

Investigating Speech Act and Politeness in Classroom Interaction

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Abstract—This present study focuses on the way of teachers' communication in learning and teaching in classroom with their student. This study is grounded on speech act theory by Searle and the principle of mutual consideration by Aziz. The aim of this study is to investigate the types and functions of speech act in classroom interaction and to identify the principles of politeness delivered by the teachers. The qualitative approach and descriptive analysis are employed in this research. The data are spontaneous conversation between teacher and student in an elementary school in Karawang, collected through recording and documentation. The findings showed that the dominant type of speech acts used by teachers to their students in conversation is assertive and the main principle is favor principle. These results are consistent with the role of the teacher as a main influencer and educator for students' psychological development.

Keywords—*politeness; classroom interaction; speech act; teacher*

I. INTRODUCTION

Language education is one of the important aspects in the development of students' character due to language is an essential tool to educate the students. However, students' education is commonly related to teacher role. The teacher should understand the procedure of language teaching in order to give a good perception and understanding depending on students' level. The problem happening around teaching and learning is teacher's utterances in communicating with the students. Many teachers consciously interact impolitely with their students. It caused gradually influence students' psychology affecting their utterance and attitude. Problematically, the language acquisition of students can be broken when it is careless involved their parent around the social environment since baby new born. In this case, alternatively solving, the teacher must stimulate the student to interact about positive utterance. The positive utterance between teacher and student frequently creates a positive students' psychology too because it can truly influence the character of student's cognition.

Good education needs good communication, as one of requirements to build students' character. In addition, it almost covered in schools regarding curriculum of 2013 that require a good characteristic as main requirement of students' assessment. The students who have a good character is usually

tend to have higher possibility to get a high score in their school. Otherwise, the students who have a bad attitude will get lower score in their score.

Previously, speech act and politeness have already been studied in many researches. For instance, Vaughan and Clancy contributed in parent's impact to the children's language development [1]. Specifically, the stages of language development of American immigrant that pragmatically can be influenced by mother and children interaction pattern [2]. Hasibuan classified both of speech act and politeness in Mandailing language adopted from Searle [3,4]. Further, many researchers explicated about speech act in requesting, apologizing, claiming, appreciating, and thanking. Whereas, from all of studies aforementioned, it is still rare which involves the teacher and students' interaction in classroom activity as a gap within the research.

Therefore, in this current research, the researcher will enthusiastically investigate more specific analysis of speech act and politeness in teacher-student interaction such as in school are instead their classroom. Mainly, the research objectives in this study are to investigate speech act and politeness occurring in teachers' interaction and its responses.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Teachers' Speech Act

Searle and Bosco et.al. clarified that speech act in pragmatic covered a certain action through words such as requesting, thanking, rejecting, greeting, appreciating, apologizing, and complaining [4,5]. In line with Terkourafi quoted Brown and Levinson that speech act is sentence product to state in order the speaker intention is recognized by hearer [6,7].

Regarding to this study, the argumentations stated by Bosco et.al. and Terkourafi became the relevant foundation for traditional communication in the school because requesting, thanking, rejecting, greeting, appreciating, apologizing, and complaining are general theme of interaction among teacher and students [6,7]. In this context of teacher and student interaction, the students tend to be far in achieving high cognitive stage, thus they will be more as hearer [8]. The student position also tends to be passive in giving entry point

that communication that involves teacher and student, the speech act of teacher is more dominant and can be called essential in stimulating students' language acquisition.

B. Politeness Principles

The literature foundation about politeness principles is created by Aziz named the principle of mutual consideration (PMC) that explicated as follows [9].

- To your hearer, use the language that exactly its language can be happy to hear if it is used by other to you, and otherwise.
- To your hearer, do not use the language that surely you do not like it if anyone used it to you

Furthermore, Aziz classified the principles of mutual consideration (PMC) namely [9]:

- Harm and favour principle; it means that a language expression has a potential which will be able to make someone harm and favour. Therefore, you should be careful in using when it is used.
- Shared feeling principle; it means that our utterance has a feeling as we feel it. Therefore, when you interact by using language expression, try to think hearer feeling as you feel in hearer position.
- Prima facie principle; it means that our hearer assessment to language politeness level is basically desired by prima facie from our utterance when we communicate in first time. Therefore, show to the hearer that we have good intention to make cooperative and communicative with him/her.
- Continuity principle; it means that our relationship should be continuity with hearer in future, essentially is determined by our way in interacting through communication at that time. Therefore, attempt to design a strong belief feeling.

In this study, the principles of mutual consideration (PMC) by Aziz used to help the analysis about politeness pattern or the principles of teacher utterance to student based on PMC because it is the most appropriate study related to the context of Indonesia [9].

III. METHOD

This present study uses qualitative approach while the researcher uses descriptive method. Moleong delineated that qualitative approach is called as naturalistic research. Its method is chosen due to describe explicitly the object happening in the field as the data [10]. The data is taken spontaneously from the utterances of teacher and student interaction during learning and teaching. As a sample, the participant only involves one class containing 30 students and one teacher in the 3rd grade of elementary school. In this case, the interaction is noted, documented, and focused on teachers' utterances. Further, the researcher analyzed based on kinds of directive, expressive, assertive, declarative, and commissive. The situation naturally occurred in the utterances of teacher and

student in classroom. The data is observed from the resources and directly recorded while having a note to complete the data.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Types of Speech Act

The result showed that kinds of speech act dominantly used by teacher is assertive or representative aiming to state and explain. Moreover, it is followed by directive which used to instruct and expressive is to appreciate. Here is the result of the study explicitly showed in the table 1.

TABLE I. TYPES OF SPEECH ACT

No.	Kinds of Speech Act	Total	%
1	Assertive/ Representative (stating, describing)	24	46,15
2	Directive (instructing)	12	23,08
3	Expressive (appreciating)	8	15,38
4	Commissive (offering)	5	9,62
5	Declarative (prohibiting)	3	5,77
TOTAL		53	100

A tendentious dominant of assertive which aiming to state and explain can be understood depending on teacher role that gives many suggestions to the students. The following below is the examples of this case.

1. *Lauk eta téh asalna tina kali.* [The fish is coming from the river.]
2. *Upami seer maca ngapalkeun, éngké bakal rengking hiji.* [If you read and study more, your will get the first rank.]

Further, it is about directive relatively aiming to instruct. This kind also can be understood by students' cognition of elementary school which have not many inspired well.

3. *Candak heula eta buku!* [bring the book, first!]
4. *Tulis heula!* [write first!]

In the expressive case, the strong function is appreciating. Regarding to the context of teacher and student, it is a part of teacher role to give reward of students' achievement and can be understood as the way of teacher to revitalize students' struggle.

5. *Budak eta mah pinter.* [that boy is clever]
6. *Enggal da bageur.* [hurry, (you) are so kind]

Furthermore, kind of commissive that only relatively concerns to offer. It shows that teacher does the role as educator which always guides and inspires the students.

7. *Uwih nya?* [go home, ok?]
8. *Bade jajan, moal?* [want to buy, not?]

In other cases, it seemingly shows that declarative utterances aiming to prohibit. In this kind, the teacher roles to determine what is available to do and counterpart by students.

9. *Teu kenging kaluar kelas.* [do not go out from the class]
10. *Eusian na anu leureus.* [answer it correctly]

The relationship between teacher and student is always connected each other in the interaction containing their psychology. Therefore, the teacher and student will open their selves within the conversation. This shows frequently that the use of assertive is meant to state and deliver something.

Moreover, the other side of communication that provided by teacher is the activeness of instructing function. From that occasion, the teacher instructs the student to do something because the students are as the opposite of speaker which still tends to have a high dependence to their teacher. Lastly, commissive and declarative are meant as teacher care to save and love his students.

B. Politeness Principles

The result showed that, from 53 utterances made by teacher, there were not the infraction of consideration principles. Otherwise, there are several infractions indicated shared feeling principle. In this study, the prima facie principle tends to be ignored, regarding to the teacher and student always meet in school every day in interaction. Moreover, the continuity principle is not really influenced because the students still have a low cognition scale and they tend to depend on their teacher. Table 2 below concludes the finding result completely.

TABLE II. THE ACCURACY OF UTTERANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF MUTUAL CONSIDERATION

No.	Accuracy	Utterance total	%
1	The accuracy with the fourth principle	42	79,25
2	Violating harm and favour principle	8	15,09
3	Violating shared feeling principle	3	5,66
4	Violating prima facie principle	0	0
5	Violating continuity principle	0	0
TOTAL		53	100

From table 2, it can be seen that teacher utterance is generally so polite due to the accuracy with the fourth principle in PMC. Otherwise, there are quite significant numbers in violating through one of the principles such as harm and favour principle. For instance (11) and (12) the following below showed that the violating of principle.

- 11. *Jang, atuh naha make bohong?* [boy, why do you try to lie?]
- 12. *Bodo pisan maneh mah!* [so stupid, you are!]

Examples (11) and (12) are indicated as the violating harm and favour principle because the utterances are potentially to hurt the student feeling as hearer. Furthermore, the student has still low initiative and cognition, then they only do and depend on what the teacher says or instruct.

In the other cases, the violating also happens in the violating of shared feeling principle, such as the examples here.

- 13. *Piceun sadayana ka tong sampah!* [throw all away to the trash bag]
- 14. *Tos gera caricing!* [enough, be silent!]

As noted, the example of (13) is delivered when the students brought their toy and played it in their class, but unfortunately, they did not care the teacher instruction to put it in the bag. Example (13) assumed as a violating shared feeling principle because in this case, the teacher did not feel what the student’s feeling but the teacher directly ordered to throw away the toy to the trash bag. On the other hand, the teacher actually had other alternative to solve the case without violating the shared feeling principle such as giving a time to put the toy in his bag or give an option to the students to choose throwing the toy away or putting into the bag.

While the example of (14) represented in learning situation. The teacher wanted to explain the material but the student still was noisy. This utterance also indicated like violating shared feeling principle because it seemingly happened in the example (13). The teacher actually gave other ways to deliver the utterance even though the teacher wants to instruct for making silent in the class.

V. CONCLUSION

From the result analysis, it can be concluded that kinds of speech act appearing in the utterances of teacher to student are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. The teacher utterance is dominated by commissive aiming to offer and declarative aiming to prohibit. This result is appropriate with teacher’s role as the one who gives the influence of students’ development such as politeness, cognition, and etc.

The teacher’s politeness in their speech act to the student is seemingly dominant and commonly fulfills all of principle in PMC. Otherwise, there are the harm and favour principle and shared feeling principle that still has significant violating. This is the case that needs to be more concerned regarded to the student as the hearer by violating in this result.

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