, judgment, slander, and negative emotions. With the discovery of these functions, it can be concluded that the information provided by WHO on their Instagram account is not well received by their followers.

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