

# Speech event and its context: What requesting strategies do school-aged children employ and what does it imply for the Indonesian language instruction?

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## ABSTRACT

As has been widely stated in the literature, a speech event always occurs in a specific context. As a result, a speech event will always take place at a specific time, location, and for a specific purpose. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to describe the requesting strategies used by schoolchildren, as well as determine whether or not these requesting strategies can be applied to the teaching of Indonesian language. Using data from three elementary school students, we conducted a qualitative study. The data were collected through field notes and observation and then analyzed using means-ends analysis and heuristic analysis. The findings suggest there can be no doubt that elementary school children use language in accordance with context when making requests. They also support their request for granting in contexts specific. This implies that they are able to use a wide range of contexts, including those that are both concrete and abstract, in their learning. Education professionals at all levels, but particularly those in primary and secondary schools, should make use of the research findings to improve the Indonesian language instruction. The main reason for this improvement is the use of communicative and contextual approaches, which return language to its role as a tool for communication and link teaching and learning activities to the context of real-life experiences. Following a discussion of the current findings' limitations and implications, additional research is recommended.

## KEYWORDS

Context, school-aged children, requesting strategies, language instruction, Indonesia

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## Introduction

A speech event always takes place in a particular context, as has been stated widely in the literature. It follows, then, that a speech event will always take place at a specific time, location, and for a specific reason. As a result, it is impossible to analyze a speech event in isolation from its context. A thorough investigation of language use necessitates an understanding of the entire context (Sbisà, 2002; Wortham & Reyes, 2020). Consequently, to maximize relevance, language activities must take into account the context in which they occur. The more relevant a conversation is, the more contextually relevant it is. The example below shows how important context is in understanding an utterance because the same utterance, when used in a different context, can have entirely different connotations..

"Mom, look at my shoes!"

Assuming the child's shoes are in a damaged state, this utterance may be interpreted as a request for new footwear because it is conveyed in a context where the child has just returned from school and feels embarrassed by her shoes, and she/he knows that her/his mother has enough money to purchase new footwear. However, if used in the context of a child who has just received new shoes from their father and feels as though they are good enough to show off to their mother, the utterance can have the meaning "showing off her shoes to her mother."

Therefore, in a context, utterances are produced by people in various social and cultural contexts who interact with one another in a variety of ways (Ferrara & Hodge, 2018). Thus, A context is more than just a collection of

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circumstances in which a statement is made and then interpreted as a realization in accordance with the conventions of a particular speech community (Moore, 2020).

Furthermore, a context is also a manifestation of the interlocutors' preconceptions and assumptions about the world (Sbisà, 2002). There is more to a context than just the physical environment; it includes past utterances that explain present hopes for the future, scientific hypotheses or religious beliefs, anecdotal memories, general cultural assumptions, and beliefs about the speaker's mind (Ellis, 2019). All non-linguistic and non-textual elements that influence speech communication interactions are considered contexts in discourse analysis (Lyons, 2018). There are four types of context, according to the literature: 1) physical and interactional settings, 2) behavioral environment, 3) language (context and reflection of language use), and 4) additional situational covering social, political, and cultural aspects (Grundlingh, 2018; Taguchi, 2018).

A context also includes a variety of components that refer to the acronym SPEAKING. These components are as follows: (1) situation (setting and scene), which may include time, place, or other physical conditions around the area where the speech event takes place; (2) participants (speaker/sender/hearer), which include speakers and interlocutors who are involved in speech events; (3) ends, which are the goals or expected results; (4) act sequences, which are the form and content of the message; and (5) keys, which are ways of dealing with something the speaker has to say (seriously, rudely, or jokingly); (6) instrumentalities, which refers to forms of speech/channel; (7) norms, which are the norms used in the interaction; (8) genres, each of which is a specific register used in different speech events (Hymes, 1989; Philipsen, 1976). In a more concrete manner, a context is classified into four classifications, which are as follows: (1) the physical context, which includes the place where language is used in a communication; (2) the epistemic context, also known as background knowledge, which is both known by the speakers and the interlocutors; (3) the linguistic context, which consists of sentences or utterances that precede or follow certain utterances in a communication event; this linguistic context is also known as the context; and (4) context can be seen in terms of knowledge, specifically what speakers and interlocutors can assume the other person knows, as well as how this knowledge guides the use of language and the interpretation of utterances (Taguchi, 2018; Wang, 2019). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to provide a description of the requesting strategies used by schoolchildren and to determine whether or not these requesting strategies, in their various contexts, can be relevant to the teaching of Indonesian language.

## Methods

This study employed a qualitative methodology (Cresswell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014). Three elementary school-aged children provided the research's data sources. Use of field notes and observation were primary methods of data collection. An interactive analysis model was used to conduct the data evaluation. The entire data analysis process, including data collection, data presentation, data reduction, and drawing of conclusions, was continuous and intertwined in this interactive model (Dey, 2005; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Miles et al., 2014). As a matter of fact, this study's data analysis is based on the ostensi and inferences made by elementary-school-aged children. Children's overall utterances were analyzed using means-ends analysis and heuristic analysis (Arundale, 2005; Leech, 2016) to determine the requesting data.

## Results and discussion

The results of the data analysis indicate that elementary school age children use the following context aspects to support the success of making requests to interlocutors: (1) place context, which includes the place around the child when making a request and the place far from the child that has something to do with the child's request; (2) time context, which includes the past time, the present time (when the request is made), and the future time; (3) event context, which includes the past event, the present event, and the future event; (4) atmosphere context, which includes a happy and pleasant atmosphere for both the child and the interlocutors; and (5) surrounding people context, which includes the surrounding people as parties who are considered interested in the request made by the child, the surrounding people as parties who support the request made, and the use of the influence of the presence of the surrounding people in the event of making a request.

### *Place Context*

It is not only taken into account by the elementary school-aged children when they make a request, but they also use it to support the success of their request. The context of the place used by elementary school-aged children when making a request includes places that are around the children and other places that are not around the children but are related to the request made, as revealed by data analysis. Context data can be used in the following example of requesting information.

- (1) B : Kalau dalam mobil gini, aku lepas jaket ya Buk. (Since we're in the car, I'm taking off my jacket, Mom) (trying to unbutton his jacket). [69]  
 R : Kamu ini, nanti masuk angin. Flu lagi lho. (Geez, you'll catch a cold. And you'll have the flu again)  
 B : Panas ilho Buk. (It's hot in here, Mom) [70]  
 R : Dingin banget gini. Pakai aja. (It's cold. Just wear it)  
 B : Aah, Ibuk ini. (Ugh, Mom) [71]
- (2) A : Pak, tempat dudukku dipindah lagi, paling belakang. (Dad, my seat was moved again, to the very back) [322]  
 E : Kenapa? (Why?)  
 A : Ya tambah gak kelihatan. Susah banget. (It's getting hard to see. Very unclear) [323]  
 E : Ya wis besok ganti kacanya. (Alright, then buy new lenses tomorrow)  
 A : Kacanya aja? (Just the lenses?) [324]  
 E : Iya, framenya masih bagus gitu. (Yes, the frame is still good)

When the child and the rest of the family had just finished bathing in the Cangar hot springs, the speech event in discourse data (1) occurred. The child had no desire to wear a jacket after showering. In order to keep the temperature down, his mother made him wear a jacket. Because the child does not like to wear a jacket, he took advantage of being in the car to ask his mother for permission to not wear one. It was an attempt by the child to take advantage of the fact that they were in the car, which was warmer, to support the negative demand that they not wear a jacket. "Kalau dalam mobil begini, ya Buk?" His mother's previous refusal of the child's request had made the child hopeful that he would be able to get enough material to reconsider the request.

When a child makes a request, he or she is not present at the location where the speech events in discourse data (2) are occurring. After school, the child had just gotten home when this speech happened. Children's learning activities have been hindered by the fact that the glasses they wear are no longer in sync with their vision. Despite the child's repeated requests, his father had not yet purchased new glasses for the child due to a lack of funds. When his child's seat was moved to the back of the classroom, the disruption made learning more difficult for the child. This was a second attempt by the child, who was sitting in the back row of the car, to persuade his father to buy him some new glasses. In this way, the child hoped that his father could reconsider the request that had been made several times by the child and was finally willing to grant the child's request.

### ***Time Context***

Rather than simply referring to the moment in which the request is made, children of elementary school age also use the past and future to contextualize their reasoning. Some examples of data on the use of time contexts in making requests for elementary school-aged children are shown below.

- (3) B : Tuh khan pak, sudah setengah tujuh lebih. Antar pakai motor Pak. (See, Dad! It's six thirty. Take me by motorbike, Dad) (grabbing his school bag). [13]  
 E : Jalan juga masih nutut kok. Makanya cepat-cepat. (There's still time to walk. Hurry up)  
 B : Telat lho Pak. Aku gak mau kalau lari-lari. (It's gonna be late, Dad. I don't want to run) [14]  
 R : Sudah Pak, pakai motor saja. (Just take him by motorbike, Dad)  
 E : Ambil kuncinya di bufet. (Get the key on the sideboard)
- (4) B : Sudah lama gak makan sio may ya Buk? (It's been a long time since we haven't eaten dumplings, right Mom?) (put the bag, after school). [11]  
 R : Tadi sudah beli pethulo gitu. Lagian belum ada sebulan ibu mbuatin kamu. Iya khan? (You just bought pethulo. Anyway, it hasn't been a month since I made it for you, right?)  
 B : Maksudnya, gak sekarang. Nanti sore atau kapan gitu lho. Buatin ya Buk. Yang seperti waktu itu lho. (I mean, not right now. In the afternoon or later. Please, Mom. Just like that time) [12]  
 R : Cepat ganti baju sana. (There, change your clothes)  
 B : Ya Buk ya? Sudah sebulan rek, gak makan sio may. (Please, Mom, please? I haven't eaten that food for a month) [13]  
 R : Iya! (Alright!)
- (5) A : Pak, minggu depan sudah liburan ilho. (Dad, next week is holiday) [287]  
 E : Kenapa kalau liburan? (So what about holiday?)  
 A : Kok belum dibelikan sepeda? (Why haven't you bought me a bicycle yet?) [288]  
 E : Beasiswa bapak belum keluar. (My scholarship is not out yet)  
 A : Macetnya kok lama se Pak? Aku males wis ikut Bapak lari pagi. Capek aku pakai otopet terus. (Why it took so long? I don't want to go with you for morning run. I'm tired of riding scooter all the time) [289]

A good example of utilizing the current time context is found in discourse (3). The child was on his way to school when the speech incident occurred. Om Yoyok's motorcycle happened to be at home at the time of the incident. The youngster insisted on riding a motorcycle to school. Child usually walks to school because it's not too far from home, and parents believe it's better for their child's health if they walk. As a result, in order to support the success of his request, the child tried to use the context of time, namely that the time to go to school was a little late. Hopefully, the child believed, his father would better be able to grasp the significance of his request and gather evidence to support his decision to grant it.

Use of the past time context is demonstrated by the speech event in discourse data (four). When the child had just returned from school, the incident occurred. The child had a strong desire for his mother's *sio may*. The child realized that his mother had to put in extra effort to make *sio may*. As a result, the kid found it more difficult to put forth his request. In order to support his request, the child used the context of the time "sudah lama" and "sudah sebulan." To help the mother decide whether or not to grant her child's request, the child hoped that the mother would be able to gather enough information to make an informed decision.

Furthermore, discourse (5) provides an example of how future time contexts can be used in the present. The child had just gotten home from school when this incident occurred. The child had been begging his father for a bicycle for a long time, and he had made several requests to do so. Due to a lack of funds, his father had refused to grant him his wish. After a few days of vacation, which meant that the child needed his bicycle to keep him occupied, he tried to use the holiday that was less than a week away to support his request, hoping that his father's attention to the child's request would be more attentive and that he would eventually grant the request.

### **Event Context**

Elementary school children's requests are always made in the context of a specific event. Children of elementary school age often use these events to support the success of their requests, in addition to being a deciding factor in speech events. When making a request, children in the elementary school age range frequently use the event's context to sway their interlocutors' opinions or viewpoints. In elementary school children's requests, the context of events that support their request can be in the form of certain events that harm the children and should receive compensation for the children, as in the example of discourse data (6), but also special events belonging to the children that provide opportunities for the children to get something from their interlocutors, as in the example of discourse data (7) below.

- (6) B : Pak, pulang dari dokter beli dunkin donat ya Pak. (Dad, after a visit to doctor, please buy me a donut, Dad) (holding his father's hands). [149]  
 E : Asal gak rewel. Nurut sama dokter. (As long as you're not fussy. Obey the doctor  
 B : Iya iya. Makan yang coklat mint ya Pak? (Alright alright. The chocolate mint, alright Dad? [150]  
 E : Boleh. (Okay)  
 (7) I : Pak, nanti kalau aku ulang tahun, belikan walkman Pak (Dad, on my birthday, buy me a walkman, please) (sitting next to his father). [236]  
 E : Berdoa ya, biar dapat berkat. (Pray, so that I get a blessing)  
 I : Khan hadiah ulang tahun Pak. (It's for my birthday present, Dad) [237]  
 E : Lha iya, kamu berdoa. (I know, please pray)

In discourse data (6), there were speech events that occurred when the child went to the dentist to receive treatment. A visit to the dentist is usually a child's least favorite activity due to the fact that dental treatment can be painful for children and the dentist's staff. In most cases, children insist on receiving some sort of financial compensation from their parents whenever they are required to visit the dentist. When the child had to go to the dentist for the nth time, he didn't waste the opportunity to ask for his favorite Dunkin' donut. Because it was a "unusual" request, getting Dunkin' Donuts was no problem for this youngster. In order to get his father to grant his wish, the child believed that he needed to go to the dentist.

Meanwhile, a special event in a child's life was celebrated in the discourse data (7), such as his birthday. This speech event was inspired by the fact that children haven't wanted a walkman in a long time. Given that the walkman was out of his father's price range, the kid concluded that the request to buy one was out of the ordinary and therefore unlikely to be granted by his father. As a result, when his birthday approached, the child tried to take advantage of the occasion to make a special request. The child hoped that his father would understand his request because of the context of his birthday and is willing to grant the child's request in the end. Children in elementary school aren't just interested in what's happening right now; they're also thinking about what will happen in the future.

### ***Atmosphere Context***

When children of elementary school age make requests during a speech event, the atmosphere behind the speech event is an important factor to consider. A further consideration is that elementary-aged children frequently take advantage of specific circumstances in order to help their requests succeed. Certain speech events have a good and pleasant atmosphere, especially when the interlocutors are in a good and pleasant mood. In the following examples, data on elementary school-aged children's use of atmosphere context when making requests is provided.

- (8) B : Buk, aku dapat sepuluh (Mom, I got 10) (sitting on mother's lap). [103]  
 R : Apa? (What?)  
 B : Mat yang gak boleh ngitung pakai tangan. (Mathematic, which shouldn't count with hands) [104]  
 R : Pinter. (Smart)  
 B : Sekarang buatin susu ya Buk. (Now, make me a glass of milk, please Mom) [105]  
 R : OK, OK. (Okay okay)  
 (a few moments later)  
 B : Ibuk seneng ya Buk anaknya pinter? (Mom, are you happy that your child is smart?) [106]  
 R : Iya dong. (Of course I am)  
 B : Habis minum susu, main ya Buk? (After drinking milk, can I go out, Mam? [107]  
 (9) A : Pak, bapak sudah gak capek khan? (You're not tired anymore, right?) (sitting, leaning on father's who is relaxing). [333]  
 E : Kenapa, mau mijat? Pijit aja.(Why? You want to massage me? Just do it)  
 A : Enggak, uang tabunganku ilho bayaren . Ya pak? (Nope, return my savings. Please, Dad? [334]  
 E : Nagih to? Untuk apa sih? (You ask me? What for?)  
 A : Ada deh. Kata ibuk boleh nagih kalau bapak habis tidur siang. (I am not telling you. Mom said I can ask for it when you wake up from your nap) [335]  
 E : Berapa utang bapak? (How much do I owe?)  
 A : Cuma Rp240.000,00. Kecil (Only Rp240.000,00. Small amount) [336]

When the child had just returned from school with his father, a speech event was recorded in the discourse data (8). The youngster had just received a perfect score of 10 in mathematics from his teacher. When the math score was reported to his mother, she was overjoyed. The child was able to sense his mother's happiness over the child's performance and did not waste it in submitting his request. As a result, despite his mother's repeated requests to keep him from playing outside after school, the youngster insisted on it. The child's belief that his mother's mood is high because of the child's accomplishments led him to believe that his mother would grant his request because of his mother's good mood.

A speech event in discourse data (9) took place while this was happening, as the child wanted to return money he had borrowed from his father. A few times he'd tried to get his father to give him the money, but it hadn't worked out. He felt a sense of responsibility to ask his father again because of this. It didn't matter that the child saw his father relaxing in the afternoon, because he felt it was the perfect time to make a request that had already been delivered. To make use of this safe haven, the child's mother advised him to wait until his father had rested and awoken from his nap, which he did with greater self-assuredness. Child hopes that the father does not get upset and isn't bothered by the child's repeated requests and in the end is able to grant the request of the child.

### ***Surrounding People Context***

There are times when elementary school-aged children's requests are met by people other than the children and their interlocutors when they are making their requests. In this study, the people in the immediate vicinity of the children at the time of their request aren't the only ones being considered; people in other locations who are somehow connected to the children's requests are also being considered. It's not just that the children's presence influences the speech events that take place; they also frequently use it to support the submission of requests to be granted by those with whom they speak. After a thorough analysis of the data, it was discovered that elementary school-aged children can make effective use of people in their immediate surroundings in three different ways: by referring to them as parties interested in or supporting their request, by referring to them as supporting parties, and by making use of the interplay between speakers and int Using the people around you as context can be seen in the following examples.

- (10) A : Buk, Icha minta dibelikan es Mc.D. (Mom, Icha wants to buy Mc. D. ice cream) (holding mother's hands, walking out of the supermarket). [363]  
 I : Siapa sih Kak. Kakak ilho Buk yang pengen. (What? It's him who wanted it, Mom.)  
 R : Sudah-sudah, sana beli tiga. (Stop stop, go buy three)

A : Yang ada coklatnya ya Buk. (The one with chocolate, Mom) [364]

(11) B : Om Yok, kata bapak ilho aku boleh ikut njemput I'ik Dyah (Uncle Yok, Dad said that I can go pick Aunt Dyah up) (sitting next to Uncle Yok). [159]

Y : Iya tah? Bapak belum bangun gitu. (Is that true? He hasn't woken up yet)

B : Lha waktu itu, bapak bilang boleh gitu. (At that time, Dad said I can go) [160]

Y : Itu lak dulu. Sana bilang ibuk dulu. (That was long time ago. Go ask your mother)

(12) I : Yang, bapak ilho beasiswanya sudah keluar, sudah tanggal muda, tapi uangku gak disaur-saur (Granny, Dad's the scholarship is out, and it's already early month, but my money is not paid yet (glancing at father). [244]

E : Ha, ha, nagih itu Yang. (Haha, he is asking me, Granny)

E : Berapa sih utang bapak? (How much do I owe?)

I : Rp240.000,0. Bapak ini janji melulu. (Rp240.000,00. Dad's always just promising) [245]

The child, his father, his mother, and his younger sisters were just out of the supermarket when the speech event in discourse data (10) occurred. The youngster desired to purchase ice cream from McD's. The child requested McD ice cream from Icha in order to avoid a direct confrontation with his mother and to lessen the psychological burden of his request. Even so, it was the child's desire. By using the child, Icha hoped to shift the emotional weight of making the request to him in case it was denied. As a result, the child hoped that his father would take the child's request more seriously.

Discourse data (11) shows a speech that took place outside on a terrace during the day. The child wanted to go with Om Yoyok to Singosari to pick up I'ik Dyah, a Singosari worker. Due to Om Yoyok being picked up by a motorbike, the child was usually not allowed to go by his parents. His parents feared that their son would catch a cold because of his weakened immune system. There were times, however, when the child was allowed to do so by his or her parent(s) Since Om Yoyok's father was present, the child told Om Yoyok that his father had granted permission for the child to pick up I'ik Dyah. That way, Om Yoyok might take the child's request into account and, if he so chooses, grant his wish..

The speech event in discourse data (12) is an example of the use of the surrounding people context, which is done by utilizing the presence of surrounding people in the speech event. This strategy is employed if the child believes that the third party present has the ability to influence the interlocutor. The child and his family visited Eyang's house in Dampit, where the speech event in discourse data (12) occurred. At that point, the child wanted to get his money back from his father, who had borrowed it. The money he borrowed from his father was repaid after he received a scholarship. In light of the scholarship announcement and the fact that his father had yet to return the child's savings, the youngster sought to revise his request and ensure that the money was returned as soon as possible. In order to get his father's support, the child tried to take advantage of Eyang's presence in Eyang's house, who was also highly regarded by his father, when he was there. The presence of Eyang gave the child hope that his father would reconsider the child's request, and in the end, the request is granted.

According to the findings above, elementary school-aged children have the ability to take advantage of a variety of contexts when making requests (Cohen, 2020; Ginsburg, 2021). Both the places around and far from children are included in these contexts, as are both special events and events that harm them. The atmosphere is also included, which includes a good, pleasant, or happy atmosphere. Finally, the people surrounding context includes mentions of interests and measurements as well as the presence of people surrounding. Therefore, teachers in general and elementary school teachers in particular should take advantage of the findings of this research to improve and complete the teaching and learning process for Indonesian language in general (Handiawati et al., 2020; Insani et al., 2019). The improvement is mainly due to the use of communicative approaches and contextual approaches, which restore language to its role as a tool of communication and link the teaching and learning activities to the context of real-life experiences experienced by the students. While Indonesian language teachers are no longer limited to teaching children about the grammatical principles behind language, they are also teaching them about how to use that language effectively and meaningfully in the real world. As a result of this, the use of variational request language forms is accelerated because of this context.

## Conclusion

There can be no doubt that elementary school children use language in accordance with context when making requests, as evidenced by the results of this study. In addition, elementary school-aged children use specific contexts to support their request to be granted. Elementary school students, according to research, can use various contexts, including the "here and now" concrete contexts as well as the abstract ones that go beyond the present boundaries of understanding. Therefore, this study has some implications. The findings of this research should be utilized by educators of all levels, but especially those working in primary and secondary schools, in order to enhance and finish the process of teaching and learning the Indonesian language in general. The use of communicative approaches and

contextual approaches, which return language to its role as a tool for communication and link the teaching and learning activities to the context of real-life experiences experienced by the students, is primarily responsible for the improvement. However, other factors have also played a role in the development of the students' language skills. Teachers of the Indonesian language no longer just instruct children on the grammatical principles underlying the language; rather, they also instruct children on how to use that language in a way that is both meaningful and effective in the real world. Because of this context, there has been an increase in the use of variants of request languages, which has led to an acceleration in their adoption.

Nevertheless, there are some restrictions to this study. This research is limited to only three elementary schools located in the Way Kanan area of Lampung province on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia. Despite the fact that this research is able to shed light on the requesting strategies used by school-aged children in a variety of contexts, this research is limited to only those three elementary schools. As a result, studies very similar to this one ought to be carried out in a more expansive context within the Indonesian context in order to determine whether or not the findings can be applied to other geographical settings. In conclusion, in order for future research to produce more reliable findings, more sophisticated research instruments, data analysis, and larger sample sizes are going to be absolutely necessary.

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