

Illocutionary Speech Act Used in Online Classroom Via Zoom Meeting by the Teacher and Students

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Abstract

The urgency of this research lies in the fact that Illocutionary Speech Acts used in online classrooms via Zoom meetings by teachers and students need to be understood to improve the effectiveness of virtual learning communication. This study examines illocutionary speech acts used by teachers and students in online classrooms conducted through Zoom meetings. The research is important because online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic changed classroom communication patterns and influenced how teachers and students interacted virtually. Understanding speech acts in online classrooms can help improve communication effectiveness in digital learning environments. This study applied a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative analysis. The population of the study consisted of utterances produced by teachers and students in an online classroom video uploaded on YouTube. The sample was selected purposively from a 57-minute online classroom interaction involving ninth-grade students. The research instrument was a transcription sheet based on the video subtitles. Data were collected through observation, watching the video repeatedly, transcribing the utterances, and classifying the data based on Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary speech acts. The data were analyzed quantitatively by calculating the percentage of each speech act type and qualitatively by interpreting the functions of the utterances in the classroom context. The findings revealed that all five types of illocutionary speech acts were found in the online classroom interaction: assertive (50%), directive (34%), declarative (8%), expressive (6.9%), and commissive (1.1%). The study implies that assertive and directive speech acts play dominant roles in maintaining interaction and delivering information in online learning. In conclusion, online classroom communication through Zoom meetings involves various illocutionary speech acts, with assertive speech acts being the most frequently used by teachers and students.

Keywords: *Speech Act, Illocutionary, Online Classroom, Zoom Meeting*

Introduction

Learning is the process through which people gain knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and experience in order to improve their understanding and abilities (Khalil & Elkhider, 2021). Humans have the ability to learn and to develop and also to share what they have learnt (Zhou & Brown, 2022). In the educational process, communication plays an important role because knowledge transfer between teachers and students occurs through interaction (Mercer et al., 2023). Language becomes the primary tool used in classroom communication to deliver ideas, instructions, explanations, and responses (Walsh & Mann, 2021). Without effective language use, the learning process may not run successfully (Sato & Loewen, 2022). Language is not only used to convey information but also to perform actions through utterances (Taguchi, 2023). Therefore, every utterance produced by speakers in classroom interaction contains meanings and intentions beyond the literal words (Ren & Han, 2024).

Understanding of how categorization uses available memory systems will improve our understanding of a basic human skill, leading to better insights into cognitive changes. This ability is what makes humans and this what differs them from any other creatures in this world. The result of learning is to make someone experienced, change the behaviour and increase the potential to improve the performance. It can be learning about something that exist in the past or learning about something new. Humans learn in every step of their life by many different ways. Learning is a hypothetical construct: it cannot be directly observed, but only inferred from observable behaviour. They may at the beginning learn by imitating people around them --like how a baby learn to speak then moving to the step where they can by themselves do some experimental process to gain information either through a formal-school or even through the environment surrounding them.

Language can be considered as one important tool in learning. Language is involve speaker, the listener and context (Mangngemba et al., 2025). When talking about learning from human (teacher) to human (student), most (if not all) of its processes will need language as a tool to send the information (Zulfa, 2018). Language is the unique thing that human has. Language is a communication tool used by everyone in their daily life as a means to convey information and arguments to others. as a tool of communication, language employs sounds, symbols, or gestures to express feeling and to deliver utterances. The utterances that the speakers produce in communication contain deeper sense than the actual meaning of the words or phrases themselves, Thus, as the result of these expression, one is expected to understand Linguistics concerned with the nature of language and communication. It deals both with the study of particular languages, and the search for general properties common to all languages or large groups of languages (Della, 2018).

Speaking is one of languages used. By speaking, people not only presence a sentence but also performing an act when saying those utterances. speaking is one of the most aspects of language learning. It occurs in every verbal communication that when people uttered something in various way of speaking, they actually perform some act that they expected to be received and to be understood by their interlocutors in exactly the same meaning as what they intended to be. The study of aspect of language that requires reference to the users of the language then led to a very natural, pragmatics is the field of linguistic which points out speech utterance (Latifah, 2026).

Speech act is a part of pragmatics. Pragmatics is the study of how more get communicated than is said, Concerned with the way in which language can be used. Speech act includes promising, apologizing, informing, refusing or greeting. The three kinds of speech act. They are locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. Locutionary act is the actual word of the message. It is also called as the act of saying something. Illocutionary act is the act of doing something. It is what the speaker means to convey while uttering the utterances. Perlocutionary act is the hearer's reaction to speaker's message. It is related to the effect that expected to be occur in hearer's action after hearing the utterances. The previous studies said that speech act is a complete language unit that consists of skills and components. It is part of language skill for it is spoken and uttered (Siritman, 2020).

Illocutionary is found in the utterance, people not just saying something but what is done in uttering the word is actually delivering their intention through the message of those utterances. The illocutionary into five. Those are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative. Assertive is speech act used to convey or commit the speaker to a particular idea. It can be true or false. Assertive force is illocutionary acts that is uttered to express a

statement related to reality (Faturrohman, 2021). It can also be defined as an utterance that shows speaker's assumption about the world. Types of assertive are statement, description, classification, expressing opinion, brag or claim. Directive is used by the speaker to get someone to do something with the aim to produce an effect to listener. Performing speech acts with directive force means that the speaker wants to get someone to do something (Basra & Thoyyibah, 2017).

Types of directive speech act are wondering, commanding, begging, praying and suggesting. Commissive speech act is committing a speaker to some voluntary action or it makes the speakers commits what they said. Types of commissive are promises, guarantees, vows and contracts. Expressive speech act is an act of showing the speakers feeling. Types of expressive speech act are thanking, congratulating, praising, and blaming. Declarative is an act that change the world by uttering something. It can bring a change to some situation, such as firing, punishing and hiring.

In learning processes, especially what are found in classroom, teacher and students are undoubtedly produce some illocutionary acts. Stated that the most significant thing in speech act is the message that speaker wants to convey (Tutuarima, 2018). It means when using language is not only produces a sentence but also perform an action. Those in which can be produce with no obstacle when it comes to the face-to-face learning process. However, nowadays, world has to face a pandemic. After The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the pandemic of Corona Virus Disease (or more known as Covid -19) on 11 march 2020, many sectors in this world have been affected. Educational sector is by no exception is the sector that has to make a lot of change as the effort to adjust with Covid-19.

During the pandemic, school all across the world have been shut. Students and teachers should stay at home to prevent the spread of Covid-19. The only way is to change the learning method. It is by using the digital platform. The method that obviously will not be the same when compared to the classroom meeting. Based on this explanation, the researcher is interested to do a research about Illocutionary speech act used in online classroom via zoom meeting by the teacher and students to examine how this study method influence the illocutionary act produce in the learning process.

Several previous studies have discussed speech acts in classroom interaction. Teacher talk in EFL classrooms and found that directive speech acts were frequently used by teachers to manage classroom activities and encourage student participation (Basra & Thoyyibah, 2017). Similarly, investigated teacher talk from a speech act perspective and revealed that assertive and directive speech acts dominated classroom communication because teachers often provided explanations and instructions to students (Faturrochman et al., 2021). Another study focused on lecturers' speech acts during online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic and showed that online interaction influenced the way lecturers delivered commands, confirmations, and responses in virtual classrooms (Mardiningsih et al., 2020).

In addition, speech acts in movie dialogues and emphasized that context strongly influences the interpretation of utterances (Tutuarima et al., 2018). Studied assertive illocutionary acts in political speeches and found that assertive acts were commonly used to express beliefs, claims, and opinions (Ramadhani et al., 2019). Lecturers' directive speech acts in online pragmatic studies and found that directive utterances such as commands, requests, invitations, and questions frequently appeared during Zoom-based learning interaction (Suputra et al., 2022).

However, the study mainly focused on directive speech acts produced by lecturers, while the present study investigates all types of illocutionary speech acts produced by both teachers and students in online classrooms. Although these studies provide important contributions to pragmatics and speech act analysis, most previous research mainly focused on offline classrooms, movie scripts, political speeches, or general online learning communication. Only a few studies specifically examined illocutionary speech acts used by both teachers and students in online classroom interaction through Zoom meetings.

Furthermore, previous studies generally focused on identifying speech act types without discussing how online classroom situations influence the occurrence of specific speech acts. The interaction in virtual classrooms has unique characteristics such as screen-sharing instructions, mute and unmute commands, checking internet connectivity, and managing students' participation remotely. These communication patterns rarely appear in conventional classroom interaction. Therefore, research on illocutionary speech acts in online learning contexts is still limited and requires further investigation.

The present study attempts to fill this research gap by analyzing illocutionary speech acts produced by teachers and students in an online classroom conducted through Zoom Meeting. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on teacher talk or offline interaction, this study examines both teacher and student utterances in virtual classroom communication. In addition, this study highlights speech acts that specifically emerge in online learning environments, particularly those related to digital classroom interaction during the Covid-19 pandemic. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the communication patterns that appear uniquely in online classrooms and in its combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis to identify the frequency and functions of illocutionary speech acts.

Method

This study employed a mixed-method research design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Mixed-method research integrates quantitative and qualitative data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem. The quantitative approach was used to calculate the frequency and percentage of illocutionary speech acts found in the online classroom interaction, while the qualitative approach was used to interpret and explain the functions and meanings of the utterances in their contextual use.

The population of this study consisted of all utterances produced by the teacher and students during an online classroom interaction conducted through Zoom Meeting. The sample of the study was selected purposively from a YouTube video containing a ninth-grade online English classroom meeting with a duration of 57 minutes and 21 seconds. Purposive sampling was used because the selected video provided complete interaction between the teacher and students and contained sufficient data related to illocutionary speech acts.

The main research instrument in this study was an observation and transcription sheet used to identify and classify utterances based on taxonomy of illocutionary speech acts (Searle, 1969). The researcher also used documentation techniques by downloading and observing the classroom video repeatedly to ensure data accuracy. The instrument focused on identifying five types of illocutionary speech acts, namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative acts.

The data collection process was conducted through several steps. First, the researcher selected an online classroom video from YouTube as the research object. Second, the

researcher watched the video repeatedly to understand the interaction context between the teacher and students. Third, the researcher transcribed all utterances based on the subtitles and spoken interaction in the video. Fourth, the researcher identified and classified each utterance into categories of illocutionary speech acts according to Searle's theory. Finally, the researcher calculated the frequency of each type of speech act and interpreted the functions of the utterances qualitatively.

To ensure the validity and feasibility of the data, the researcher applied expert validation through consultation with academic supervisors who examined the classification and interpretation of the utterances. The validation process aimed to ensure that the categorization of speech acts was appropriate and consistent with pragmatic theory. In addition, triangulation techniques were applied by repeatedly reviewing the video, transcription results, and data classification in order to minimize interpretation errors and improve data credibility. The quantitative data were analyzed using percentage calculation techniques to determine the frequency of each illocutionary speech act type. The calculation used the following formula:

$$P = N/F \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage

F = Frequency of each speech act type

N = Total number of utterances

The results of the percentage calculation were then categorized into dominant and less dominant speech acts based on the frequency of occurrence. Meanwhile, the qualitative data were analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques. The researcher interpreted the meaning, function, and context of each utterance to explain how illocutionary speech acts were used in online classroom interaction.

Results

Illocutionary Act Produced by Teacher and Students

Based on the data analysis, the researcher found that all five types of illocutionary speech acts proposed in Searle (1969) are produced by the teacher and students during the online classroom interaction. There are 550 utterances identified in the video. The occurrence of each type of illocutionary act is presented in the following table:

Table 1. *Data percentage of illocutionary act found in the video*

Speech Act	Percentage
Assertive	50%
Directive	34%
Commissive	1,1%
Expressive	6,9%
Declarative	8%
Total	100%

From the table above, it can be seen that the utterances produced in the video are dominated by assertive Force. 275 utterances or 50% from the total of the utterances in the video are found to be assertive. In the second place is directive force that gain 34% of the total utterances produced by the speakers. The third place is declarative force that gain 8% of the total utterance. Next is expressive force, 6,9%, almost the same number with declarative force.

The least occur illocutionary act found in the video is commissive force with 1,1% from the total of utterances produced by the teacher and student in the video.

Discussion

Assertive Illocutionary Act

Assertive illocutionary acts were the most frequently used speech acts in the online classroom interaction. Assertive speech acts are utterances used by speakers to express beliefs, opinions, statements, or information considered to be true (Searle, 1969). In this study, most assertive utterances were produced by the teacher while explaining learning materials and providing information to students during the Zoom meeting.

This finding is in line with the another study, which found that assertive speech acts are commonly used to express statements and convey information (Ramadhani et al., 2019). Similarly, previous studied revealed that assertive speech acts frequently appear in classroom interaction because teachers play a dominant role in explaining lessons and delivering knowledge to students (Faturrochman et al., 2021). Therefore, most of the utterances are informing act which belong to assertive force. The teacher informing the believes about the topic to the students. One of the functions of speech act is to convey information to others. For example:

Teacher: "This morning discussion, I'd like to share screen to you. A short power point presentation because it also contains example".

From the the utterance above shows that the teacher informs students about the learning activity and the use of screen-sharing features in online learning. This type of utterance reflects the informational function of assertive speech acts. In addition, the use of expressions such as "share screen" demonstrates communication patterns that specifically appear in online learning environments. The dominance of assertive speech acts in this research indicates that online classroom interaction still prioritizes information delivery despite the transition from face-to-face learning to digital platforms.

Directive Illocutionary Act

The second most occur illocutionary act is belonged to directive force. Directive illocutionary act is uttered to have the hearer of the utterance to do something. According to John Searle (1969), directive speech acts are utterances intended to make listeners perform certain actions. In this study, directive acts were mostly used by the teacher to instruct students, ask questions, and maintain classroom interaction during the Zoom meeting

In the video, this act is used mostly by the teacher to engage students to participate in class discussion. The data show that the teacher frequently ask question to the students after finishing one explanation. It can also be seen that the teacher often to ask question to one particular students by pointing or calling their name before or after raising a question directly. It appeared to be the strategy to get all the students to be ready to answer the question at any time their name got called by.

Moreover, calling or pointing a particular student may avoid the students to speak at the same time in the meeting, one that may become a big trouble in an online class. In face-to-face meeting it is very common to hear a teacher to raised question then waiting for any students to volunteer in answering the question. However, it is not found in this online class. The reason probably laid in the trouble caused when no one volunteer then the class being so silent or the

vice versa, when many students volunteer and the teacher has to pick one student. It will become no problem when it is an offline class because the teacher can clearly see every student, but in an online class meeting it may be a little difficult to see all students while also presenting the shared screen material. This finding supports the previous studies, which found that directive speech acts are frequently used by teachers to control classroom activities and encourage student participation (Basra & Thoyyibah, 2017). Similarly, the another study who found that assertive and directive speech acts frequently occurred in online classroom discussion because participants actively exchanged information and managed interaction during virtual learning activities (Madina, 2022).

Aside from the directive illocutionary act that is raised for the class discussion, the researcher also found some directive force that raised due to the bad internet connection during the meeting. The speaker used directive force to check or to recall if the reader still following the explanation. For example, in the video sometimes these utterances are appeared:

Teacher: "is it you, Ben?"

Teacher: "Jade, can you hear me jade?"

Teacher: "again, again, sorry Natalia"

Teacher: "you have muted yourself, try to unmute yourself Natalia"

Teacher; "hello, hello Jamie"

These utterances are commonly found in the video. They are mostly uttered by the teacher when the teacher got no response from the students for some shorts of time after raising a question or giving a direction. In one example above, there is also a term that is only used in the online class. That is "mute/unmute yourself". In online class, there is a tool that can be used to turn on/off the audio of the participants during the meeting. In some cases, some participants may forget to turn on their audio while trying to deliver their speech. In that case the teacher asked the students to turn it on first before continue their turn by saying "unmute yourself".

The findings indicate that online learning environments require teachers to frequently use directive speech acts in order to maintain interaction, solve technical problems, and monitor student participation effectively.

Declarative illocutionary act

Declarative illocutionary act is the next highest number of accuracy in the video. However, the number is contrast differ from the previous two types. Speech acts are utterances that can change a situation or confirm a condition directly through speech.

In this study, declarative acts were mostly used by the teacher to confirm students' responses or validate classroom communication. This finding is related to the another study, which explained that teachers in online classrooms often use confirmation expressions to maintain interaction and ensure mutual understanding between speakers and listeners (Mardiningsih et al., 2020). Some examples of these are:

Teacher: "yeah, it happened in Italy, correct"

Teacher: "It's tumma, correct"

Student: "Yes sir" (as a response to question "Jade, can you hear me, Jade?")

These utterances function as confirmation and validation of students' responses. In online learning contexts, confirmation becomes important because limited face-to-face interaction may create misunderstandings during communication.

Expressive illocutionary act

Expressive illocutionary act is found in the video in the beginning and the ending part of the lecture and also in the discussion session. In the beginning and the ending part of the meeting, greeting and thanking is normally used by the speakers to start and to close the meeting. In the discussion session, expression of thinking, accepting, and apologizing are uttered by the speaker to express their feeling. The illocutionary goal of expressiveness is to express the psychological state about some affairs. By expressiveness, the speaker should express his psychological state about some affairs. Typical cases are when the speaker curses, praises, confesses, or congratulates, the listener.

In this study, expressive speech acts appeared mostly during greetings, apologies, and spontaneous reactions during the online classroom interaction. This finding supports the previous studies, who stated that context strongly influences the use of speech acts in communication (Tutuarima et al., 2018). Some examples in the video are:

Student: "umm"

Teacher: "tomorrow, ow not tomorrow"

Teacher: "I have, wait, okay"

Teacher: "I don't know but for some reason, Trixley, something's not right with
the audio from there, sorry"

Teacher: "I'll try calling someone else right now, okay, okay"

These utterances show expressions of apology and confusion caused by technical problems during online learning. The findings suggest that expressive speech acts play an important role in maintaining interpersonal relationships and communication comfort in virtual classrooms.

Commissive illocutionary act

Commissive illocutionary act is the least frequent type found type in the study. Searle (1969) stated that commissive speech acts commit speakers to future actions, such as promises, hopes, or intentions.

This finding is similar to another study, who found that through speech acts, speakers choose ways of expressing themselves based on their objectives toward their hearers such as to believe, accept, or do something (Mahmud, 2019). Example in the data include:

Teacher: "just to make, make it short really. Really make it short"

Teacher: "I try to calling another one"

Teacher: "I hope that's clear with everybody"

Teacher: "hopefully you will not stutter or that you will not read it ignoring
thought units"

Teacher: "I hope everybody got that part"

Teacher: "time check is 8:59 I hope everybody can still 8:29 I hope everybody can still hear
me"

These utterances indicate the teacher's intention and expectation regarding classroom interaction. However, commissive acts appeared less frequently because the online classroom interaction was more instructional than transactional.

Conclusion

This study investigated the types of illocutionary speech acts used by teachers and students in an online classroom conducted through Zoom Meeting. Based on the findings, all five types of illocutionary speech acts proposed by Searle (1969) were identified in the classroom interaction, namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech acts. Among 550 utterances analyzed, assertive speech acts were the most dominant with 50%, followed by directive speech acts with 34%, declarative speech acts with 8%, expressive speech acts with 6.9%, and commissive speech acts with 1.1%. These findings confirm that the objectives of this study were successfully achieved, namely identifying the types of illocutionary speech acts and determining the most frequently used speech acts in online classroom interaction. The findings imply that online learning environments require teachers to use assertive and directive speech acts more frequently in order to deliver information, manage classroom interaction, and overcome technical communication barriers during virtual learning. In addition, this study revealed several communication expressions that specifically emerged in online learning contexts, such as "share screen" and "unmute yourself."

However, this study was limited to one online classroom video involving ninth-grade students, so the findings cannot fully represent all online learning situations. Therefore, future researchers are recommended to analyze larger data sources, different educational levels, or other digital learning platforms in order to obtain broader and more comprehensive findings regarding speech acts in online communication.

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