

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of speech acts and politeness strategies in online English debate competitions, focusing on student of SMAN 2 Kebumen. Communication in debate involves not only the exchange of arguments but also the application of pragmatic competence, where speech acts and politeness become essential tools in achieving effective interaction. Guided by Searle's taxonomy of speech acts and Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, this research aims to identify the types of speech acts produced, examine the politeness strategies applied, and explore their implications for teaching hortatory exposition text.

The study employed a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected from recorded online debate performances, transcriptions, and field notes. The analysis revealed that students produced a variety of speech acts including assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations, with assertives being the most dominant. Politeness strategies such as positive politeness, negative politeness, and bald-on-record expressions were also evident, indicating students' efforts to maintain respect and cooperation in virtual interactions.

The findings highlight that online debate provides a meaningful context for developing students' critical thinking, linguistic performance, and communicative competence. Furthermore, the integration of speech act and politeness analysis into classroom practice offers valuable pedagogical insights for teaching hortatory exposition text. This research contributes both theoretically, by enriching the study of pragmatics in digital settings, and practically, by supporting teachers and students in enhancing effective and polite communication in academic discourse.

Keywords: *speech acts, politeness strategies, online debate, pragmatics, hortatory exposition*