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## A Pragmatic Study: The Illocutionary Acts Analysis Used by An English Instructor in West Java Indonesia

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### Abstract

The use of illocutionary act in EFL classroom that used by English instructor determines the course of teaching activity. The purposes of the research are to find out illocutionary act classification used by an English instructor in teaching, and the reason behind using each type by connecting with the teaching goals. This research was a case study involving an English instructor in teaching activity of EFL class. The findings of the research showed that the frequency of each classification found as the following: from 540 utterances, directive utterances was used 382 times which represent 71%, representative was used 65 times which represent 12%, expressive 78 times representing 14%, and commissive 15 times representing 3% . Directive speech acts were used mostly by English instructor. The use of directive illocutionary act apparently helped students to improve speaking skill. Besides, expressive act was a second dominant act. Giving many praising to students during teaching students would be motivated to learn and improved their speaking. Moreover, representative act and commissive act was the lowest act during teaching. It was because in speaking class, English instructor provided more opportunity to students to speak in English. Thus, this study gives the implication for teachers and instructor in using the illocutionary acts during teaching activity which it determines the teaching goals and constructing student's improvement. It was about how the instructor or teacher chose the use of their language in classroom that related with the main purposes of a class.

**Keywords:** *illocutionary act, directive, representative, expressive, declarative*

### INTRODUCTION

The important of English as a foreign language makes EFL teaching in Indonesia should be presented effectively. In this case, English teaching must be supported by the factor of successful English teachings such as teachers, students, curriculum, materials, and learning facilities (Wati, 2018). Related to that statement, the role of teacher especially their speech is the most important aspect. It is because teacher and their instruction in teaching activity determine the whole process of learning by connecting curriculum, material and student to present a teaching.

Basra & Thooyibah (2017) explained that the language used by the teacher determines the success of the English teaching and learning process. Teacher takes an important role in teaching activity in which teachers and students always involve in one communication during learning process. By involving teachers and students in one communication, the teacher can engage student, give some instruction, explanation, and other purposes to realize the aims of teaching. Nevertheless, communication between teachers and students in English as a foreign language class may lead to a misunderstanding. The students may have difficulties in interpreting teacher's instruction which delivered in English as a foreign language in Indonesia. As a result, the students will get trouble in understanding the materials being taught. This case proves that understanding pragmatic as a study of meaning based on the context in teacher talk is important to avoid misunderstanding and to reach teaching goals that may occur between teachers and students in teaching activity.

Pragmatics involves the use of speech act as one of the scopes of pragmatic to solve this case in English teaching in Indonesia. The speech act used in teacher talk determines teaching interaction to achieve teaching goals and student's improvement in a lesson. Basra & Thooyibah (2017) point out that applying speech act in teaching activity is based on the teaching approach that the teacher used for the lesson. In this case, the teacher must be able to use a suitable speech act in teaching such as in delivering instructions, explanations, engaging students, and other purposes to achieve a teaching goal. The example of utterances is found from pre-observation which conduct on August 12nd 2020: "Look at this one!". This utterance is categorized as directive illocutionary act. The other example also comes from the other research that has similar research in analysing types of illocutionary act in teaching activity. The first researcher is from Basra & Thooyibah (2017) that show the example of types of illocutionary act in teaching activity: "Uhhh... do you know, oh what is that? Other expression rather than saying fine?". This utterance is categorized as directive especially asking. This utterance shows that teacher tries to attract student's attention and train student's critical thinking by asking something. The other example comes from Andewi & Waziana (2019), the teacher said "Thank you for your attention", this utterance is categorized as expressive which means teacher thanked to students for giving the attention to teacher in English learning. By showing those examples, this study investigates speech acts performed by English instructor in the classroom in terms of speech acts classification.

This study contributes to the matter of speech acts specifically illocutionary acts analysis in English teaching in Indonesia. English teaching is not only extended in school as formal education but also it extends in English course as informal education. Both formal and informal English teaching have a same role in improving student's skill of English. It is considered that analysing the use of speech act used by an English instructor in a course will be beneficial to achieve the successful of English teaching in course as well. As a result, this study investigates the use of speech acts specifically illocutionary acts performed by an English instructor. It further explains the impact of using speech act in constructing teaching strategy and reaching teaching goals in a class.

The problem that can be formulated in this study as follow: (1) What are the types of illocutionary acts used by an English instructor? (2) What are the reasons behind the use of illocutionary acts in teaching activity?

## **METHOD**

This research employed by a qualitative research design, specifically a case study. It was because this research analysed the use of illocutionary act in teacher talk in an English course as a bounded system in social action. In a case study, the object of study is a bounded system in social action that involved individuals or entities with context Heigham & Croker (2009).

Furthermore, this research is categorized as phenomenological case study. Creswell (2007) explains that there is a combination of objective reality and individual experience in a phenomenon. Moreover, based on the size of the bounded case of this study, an instrumental case study is categorized for this study. Teacher talk is one bounded case of teaching activity as an issue becomes a concern of categorizing this case study. Creswell (2007) points out stakes theory that the researcher selects one bounded case of an issue as an instrumental case study.

In addition, using the triangulation of research methods can provide better understanding of a research problem than either research approach alone. Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting and involves a process of building a complex and holistic picture of the phenomenon of interest. Therefore, whereas in the research, the researcher tried to use methodological triangulation in order to reveal depth in research result. Qualitative research itself is an inquiry into an observation, audio-video recording and interview.

This research was conducted in Bright English Learning Course Tasikmalaya in September 5<sup>th</sup> 2020. One English instructor was participated in this research. The time required for observation was two times observations. Time required of observation depends on the data which the researcher will take the data until get the data bias. Cresswell (2007) points out that time required for observation is one or two times to gain some initial experience and engage in a pilot project.

The instruments of observation were concerned with the theory of illocutionary act towards English teaching in a course. Observation was conducted as first data collection. The researcher observed teaching activity as non- participant observation where the researcher did not involve in teaching activity. The observation was focused on the use of illocutionary acts in English instructor's utterances. The data was collected by using field notes during the teaching and learning process. Bassey (1999) believes that using notes to record the data during a classroom observation is an alternative way. The form of field notes was adapted from Cresswell (2012). The observation was highly expected to answer the first research question. Before the researcher conducted the observation, the written consent form was explained to the participant. So that, the interviewees were left in no doubt as to what would happen.

After having a look at the completed questionnaires which consisted mainly of open-ended questions, some responses needed to be clarified, so the next step of data collection was conducting structured interviews with the respondent to elicit more explanations. The question items in interview were adapted from Yin (2009). This research instrument consisted of five levels of questions that were integrated with research participant. Five levels of questions were specific interviewees, individual cases, the pattern of findings across multiple cases, normative question about policy recommendation and conclusion. Similar to the observation, the interview required the interviewee to clarify the use of illocutionary acts towards English teaching. The interviewee's responses were recorded in sound recorder of hand phone during the interview. The interview method was selected to offer deeper insights and additional information about the illocutionary acts in teacher talk and also to provide qualitative data for triangulation with the qualitative data. It was conducted at the same visit to the research site for data collection. The interviews were conducted after the researcher got the data result from analysing the data of observation. In conducting the interview, the interviewer explained to the respondent the purpose, scope, nature, and conduct of the interview.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher used data collection technique in the form of a questionnaire to find out data of students' motivation to learn English, while for data of students' English learning achievement used report cards. The questionnaire items used to measure students' motivation were adopted from the AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery) International Gardner research project. The sort of questionnaire with a view to be used in this study was a closed-ended questionnaire, the answers to every instrument item use a Likert scale.

### **Types of Illocutionary Acts Used by English Instructor in Teaching Activity**

The data findings concerned with the types of illocutionary act used by English instructor on teaching learning process. The theory classifies illocutionary act into five categories. They are representatives, expressive, directives, commissive and declarative. Based on the result of observation, the researcher found four types of illocutionary acts performed by English instructor. They are representatives, expressive, directives, and commissive which each type were divided into some categories to be more specific.

#### **a. Expressive Act**

Some statements such as pleasure, pain, like, dislike, joy or sorrow, praising are categorized as expressive (Yule, 1996). By referring to that theory, the researcher found 4 kind of expression act. They were welcoming, praising, thanking, and leaving.

#### **b. Commissive Act**

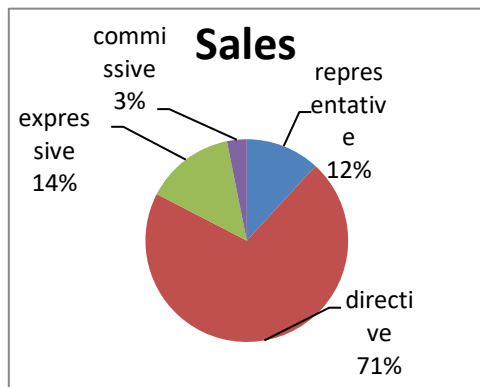
Commissive act has a purpose of communication to give a plan for the future actions. Commissive act contain a promise, threats, refusal, and pledges (Yule, 1996). There were 17 utterances can be categorized as commissive. The category of commissive act that found during teaching activity was promising.

#### **c. Representative Act**

The researcher found six kinds of representative act in teaching and learning process. They are confirming, explaining, concluding/stating, assuming, and claiming. There were 64 utterances which can be categorized as representative act.

#### **d. Directive Act**

There are only 4 types of directive act in data findings. They were asking, commanding, requesting and forbidding. The researcher found 382 utterances of directive illocutionary act. The figure 1 showed the amount of each illocutionary acts and percentage of types of illocutionary acts in teaching activity in two meetings. The figure 1 showed the percentage of each illocutionary acts in teaching activity. It showed the types of illocutionary acts from the high one until the low one.



**Figure 1. The percentages of illocutionary acts**

From the figure above, it can be seen that in 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting used 540 utterances of types of illocutionary acts. English instructor used four types of speech acts. They were expressive act, directive act, representative act, and commissive act. From 540 utterances, directive utterances were used 382 times which represent 71%, representative was used 64 times which represent 12%, expressive 77 times representing 14%, and commissive 17 times representing 3%. The researcher concluded that the most dominant types of speech act used by English instructor were directive illocutionary act.

### **The Reasons behind Using the Illocutionary Acts in Teaching Activity**

*Extract 1: "... kita harus membiasakan siswa untuk berbicara bahasa inggris karena yang utamanya speaking dengan membiasakan ini kan kita bisa dengan cara yang pertama bertanya memberikan kesempatan kepada murid murid untuk berbicara, mendengarkan atau menjelaskan materi kita atau kita menanyakan dan mereka bisa menjawab secara terbiasa. Nah selain memberikan pertanyaan atau memberikan materi kepada siswa saya juga sering menggunakan compliment atau memberikan pujian kepada siswa supaya si murid ini termotivasi untuk belajar bahasa Inggris".*

From the extract 1, the students frequently spoke English because the important one was speaking, it provided the students were able to ask and give an opportunity. Besides, the teacher usually used compliment or give a praising to students, because it made students motivated to learn English.

***Extract 2:** "... karena kan dengan pertanyaan secara tidak langsung membuat mereka enjoy untuk berbicara bukan menyuruh tapi kan menyuruh dengan bertanya berbeda, dengan bertanya kan membuat mereka lebih aktif, relax juga, enjoy juga. Terus dengan memberikan pertanyaan, kita juga mengasah critical thinking mereka gitu, iya untuk berbicara bahasa inggris".*

By questioning, it made students enjoy to speak. It did not request any question more active, relaxed, and enjoyable. Furthermore, by questioning, the teacher can train students' critical thinking in English speaking. It showed that the types of illocutionary acts divided into commissive, directives, assertive, expressive, and declaration. After conducting the research, the researcher found four types of speech acts performed by English instructor on English teaching learning process in beginner class, it was based on the observation on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2020. They were representative, expressive, directive, and commissive. After researcher analyzed the dialog in teaching and learning process in the classroom, the researcher did not find all of kinds of speech acts. Researcher only found 4 of 5 kinds of speech acts. In the first meeting and second meeting used 540 utterances of types of speech acts.

From 540 utterances of illocutionary act, directive act was used 382 times which represented 71%. Directive act was mostly performed by English instructor during teaching. It was because directives act applied to manage and control the activities during teaching and learning process. In this speaking class, the instructor often used question or asking to students about related materials which question or asking was one of directive act category. It gave the opportunity to students to speak and made English speaking became a habit in class. It made students became enjoy to speak English in class as well and train the critical thinking of students. Brown (2000) states that questioning strategies is an effective way to build stimulus of students. By using questioning strategies, teacher and students are involved in a communicative learning process. Questioning allowed the students to participate actively in the lesson. It was also beneficial to check the student's knowledge or comprehension as well as to promote the student's critical thinking. It implies that asking should be employed by the teacher during classroom communication practice. Moreover, Brown (2000) states that a good typical classroom interaction

is when a teacher allowed students to initiate language by asking question, giving direction and providing information. In this typical classroom, teacher train students to be active to speak and involved in a classroom conversation.

Expressive was used 77 times which represented 14%. Expressive was the second dominant illocutionary act used by English instructor in teaching and learning process. The most dominant expressive act was praising or compliment. The English instructor used praising words to give feedbacks of each student's achievement. Brown (2000) states that linguistic feedback of teacher determines students in EFL class. It indirectly will motivate students to speak and learn English in class. Even less, the students of this typical classroom which most of them were elementary students were very motivated by getting a praising from their instructor. By saying "*Good job*" to students will make them enjoyed to speak in English and being easy to be involved in learning activity well. Moreover, students in this class will be more respect to their instructor. They will be easy to be directed and respecting of each teacher's instruction. Harmer (1998) states that students who integrated by speaker/teacher's culture will be more highly motivated than students who motivate by language itself.

Representative was used 64 times which represent 12%. Representative act was in low percentage than expressive act. It was because in speaking class, the teacher minimized explaining many materials. The teacher only explained the material a little to give the example of describing a thing. In this speaking class, practicing was more important for students. Harmer (1998) argues that students need more practicing than teacher in class. Thus, the instructor should be aware to minimize TTT (Teacher talking time) and maximize STT (Students talking time). Even less, this speaking class had a goal to train speaking skill of students.

Commissive was used 17 times representing 3%. Commissive was rarely used by English instructor. She mostly expressed promising statement to the students, so the English teacher used it when the teacher promised to students to give a good score when the students do the best assignment or giving the activity that will be do in teaching activity. Then, commissive act was the lowest percentage than the other types. It was because commissive act was just used in a certain part of teaching such as in the beginning and the end of teaching.



## CONCLUSION

This research is concerned with the pragmatic analysis especially illocutionary acts analysis used by the English instructor in English course. By conducting this research, the researcher obtained the result that can be concluded as follows. Types of speech acts used by English instructor during teaching activity were only four types. They were directives, representative, expressive, and commissive. Declarative did not used by English instructor in teaching activity. Directive acts were 71%. It was mostly dominant type used by English instructor. The second was expressive acts which took 14%. The third was representative acts (12%) and the last was commissive acts (3%). Each type of illocutionary acts which were found in teaching activity used by English instructor was determine the purpose of the teaching itself. In which, this purpose was constructed indirectly from the interaction between teacher and students during teaching. Brown, (2000) also states that the genuine interaction in classroom is created from communication purposes. There was a relation between teacher talk and teaching goals which it will determine student's improvement as one of teaching purposes. As a result, language used by teacher or instructor took the most important part in realizing the effective teaching activity in classroom.

In speaking class, the instructor gave many opportunities for students to speak confidently and answer many questions to get more vocabulary and enjoy speaking in English. It answered the reason why directive acts was the most dominant. Basra & Thooyibah (2017) pointed out in this study that directive speech acts were used mostly by the teacher because the teacher adopts the principle of communicative language teaching. The other different reason came from Widya (2017). She stated that the frequent of directives indicates that the lecturer seemed to be aware of their status as a lecturer which is believed to be more powerful than her students. Furthermore, by giving many praising as expressive acts could be students' motivation to improve their learning. It could be a trigger to be better learner in classroom. While, representative acts and commissive acts was lower than directive and expressive act. It was because teacher in speaking class provide more opportunity for students to speak than listen the explanation.

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