

## Speech Acts of Male and Female Language in the Novel *Shaf* by Ima Madani

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**Abstract.** *This study aims to describe the speech acts of men and women in the novel Shaf by Ima Madani. The research is textual in nature and employs a pragmatic approach, using a descriptive method to analyze the data. The data consist of the novel's text, which contains various types of speech acts: representative, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. The primary source of data is the novel itself. Data collection was conducted through purchasing, reading, observing, and marking relevant passages. The analysis involved several steps, including data collection, reduction, display, conclusion, and verification. By applying this approach, the study identifies how men and women use different speech acts in various contexts within the narrative. The findings aim to provide insights into gender-based language patterns, illustrating how characters express, request, promise, or declare through speech. This study contributes to understanding the pragmatic functions of language in literary texts, showing the relationship between linguistic choices and character roles. Overall, the research highlights the diversity of speech acts in Shaf and demonstrates the effectiveness of a textual-pragmatic approach in literary analysis, offering a structured method for examining how dialogue reflects social and interpersonal dynamics in the novel.*

**Keywords:** *speech act, male, female, shaf novel.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A novel is a literary work in the form of prose, born from the imagination of an author, which discusses the life problems of an individual or various characters around them, highlighting the traits and personalities of each character. According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI, 2020), a novel is a long prose composition about the life of a person and their surroundings. Nurhadi and Dawud (2018) further explain that a novel contains cultural, social, moral, and educational values. The structure of a novel generally consists of chapters and sub-chapters following the storyline, and its author is referred to as a novelist.

The language used in a novel must be carefully chosen to ensure the work is both high-quality and enjoyable. Language is a human ability to communicate using signs, such as words and body movements (KBBI, 2020). Kridalaksana (1985) states that language is a system of meaningful sounds used for communication within human groups. Walija (2001) adds that language is an effective tool for conveying ideas, intentions, feelings, and opinions. The functions of language include communication, national unity, social identity, thinking, social control, and expression.

In sociolinguistics, language and gender are closely related, as male and female speech behaviors differ in body movement, facial expression, voice, intonation, phonemes, and

grammatical structures (Sumarsono, 2007; Wareing, 1999). Women tend to speak more than men, and there are notable phonological and syntactic differences in language use.

This study examines speech acts in the novel *Shaf* by Ima Madani. Speech acts are utterances accompanied by actions and are part of pragmatics (Sumarsono & Partana, 2010). Austin (1962) explains that when a speaker utters something, they also perform an action. According to Morris (1938), pragmatics studies language use in specific communicative contexts. Searle (1969) classifies illocutionary speech acts into five types: representative, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. This study analyzes these five types of speech acts in the male character (Athaya) and the female character (Shafira).

*Shaf* is the third religious novel by Ima Madani, originally published on Wattpad in 2020 under the account @madani\_, now changed to amimomile. By June 2022, the novel had been read over 4.7 million times and gained popularity because, unlike Ima Madani's previous novels containing medical elements, *Shaf* does not. This study is significant because research on male and female speech acts in *Shaf* has never been conducted before. The findings can enhance knowledge of speech acts and serve as a reference for teaching Indonesian

## 2. METHODE

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design with a pragmatic approach to analyze the speech acts of male and female characters in the novel *Shaf* by Ima Madani (Sumarsono & Partana, 2010). Descriptive qualitative research was chosen because it allows for an in-depth, broad, and comprehensive exploration of social phenomena, while the pragmatic approach emphasizes language as a means of conveying specific intentions within a communicative context. The research method used is descriptive, focusing on depicting the characteristics of the research objects and the phenomena under study. The data source is the novel *Shaf*, published by Galaxymedia in 2021, and the research data consist of text containing illocutionary speech acts, including representative, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative acts. Data collection techniques include purchasing the novel online, reading it multiple times, observing the text to identify speech acts, and marking relevant words or sentences. Data analysis is conducted through data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion and verification. Data reduction is performed to simplify, select, and categorize the data to facilitate theoretical analysis. Data display involves categorizing and classifying speech acts according to type and dominance, while conclusion and verification aim to identify the meaning, relationships, similarities, or differences in the data as answers to the research questions."

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### a. Dominant Speech Acts

This section presents the dominant speech acts in the novel *Shaf*, divided into male and female language.

Table 1. Male Speech Acts

| Speech Act          | Type           | Frequency |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Stating             | Representative | 9         |
| Admitting           | Representative | 5         |
| Demanding           | Representative | 2         |
| Testifying          | Representative | 3         |
| Showing             | Representative | 2         |
| Mentioning          | Representative | 4         |
| Requesting          | Directive      | 4         |
| Suggesting          | Directive      | 5         |
| Ordering            | Directive      | 5         |
| Commanding          | Directive      | 3         |
| Pleading            | Directive      | 1         |
| Giving instructions | Directive      | 1         |
| Inviting            | Directive      | 2         |
| Thanking            | Expressive     | 3         |
| Praising            | Expressive     | 1         |
| Deciding            | Expressive     | 1         |
| Granting            | Expressive     | 1         |

The male character's speech acts consist of 52 utterances, including representative acts such as stating (9), admitting (5), demanding (2), testifying (3), showing (2), and mentioning (4). Directive acts include requesting (4), suggesting (5), ordering (5), commanding (3), pleading (1), giving instructions (1), and inviting (2). Expressive acts include thanking (3), praising (1), deciding (1), and granting (1). The most dominant type is the directive speech act, as the male character frequently speaks to his subordinate (secretary) and thus tends to give suggestions, orders, and commands.

Table 2. Female Speech Acts

| Speech Act  | Type           | Frequency |
|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| Stating     | Representative | 5         |
| Speculating | Representative | 5         |
| Admitting   | Representative | 5         |
| Reporting   | Representative | 5         |
| Mentioning  | Representative | 5         |
| Ordering    | Directive      | 3         |
| Requesting  | Directive      | 1         |
| Thanking    | Expressive     | 4         |
| Complaining | Expressive     | 4         |

|                        |             |   |
|------------------------|-------------|---|
| Criticizing            | Expressive  | 4 |
| Promising              | Expressive  | 3 |
| Expressing willingness | Commissive  | 3 |
| Forgiving              | Declarative | 1 |

The female character's speech acts consist of 48 utterances, including representative acts such as stating (5), speculating (5), admitting (5), reporting (5), and mentioning (5). Directive acts include ordering (3) and requesting (1). Expressive acts include thanking (4), complaining (4), criticizing (4), and promising (3). Commissive acts include expressing willingness (3), and declarative acts include forgiving (1). The most dominant type is the representative speech act, as the female character typically communicates with her superior (boss), focusing on stating facts, speculating, admitting, reporting, and mentioning

## **b. Effects of Dominant Speech Acts**

### **1) Positive Effects**

Positive effects refer to outcomes that benefit the interlocutor, causing them to respond or react positively.

#### **a) Encouraging Caution in Actions**

Certain utterances motivate the interlocutor to act more cautiously. For example:

***“But with your words earlier, the bad rumors will spread even more at the office. Instead of calming the issue, you make it worse. You shouldn’t casually use the word ‘dear’ for a woman. How would you feel if a stranger suddenly called Sheina ‘dear’?” (Shaf, Chapter 20, p. 266).***

This statement, spoken by Shafira to Athaya, encourages Athaya to be more careful in his actions to avoid misunderstandings.

#### **b) Fostering Sincerity**

Some utterances inspire sincerity in the interlocutor. For example:

***“Then, just move the meeting to finish today within working hours. Contact Ilyana’s secretary and schedule the appointment. She’s flexible with schedules, unlike Mr. Jonathan.” (Shaf, Chapter 1, p. 42).***

Athaya’s instruction to Shafira requires her to sincerely carry out her superior’s orders. Another example:

***“Are you working overtime today? I need a notetaker. Reserve a room at Enchanté Hotel and order some food as well.” (Shaf, Chapter 3, p. 42).***

Shafira must sincerely comply with Athaya’s request, demonstrating the effect of fostering sincerity.

c) Encouraging Positive Assumptions

Utterances may guide the interlocutor not to make negative assumptions about others. For instance:

***“Good, I also don’t enjoy lunch there. We won’t eat at the office food court, and please don’t think narrowly. I invited you because my acid reflux acted up, and you came during my break.” (Shaf, Chapter 6, p. 100).***

Shafira’s words to Sheina prevent Sheina from assuming negative intentions. Similarly:

***“I truly respect you, Mr. Dipta. Physical contact with a non-mahram is forbidden in my religion. So, if I shake your hand, it does not mean I see you as a man. I hope you understand that I treat all non-mahram men this way.” (Shaf, Chapter 2, p. 30).***

Shafira’s explanation prevents Mr. Dipta from misunderstanding her intentions.

d) Boosting Confidence

Some utterances increase the interlocutor’s confidence. For example:

***“Hearing you list the qualifications a secretary should have makes me confident you can be a competent secretary. Regarding the workspace, you can use the front room. Travel arrangements can be discussed later with HR.” (Shaf, Chapter 1, p. 20).***

Athaya’s encouragement boosts Shafira’s confidence in her abilities.

e) Promoting Gratitude

Certain statements foster gratitude. For instance:

***“Father once told me, if marriage waits until one is ready, no one would marry. Readiness cannot be measured because the parameters differ—some evaluate material, others age and maturity.” (Shaf, Chapter 6, p. 94).***

Shafira’s reflection on her father’s words cultivates gratitude. Another example:

***“Alright, the landing is at four, right? Send me the number and photo so I can recognize your fiancé.” (Shaf, Chapter 14, p. 236).***

Shafira’s assistance fosters gratitude in Athaya.

## 2) Negative Effects

Negative effects are outcomes that adversely affect the interlocutor, causing discomfort or worry.

a) Causing Displeasure

Some utterances result in feelings of displeasure. For example:

***“Your apology is accepted, but for this... I cannot accept it.” (Shaf, Chapter 3, p. 51).***

Shafira's refusal to accept Athaya's gift generates displeasure. Another example:

**"Alhamdulillah." (Shaf, Chapter 19, p. 355).**

Athaya's reaction to Shafira's canceled wedding evokes displeasure in Shafira.

b) Inducing Worry

Certain utterances cause concern or anxiety. For example:

**"Dad, don't sleep yet, okay? I want to video call someone; it's really important." (Shaf, Chapter 17, p. 307).**

Shafira's request causes her father to feel worried. Another example:

**"It seems I need to cancel my wedding with Kak Afif." (Shaf, Chapter 19, p. 345).**

Shafira's announcement generates worry in her father and older brother Hazm.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis, it can be concluded that in the novel *Shaf*, the most dominant speech act used by the male character is the directive speech act, as he speaks to his subordinate, who serves as his secretary, and therefore tends to issue suggestions or commands. In contrast, the most dominant speech act used by the female character is the representative speech act, which includes stating, speculating, admitting, reporting, and mentioning. This occurs because the female character communicates with her superior, who serves as her boss, making her utterances more informative and focused on conveying facts or opinions. The effects of these speech acts are divided into two categories: positive effects, such as encouraging greater caution in actions, fostering sincerity, promoting positive thinking, enhancing self-confidence, and cultivating gratitude; and negative effects, such as causing displeasure and inducing anxiety. These findings indicate that differences in social roles and hierarchical positions between male and female characters influence both the types of speech acts employed and their resulting impacts on interpersonal interactions.

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