

SPEECH ACTS USED BY ENGLISH TEACHERS IN EFL CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

Classroom interaction during teaching and learning process is essential to perform effective learning to gain a successful teaching and learning process. It is important to find out the types of speech acts uttered by the teachers since their speech acts will contribute to their classroom practices in teaching. This study is aimed to investigate teachers' speech acts used for teaching English in EFL classroom and its implication in a classroom context. The subject of this study was English teachers of seventh-grade students in a Junior High School with adequate experiences of teaching EFL. The method of the study was descriptive qualitative by observing to collect data. Three cyclical steps were used to analyze the data: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing or verification. The findings showed that there were four speech acts used by the teacher namely assertive, directives, expressives, and commissives. Directives speech acts became the most largely used ones because it is more comprehensible in a classroom setting.

Keywords: *EFL classroom, English teachers, speech acts*

INTRODUCTION

Interaction in the classroom during teaching and learning activities is crucial for efficient learning in order to achieve a good teaching and learning process. Celce-Murcia (2000) stated that the use of language in the classroom affect students' process and advancement of learning. In term of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching in Indonesian setting, teachers who are non native English speaker employs some utterances when they interact with their students to deliver the materials through their expression. In other words, the use of appropriate speech acts produced by the teacher will lead to suitable material delivery and good student understanding so that a successful teaching and learning process is achieved. According to Bach (1994), such communication speech acts are further referred to as speech acts, which are described as the speaker's speech acts in the hearer relationship. It is not only

about the words spoken by the speaker, but also about the intentions of the speaker to the hearers.

Considering on speech acts, people use speech acts to convey things to the hearer and get feedback. Then, as a primary means of communication, language is used to convey feelings, thoughts, ideas, intentions and emotions directly (Austin, 1975). Therefore, in a classroom setting, speech acts play a significant part during the teaching process because when the teacher teaches he or she utilizes speech acts to teach, guide and instruct the students.

As stated by Yule (1996) speech acts is utterance of speech that constitutes some sort of act. When people do conversation, they not only produce utterance but also perform action. The basis of Austin's theory lies on his belief that speaker do not merely use language to say somethings, but to do somethings and thus utterances could be regarded as speech acts. According to Curtis and O' hagan (2005), teaching performed by language referred as classroom speech acts. The speech acts of the classroom influence the quality of the classroom's verbal communication. Teachers will recognize the typical habits of teaching when they communicate thoroughly with students. Therefore it will provide significant information for teachers. Furthermore, when teachers perform the learning process, they have some intentions directly or indirectly in their speech, and in their words they speak literally or non-literally.

There are a number of study focuses on speech acts. Previously, the study about speech acts in terms of illocutionary acts on social media have been conducted by Oomens (2017). The results showed that people tends to use some speech acts on social media such as Facebook and Twitter relied on Austin's and Searle's speech acts categories. Social media is one of media to produce speech acts to express feelings and ideas through updating status. Based on Austin's speech acts categories, people on social media used four speech acts namely; expositive, verdictive, exercitive, and behabitive. While, in Searle's speech acts categories, there were representatives, declarations, expressives, and directives. Otherwise, this study is different in which the researcher have been investigated types of speech acts that is used by teachers during teaching and learning activity.

The others study have been done by Chiluya (2007). His study found directive speech acts are used dominantly in 95 percent of popular soft drink ads between 2000 and 2006. This is aimed at getting audiences to purchase the advertised products.

According to two previous study, this study is attempted to observe the phenomena of teacher's speech acts in EFL classroom considering on Searle's speech acts taxonomy. They

were assertive, directives, expressives, commissives, and declarations.

The study investigated teachers' speech acts used for teaching English in EFL classroom and its implication in a classroom context through qualitative research design. The research method was conducted by doing observation through video recording during teaching learning process to collect the data. Thus, the subject of this study was an English teacher who teaches at the seventh grade of one state Junior High School in Kulon Progo. The teacher was chosen purposively based on the teaching experiences in more than 20 years of teaching EFL classroom.

In this study, the researcher only observed the teacher's speech acts then they were analyzed through three cyclical steps, namely: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing or verification proposed by Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014). Firstly, the researcher transcribed the teacher's utterances conveyed to the students in the classroom during the teacher's speech or interaction. Secondly, the researcher chosen the utterances and reduced them. Each of the chosen utterances was entered into a profile in which indicating all of its appropriate characteristics. Next, the data were classified and categorized depending on specified characteristics. Lastly, the clear data mapping are analyzed, described and reported as a research finding.

Based on the explanation above, this recent study focuses on types of teacher's speech acts used for teaching English in EFL classroom and its implication in a classroom context.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Type of Teacher's Speech Acts

Descriptive method is used to show the findings. As stated by Nassaji(2015), Gall, Gall, & Borg (2007) descriptive research is aimed to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics thus observation and survey tools are often used to gather data. To find out types of speech acts uttered by the teacher in EFL classroom, observation is conducted during teaching learning activity based on Searle's speech acts categories.

After having the data and transcribed them, the researcher analyzed and presented teacher's speech act production into table. The teacher's speech acts was classified into five categories, namely: assertives, directives, expressives, commissives, and declarations. In terms of speech acts frequency performed by the teacher in the classroom are presented on the Table 1 as follows:

Table 1
Type of Teacher's Speech Act

No	Types of speech acts	Utterances	Percentage
1	Assertives	68	31.9%
2	Directives	123	57.7%
3	Expressives	14	6.6%
4	Commissives	8	3.8%
5	Declarations	0	0.0%
	Total	213	100.0%

Considering on the table above, the total production of teacher's speech acts in the classroom are 213 utterances. There are only four types of speech acts categories uttered by the teacher assertives, directives, expressives and commissives. While, the teacher did not used declarations speech acts in her teaching.

Assertives (31.9%)

It was found that there are 68 utterances produced by the teacher. According to Searle (1979) assertives speech acts underlined on the speakers focus on truth of the proposition expressed such as stating, informing, concluding, boasting, complaining, suing, or reporting. The finding related to assertives speech acts gained from the data includes the act of stating students' answer to make sure what is said as what it is. Then, the act of informing indicates to give information from a student to the class. The others assertives speech acts showed teacher's conclusion to close her teaching. Some samples of the data can be seen in the table below.

Table 2
Assertives Speech Acts

Utterances	Assertives speech acts categories
S: "page 158 Mam" T: "oh, ya page 158"	Stating
"your friend have found 15 adjectives"	Informing
"So, we have learnt about adjectives "	Concluding

Directives (57.7%)

Yule (1996) states that directives speech acts is used in which the speaker get something done

by the hearer. These acts express what the speaker wants or attempt to make the world fit the worlds via the hearer. Based on Table 1, directives are the most frequently used in classroom setting because it is more comprehensible. Among those 213 utterances, 57.7 % have word hints for directives speech acts. The hints of Searle (1979) directives speech acts includes ordering, commanding, begging, suggesting, and advising. Largely, the teacher performed directives in order to ask the students about something, to command and request the students to do something. Moreover, advising is one of teacher's directives speech acts performed in the class. Some samples of the data can be seen in the table below.

Table 3
Directives Speech Acts

Utterances	Directives speech acts categories
“What can you find in that page?”	Asking
“Ok, sit down please!”	Commanding
“Can you tell me what you get Melani?”	Requesting
“You should bring dictionary”	Advising

Expressives (6.6%)

14 utterances classified into expressive speech acts word hint are found in the data. Searle (1979) identified utterances with expressive utterances like thanking, congratulating, apologizing, condoling, deploring, and welcoming. Expressives speech acts state the speaker's feelings or attitudes about something (Yule, 1996). Out of 14 utterances, teacher uttered some expressive speech act are presented as below.

Table 4
Expressives Speech Acts

Utterances	Expressives speech acts categories
“Very good, Usman”	Congratulating
“Thank you for your attention”	Thanking

The utterance like “very good” and “good job” are commonly used by the teacher

after her students did based on what she asked. For closing her class, the teacher uttered thanking in order to express her feelings that her students are fully gave attention to her during teaching learning.

Commissives(3.8%)

Commissives became the least utterances spoken by the teacher. There were 8 utterances in which 3.8% out of 100%. The utterance like promising, pledging, offering, threatening, refusing and vowing are categorized into commissives speech acts in which used by the speakers to commit actions in the future (Searle, 1979). Some samples of the data are shown in the table below.

Table 5
Commissives Speech Acts

Utterances
“We will read a text on page 160”
“Okay, I am going to write them in the whiteboard”
“I will give you 10 minutes”
“Next week we will discuss it”

Declarations (0%)

It was found that declarations are not used by the teachers to teach in the EFL classroom. It is evidently due to the nature of declaratives speech acts in which the speaker has to have institutional role in a specific context when employing these acts (Yule, 1996). This speech acts underlined on the speaker who is able to change the state of affair in the world via the utterances. It is only given such institutions as the Church, the law, private property, the state and a special position of the speaker and hearer within these institutions that one can ex-communicate, appoint, give and bequeath one's possessions or declare war (Searle, 1979). Therefore, in the classroom context, declarations are very unlikely to be used in EFL learning.

Speech Acts' Implication in Classroom Context

Reportedly, in the classroom, as Arani (2012) found out that excellent communicative competence is the effect or implication of using directives speech acts. The research also showed, particularly for two productive skills, students achieved high results in speaking and writing. From this study, it can be assumed that the use of the directives speech acts adds to

fostering productive abilities for students, which also helps to build communication skills for students.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, kinds of speech acts used by teacher in EFL classroom have been presented based on observation. The results reveal that there were five types of speech acts but only four speech acts used by the teacher namely assertive, directives, expressive, and commissive. The total of the utterances used by the teacher in the class is 213 utterances. Four categories have different portions in which directive speech acts as the most widely used ones, taking over 57.7% of the utterance because it is more comprehensible in classroom setting. The second widely categories is assertives speech acts for 31.9%. The expressives and commissives speech acts got low portions, namely 6.6% and 3.8% . The implication that can be drawn from the findings was that using directives speech acts which brings a lot of question, requesting, commanding provide to students' achievements, particularly in productive skills.

This condition is because many students are encouraged to answer the question by posing a lot of questions and maintain speaking. The choice of language and speech acts gave impacts not only for teaching and learning process but also for the teacher and the students. The recommendation is delivered for English teachers who are non native English speaker in which teaching EFL class is not a painless job. Teaching with instruction in foreign languages, however, may cause trouble and misunderstanding between teachers and students. Teachers are expected to train the students by exposing instruction in English so that directive speech acts is used on a regular basis, which will enable the students to speak more in EFL classroom.

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