Investigating Student-Lecturer Interactions in EFL Classroom: A Speech Acts Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Within educational settings, the exploration of signals presents enough opportunities to analyze the dynamic exchanges between teachers and students. Gaining insight into the consequences of sign usage in educational settings can improve teaching methods and foster a greater understanding of the intricacies of human communication. This study investigates the complexities of speech acts in the process of learning the English language, with a specific emphasis on illocutionary speech actions between students and lecturers. Gathering data from 24 students, who were randomly selected from a single class, was done using Searle's taxonomy of speech acts. Verbal exchanges were documented and examined utilizing pragmatic analytic methodologies. The results demonstrate a prevailing reliance on representatives, underscoring a significant focus on effective communication skills and values. Directives, which are intended to influence the activities of listeners, are commonly used, while expressives and commissives are less frequently employed. This distribution highlights the central emphasis on the exchange of knowledge and the solicitation of information or actions during classroom interactions. The novel finding of this research is the recognition of a distinct hybrid speech act that incorporates components of representatives and directions. This indicates a fresh approach where students can effectively communicate information while also influencing their peers' comprehension and actions.

INTRODUCTION

Within the expansive domain of linguistics, Pragmatics stands as a pivotal discipline, dedicated to probing the intricacies of signs and their multifaceted interpretations across the rich mosaic of human languages, whether articulated through spoken discourse or captured in written text (Silk 2016; Ward, 2016; Yule, 2022). Language, far from being confined to mere vocalization, assumes the role of a versatile tool, weaving its threads through the fabric of communication encompassing both the written word and receptive listening. At its core, language serves as the lifeblood of societal interaction, fostering cohesion and understanding among members of a community (Bonvillain, 2019). Embedded within the evolution of human cognition lies a profound symbiosis with the ongoing process of comprehension, perception, and

the construction of meaning (Yule 2013; Rahman, 2023). Every expression, whether spoken, written, or physically portrayed, contains hidden meanings that can be deciphered and decoded by perceptive individuals (Leow et al., 2024).

In the realm of education, the study of signs finds a fertile ground for exploration, particularly within the dynamic interplay between educators and learners within the classroom milieu (Siritman & Meilantina, 2020; Rahman et al, 2023; Suryandani & Budasi, 2022). Here, the nuances of pragmatics or sign employment assume paramount importance, as they underpin the efficacy of teaching and learning endeavors (Ishihara & Cohen, 2022; Rahman et al., 2023). The ability to navigate and comprehend these subtleties holds the key to fostering meaningful exchanges and facilitating knowledge transmission. Moreover, the significance of sign usage transcends the boundaries of verbal communication (Abdikarimova et al., 2021; Muntasir et al., 2022), encompassing a spectrum of non-verbal cues that contribute to the rich tapestry of interpersonal interaction (Yuzar et al., 2022; Baugh et al., 2020).

Understanding the profound implications of sign usage within educational settings not only enhances pedagogical practices but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the complexities inherent in human communication (Humphries & MacDougall, 1999; Zurriyati et al., 2023). By delving into the depths of pragmatic inquiry, educators can unlock new avenues for engagement and comprehension, laying the groundwork for enriched learning experiences characterized by meaningful dialogue and mutual understanding. Thus, the study of signs within the context of education emerges not only as a scholarly pursuit but also as a transformative endeavor poised to shape the landscape of teaching and learning in profound ways.

In contemporary linguistic and intercultural communication studies, the exploration of speech acts assumes paramount importance, necessitating an in-depth comprehension of its various manifestations (Humaira et al., 2022). Consequently, the research endeavors to dissect not only the spoken discourse but also the behavioral patterns exhibited by students in the process of language acquisition and intercultural communication (Ruiz & Spinola, 2019; Yuzar et al., 2022; Vu, 2019). The crux of the research revolves around dissecting the intricacies of speech acts as they unfold amidst the dynamic milieu of student-lecturer interactions during English language learning sessions. Guided by pertinent research inquiries, the study seeks to unravel the mechanisms underlying the delivery and prevalence of distinct speech acts within conversational exchanges (Lewiński, 2021).

This research embarks on a quest to unravel the intricacies of speech acts within the realm of English language (Zurriyati et al., 2023) and English language pedagogy/learning (Kim, 2019), with a dual purpose: to decode the manner in which speech acts are wielded within conversations and to identify the predominant types of speech acts dominating such interactions. Focused on the elucidation of illocutionary speech acts among students and lecturers in the process of learning English (Croddy, 2002), this research meticulously

examines the nuances of daily discourse within the purview of pragmatic analysis, drawing upon Searle's taxonomy of speech acts as a conceptual framework (Searle, 2014; Nielsen, 2020). The study specifically examined the dynamics of speech acts within the academic setting of first-semester students enrolled in the English education program at State Islamic Institute of Lhokseumawe.

Theoretical implications of this study extend a beckoning hand to future researchers, furnishing them with invaluable insights into similar avenues of inquiry. Moreover, the practical ramifications of the research reverberate within educational spheres, equipping educators with a deeper understanding of student speech acts and fostering suitable approaches to address individual needs effectively. By bridging the chasm between theory and practice (Zou & Yiye, 2022; Lewiński, 2021), this research serves as a beacon illuminating the path toward enhanced pedagogical practices and student engagement.

METHODS

The aim of this research is to gain a thorough comprehension of the dynamics of verbal exchanges between students and lecturers using a speech act analysis approach (Ramanadhan et al., 2021). This study utilizes a qualitative approach to depict and examine the emotions and thoughts of individuals, with the goal of clarifying the underlying phenomena (Saldana, 2014). This study aims to improve the quality of education by examining specific communication occurrences in the field and studying individual behavior and interaction patterns through speech act analysis (Searle, 2014). The study focused on analyzing the patterns and interactions of speech acts among first-semester students in the English education program at the State Islamic Institute of Lhokseumawe. This study focused on students in their first semester of the English Education program at the State Islamic Institute of Lhokseumawe, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training. The researcher used a purposive sampling strategy to handle time, resource, and operational constraints (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024). More specifically, 24 students from a single class were chosen to collect data through direct observation of their interactions with the lecturer during class sessions. The technique involved registering students' names, distributing consent forms, and selecting participants via a lottery process.

Conversations were recorded and evaluated utilizing pragmatic analytic approaches (Ard, 2024). The data collection method involves the use of observation and documentation techniques. Observation was a valuable method for systematically assessing students' conduct during English learning sessions. The researcher attended and watched multiple class sessions to gain a full understanding of the interactions. Documentation in the form of written texts, visual photos, and audio recordings was used to supplement observation by giving physical verification of interactions and happenings in the classroom setting. These documents were critical for preserving the nuances of speech acts and providing a thorough dataset for

analysis. The acquired data was thoroughly examined for speech actions, with a particular emphasis on identifying and categorizing the various types of speech acts performed by students and lecturers. The goal of this analysis was to uncover the underlying motivations behind uttered words, the aims of various sorts of speech acts, and the effects these acts had on the people involved.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings section presents a thorough assessment of the data, focusing on various types of Searle's speech acts related to illocutionary acts and illocutionary forces conducted by both the lecturer and the students.

Table 1. Types of Speech Acts in Terms of illocutionary Acts and illocutionary Forces

No.	Classification of Searle's Speech Act (The Illocutionary Act)	Illocutionary Force	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Representatives	Confirming	8	11,25%
		Correcting	6	3,75%
		Agreeing	4	2,50%
		Explaining	18	11,25%
		Disagreeing	1	0,62%
		Informing	14	8,75%
		Stating	8	5%
		Predicting	0	0%
	Total		59	43,06%
2.	Directives	Reminding	2	1,25%
		Warning	2	1,25%
		Suggesting	5	3,12%
		Requesting	4	2,50%
		Asking	23	14,37%
		Ordering	8	5%
	Total		44	32,11%
3.	Expressives	Stating anger	0	0%
		Stating annoyance	1	0,62%
		Stating disappointment	0	0%
		Apologizing	5	3,12%
		Leave-taking	2	1,25%
		Stating pleasure	3	1,87%
		Wishing	1	0,52%
		Greeting	4	2,50%
		Thanking	5	3,12%
		Complimenting	2	1,25%
		Stating surprise	5	3,12%
	Total		29	21,16
4.	Commissives	Granting	1	0,62%
		Promising	0	0%
		Offering	4	2,5
	Total		5	3,64%

The discussion section thoroughly examines the findings in a comprehensive manner. It provides comprehensive explanations and interpretations of the data discovered during the analysis stage. This part seeks to enhance comprehension of the observed speech acts and their implications in the context of English language training through careful analysis and synthesis. The discussion section seeks to promote understanding and facilitate meaningful conversation about the dynamics of communication in the classroom setting by analyzing the findings within applicable theoretical frameworks and pedagogical viewpoints.

The table provides an overview of the categories of Searle's speech acts that were noticed during the teaching and learning sessions in the Conversation I class. The interactions between lecturers and students revealed four distinct sorts of speech acts: representatives, instructions, expressives, and commisives (Borchmann, 2020; Van Thao et al., 2021; Siritman & Meilantina, 2020; Zurriyati et al., 2023).

Representatives are the most common illocutionary acts in this group, making up 43.06% of the total. This category includes instances of speech acts in which the speaker articulates their beliefs regarding the veracity of a claim. The most prevalent action within this category is "Explaining," which occurs 18 times, accounting for 11.25% of the total. Two more noteworthy performances are "Confirming" and "Informing," each occurring 8 times, accounting for 11.25% and 8.75% of the total, respectively. The less frequent actions seen are "Correcting" (6 occurrences, accounting for 3.75% of the total), "Stating" (8 occurrences, accounting for 5% of the total), "Reminding" and "Warning" (each with 2 occurrences, accounting for 1.25% of the total), and "Disagreeing" (1 occurrence, accounting for 0.62% of the total). Curiously, the word "Predicting" is completely absent, suggesting that there were no recorded occurrences of this action.

Directives are the second most common form of illocutionary act, accounting for 32.11% of the overall amount. This category encompasses the speaker's endeavors to persuade or influence the audience into taking action. The predominant command is "Asking," which appears 23 times and accounts for 14.37% of all actions. The act of placing an order is also noteworthy, occurring 8 times, which accounts for 5% of the total instances. Less common commands, such as "Suggesting" and "Requesting," occur 5 times (3.12%) and 4 times (2.50%) respectively. The predominance of "Asking" indicates a strong emphasis on obtaining information or prompting actions from the listener.

Expressives, accounting for 21.16% of the overall, pertain to the speaker's expression of their psychological condition. Among the acts within this category, "Apologizing" and "Thanking" are both frequent, each occurring 5 times, which accounts for 3.12% of the total. The expression "Stating surprise" occurs 5 times, accounting for 3.12% of the total instances. Additional examples of expressives are "Leave-taking" with a frequency of 2 instances (1.25%), "Stating pleasure" with a frequency of 3 instances (1.87%), and "Greeting" with a frequency of 4 instances (2.50%). Less frequent are the categories of "Stating annoyance," "Wishing," and "Complimenting," each occurring only once, accounting for 0.62%, 0.52%, and

1.25% of the instances, respectively. Remarkably, the data does not contain any occurrences of "Stating anger" or "Stating disappointment," suggesting that these emotional expressions are not present.

Commissives constitute a mere 3.64% of the overall illocutionary acts, making them the least common type. This category pertains to the speaker making a commitment to carry out a specific activity in the future. The act of "offering" is the most frequently observed commissive act, accounting for 4 occasions or 2.5% of the total. The term "Granting" is present once, accounting for 0.62% of the occurrences, but there are no instances of the term "Promising." The infrequency of commissives implies that expressions of commitments to future activities are less prevalent un comparison to other forms of speech acts within this categorization.

The classification above demonstrates a prevailing utilization of representatives, showing a significant emphasis on communicating skills and beliefs (Ruiz & Spínola, 2019; Yuzar et al., 2023; Abdikarimova et al., 2021; Suryandani & Budasi, 2022). Directives, which have the purpose of exerting influence over the listener's activities, are also prominently prevalent. Expressives, which convey the emotional condition of the speaker, are quite common, whereas commissives, which involve making future commitments, are seldom. This distribution highlights the focus on exchanging knowledge and making requests for information or actions in the examined speech activities (Kim, 2019).

CONCLUSION

By doing a comprehensive analysis of Searle's speech actions, specifically emphasizing illocutionary acts and forces, it can be inferred that this study pertains to the English teaching and learning context at IAIN Lhokseumawe. The interactions between the English lecturer and students were analyzed and four primary categories of speech acts were found. These categories include representatives, instructions, commissives, and expressives. Representatives were the most commonly employed speech act, making up 43.06% of utterances, whilst commissives were the least utilized, accounting for only 3.64% of utterances. These findings emphasize the importance of comprehending speech acts in promoting effective communication within educational settings.

Building on the study's findings, several recommendations are made for various stakeholders. Linguistic students are urged to delve deeper into pragmatics, namely the study of speech acts, in order to improve their grasp of language usage and avoid misinterpretations. English lecturers and students are encouraged to incorporate pragmatic awareness into their language teaching approaches, emphasizing the value of efficient communication. This includes implementing a variety of learning activities to help students develop pragmatic awareness and communication competence, as well as offering plenty of opportunity for classroom interaction. Furthermore, the study's limitations provide up possibilities for future research, prompting scholars to investigate other areas of pragmatics such as perlocutionary acts, implicature, and

politeness. To improve comprehension of language dynamics in real-world circumstances, researchers should expand their investigations to incorporate students' speech acts and use actual data sources.

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