

Contrastive Analysis of Tabe Politeness Speech Acts in Bugis and Sumimasen in Japanese (Pragmatic Study)

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Abstract

This research investigates the level of politeness exhibited by Tabe in Bugis and Sumimasen in Japanese. The researchers do a contrastive analysis to examine the differences and similarities between Tabe in Bugis and Sumimasen in Japanese, which encompasses the act of begging and the pragmatic aspect of politeness. This research uses a contrastive descriptive qualitative methodology, in which the data consists of elaborate qualitative information rather than numerical values. This data is examined by using two distinct approaches, specifically descriptive and contrastive data analysis. The findings of this investigation in the term "tabe" holds significant symbolism in Bugis language and culture, serving to kindly and respectfully request permission. By strategic use of "tabe" in appropriate circumstances, individuals can demonstrate profound gratitude and courtesy towards others, enhance social connections, and uphold societal harmony. Likewise, the use of "sumimasen" in Japan underscores cultural principles that emphasize courtesy, modesty, and social concord. The word is employed in several contexts to apologise, request assistance, or convey appreciation, and serves to sustain positive relationships and prevent conflict in daily contacts.

Keywords: Contrastive Analysis; Speech Acts; Tabe; Sumimasen

INTRODUCTION

Speech acts in language play a crucial role in daily communication as they encompass not just phrase structure, but also the context and motivation of the communication. Comprehension of speech actions enhances our ability to communicate with greater effectiveness and gain a deeper understanding of the goals of our conversation partners. Verbal communication encompasses not only the transmission of knowledge, but also the implementation of measures. For instance, when we vocalize the phrase "Please close the door!", we are not just transmitting knowledge about the door being accessible, but also requesting the person we are speaking with to shut the door. Speech acts in Japanese and South Sulawesi, as in other languages, are integrated into the field of pragmatics, which investigates the usage of language in daily communication.

Adha and Arief (2020) argue that an individual's virtuous character is not only exhibited via their courteous behaviours, but also in their manner of communication. The social context, particularly the educational setting, exerts a substantial impact on the development of courteous or disrespectful speech patterns. Furthermore, as demonstrated by Septiani et al. (2020), the act of speaking respectfully serves to demonstrate respect towards others and sustain positive social connections. Hence, it can be inferred that the correlation between courteous speech acts is a moral principle of showing concern for the person being spoken to. By seeking consent or endorsement prior to engaging in an activity, the speaker demonstrates his regard and appreciation for the interests of the conversational partner. Exhibiting politeness can enhance interpersonal interactions and heighten understanding of the interlocutor's interests. In Kartika and Riza (2022) study, Aijmer asserts that politeness is a potent instrument that might enhance the likelihood of a request being successful. Through the comprehension and implementation of politeness techniques, a one can enhance their ability to accomplish their objectives. Rohmadi (2010) defines a speech act as an operational outcome of a statement uttered inside a certain context. A speech

act is the most basic linguistic unit that can take the form of a statement, question, command, or any other suitable form. Searle, as cited in Rahardi (2005:35), categorizes the actions executed by speakers through their speech into three types: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary acts refer to the deliberate act of uttering phrases that convey meaning as intended by the speaker. Illocutionary acts refer to the performance of physical actions using spoken language. In this instance, the speaker possesses a specific objective or purpose underlying their speech, beyond the mere transmission of information. Perlocutionary acts refer to the behavioral consequences or impacts that a speaker's speech has on their speaking partner. John R. Searle, a prominent language philosopher, proposed a theory of speech acts in Haristiani and Sopiyan (2019) that elucidates how speech serves the dual purpose of conveying meaning and performing action. The theory categorizes illocutionary speech acts into five distinct categories, which are: Assertive: employed to articulate propositions, with the intention of imparting knowledge or persuading the listener. Directives are employed to exert influence or modify the behavior of the listener. A commissive is a verb that obligates the speaker to perform a future action. Expressive: Employed to convey the emotions or attitudes of the speaker. Declarative: Employed to modify the state based on the spoken content.

Despite their differences, Japanese and Bugis share a common fundamental purpose, which is to serve as a medium of communication. Japanese is officially classified as a national language, but Bugis is only classified as a regional language. Notably, these two languages share commonalities in terms of linguistic levels, namely speech levels. Both the Japanese and Bugis languages employ a language level system to adapt speech according to the context and the interlocutor. The purpose of this is to demonstrate respect and courtesy in communication. The following is an illustrative sentence employed in a similar context, namely when conversing with a college professor.

1. せんせい すみません、トイレへいってもいいですか。

Sensei, I'm sorry, can I go to the toilet?

2. Tabe sensei, wedding ga iya lao wc we ?

Excuse me sensei, may I go to the toilet?

The present study explores expressive speech acts and politeness of language, building upon previous research conducted by Damayanti (2023) at Pangkep Central Market. The present study and Damayanti's research (2023) both explore the topic of speech acts utilizing *tabe*. Damayanti's research distinguishes itself by not only examining *tabe* as a politeness speech act, but also by encompassing all forms of politeness evident in expressive speech actions exchanged between customers and sellers at Pangkep Central Market. Furthermore, a study was undertaken by Sartika (2022) to examine the implementation and communication aspect of *tabe* culture within the Bugis Community tradition in Salu Paremang Village. A research study conducted by Abdillah (2019) examines the term "sumimasen" in Japanese speech and its usage in several domains, namely: function, which refers to excuse me, apologize, and thank you. Siregar's (2021) study includes an analysis of the term *Sumimasen* in Speech Acts inside the Anime Film "School Baby Sitters".

The primary objective of this study is to examine politeness speech acts in two distinct languages, namely Bugis and Japanese. The present study investigates two distinct politeness speech acts, specifically "*Tabe*" in the Bugis language and "*Sumimasen*" in Japanese. Gain a deeper understanding of the diversity of politeness speech acts across several languages. Comparatively analyze the politeness tactics employed in two languages. The objective is to enhance comprehension of cultural and civility standards in two distinct societies. This paper adopts a contrastive approach to examine the differences and similarities between *Tabe* in Bugis and *Sumimasen* in Japanese, which refers to the act of

requesting and the politeness in this research study. An illustration of the application of Tabe in Bugis and Sumimasen in Japanese:

1. すみません、ちょっと^{とお},通して^{くだ},下さい。

Excuse me, may I pass?

2. Tabe, mauka lewat bu

Excuse me, ma'am, I'd like to pass by

Sentence (1) demonstrates the use of sumimasen as a courteous speaking act while approaching someone to pass by, meaning "excuse me." Furthermore, the usage of tabe in example phrase (2) tabe, which translates to excuse me, is a verbal act of civility when about to pass.

Comparisons can be made in the usage of Tabe and Sumimasen in speech acts based on the given sample sentence. Consequently, the researcher intends to do a comprehensive investigation of the politeness associated with the use of tabe and sumimasen by pragmatic theories and contrastive analysis.

METHOD

The present study used a descriptive contrastive methodology, incorporating a qualitative approach. This indicates that the gathered facts are not numerical, but rather consist of abundant qualitative information. Analysis of this data is conducted utilizing two distinct approaches, specifically descriptive and contrastive. Contrastive analysis, as defined by Sutedi (2009), is a linguistic methodology that specifically examines and compares the structural similarities and contrasts between two languages. The findings of this comparative study are highly valuable for those studying a foreign language, particularly Japanese, in acquiring proficiency in the target language. Utilizing a contrastive approach to examine the semantic equivalence between the Japanese term "sumimasen" and the Bugis term "tabe". The focal variables of investigation in this study are the

Japanese term "sumimasen" and the Bugis term "tabe". The present study centres on the semantic and practical applications of these two terms in daily contexts. Research data were collected from several sources, including the Shin Nihongo No Kiso II Book, Minna no Nihongo Sokhyuu I Book, Shin Bunka Shokyuu Nihongo Book, and Nihongo de Hanasou III publication. I. Nihongo de Hanasou. Websites: wikihow.com, kepojepang.com, japantalk.com, YouTube channel: Meiji Academy. Native speakers of Japanese and Bugis languages. Secondary data comprised of interviews conducted with native Bugis speakers and native Japanese speakers were utilized to verify the precision of primary data and as supplementary information. The methodology of this study consisted of five primary phases: analysis of the term "sumimasen", categorization of its meaning, interpretation of the data analysis results, discussion of the findings, and formation of conclusions. Although each stage has distinct goals and approaches, they are interconnected to accomplish the overarching research goals.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present investigation has identified that the term "sumimasen" is employed in diverse circumstances and contexts. Through the analysis of 38 speech acts, five primary meanings were identified. The term "sumimasen" has multiple interpretations and its specific usage is contingent upon the context and circumstances of the speech. This study demonstrates the significance of the term "sumimasen" in Japanese terminology and its usage in diverse everyday contexts. Please refer to the table 1 for a more comprehensive description of the data from this study.

Table 1. Speech Act in the Use of Sumimasen and Tabе

Speech Act in the Use of Sumimasen		Speech Act in the Use of Tabе	
Apologizing	4	Apologizing	3
Gratitude	4	Asking for Help	4
Asking for Help	5	Asking Permission	5
Asking Permission	3	Showing Gratitude	2
Permission	4	Permission	4
Total	20	Total	18

This research experiment employs a range of speech behaviours involving requests and politeness, each with distinct goals. Improper interpretation of this can lead to perplexity. Thus, the present study conducted a thorough analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role and various categories of speech acts related to requesting and politeness in Bugis and Japanese. The research data were acquired from online sources, textbooks, individuals who are native Bugis speakers, and native Japanese speakers.

Compilation of Politeness Speech Acts

Sumimasen data is employed in formal apologies

Sentences under data number 1 and 2 are extracted from the book Shin Bunka Shokyuu Nihongo. Data number 3 extracted from the Nihongo de Hanasou III book. The fourth data point is sourced from the book Nihongo de Hanasou I. Situations 1 and 3 refer to casual discussions, such as chats, among classmates, friends, or family members. Scenarios 2 and 4 involve dialogues between consumers and shop attendants.

- 1) ワン：キムさん、すみません。CD をわすれてしまいました。
Wan: Kimusan, sorry. I forgot to bring your CD.
キム：そうですか。じゃあ、^{あした}明日、^も持って^き、来てください。
Kimu: Oh really? Then, please bring it tomorrow.
- 2) ^{きやく}客：すみません、^{はこ}箱を^{たお}、倒してしまっただです。
Customer: Sorry, I dropped a box.
- 3) ^{たなか}田中：あ、グリーンさん。
Tanaka: Oh, Mr Green.
グリーン：すみません、おそくなって。
Green: Sorry, I'm late.

4) B: すみません。すこし じかんが かかりますが. . .

Sorry. It might take too long...

A: どのぐらいかかりますか。

How long the time needed?

B: 10 分ぐらいです。

About 10 minutes.

The speech act scenario shown in number 1 is a dialogue between Wan-san and Kim-san, in which was inadvertently neglected to bring Kim-san's camera. The invocation "sumimasen" is employed to express remorse and apology for one's own negligence. This is analogous to example sentences 2 and 3, where sentence 2 expresses regret for dropping the box and sentence 3 acknowledges the error of being late. Distinguishing itself from sentence no. 4, the term "sumimasen" is employed to show deference towards the customer, as they are expected to endure a 10-minute wait. The essence of "sumimasen," a sort of apology, is the sense of guilt for one's own negligence and the recognition of the future consequences.

Data 2 of sumimasen used to ask some help

Extracted from the book Shin Bunka Shokyuu Nihongo no is data number 1. Extracted from the book Minna no Nihongo Sokhyuu I is data number 2. The data points 3 and 4 are sourced from the book Nihongo de Hanasou. 3. Scenarios 1 and 2 involve dialogues between consumers and shop employees. Situation 3 refers to a formal or official discourse initiated during the delivery of a speech. Scenarios 4 and 5 are casual dialogues, specifically chats among friends or someone in proximity.

1) ^{きゃく}客: すみません。テーブルがぬれているので、ふいてください。

Customer: (Excuse me. The table is dirty, please clean it up.)

ワエートレス: はい。どうもすみません。

Waiters: (Oh, yes. Excuse me.)

- 2) ラオ：すみませんが、^{はいたつ}、配達を ^{ねが}お、願ひできますか。
Rao: (Excuse me, can you deliver it?)
^{てんいん}、店員：はい、かしこまりました。
Shop employee: (Yes, of course.)
- 3) グリーン：すみません。みなさん、ちょっと^き、聞いてください。
Green: (Excuse me. Please pay attention, everyone)
- 4) A: あ、すみません。^{ちず}、地図を ^か、書いていただけませんか。
A: (Oh, excuse me. Can you draw the map for me?)
B: ええ、いいですよ。
B: (Yes, it's ok.)
- 5) すみませんが、^{しゃしん}、写真を ^と、撮っていただけませんか。
(Excuse me, can you take my photo?)

The speech act scenario represented by conversations no. 1 and 2 involves a customer and an employee. The usage of "sumimasen" in sentences 1 and 2 is a courteous speaking act intended to direct someone to perform a specific task. Sumimasen, namely in numbers 3, 4, and 5, is a courteous speaking act performed to request assistance.

Data no 3 of sumimasen used for expressing gratitude

Extracted from the book *Minna no Nihongo Sokhyuu I* are data numbers 1, 2, and 3. Information number 4 obtained from the website *Kepojepang.com*. Scenarios 1, 3, and 4 are informal dialogues of equivalent standing to the speaker, with whom the speaker is already acquainted. Scenario number 2 involves a dialogue between employees and supervisors, specifically leaders.

- 1) たかはし,高橋: しかし、2か^{げつ},月は^{なが},長いかも しれませんね。
もう^{すこ},少し^{みじか},短く^{なるか} どうか、^{ぶちよう},部長に
^{そうだん},相談してみます。
(However, two months may be a long time. I will talk to the department head to see if it can be shortened.)
ナロン: すみません。よろしく お^{ねが},願います。
Naron: (Thank you. Please.)
- 2) ミラー: これ、^{きやうと},京都の^{みやげ} お^{ねが},土産です。
Miller: (It's a souvenir from Kyoto.)
^{かんりにん},管理人: どうも すみません。
Manager: (Thank you)
- 3) カリナ: わたしが お^{べんとう},弁当を^も,持って^い,行きましょうか。
Karina: (Do you want to get some lunch, don't you?)
ワン: すみません。お^{ねが},願います。
Wan: (Yes. Thank you)
- 4) A: どうぞ、^{あたた},温かいうちに^め,召し^あ,上がってください。
A: (Please have it while it's still warm.)
B: どうも、すみません。
B: (Thank you very much.)

Sentences no. 1, 2, 3, and 4 include the term "sumimasen," which translates to "thank you". Using the term sumimasen to express gratitude entails apologizing for any inconvenience caused and expressing appreciation for the actions performed by the other person.

Data 4 sumimasen used for asking for permission

Data number 1 is sourced from the book Shin Nihongo No Kiso II edition. Database entries 2 and 3 are sourced from the book Nihongo de Hanasou I. Consider scenario no. 1, which involves a dialogue between a

consumer and a store clerk. Scenario 2 is an informal dialogue, characterized by a courteous approach to posing a query to a management. Situation 3 is informal, characterized by a courteous manner of posing a question to a casual acquaintance.

- 1) マリア：すみません。その ワインを ^み,見せて ください。
Maria: (Excuse me. Can I see the wine?)
^{てんいん}店員：はい、どうぞ。
Shop employee: (Sure, please come on.)
- 2) A: すみません。あのう、これ ^{えいご},英語で かいてもいいですか
A: (Excuse me. Can I write it in English?)
B: ええ、どうぞ。
B: (Sure, please do.)
- 3) A: あのう、すみません。この いすつかってもいいですか。
A: (Excuse me. Can I sit here?)
B: あ、すみません。ともだちが いますので。
B: (Oh, sorry. It's already taken.)

Conversations in numbers 1, 2, and 3 employ the term "sumimasen" to indicate seeking consent from the other person before proceeding with the intended activity. This speech act is a courteous communication technique used to avoid making any errors in our interaction with the other person.

Data 5 sumimasen means permission

The data numbered 1 and 2 are sourced from the book *Nihongo de Hanasou I*. Information numbered 3 is sourced from the book *Shin Nihongo No Kiso II*. Data reference number 4 is sourced from the Meiji Academy YouTube channel at <https://shorturl.at/Qh1Hk>. Conversation scenarios 1, 2, 3, and 4 are formal

conversation scenarios designed to promote courtesy while posing questions to unfamiliar speakers and shop staff.

1) ラオ：すみません。いま、今の電車にかばんを忘れてしまったんですが...

Rao: (My bag was left on the train this morning.)

えきいん 駅員：どこにお、置いたんですか。

Station staff: (Where was it?)

2) A: すみません。このでんしゃはあかさか、赤坂へ行きますか。

A: (Is this train going to Akasaka?)

B: いいえ、あかさか、赤坂はちよだせん、千代田線ですから、おおてまち、大手町のりかえです。

B: (No, Akasaka is on the Chiyoda Line so you have to change the line in Otemachi.)

3) A: すみません。モーニングサービスはいつ、何時までですか。

A: (Excuse me. What time the service ends?)

B: 11時までです。

B: (It's up to 11.)

4) きやく 客：すみません.....

Customer: (Excuse me...)

ワエートレス：ちゅうもん、注文はお、決まりですか。

Waiter: (Have you order the foods?)

An analysis of the distinctions and parallels between the politeness speech act Tabe in Bugis and Sumimasen in Japanese

The following analysis will outline the resemblances and distinctions between the politeness speech act Tabe in Bugis and Sumimasen in Japanese. The present study aims to compare the politeness speech acts employed in the apology of Tabe in Bugis and Sumimasen in Japanese.

Tabe and Sumimasen used to issue apologies for their perceived negligence and lack of respect towards the speaker. A detailed analysis of the similarities and differences between Tabe and Sumimasen can be found in table 2.

Table 2. Similarities and Differences in Politeness When Apologizing

Meaning and Situation of Speech Act	Tabe	Sumimasen
Showing respect towards the speaker	✓	✓
Showing responsibility in unexpected mistakes	✓	✓
Apologizing for refusing something and followed by giving any excuses	X	✓
The polite speech act of apologizing can be used at the end of a sentence marked with a question mark.	✓	✓
It can be used for apologizing towards the superordinates	✓	✓

The analysis in table 2 indicates that there are several resemblances in the significance and application of the polite speech act of apologizing. However, what sets Tabe and Sumimasen apart is that Tabe is less suitable for inclusion in sentences, as it is less suitable for expressing a refusal accompanied by a justification, as shown in the given example sentence.

すみません。きょうは ちょっと…。まだ しごとが ありますので。

(Sorry. I can't do it today cause I still have something to do.)

Shin Nihongo No Kiso II

This expression cannot entirely accurate when substituted with "tabe" as tabe simply conveys a feeling of accountability for the error that has been committed and promptly expresses regret while conversing with the target.

Comparison of polite speech acts when asking for help *Tabe* in Bugis and *sumimasen* in Japanese

Tabe and *Sumimasen* are used as means of requesting assistance. The terms "tabe" and "sumimasen" are employed to gain the attention of the one being solicited for assistance in a courteous manner. Table 3 shows a comprehensive analysis of the distinctions and resemblances in courteous verbal expressions while requesting assistance.

Table 3. Differences and Similarities in Speech Acts in Politeness When Asking for Some Help

Meaning and situation of speech act when asking for some help	<i>Tabe</i>	<i>Sumimasen</i>
Showing some respect	✓	✓
Be polite in giving orders to some people you do not really know well	✓	✓
Showing some cultural value	✓	✓
Implying gratitude in advance for the expected assistance	✓	X

Tabe and *Sumimasen* share many parallels in their politeness when seeking assistance. These commonalities include demonstrating respect for the person being spoken to and promoting equality among the conversants. For instance, they may ask for aid from colleagues or even strangers. The distinction between *Tabe* and *Sumimasen* lies in their respective aspects of seeking assistance from others to achieve personal goals and expressing appreciation in advance for the assistance received. Consider, for instance, the following sentence.

Arumi, alleki rong anjo sondok ka dallekanna tante puput nak, tabe nah!

[Arumi please bring me the spoon in front of Aunt Puput, thank you in advance.]

Sumimasen is not suitable for usage as a courteous speech act to request assistance, as it entails expressing a request or apology for disruption, followed by articulating the sought-after assistance. Sumimasen is the expression of gratitude, particularly when someone has fulfilled an anticipated or requested task. In such cases, sumimasen might be spoken as "doumo sumimasen," which translates as thank you.

Comparison of polite speech acts when asking for permission Tabe in Bugis and sumimasen in Japanese

During a conversation, Tabe and Sumimasen are said as speech actions to request permission, serving as a gesture of greeting and respect towards the other person. An analysis of the similarities and variances in politeness speech acts when requesting permission is provided in table 4.

Table 4. Similarities and Differences in Speech Act in Politeness When Asking for Permission

Meaning and situation in speech act in politeness when asking for permission	Tabe	Sumimasen
Showing some respect or asking for apology	✓	✓
Used to ask for permission for higher ups	✓	✓
Showing some manners	✓	✓

The Japanese people attach great importance to the virtue of displaying respect and sensitivity towards the emotions of others. Using "sumimasen," individuals demonstrate their reverence and concern for others. Similarly, one

can demonstrate great respect and courtesy in ordinary contact by using the term "tabe," which is much esteemed in Bugis culture.

Comparison of the polite speech acts of excuse me *Tabe* in Bugis and *sumimasen* in Japanese

The use of "sumimasen" indicates that an individual possesses an understanding of the consequences of their activities on others and is prepared to accept the potential annoyance that may arise. The following is a comprehensive analysis of the resemblances and distinctions between *tabe* in Bugis and *sumimasen* in Japanese.

Table 5. Similarities and Differences in the Speech Act in Politeness of Asking for Permission

Meaning and situation in the speech act in politeness of asking for permission	Tabe	Sumimasen
Showing some respect	✓	✓
Used when asking for attention or calling an employee	X	✓
Used to ask for something you want	✓	✓
Used to greet someone	✓	✓

Tabe and *Sumimasen* are Japanese and Bugis idiomatic expressions used to verbally request permission from someone. *Tabe* and *sumimasen* share significant similarities, such as their use in greeting someone on the street to inquire or requesting permission from someone. These two forms of expression are typically employed at the start of a phrase. *Tabe* is unsuitable for usage during the ordering process. The conversation is an illustration of a *sumimasen* sentence that is not substitutionable with *tabe*.

きゃく,客: すみません.....

Customer: (Excuse me..)

ワエートレス: ちゅうもん,注文はおき,決まりですか。

Waiter: (Have you decided to order?)

Meiji Academy <https://shorturl.at/Qh1Hk>

If sumimasen is substituted with tabe, the language above is not entirely accurate. Taboo is exclusively employed to initiate contact and extend greetings, rather than to summon someone and request their presence.

Comparison of the polite speech acts of thanking Tabo in Bugis and sumimasen in Japanese

In the context of receiving assistance, the expressions "tabe" and "sumimasen" are employed as a means of expressing thanks for the generosity of the person who provided aid. Table 6 presents a comprehensive analysis of the distinctions and resemblances between tabe and sumimasen.

Table 6. Similarities of tabe and sumimasen in speech act in the politeness of showing gratitude

Meaning and situation of speech act of tabe and sumimasen in the politeness when showing gratitude	Tabo	Sumimasen
Showing some respect	✓	✓
Used in more formal situation	✓	X
Used when talking to friends	✓	✓

The parallels between tabe and sumimasen in the courteous rhetorical act of expressing gratitude both demonstrate deference towards the recipient of assistance. Nevertheless, sumimasen is not suitable for use in formal contexts, where it is sometimes more suitable to say 感謝 (Kansha shimasu).

CONCLUSION

The study findings enable the conclusion that "Tabé" and "sumimasen" hold significant importance as polite terms within Bugis and Japanese cultures. A comprehensive grasp of the significance and application of these terms can enhance the communication skills of Bugis and Japanese learners. The term "tabé" holds significant importance in Bugis language and culture since it is employed to request permission in a formal and courteous manner. Effective use of "tabé" in appropriate circumstances enables individuals to express profound gratitude and courtesy towards others, enhance social bonds, and uphold societal harmony. Furthermore, in Japan, the use of "sumimasen" exemplifies cultural principles that emphasize courtesy, modesty, and social concord. Interpersonal apologies, requests for assistance, expressions of thanks, and the maintenance of positive relationships and prevention of conflict in daily contacts are all applications of this term.

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