

Indirect speech acts and persuasive strategies of cultural narratives of *Go'et* in health promotion

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Abstract - Studies of cultural narratives as indirect speech acts and persuasive strategies in health promotion remain limited. This study aims to discover how "Go'et," a cultural narrative of Manggarai Community Indonesia, is used as an indirect speech act and persuasive strategy in health promotion. It is a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach. The study was conducted in the Rego dialect community, Manggarai, Indonesia. The study participants were chosen purposively based on predetermined criteria. The participants included healthcare providers, customary leaders, and community figures. Data from the study were collected using in-depth interviews, observation, documentation and Focus Group Discussion. The study indicated that the cultural narratives of Go'et in the Manggarai community in Indonesia are relevant to the context of health promotion. The cultural narratives are constructed in imperative sentences with the illocutionary power of advising, recommending and hoping. Using indirect speech acts through "Go'et" has become a persuasive strategy for shaping people's perceptions, beliefs and behavior. Healthcare providers can adopt such expressions to positively influence patients' emotional states, enhancing their psychological readiness to recover or maintain good health. The study contributes to understanding how cultural narratives function as indirect speech acts in non-Western communities, particularly within the Manggarai context of Indonesia. By highlighting *Go'et* as a culturally embedded form of communication, the study expands the theoretical discourse on indirectness, politeness strategies, and persuasive communication in health promotion. Moreover, the study provides valuable insights into community-based health promotion strategies by emphasizing the compelling role of traditional discourse.

Keywords: Cultural Narratives, Go'et, Health Promotion, Indirect Speech Act, Persuasive Strategy

1. Introduction

Speech act theory provides a framework for understanding how language performs actions beyond merely conveying information (Searle, 1979). Utterances can be categorized into locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, each serving a distinct function in communication (Weigand, 2016). One of the significant developments within this theory is the notion of indirect speech acts, where the speaker's intended meaning differs from the literal expression (Nkirote, 2024). Indirect speech acts are commonly used to soften commands, express politeness, or negotiate meanings within cultural norms (Válková, 2013). In many traditional societies, such as Manggarai, Indonesia, these indirect forms of speech take on culturally embedded forms, such as *go'et*, which are used to indirectly convey advice, warnings, or social values.

Health promotion involves enabling individuals and communities to increase control over their health through communication, education, and behavioral interventions (Kreuter & McClure, 2004). Language is important in health promotion, especially in culturally diverse communities, where persuasive communication needs to be context-sensitive (Alahäivälä & Oinas-Kukkonen, 2016). In such contexts, indirect and culturally meaningful expressions often resonate more deeply with community members than direct instructions. Understanding how culturally embedded speech strategies such as *go'et* function in health discourse is essential for designing effective, persuasive health messages that align with local traditions (Cipta et al., 2024).

Persuasion in communication, particularly in health promotion, involves appeals to logic, emotion, and ethics (Higgins & Walker, 2012). However, the success of persuasive strategies is highly contingent on the socio-cultural context in which communication occurs. In traditional societies, indirectness and metaphorical language are often seen as more respectful and effective, particularly when addressing sensitive issues like health and well-being (Rochwulaningsih, 2015). In the Manggarai culture, the use of *go'et*, an indirect, metaphorical form of advice, embodies the community's values of harmony, politeness, and social cohesion, which are crucial in delivering health messages persuasively (Daar, 2023).

The Manggarai community in Flores Island, Indonesia, upholds a strong oral tradition where *go'et*, proverb-like expressions or indirect advice, play a vital role in interpersonal communication and conflict resolution (Jama, 2021). *Go'et* are used not only to express cultural wisdom but also to influence behavior subtly, making them a powerful tool for persuasion in both everyday interactions and formal settings, including health-related discussions. These expressions often encode health values, environmental concerns, or social behavior within metaphoric or symbolic language, requiring interpretation based on shared cultural knowledge (Sukirman et al., 2022; Daar et al., 2023). Thus, understanding *go'et* is key to tapping into indigenous frameworks of persuasion and communication.

Several studies have examined speech acts and their role in cross-cultural communication. (Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Gąsior, 2015; Xiao, 2023; Fitriani & Pujiati, 2018; Drid, 2018). Meanwhile, some scholars have conducted studies on health communication through cultural approaches. Nguyen et al. (2024) studied the influence of culture on the health beliefs and health behaviors of older Vietnam-born Australians living with chronic disease. Jayasinghe et al. (2025) studied the culture of healthy living. Donnelly et al. (2012) explored the impact of cultural and social factors on exercise, diet, and smoking of Arabic women living with cardiovascular diseases in the State of Qatar. The studies underscored the important role of culture in shaping people's perceptions, behavior, and attitudes toward their health. Moreover, the studies on the use of "Go'et" in Manggarai culture in communication have been investigated by some scholars. Daar (2023) investigated the use of Go'et in Wee mbaru cultural event, Moses (2013) explored the application of *Go'et* during ceremonies and cultural gatherings, and Jugan & Pandor (2023) found Go'et as poetic and figurative language (*reweng* or *jaong di'a*). The studies emphasize the role of "Go'et" as one of the cultural narratives used as indirect speech acts in cultural interaction.

Despite the richness of Manggarai's oral traditions and the growing interest in culturally sensitive health communication, research that integrates speech act theory with indigenous persuasive strategies like *go'et* remains limited. Existing studies focus broadly on cultural expressions or speech acts in general without investigating their application in health contexts. This study seeks to bridge that gap by analyzing *go'et* as an indirect speech act that functions persuasively in health promotion within the Manggarai community. The novelty of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach, combining linguistics, cultural anthropology, and public health communication to explore a localized, culturally embedded strategy for influencing health behaviors.

The following research questions guide this study: How do cultural narratives function as indirect speech acts and persuasive strategies in health promotion in Manggarai, Indonesia? The primary objective is to analyze the structure, function, and persuasive power of *go'et* within the framework of indirect speech acts and to assess their potential role in improving culturally sensitive health communication strategies. Through a linguistic-pragmatic analysis, the study aims to map out how traditional discourse can serve modern communicative goals.

The findings of this study are expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it will expand the understanding of indirect speech acts in non-Western cultural settings, specifically through the lens of *go'et* in Manggarai. Practically, it will offer insights for public health practitioners and educators on incorporating local communication strategies into health promotion efforts. Ultimately, the study aims to support the development of culturally grounded health interventions that respect and utilize traditional modes of communication, enhancing their relevance and effectiveness in local communities.

1.1 Indirect Speech Acts

Indirect speech acts (ISAs) are utterances where the intended meaning differs from the literal expression, relying on contextual and pragmatic cues for interpretation (Searle, 1979; Yule, 1996). Indirect speech acts play a significant role in daily communication. They allow speakers to convey intentions such as requesting, warning, or advising without stating them explicitly. These acts are crucial in maintaining politeness and social harmony, especially in high-context cultures (Boroujeni & Mansouri, 2023).

Searle's foundational theory distinguishes between direct and indirect speech acts based on the alignment of illocutionary force and propositional content. In indirect speech acts, the speaker's intention must be inferred from the utterance and situational context (S. Brown & Matusitz, 2019). For example, the question "Can you open the window?" functions as a request rather than a query about ability. Indirectness is often motivated by considerations of politeness and social norms (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Anin & Novitasari, 2015). In many cultural contexts, indirect speech is preferred to mitigate face-threatening acts and to show deference, particularly when addressing sensitive topics. Such strategic use of language fosters positive interpersonal relations. In indigenous or traditional societies, indirectness can be deeply embedded in cultural communication practices. For instance, the Manggarai culture employs *go'et*, metaphorical, poetic expressions, as an indirect way to instruct or advise (Abels et al., 2021). This form of communication not only reflects linguistic artistry but also conveys values and social expectations.

Studies on indirect speech acts underscored the importance of the speaker's illocutionary power and the listener's understanding of the intention given. Listeners need to possess particular knowledge and experience to know the message conveyed by the speaker. Yazdanfar & Bonyadi (2016) studied Request Strategies in Everyday Interactions of Persian and English Speakers. The study found that indirect speech is a strategy in making requests as a daily interaction mitigation device. Deveci et al. (2023) through their research, they also highlighted the importance of considering the interlocutors' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and the possible hidden intentions behind a compliment. Moreover, Díaz Pérez (2004) suggested the importance of paying attention to pragmatic aspects in using particular speech acts in specific context.

Pragmatic competence is important to understand and use indirect speech acts for effective communication across different social contexts (Duan, 2011; Nkirote, 2024). It involves recognizing the speaker's intention, interpreting contextual clues, and selecting appropriate linguistic forms. Misinterpretation can lead to communicative breakdowns, especially in intercultural settings (Alemi & Khanlarzadeh, 2016). Moreover, studies suggest that the interpretation of indirect speech acts varies depending on factors such as power relations, social distance, and cultural norms (Alghazo et al., 2021). Thus, it's essential to examine indirect speech within specific cultural frameworks of *go'et* in Manggarai to better understand how language functions as a tool for persuasion and social regulation in health promotion.

1.2 Language in Health Promotion

Language is central to health promotion. It conveys information and shapes attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to health (Cipta et al., 2024). Effective health communication relies on the strategic use

of language to motivate, educate, and persuade individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles (Kreuter & McClure, 2004).

Incorporating local linguistic norms into health communication is vital. The choice of language in health messages can significantly affect their reception and impact (Akinloye et al., 2021). Studies have shown that culturally appropriate and linguistically tailored messages enhance comprehension and compliance, particularly in multilingual and multicultural populations (Rachmawati, 2020; Tuohy, 2019). In this regard, understanding linguistic form and cultural context is essential.

In many traditional communities, health-related knowledge is often embedded in oral traditions and conveyed through culturally meaningful discourse (Ross & Castle Bell, 2017). Utilizing traditional forms like *go'et* in health promotion allows messages to resonate more deeply with the target audience by aligning with their worldview and communication preferences (Nkirete, 2024). Research on community-based health promotion has emphasized the importance of participatory approaches that respect indigenous knowledge systems and communication styles (Percival et al., 2018; Hawley & Morris, 2017; Dutta et al., 2019). Integrating culturally specific language, metaphors, and symbols can empower communities to take ownership of health initiatives.

The language used in health education must balance accuracy, clarity, and cultural sensitivity (Almutairi, 2015). Overly technical or direct language may be ineffective or counterproductive, particularly when addressing taboo or sensitive topics (Hawley & Morris, 2017). It makes indirect speech and metaphor an effective alternative in such contexts. In this regard, language is a medium of communication and a means of social influence. Understanding how linguistic strategies such as indirectness function within specific cultural contexts can inform more effective and inclusive health communication practices.

1.3 Persuasive Strategy

Persuasive communication strategies aim to shape individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Fransen et al., 2015). Within health promotion, these strategies are applied to motivate healthy choices and minimize harmful behaviors. They typically utilize rhetorical elements, emotional engagement, and culturally meaningful storytelling (Roe, 2018).

A widely recognized approach involves using ethos, pathos, and logos, representing the speaker's credibility, emotional resonance, and logical reasoning (Higgins & Walker, 2012). In traditional settings, persuasive authority is often derived from the speaker's societal position, accumulated wisdom, and life experience, which are reflected in practices.

In indigenous communication practices, persuasion is often conveyed indirectly, relying on shared cultural values, storytelling, and metaphor rather than explicit directives (Nwagbara & Belal, 2019). This method promotes a respectful and contemplative environment, enabling audiences to process and adopt messages in their own time. In the Manggarai context, *go'et* illustrates this culturally embedded mode of persuasion. Narrative persuasion, which employs storytelling to influence beliefs and attitudes, has proven effective in health communication (Ross & Castle Bell, 2017). Traditional oral expressions such as *go'et* function as narrative structures that gently steer audiences toward healthier behaviors through implicit messaging rather than confrontation (Dutta et al., 2019).

Social influence theory emphasizes the impact of peer norms and the authority of community figures in shaping individual attitudes (Higgins & Walker, 2012). Health promotion efforts integrated into culturally respected forms, such as ritual speech or ancestral teachings, tend to carry greater legitimacy and are more readily embraced by the community. Persuasive approaches that resonate with a community's epistemological and axiological foundations, its ways of understanding knowledge and values, are typically more enduring and effective (Lee & Aaker, 2004).

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the use of *go'et* as a form of indirect speech act and persuasive strategy in the context of health promotion within the Manggarai cultural community, Indonesia. Qualitative descriptive design was chosen because it allows an in-depth understanding of how language is pragmatically and culturally constructed and used to influence health behavior. The study is grounded in speech act theory, persuasive communication theory, and

ethnographic linguistics, emphasizing the interplay between language, culture, and context. This study aims to uncover the underlying meanings, pragmatic intentions, and cultural relevance of *go'et* in shaping community perceptions and actions related to health.

2.2 Participants and Research Instruments

This study's participants consisted of 15 key informants, selected through purposive sampling. Some criteria were determined for choosing the participants: 1) They are traditional elders, possessing knowledge on Manggarai Culture, having the experience of becoming spokesperson in Manggarai cultural rite; 2) The participants are local health workers, having the experience of at least five years working as health promoter in Rego-dialect community; 3) The participants are community leaders, having the knowledge of Manggarai culture; 4) Geographically, the participants are community members from several villages in the Rego Dialect, West Manggarai Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia.

The main instruments used for data collection were: 1) Semi-structured interview guides designed to elicit insights on the function, form, and interpretation of *go'et* in health-related contexts. 2) Audio recording devices capture natural discourse involving *go'et* during traditional events or informal conversations. 3) Field notes and observation sheets documented contextual information and non-verbal communication elements. 4) Document analysis sheets were used to examine written or transcribed versions of *go'et* from cultural texts and ceremonial speeches. All instruments were developed based on relevant literature in pragmatics and ethnolinguistics to ensure relevance and clarity.

2.3 Techniques of Data Collection

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations, Focus Group Discussion and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with each participant to explore their understanding and usage of *go'et*, particularly concerning advising or persuading others in health-related situations, such as sanitation, nutrition, maternal health, and child care. Participant observations occurred during cultural gatherings, rituals, or health discussions where traditional forms of communication were naturally used. This method allowed the researcher to observe the spontaneous use of *go'et* and its reception by listeners. Document analysis sheets were used to examine the transcribed *go'et* texts collected from ceremonies, traditional speeches, and community archives. These texts were analyzed to identify linguistic features characteristic of indirect speech acts and persuasive language. The interviews were conducted in the local Manggarai language and/or Bahasa Indonesia, depending on the participants' knowledge and preferences. It lasted for 30-45 minutes. Meanwhile, the Focused Group Discussion was conducted once and lasted for 90 minutes. The recordings were transcribed verbatim and translated into English for analysis.

2.4 Techniques of Data Analysis

The data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model. Data reduction: reviewing transcribed interviews, field notes, and documents to extract segments related to indirect speech acts and persuasive strategies. Codes were developed based on themes such as illocutionary acts, metaphoric expressions, politeness strategies, and health-related topics. Data display: The coded data were organized into thematic matrices and charts to visualize patterns using *go'et* across different contexts and participant groups. Conclusion drawing and verification: Interpretative summaries were developed to understand how *go'et* functions as an indirect yet persuasive linguistic device. Findings were verified through triangulation—comparing interview data, observations, and document analysis—and member checking with selected participants to ensure the validity of interpretations.

In addition, pragmatic analysis was applied to examine the types of speech acts (illocutionary force), the indirectness level, the perlocutionary effects, and the social factors (e.g., power, distance, and cultural norms) involved in each *go'et*. The analysis also considered how these utterances align with health promotion messages and the broader socio-cultural context of the Manggarai community.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The study focuses on how cultural narratives of Go'et are used as indirect speech acts and persuasive strategies in health promotion in Manggarai society, Indonesia. The following presents the dynamic of "Go'et" as one of the cultural narratives in Manggarai society in persuading listeners in a health promotion context. The data is presented based on the types of indirect speech acts found and how they are applied as persuasive strategies in promoting health in Manggarai society.

Data Go'et 1:

Neka ba rumbang ngo duat, rantang depet le meneh, cegong le seoh.

Don't be careless go work, not caught by cold, touched by cold

Don't work in the heavy rain and under the sun directly, so you don't get sick

Data Go'et 1 above literally gives the listeners prohibition. The listeners (people in society) are prohibited from working directly under heavy rain and sun since it has a certain impact on them, e.g., getting sick. However, the Go'et indirectly advises the listeners to take care of themselves. It's undertaken through carefully doing their work as farmers. Before going to work, they should anticipate the instruments they should have to protect themselves from working in the sun or heavy rain.

The Go'et was created based on the primary job done by the Manggarai society as farmers. As farmers, they work regardless of heavy rain and sun. This context sometimes naturally causes people to work without caring for their health and safety. Thus, Go'et *Neka ba rumbang ngo duat* indirectly advises and persuades people to take care of themselves for a continuous and better life. If this advice is ignored, it may result in a negative consequence such as getting sick "*depet le menu agu gong le seoh*."

Understanding the illocutionary power of this Go'et determines the perlocutionary acts taken by the listeners. Those who realize the importance of health implement it. However, those who recognize its importance but the facilities don't support it take it for granted. The participants stated that people in the community sometimes work under the heavy rain without any protection. It causes them to get sick. In this regard, the *Go'et* is required to persuade listeners to be aware of their health.

Data Go'et 2:

Imbi le ri'ing, jaga sumang dumpa agu pala ranga

Believe in prohibition, not to come face directly

Follow the advice so you stay away from any problem

Data in Go'et 2 above carries out an insight into the importance of listening, believing and implementing the advice given by the elders. Structurally, the Go'et is in the form of an imperative sentence. Lexicon *imbi* is a verb and put at the beginning of a sentence. It forms an imperative sentence. However, the go'et carries out the intention of giving advice. It doesn't carry out the intention of command the listener to listen or undertake the prohibition *ri'ing*, instead it brings advice that the listeners should do for a better life.

The go'et also highlights the consequences of not doing it, *sumang dumpa agu pala ranga*, bad effects; it can be sickness or other kinds of bad situations in the listener's life. The advice has meaningful value for both the listeners and speakers. A healthy, happy and good life can be achieved through undertaking every prohibition spoken by elders. They are considered to possess more experience and knowledge to be copied and integrated into the listener's life, particularly the young generation.

The use of indirect speech acts in this Go'et has a persuasive intention. Speakers persuade the listeners to follow the prohibition spoken by the elders. Indeed, the persuasion strategy is applied due to the importance of the Go'et in influencing the listener's perception and attitude. However, it depends on how the listeners respond to the Go'et given. In some cases, people in the community who tend to ignore the Go'et obtain inevitable consequences. For instance, the elders in Manggarai always advise their children not to sleep late at night, "*neka wela wie*." The advice is given using imperative sentences. The children who ignore it get sick as a consequence. Likewise, those who follow the advice get good health.

The Go'et *Imbi le ri'ing, jaga sumang dumpa agu pala ranga*, has a broad meaning and use. It depends on the context in which it is used. It has become a valuable narration and advice. It's a strategy of persuading people in Manggarai community to behave well. Moreover, the phrase *sumang dumpa agu*

pala ranga could be interpreted as any kind of obstacles that hinder the aspiration of better life that is realized through good health and other good life conditions.

Data Go'et 3:

Neka ngonde mai posyandu rantang mipih linsing dango ranga
Don't lazy come posyandu not pale face
Be diligent to come to health center for your better health

The data in Go'et 3 above represents the vital goal of being involved in health activities provided by the Government. Indonesia's Government takes good care of its people by providing health infrastructure facilities and human resources in every village, called the "Puskesmas" Community Public Health Center. Those who take care of their health come to this place with awareness. However, some people tend to be careless, though the information and announcements have been delivered. To this extent, the Go'et *Neka ngonde mai posyandu rantang mipih linsing dango ranga*, is made specifically by the health providers. Grammatically, the Go'et *Neka ngonde mai posyandu* is a negative imperative sentence, which means "Don't be lazy to get health services." However, the illocutionary act of the Go'et is a request and advice to the community always to come to the health center regularly to align with the schedule provided.

In the Go'et above, the healthcare provider uses the humanity approach to improve the community's health awareness. The use of imperative sentences in the Go'et doesn't mean to force the listeners to come to the health center. Instead, they inform particular effects of not coming to the place that is "*mipih linsing dango ranga*" illness without any solution. Thus, using this Go'et is expected to improve the community's self-awareness of their health. Understanding the intention through the Go'et relies on the listener's cultural and lingual knowledge. Thus, using this Go'et to communicate health services information becomes a medium to make the Go'et familiar, known and acceptable in society.

The continuous use of Go'et through verbal and non-verbal communication increases awareness. In the interview, the health provider stated that they sometimes use Go'et when interacting with people during health service. In this context, the intention of using the Go'et is beyond advising and requesting. It's also a strategy for persuading them to come to the health center. This strategy is undertaken for particular reasons, e.g., the decreasing number of people who come to health centers and more people who come to the place when they are in an emergency.

Data Go'et 4:

"Emo suan wua tuka kudut ripok kaeng kilo"
Enough two children to happy family
Better to have two children for a happy family

Data in Go'et 4 above, grammatically constructed using the declarative sentence "*Emo suan wua tuka*", Possessing two children is better. Commonly, a declarative sentence carries out the meaning and intention of stating, describing or informing something. In this Go'et, the declarative sentence of "*Emo suan wua tuka*", doesn't mean to explain or inform the community to have two children, instead it indirectly brings the intention of advising to possess two children in family. The sentence in the Go'et is followed by phrase "*kudut ripok kaeng kilo*" to explain the advantages of having two children: being a happy family. The Go'et indirectly intends to advise or recommend the community to have two children to build a happy and prosperous family.

The use of this Go'et represents the dynamic process of advice speech acts created in the Manggarai community to adapt to the policy and national program made by the Indonesian Government. The family planning program has been declared, and strong collaboration and commitment among stakeholders have been acquired to implement the program. In the context of health promotion, healthcare providers need to be creative and innovative to encourage the community to apply the program voluntarily and freely. Thus, using the above Go'et has become one of the strategies to persuade the community's perception and behavior to apply it in their family. However, the participants asserted the program's success lies in the community's awareness. Moreover, it depends on the community's educational background.

The above Go'et reasonably impacts changing people's perception and behavior. Many families have reduced their birth rate. It means that applying this Go'et as an indirect speech act of advising or recommending a persuasive strategy is successful when dealing with the community with high

awareness. However, the participants also asserted that the Manggarai community has other Go'et possessing opposite intention and meaning to the above Go'et, that is, Go'et "*Porong anak banar agu wing do*" hope to have many children. Although the Go'et is commonly used in different contexts of interaction, e.g., in cultural event context, it has the illocutionary power of expecting the listener to possess a specific perception and attitude on having children in the family. A family is built to have children and descendants. It's tied with the life philosophy of the Manggarai community. However, the illocutionary power of the Go'et can also be interpreted as the hope of elders to their young generation to have children and descendants when building a family. Therefore, the use of these two Go'et should be anticipated by considering the context of their use. In addition to replicating the impact of Go'et "*Emo suan wua tuka kudut ripok kaeng kilo*", the health providers must continuously use it through verbal and nonverbal communication.

Data Go'et 5:

Neka danga ragok lobo jangkong
Don't stay on bed
Don't lie in bed all the time

Based on the data in Go'et 5 above, it can be known that the Go'et is constructed in negative imperative sentence "*Neka danga ragok lobo jangkong*" Don't lie in bed all the time. Structurally, the sentence means to prohibit the listener from staying in bed. However, the sentence in Go'et has the illocutionary power of recommending and advising the listener to find physical activities to help him stay healthy. Based on the Manggarai elder's experience, physical activities have proven to improve their muscle strength and keep them safe and healthy. Most of these activities deal with farming. Therefore, in a different context, the go'et encourages listeners to work hard. Keeping one's body in bed results in the emergence of various kinds of diseases and the loss of a lot of fortune. Manggarai community believes and perceives staying in bed always as a signal of laziness; it's the source of various kinds of bad fortune, including illness.

Using the above Go'et in the context of health promotion has been considered beneficial in changing people's behavior. Specifically, the Go'et is applied when communicating with patients with muscle problems. Moreover, the Go'et strategy persuades patients to come to the health center. Choosing to stay in bed is a bad behavior that can lead them to worse condition. Applying this persuasive strategy requires sensitivity of both the speaker and listeners. Some might interpret it as insulting to a particular behavior, but some might consider it a good recommendation. Thus, social distances need to be considered when choosing this Go'et. Health providers promote health using certain Go'et that has been tied to the community's life while maintaining good relationships with the listeners.

Data Go'et 6:

Uwa gula bok loho, bolel loka basa tara
Grow morning, rise sun, glow skin wet looking
Grow healthy and happy

Based on the data in Go'et 6 above, it's known that the Go'et is grammatically imperative: "*Uwa gula, bok loho*", Grow healthy and happy. Grammatically, the Go'et commands listeners to grow healthy and happy. However, the context of using this Go'et causes it to bring different intentions. It has the illocutionary power of hope for the listeners to grow healthy. The participants stated that this Go'et is closely related to Manggarai culture. Parents hope their children have a better life. It's spoken directly or indirectly through their prayer. In specific cultural events, e.g., "*Wee mbaru cultural rite*," the cultural rite of entering a new house, this Go'et is spoken by the spokesperson or family representative. It brings hope for the house owner to have a prosperous life while occupying the home. The meaning and intention of this Go'et are relevant to the context of health promotion. Patients are expected to have good health after being treated or serviced at Community Health Center.

The use of this Go'et in health promotion can be a persuasive strategy undertaken by healthcare providers to influence the listeners' psychological state through feelings and emotions. In this context, speakers use speech acts of expression that connect with the listener's hope to recover. The persuasive strategy helps make the listeners obtain their hope. Thus, the participants asserted that this Go'et should always be spoken in every health promotion activity. The considerable impact comes if it is used repeatedly.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis, it's found that cultural narratives of "Go'et" function as indirect speech acts and persuasive strategies in promoting health in the context of Manggarai, Indonesia society. Two types of indirect speech acts are commonly applied in this context: indirect speech acts of advising and recommending and indirect speech acts of hope. This data indicated that cultural narratives in the context of Manggarai society, which is embedded in the "Go'et," have the potential for integrating in promoting health from cultural perspectives. Braçaj (2014) asserted that culture plays a vital role in maintaining and improving self-awareness to engage people with self and community-based health. Moreover, Dutta et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of integrating culture in anticipating the issue of health. Many people in society tend to follow their culture to determine which health issue to choose. Thus, the finding of this study underscores the primary role of healthcare providers to advocate health promotion by implementing strategies that possibly help achieve the goal of promoting health. The persuasive strategy embodied in the cultural narrative of Go'et becomes one of the strategies to be considered (Fransen et al., 2015).

The main objective of promoting health is to improve people's knowledge and awareness of health. Moreover, it's expected to change people's behavior (Ekiyor & Altan, 2020). Language plays a vital role in this context. However, the use of appropriate language determines whether the message conveyed is accepted or not. In this study, the use of cultural narratives of Go'et functions as indirect speech acts. Searle (1979) stated that indirect speech acts have illocutionary power, different from its structure. It's also found in the use of metaphors in language. This language use is more acceptable for those tied to the culture (Alghazo et al., 2021). Communication conducted through language culture is appropriate for them. It's close to their daily life. It also anticipates the face-threatening act of using direct messages (Yaqin et al., 2022). Thus, this study highlights the uniqueness of the cultural narrative of "Go'et" in promoting health. It conveys intention or message indirectly, along with the consequences of doing or not doing it. It doesn't directly threaten the listener's face. It helps the listeners psychologically accept and implement the message in their daily lives. For instance, the use of imperative sentence in Go'et "*Neka ngonde mai posyandu*" doesn't mean to force the listeners to come to the health center, instead particular effects of not coming to the place is informed, that is "*mipih linsing dango ranga*" illness without any solution. Using this Go'et is expected to improve the community's self-awareness of their health. Therefore, this study underscores the significant role of indirect speech acts in conveying messages in promoting health to listeners who are tied to culture and identity.

One of the indirect speech acts found in the study is advice speech acts. It's part of the directive speech act to influence the listeners and change their perception and behavior (Babaie & Shahrokhi, 2015). In the study, the indirect speech act of advice is vital in health promotion. It's not delivered using direct language, aiming to influence people's perceptions and behavior, particularly regarding self and community-based health. For instance, Go'et *Neke ba rumbang ngo duat* indirectly advises and persuades people to take care of themselves for a continuous and better life. However, a persuasive strategy is applied simultaneously by informing the bad effect of not doing the advice: "*depet le meneh agu cegong le seoh*" getting sick. Weigand (2016) stated that even though advice speech acts are not obligatory, listeners understand that advice is given for the listener's better life. In this regard, listener's basic knowledge and experience determines whether the perlocutionary act is taken or not (Al-Khatib & Al-Khanji, 2022). Thus, as the speaker, the healthcare provider needs to clarify and explain the importance of the advice in more detail by considering the listener's background knowledge.

The speech act of advice is indicated by the words 'should, advise, recommend, suggest', and is stated directly in a declarative sentence, and Hosni (2020) mentioned it as a face-threatening act (FTA) since it threatens the recipient's autonomy by implying the advisor knows better, placing them in a higher position. Moreover, it's uncommon to find the advice speech acts in imperative sentences. However, by investigating the cultural narrative of "Go'et," this study found other distinctions in using advice speech acts. It can also be found in imperative sentence e.g. *Neka ngonde mai posyandu*, *Neke ba rumbang ngo duat*, *Emo suan wua tuka*. These sentences form imperative but function as advice. The distinction between these speech acts indicates the dynamic of indirect speech acts aligns with cultural and lingual diversity (Al-Khatib & Al-Khanji, 2022). Understanding the intention of the speech relies on the knowledge and experience of the listeners (Daar, 2023). Strengthening this cultural identity replicates the effectiveness of using Go'et as a medium of health promotion.

The study also found the indirect speech acts of hope, e.g., Go'et "*Uwa gula, bok loho*" "Grow healthy and happy" is grammatically categorized as an imperative sentence, which typically functions to

issue commands. However, in the Manggarai cultural context, the utterance conveys more than a directive. It expresses a sincere wish or hopes for someone's well-being. This shift in function reflects the illocutionary force of expressive speech acts, wherein the speaker's intent is not to command but to convey emotion or personal attitude (Searle, 1979; Yule, 1996). This cultural significance reveals how *Go'et* functions as a linguistic unit and a social interaction and emotional connection tool. In Manggarai society, the utterance is often part of a broader communicative practice that aligns with communal values, spiritual beliefs, and traditions of care and respect. Such speech acts illustrate how language embodies shared cultural meanings and contributes to the construction of social reality (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013).

Despite the uniqueness and distinction of using indirect speech acts of *Go'et*, this study also underscores the importance of anticipating the use of two *Go'et* which potentially carry out contra productive intention e.g. *Go'et* "*Emo suan wua tuka*" better to have two children and *Go'et* "*porong anak banar agu wing do*" hope to have many children. The use of these two *Go'et* should be carefully considered in terms of the context in which they are spoken. These expressions carry significant cultural meanings beyond their literal, grammatical forms (Pongsibanne et al., 2018; Ziyatbay, 2024). While they may appear to be direct imperatives, their illocutionary force often conveys expressive intentions such as hope, blessing, and encouragement. Understanding the situational and cultural background is essential for ensuring these utterances are interpreted correctly and respectfully. As Austin (1962) argued, speech acts are not merely about what is said but also about the intended meaning and the social context in which they occur. Thus, health practitioners and community leaders must be contextually aware to preserve these expressions' cultural integrity and communicative power. In replicating the positive impact of the *Go'et* "*Emo suan wua tuka kudut ripok kaeng kilo*," which conveys a hopeful and poetic message for continued sustenance and prosperity, healthcare providers are encouraged to employ both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication. Verbal repetition, tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language all reinforce the utterance's emotional and symbolic power (Aguert et al., 2010; Witek, 2021).

In health promotion, these cultural narratives of *Go'et* serve as a persuasive and culturally sensitive communication strategy. Healthcare providers can adopt such expressions to influence patients' emotional states positively, enhancing their psychological readiness to recover or maintain good health (Percival et al., 2018). The indirect speech acts in this context build a connection between the speaker and listener through empathy and encouragement (Almutairi, 2015). *Go'et* should be incorporated into health promotion activities because it resonates with cultural values and invokes emotional strength. When used consistently, the utterance can reinforce optimism and healing, serving as both a linguistic and therapeutic resource in community health contexts.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, cultural narratives of *Go'et* in Manggarai Indonesia, have the potential to be applied as indirect speech acts and persuasive strategies to shape people's perceptions, beliefs and behavior in the health promotion context. The cultural narratives of *Go'et* are constructed in imperative sentences possessing the illocutionary power of advising, recommending and hope. They are not used to command the listeners to do what is stated in the spoken words. Understanding this indirect speech acts relies on the listener's experience and knowledge of local language and culture. Thus, healthcare providers play a vital role in making these cultural narratives familiar, understandable, and integrated into the listeners' way of life. It's undertaken through using them repeatedly in any context of health promotion.

The study contributes to understanding how cultural narratives function as indirect speech acts in non-Western communities, particularly within the Manggarai context of Indonesia. By highlighting *Go'et* as a culturally embedded form of communication, the study expands the theoretical discourse on indirectness, politeness strategies, and persuasive communication in health promotion. It also provides valuable insights into community-based health promotion strategies by emphasizing the persuasive role of traditional discourse. The use of *Go'et*, with its indirect yet consequential illocutionary force, often framed in imperative forms to advise, recommend, or express hope, demonstrates how culturally resonant narratives can be more effective than direct communication in influencing health-related attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, the study supports the development of culturally sensitive communication models that incorporate local wisdom and traditions, offering a foundation for policymakers, healthcare practitioners, and educators to design more effective and respectful health promotion programs in indigenous and rural communities.

Despite answering the research question, the study has some limitations that could be addressed for future studies. The study used a qualitative method that might not capture generalizable data. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods could offer more comprehensive data. Moreover, future studies could explore the intersection of Go'et's cultural narrative with politeness theory and language function in health promotion.

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