



# Exploring Classroom Instruction in Online Speaking Classes: A Case Study of Telkom University Instructors

Shofa Dzulqodah<sup>(✉)</sup>, Qisti Triani, and Retno Hendryanti

Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia  
shofadz@telkomuniversity.ac.id

**Abstract.** This study investigates classroom instructions used by instructors in online speaking classes. The study employed a qualitative approach. Data were taken from 6 recorded class sessions of 2 instructors teaching engineering and communication science undergraduate students. In addition, the instructors were also interviewed. Content analysis was conducted to analyze the data. The study revealed that instructors used different types of sentences. They tended to use long phrases. They repeated the instructions in the paraphrased and shortened version. The use of Bahasa Indonesia was also found when the students did not get what to do. The results are used as consideration for designing a professional development program.

**Keywords:** instruction-giving · speaking class · coping strategies

## 1 Introduction

Covid-19 pandemic has changed almost every aspect of people's life including education. The outbreak has pushed schools to shift from offline to online learning using various apps like Google Meet or Zoom. Indonesia is no exception that in 2020, the Minister of Education and Culture instructed schools and universities to conduct online learning instead of the traditional one. This shift has affected teachers and students in various ways including their interaction that in the online setting it may be challenging as Bento et al. (2005) says. In Indonesia moreover, Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) point out that lack of students' participation and readiness to have online learning are among the things that the teachers complain about. This is mainly because online learning was not planned and prepared before. It happened suddenly to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia.

Aside from students' participation in online classes, instruction giving is an integral and vital part of learning processes. Instructions and their delivery can be the determining factors as to whether a lesson succeeds or fails (Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 1996 in Sowell, 2017). Sowell furthermore says that instruction is important yet almost always it is not included in teachers' training. Thus, both native and non-native teachers see this challenging. The online setting puts the situation in a more serious matter due to some

causes like the lack of motivation of students to respond to teachers. Chakraborty and Nafukho (2014) cite Allen and Seaman that attention, lack of motivation and challenges in the virtual learning environment are one of the issues complained by students.

In the theory of pragmatics, instruction giving belongs to the directive speech act since according to Yule (1996) directive is usually used to get someone to do something which covers commands, orders, requests, and suggestions. In the light of teaching and learning, directives, as mentioned by Holmes in Bao Ha and Wanphet (2016) are done in order for learning to take place. Furthermore, directives can be stated directly and indirectly. Yule elaborates that this directness is related to the forms and functions of the utterance. A speech act is considered direct where there is a direct relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance while the indirect one happens if there is indirect relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance.

Considering the aforementioned things regarding Covid-19 outbreak, online learning, instruction giving, and directive speech acts this study formulated the following research questions. Research questions: 1. How do EFL instructors formulate their instructions? and 2. How do instructors manage emerging problems towards instruction giving?

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Instruction Giving

Interactions in the learning process play an important part as mentioned by Bento and Schuster (2003) who observe that student participation in class discussions play an essential part in the teaching and learning process. These interactions may take different forms. Van Lier (1988 in Khoiriyah, 2018) show five patterns of classroom interaction; teacher/learner-learner teacher (T/L-LT), teacher-(learner) (T-(L), teacher-learner/learner (T-L/L), teacher-learner (T-L), and learner-teacher/(teacher) (L-T/(T). Giving instructions belongs to one of them and it also plays a vital part.

Considering its vital role in the teaching- learning process, instructions should be delivered effectively. Instruction-giving here as defined by Bao Ha and Wanpet (2016) is a type of teachers' talk where two parties communicate using communicative language either spoken or written. According to Ur (2009) the following are the guidelines in giving instructions. The first thing to do is preparing and making sure that the class is fully attentive, presenting the information more than once, being brief, illustrating with examples and getting feedback. Sowell (2017) adds that instructions need to be clear and concise by avoiding the wordy ones. Additional input such as drawing, and pictures are advisable. What is instructed should be modeled and extra linguistic devices to add meaning are used. Besides, instructions need to be broken out into some pieces if they consist of some stages. In instructing, teachers are to set the time limit for students, check students' understanding and avoid giving vague instructions.

### 2.2 Directive Speech Act

In the theory of pragmatics, instruction giving belongs to the directive speech act since according to Yule (1996) directive is usually used to get someone to do something

which covers commands, orders, requests, and suggestions. Furthermore, directives can be stated directly and indirectly. Yule elaborates that this directness is related to the forms and functions of the utterance. A speech act is considered direct where there is a direct relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance while the indirect one happens if there is indirect relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance. Pamungkas, Rustomo and Utanto (2018) state that the functions of the directive speech acts may include forcing, inviting, asking, ordering, charging, urging, begging, advising, suggesting, commanding, giving cues, challenging.

### 2.3 Context and Politeness

Pragmatics is highly related to context. Leech (1984) states that it involves the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said. In other words, it is said that pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning. There are several kinds of contexts to be considered in understanding the meaning of utterances uttered by speakers. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2003) state that in pragmatics there are two relevant contexts namely linguistic and situational. Other types of contexts are also stated by Cippolone (1998 in Dzulqodah 2018) namely epistemic and physical. Cutting (2002) mentions background of knowledge context and co-textual context.

Bussmann (1996) states that context refers to all elements of a communicative situation. It accounts for the verbal and non-verbal context, the context of the given speech situation and the social context of the relationship between the speaker and hearer. This brings the speaker-listener knowledge, and their attitudes. In an interaction of English-speaking contexts, the participants often have to determine, as they speak, the relative social distance between them, and hence their 'face wants'. This leads to politeness as stated by Yule (1996) that in an interaction, context can be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person's face. Politeness can be accomplished in situations of social distance or closeness including in online class. Showing awareness for another person's face when that other seems socially distant is often described in terms of respect or deference. It might be found in a student's question to his teacher.

## 3 Methods

The study made use of a qualitative method considering that the data are texts. Fraenkell and Wallen (1990) mention that this approach is compatible with texts and images taken from a small number of individuals. Since the data were only a small number of individuals, case study was employed since according to Creswell (2014) it is an in-depth analysis of one or more cases. The data were 6 recorded meetings of 2 instructors of the Language Center of Telkom University teaching the freshmen of international class in a program called ESyP (English Synergy Program). It offers a seven-meeting course called Presenting Data in English (PDE). The program does not have any credit load yet may add their academic activity point (TAK) as one of the graduation requirements and give them a chance to improve their English in the context of academics which hopefully assists their presentation in class. Additionally, Creswell (1994) points out that in its process, qualitative research involves emerging questions and procedures.

The data are collected in the participant setting. It is inductive in process and it highly involves researcher's interpretation of the data meaning.

This research mainly follows the steps of analysis suggested by Creswell (2016). The first step done was organizing and preparing the data for the analysis through transcribing and reading to get the general sense of the data. The analysis step was started with coding in which some labels are assigned to the data in the same conceptual group. In this study, the data are coded with the following specifications namely **interrogative, imperative, giving suggestion, please, nominating, prohibition, and declarative**. In the coping column words like **paraphrasing, repetition** and **use of L1** can also be found.

After coding, categorization is done to draw a conceptual pattern. Based on the previous explanation, the categorization of the data is based on the type of sentences used in giving instructions namely declarative, interrogative, and imperative along with the details of each variation. The next step is interpretation and presentation. The data is presented by the order of the research questions.

## 4 Findings and Discussion

### 4.1 Finding and Discussion Regarding How Instructors Formulate Their Instructions

The finding regarding how instructors formulate their instructions is presented in the following table and the discussion may Table 1.

The two Tables 1 and 2 both similarities and differences of instructions formulated by the instructors. The similarities come from variations of the form of instruction since they did not only use imperative but also other forms like positive declarative, positive declarative with modal (can, may and have to) and interrogative either in Y/N or WH. In both classes, instructors also use nominating or directly asking specific students to answer certain questions which are combined with different kinds of forms.

In instruction giving formulation, the main difference of both instructors lie on the combination of the forms. In I1 class, instructions were dominated by imperative, followed by declarative and interrogative with the presentation of 59.9%, 43.1% and 6% respectively. However, a different tendency can be seen in I2 class: the instructions were

**Table 1.** Frequency of Instruction Giving Formulation by Instruction 1 (I1)

Instructor 1 (I1) Instruction forms		
Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative
Declarative (9)	Interrogative (5)	Imperative (16)
Declarative + non (1)	Interrogative +	Imperative + non (1)
Declarative with modal 'can' (20)	nom(2)	Prohibition (1)
Declarative with modal 'may' (3)		Giving suggestion (21)
Declarative with 'have to' (17)		Imperative with 'please' (18)
		please only (2)
50 (43,1%)	7 (6%)	59 (50,9%)

**Table 2.** Frequency of Instruction Giving Formulation by Instruction 2 (I2)

Instructor 2 (I2) Instruction forms		
Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative
Declarative (40)	Interrogative (26)	Imperative (19)
Declarative nom (5)	Incomplete interrogative (9)	Prohibition (9)
Declarative with modal ‘can’ (52)	Interrogative with ‘please’(4)	Giving suggestion (11)
Declarative with modal ‘may’ (6)		please only (2)
Declarative with modal ‘may + nom’ (1)		
Declarative with ‘have to’ (9)		
Incomplete declarative (2)		
Negative declarative (1)		
116 (59,1%)	39 (19,9%)	41 (20,9%)

dominated by declarative, imperative and interrogative with the percentage of 59.9%, 20.9% and 19, 9% respectively. There was a slight difference between the statements used by the instructors. I2 used more varied statements than the I1 and negative statements and incomplete statements were only found in I2 transcription. The use of the word ‘please’ was also distinctive since I1 attached it more to imperatives yet the other attached it more to interrogatives.

From the data shown above, it can be concluded I2 used more indirect directives. It is confirmed with the interview that the instructor used them to uphold the value of politeness and when asked why it is used, the instructor believed that politeness is a thing that should be shown through example. Although I1’s instructions were mainly in the form of imperatives, the exact forms used were giving suggestions and imperatives with the word ‘please’. In the interview, the instructor said that this is done for politeness and to soften the instruction.

Below are some excerpts demonstrating how various sentences are used to perform instruction giving.

**4.1.1 Imperatives in I1 and I2 Class**

Excerpt 1. I1 instruction giving in imperative

Nofrizal also if you have finished submitting the form, **then get ready for your Presentation, choose one of these cases...**

Excerpt 2. I2 instruction giving in imperative

There are 4 questions ya. **Make note of the answer and then after that you're gonna do hmm discussion about this** on this class. So I'll give you around...

#### 4.1.2 Declarative in I1 and I2 Class

Excerpt 3. I1 instruction giving in declarative sentence

*Then you have to choose which one, that you think is quite easy. This one. Both of them is not easy but try to find the easier one to describe. OK. **I will give you about 10 minutes to prepare for the presentation, to prepare ya.. presenting this data....***

Excerpt 4. I2 instruction giving in declarative sentence

...There will be five graphs and chart here. **You can pick one and you can also prepare it for around 5 minutes and if you need more time that's okay. ....You're gonna deliver a presentation from the opening to the closing one by one in a zoom meeting..**

#### 4.1.3 Interrogative in I1 and I2 Class

Excerpt 5. I1 instruction giving in interrogative sentence

*Okay Thank you Nofrizal for doing the presentation really well and the last but not least, we have Adinda here so Adinda, **Are you ready now?***

Excerpt 6. I2 instruction giving in interrogative sentence

That's the first video. What can you get from the video? **Can someone give an opinion?**

Excerpt 1 and 2 demonstrate the use of imperative sentences in giving instruction since the relation between the form and the function is direct. However, Excerpt 3 and 4 are in the form of statements yet the meaning the speakers tried to convey is imperative. So as mentioned by Yule (1996) that the indirect speech act happens if there is an indirect relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance. It can be concluded from the context that both instructors were giving a task instruction and setting the time. These sentences can be paraphrased into **“Choose the one that you think is easy and prepare it in 10 min”** and **“Pick one and prepare it for around 5 min, tell me if you need more time and deliver the presentation from the opening to closing”**. Excerpt 5 and 6 are no different that the question **“Are you ready”** and **“Can someone give an opinion”** are other words for **“Start now”** and **“Anybody, share your opinion”**.

**4.2 Find and Discussion Regarding How Instructors Manage Emerging Problems Towards Instruction Giving**

The finding regarding how instructors manage emerging problems towards instruction giving is presented in the following table and the discussion may Table 3.

When giving instruction, kinds of responses expected were verbal, non- verbal (doing) and taking notes on some important points about presentation like the do’s and the don’ts in the presentation. From the I1, it is observed that there were not many instances of coping strategy in the effort of getting the response of the students. On some occasions it is observed that after not getting any response from the students, some questions in the exercises were answered by the instructor. There was not enough waiting time. Meanwhile, as suggested by Rowe in Kelly (2020) extending waiting time results in encouraging students to take risks. Different things could be seen in the I2 class since more efforts were done to involve students in the discussion. Besides performing some coping strategy when getting no response, group work and competition were observed to be present and they students to engage. As mentioned earlier, the dynamic interaction of both classes is different. This might be because the students in I2 class come from the same major/ class yet the ones in the other class come from different classes. Additionally, this program applied an open schedule in which students may choose any classes

**Table 3.** Instructors managing problems strategy and their number of occurrence

<b>Instructor 1 Coping Strategy</b>	<b>Instructor 2 Coping Strategy</b>
Repeating (7)	Paraphrasing (3)
Paraphrasing (1)	Repeating + complementary information (10)
Nominating (4)	repeating + giving examples (1)
Use of L1 (5)	Nominating (1)
	Use of L1 (1)

with their schedule thus it was possible that what was seen on the video was their first encounter.

In terms of coping strategy used when there were no verbal responses given by students both instructors use repetition, paraphrasing and the use of L1. Besides in the situation in which no responses were found, these coping strategies were also found when there were questions from students to clarify what they had to do in certain tasks. In terms of coping strategy used by both instructors, they use repetition, paraphrasing, nominating and sometimes use their L1. However, it is also spotted that in repeating or paraphrasing, I2 tend to give more details and examples, but I1 did not do so. I2 also confirmed his students' understanding of the instructions before the students performed the task, and I1 did not do as much as he did. However, when the instructor did not get any expected response, they did the following.

#### 4.2.1 Repetition

<i>First statement</i>	<i>Expected Response</i>	<i>Actual response</i>	<i>Coping strategy</i>	<i>Second Statement</i>
Excerpt 7. I1 coping with student's response by repeating				
<b>So number 1, what is the graph about?...So what is the graph about?</b>	answer directly/ write something	no response, off cam	Repeating the question	Okay, is there anyone of you who would like to try to answer <b>what is this graph about?</b>
Excerpt 8. I2 Coping with student's response by repetition				
<b>It's up to you</b> actually as long as it is related the question....	Answer directly	Answer directly	Repeating the instruction	<b>It's up to you.</b> Which one is more comfortable...

Excerpt 8 is the example of repetition done by the instructors when getting no response. In Excerpt 7, the instructor repeated the instruction but still not getting the expected response thus it ended up with the instructor answering the question. However, excerpt 8 shows the repetition done by the other instructor and it resulted in the students responding to him by clarifying her understanding.

### 4.2.2 Paraphrasing

<i>First statement</i>	<i>Expected Response</i>	<i>Actual response</i>	<i>Coping strategy</i>	<i>Second Statement</i>
Excerpt 9. I1 Coping with student's response by paraphrasing				
Yeah. But I will give you about, I will give you about 10 min, <b>10 min to prepare for the presentation.</b>	Action: preparing the presentation	Cannot be seen	paraphrase (positive statement-imperative)	....Please be please <b>be ready in time in the next 10 min.</b>
Excerpt 10. I2 Coping with student's response by paraphrasing				
Look at the charts/graphs below then <b>practice a 3-min opening of a presentation in a formal or informal situation...</b>	Start preparing	No Response	Paraphrase in different sentence type (positive statement-imperative)	<b>Make an introduction of this or from this chart an opening in formal or informal.</b>

Excerpts 9 and 10 demonstrate how the instructors performed paraphrasing when they got no responses from the students. It is obvious here that both try to convey the same meaning but with different forms of wordings. These two actions done by the instructors resulted in the success of the instruction in the form of action expected by them.

### 4.2.3 Nominating

<i>First statement</i>	<i>Expected Response</i>	<i>Actual response</i>	<i>Coping strategy</i>	<i>Second Statement</i>
Excerpt 11. I1 Coping with student's response by nominating				
... I hope Rifqy and Tazkia are ready. Who's going to be the first?	Verbal	No response, off cam	Repeating + nominating	Tazkia or Rizky, Yo sapa duluan? Tazkia dulu Rifki dulu?
Excerpt 12. I2 Cope with student's response by nominating				
It's not correct. Gustav, would you like to try?	Verbal	No response	<i>Repeating the question</i>	Gustav, are you gonna try?

Nominating or calling out students' names to answer the question is done to give students a chance to speak as stated in [https://teknologic.wordpress.com/\(2016\)](https://teknologic.wordpress.com/(2016)) that nominating may give chances for students to speak.

#### 4.2.4 Use of L1

<i>First statement</i>	<i>Expected Response</i>	<i>Actual response</i>	<i>Coping strategy</i>	<i>Second Statement</i>
Excerpt 13. I1 Coping with student's response in using of L1				
...Let's try to make some sentences related to the graph...	No verbal response, in the middle of explanation	No response	Use L1	<b>Kemudian ada lagi yang mau bikin kalimat dengan pola yang ini?</b> Meanwhile, ya kita bisa meanwhile...
Excerpt 14. I2 Coping with student's response in nominating				
Okay. We're gonna move to the next. We're gonna do listening..... <b>Can you access mooc?</b>	Action and verbal response	No Verbal response	Use L1	Bisa diakses ga mooc nya?

In the excerpt above, the instruction is rephrased but in L1 (Bahasa Indonesia). The use of Bahasa is observed after there was no response found from the students. These two excerpts resulted in the success of the instruction since after they were rephrased in Bahasa, the students responded.

## 5 Conclusion and Suggestion

From the study, it can be concluded that both instructors used direct and indirect directives in giving instructions. The use of directive with the word 'please' and the indirect ones were made in order to be more polite. In terms of strategies used by the two instructors in coping with no response from the students, repeating, paraphrasing, nominating and use of L1 were found.

The suggestions of this research are aimed at the institution and instructors in general. For the institution, the result of this research shows that there are some issues in instruction given by the instructors. First, the institution may want to consider giving a special training for instructors related to instruction giving in an online setting. Second, a periodic observation and feedback should be given in order to maintain the teaching and learning quality. Additionally, Instructors in the institution and in general may want to plan the instructions that are going to be used in the class. Besides, learn from various sources to maintain and enhance their quality of teaching is advisable. This in turn, hopefully enhances the learning quality of students.

**Acknowledgments.** The authors would like to express their gratitude to those who have contributed and supported the completion of this research.

**Authors' Contributions.** Shofa Dzulqodah: Wrote the paper, collected and analyzed the data. Qisti Triani: Wrote the paper, collected and analyzed the data. Retno Hendryanti: Designed the research questions and table for data analysis.

## References

- Bento, R., Brownstein, B., Kemery, E., & Zacur, S. R. (2005). A taxonomy of participation in online courses. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning (TLC)*, 2(12).
- Bussmann, H. (1996). *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics* (K. Kazzazi, & G. Trauth, Eds.) (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203980057>
- Chakraborty, M., & Nafukho, F. M. (2014). Strengthening student engagement: What do students want in online courses? *European Journal of Training and Development*, 38(9), 782–802.
- Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach* (4th ed.). Sage Publications, Inc
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Cutting, Joan. 2002. *Pragmatics and Discourse*. London: Routledge.
- Dawan, S. (2020, January 20). *Online learning: A panacea in the time of ... - sage journals*. Retrieved April 26, 2022. from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0047239520934018>
- Dzulqodah, S. (2018). *Flouting Implicature of the Three Women Activists' Speeches at the Women's March 2017*. (Tesis, Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung, Indonesia).
- Fraenkel, Jack R. And Norman E. Wallen. (2009). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*. New York. McGraw-Hill Companies
- Fromkin, Victoria, Robert Rodman & Nina Hyams. 2003. *An Introduction to Language, 7th Edition*. Thomson Wadsworth.
- Kelly, M (2020). *Wait Time in Education*. Thought.Co. Retrieved from: <https://www.thoughtco.com/importance-of-wait-time-8405>
- Khoiriyah, A (2018). *Classroom Interaction In English Speaking Class: A Naturalistic Study At English One Course Surakarta*. (Skripsi, Universitas Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia)
- Nomination Card Giving Students a Chance to Speak. Technologic Wordpress. (2016). Retrieved from: <https://teknologic.wordpress.com/2016/03/29/nomination-cards-giving-students-a-chance-to-speak/>
- Pamungkas, B. T., Rustono, R., & Utanto, Y. (2018). The Function of Directive Speech Acts in Gamal Komandoko's Indonesian Archipelago Folklore Text. *Journal of Primary Education*, 7(2).
- Sowell, J. (2017). *Good instruction-giving in the second-language ... - ed*. Retrieved April 26, 2022, from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1156495.pdf>.
- Ur, P. (2009). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice of Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

