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Editorial Note

The Volume 21, 2020 of *Liwuram: Journal of the Humanities* received over 90 essays. They went through thorough editorial mill and 64 essays and creative works in the genres of poetry, drama and prose (short stories) were found publishable. This number of essays is considered too much for one volume, hence the board's decision to have two numbers for the volume 21, No 1, 2020 and Volume 21, No 2, 2020. Perhaps this is the first time in the history of the journal that this high level of subscription is received. Interestingly the spread of subscriptions in terms of institutional affiliations of the contributors and subject areas is quite impressive. They cut across over forty different institutions, home and abroad, and core subject areas in the humanities. This is a positive and welcome reflection of the popularity *Liwuram* now enjoys among scholars and researchers in Nigeria and offshore. It is our desire to sustain this tempo and improve upon the present achievement.

We wish to genuinely acknowledge the support of the Dean of Arts, Professor Mohammed Aminu Muazu, the Editorial Board, individually and collectively, the last two editors of the journal – Professors Sheriff Bosoma and Abubakar Abanga, and our very critically thorough reviewers/assessors, which accounted for the birth of this current volume in two numbers. We are indeed very grateful. *Liwuram* can only get better.

Welcome to a delicious meal of scholarship. Enjoy it and get enriched.

Professor Sunday Enessi Ododo, *fsonta*, FNAL
Editor-in-Chief

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A SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS OF SELECTED STUDENT-LECTURER CONVERSATIONS IN ENGLISH IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN

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Abstract

In every social and linguistic intercourse, an act is performed which has a positive or negative reaction on either of the interlocutors. Sometimes, the outcomes of these discourses are resultant effects of the social variables of relative power and social distance that exists between the participants. Undoubtedly, discourse which exists in the context of the academic milieu exhibits such phenomena. Hence, this paper investigates the functional significance of acts performed via language and the communicative goal of such actions in lecturer-student conversations in the University of Ilorin. Using Searle's (1969/1975) taxonomy of Illocutionary acts as a benchmark, thirty oral discourses which were recorded and selected between lecturers and students from various strategic locations on the campus are transcribed and analysed qualitatively and quantitatively to underline the directness and indirectness of the acts in the conversations. It is observed that the desire to be polite usually necessitates indirectness in the conversations especially by the students whose utterances exhibit preponderant use of indirect speech acts of directives. A major reason is to present their requests so as not to appear impolite towards the lecturers. In contrast to the students' utterances, the lecturers' utterances demonstrate more of direct speech acts directives which involve rebuking, asserting and requesting in order to get the students to have something done to their benefits among other grounds. The study concludes that the acts used by the interlocutors are tacitly guided by differences in power and social distance.

Keywords: Speech acts; Searle; Power; Social distance; Lecturer-student

Introduction

Communication is the major use for which man employs language. It is the most pervasive characteristics of human existence. A speaker uses language to communicate his ideas and feelings. Hence, successful communication in any communicative event is highly dependent on inferring the function of what is said by considering its form and context as well as maintaining harmonious relationship between participants. One of such discourse situations is the academic milieu where communication proliferates in all its spheres-amongst and between lecturers, students, non academic staff, etc. The

transmission of knowledge and morality is the sole purpose of a university and it is mostly achieved through the interactions between students and lecturers, who are the principal actors in a university system. Such student-lecturer interactions are used to perform certain actions for either of the interlocutors to achieve her/his communicative goal. A speech act provides a means of establishing the function of what is being said; an utterance that serves a function of communication. J.L. Austin (1962) states that speech acts are performed when we offer an apology make a request, condemn an action, make a complaint, etc.

Thus, this paper is premised on the functional use of language for the purpose of communication in teacher-student conversations in the University of Ilorin, by identifying and analysing the speech acts used by these key interlocutors with regards to social relationship of power and social distance as well as relate these acts in relation to the context in which it is made.

Literature Review

The Concept of Pragmatics

Recent perception of pragmatics seems to take off from the often cited definition of Morris (1938, p.6) who views pragmatics as "the study of the relation of signs to interpreters". His definition is rather considered, in modern linguistic terminologies, as relating message to language users. It is worthy of note that certain linguistic behaviours are imposed on language users by the society. This social dictate in language use is captured by Mey (1993, p.6) that pragmatics is a field of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of the society. Unlike in semantics where meaning may be limited to what individual lexical items in the utterance mean, meaning in pragmatics has to do with the analysis of what people do by their utterances. Hence, pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning (Yule 1996, p.1).

The conception of pragmatics as described above, as well as other definitions as numerous as there are linguist and philosophers, has necessitated the introduction of principles and theories to explain how meaning is conveyed and interpreted by speakers and hearers respectively. These principles include, among others, speech act theory, cooperative principle, politeness theory, pragmatic acts. Each of these principles and theories are directly relevant to pragmatics especially that of speech acts theory which informs the functional use of language in communication.

Speech Acts

Speech act has been one of the basic ingredients of pragmatics over the years (Verschueren, 1999, p. 22). J.L. Austin (1962) brought the concept into limelight through his work, *How to do things with words*. He states that, in every utterance an individual makes, he performs an action through it. This act is known as speech acts. Austin classified speech acts into five namely: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, expositives and behavitives. Further classification of speech acts, are what Austin refers to as locutionary acts, illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts.

Leech (1983, p.176) is of the opinion that locutionary act is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference. Grundy (2008, p.74) following Austin (1962) asserts that performing a locutionary act is uttering a sentence with a determinate sense that is, making a meaningful utterance and reference. This therefore means that locutionary act is an act of stating an actual utterance and its supposed meaning. Illocutionary acts are the acts performed by the speaker to create an effect on the hearer. In other words, it has to do with performing an act by uttering a sentence. The intention is found in the illocutionary force. According to Osisanwo (2008, p. 64), perlocutionary acts result from a language user's utterance and a product of the hearer's interpretation. It could be the intended or unintended consequence of a reaction to what is said.

Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

In interpersonal communication, directness is a sign of familiarity and closeness while indirectness is taken as a tact or lack of closeness and usually signals distance and denotes power. Indirect speech acts are frequent when the person of a low social status addresses a person of a higher social status. The observation of politeness often results in the speaker's use of indirect speech acts. Olanrewaju (2013, p.141) notes that indirect speech act is an essential aspect of speech acts in our daily discourse. It is a veritable tool in the maintenance of social cohesion between the speaker and hearer because it carries an element of politeness.

Yule (1996, p. 54) observes that indirect speech acts occur whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function. For example, could you open the window? (Interrogative used for a command hence, it is an indirect speech act.) In other words, it does not require a verbal response or answer but actions. Such interrogatives are normally understood as requests, thus, they are said to be indirect speech acts, and as such they are generally associated with politeness in English than direct speech acts. This is in tandem, with Searle (1979, p.41) who maintains that, the term 'indirect speech act' in traditional literature refers to utterances in which one says one thing and means another illocution with different propositional content.

Saeed (2009, p.241) states that the conventionally expected function is known as the direct speech act and the extra actual function is termed the indirect speech act. Saeed (2009) also citing Searle (1975) asserts that, speakers do indeed have access to both. He termed the direct use the literal use of the speech act and the indirect, the non literal use.

Thomas (1995, p. 119) explains that indirectness occurs when there is a mismatch between the expressed meaning and the implied meaning. For example, a man walks into a bar and utters to a receptionist 'can I have a bottle of beer, please?' the expressed meaning of the utterance is that the man enquires whether he could be permitted to take a bottle of beer. In this case, he is asking a question which demands a 'yes' or 'no' answer. This implied meaning at another level is 'serve me a bottle of beer' which means making a request. The mismatch in the meanings gives rise to indirectness. Thomas (1995) enumerates types of consideration likely to govern pragmatic choices in any language, which are:

1. The relative power of the speaker over the hearer
2. The social distance between the speaker and the hearer
3. The degree to which x is rated an imposition in culture y
4. Relative rights and obligation between speaker and hearer.

The application of these vary from culture to culture (p. 124).

It is thus evident that, indirect speech acts exists in most human interaction. The emphasis is shifting from how language users interpret the indirectness of pragmatic meaning to why indirectness is used at all. Thomas (1995) provides reason to the latter question.

1. The desire to make one's language interesting
2. To increase the force of one's message
3. Competing goals
4. Politeness/ regard for face

(p. 143).

Theoretical Underpinning

This section discusses the theoretical thrusts that underlie the study.

Searle's (1969/1975/1979) Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts

Austin's classification has served as the bedrock of speech acts classification of the other classifications of speech acts that came after it, namely: Searle (1969), Bach and Harnish (1979) Allan (1994), Mey (2001). The theory cannot be said to be devoid of flaws. Searle points out that, Austin's classifications of illocutionary acts do not contain illocutionary force but are rather, classifications of English illocutionary verbs. He further asserts that Austin's taxonomy was not constructed based on a clear or consistent principle or set of principles. Thus, as a reaction to these flaws, Searle points out five taxonomies with the view to filling the gaps he observed in Austin's classification.

Representatives: Which commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition paradigm cases include, asserting, concluding, etc.

Directives: Which are attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something paradigm cases include requesting, questioning, etc.

Commissives: Commit the speaker to a future course of action. Paradigm cases include promising, vowing, covenant, etc.

Expressives: Express a psychological state. Paradigm cases include, thanking, apologizing, welcoming, congratulating, etc.

Declarations: Which effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions. Paradigm cases include declaring, war, christening, marrying, firing from employment, etc.

Leech (1983, p.177) states that Searle's theory is more successful and systematic than Austin's. This is because the strength of his theory lies in his blending of the crucial aspect of Grice's intentional theory of meaning with Austin's conventional theory of speech act.

Power Relation and Social Distance

Communication takes place in various categories where it is often the case that one discourse participant has greater status and greater power in interaction. It is thus, required that one speaks to others in the light of their relationship to oneself. In other words, we are inclined to speak to our social equals differently than those whose status is higher or lower than our own. For example, using inappropriate linguistic choices such as the imperatives 'Stop talking' or 'shut the door' by a Student to a Superior e.g. a lecturer may be considered rude and disciplinary actions will be taken on such student.

As Thomas (1995) submits that the relative power of the speaker over the hearer and the social distance between the speaker and the hearer are some of the considerations likely to govern pragmatic choices in any language. Brown and Levinson's (1978) also incorporate power and distance in their Politeness theory. It is thus integral to say that that power commands respect and formality and predict the level of politeness required in a particular context which in turn has an effect of the speaker's word choices. Reflecting on this, Palmer (1981, pp. 62-63) states that power involves the asymmetric relations of being older than, parent of, employer of, richer than, the other. Salifu (2008, p. 279) also opines that 'power' reflects relative superior status, social distance, unfamiliarity, and deference.

In essence, the person who is highly placed gets the subordinate to act or move in a particular or desired direction also referred to as power in social influential situations. French and Raven (1959) define social power as the ability of an agent to bring about a change in the belief, attitude or behaviour of a person or the target of influence using available resources. The two authorities propounded five bases of power which are: legitimate power, referent power, expert power, reward power and coercive power. Agustina & cayhono (2016) adapt these bases of power to campus-based discourse in their study of Indonesian learners and lecturers in EFL classroom interactions. They explain that the legitimate power refers to the authority attributed to the teacher for his or her position as the teacher or instructor. Generating commanding utterances directly or indirectly can also be considered as legitimate power. Referent power refers to the interpersonal relationship between two parties, the teacher and the students. The practice of referent power in utterances is normally initiated by a question, can be a request to random students. Expert power refers to the notion that the teacher is the most competent and knowledgeable person in the classroom. With this power, a teacher is free to deliver the materials for his or her students without restraints. The expected result of using this power is cognitive developments of the students. Reward power refers to the teacher's capability to give rewards for the student. The reinforcement is provided for students who meet the teacher's expectation. The coercive power is the opposite of reward power; it refers to the teacher's ability to

...give punishment for the students. This power enables teacher to threaten or punish students who do not meet the teacher's expectation.

Methodology

The data for this study consists of thirty randomly selected fragments of conversations of lecturer/student (postgraduate and undergraduate students) in the University of North. The data are sourced from a combination of formal and informal settings: classrooms, lecturers' offices, school cafeterias, boardrooms, telephone conversations and other strategic locations where conversations between the interlocutors often occur. The conversations were recorded and later transcribed into written form and then applicable chunks were extracted from each conversational token for the researcher's use to authenticate the area research.

Searle's illocutionary speech act classification is employed to the analysis of the data by identifying the communicative goals of lecturers' and students' utterances in the conversations in relation to directness and indirectness of their acts as well as relating these acts to the context they are made. How power exercise affects these choice of acts is also assessed by employing Agustina & cayhono (2016) theory of five bases of power and supported by the three main mood systems of English which are traditionally referred to as interrogative, imperative and declarative/statement.

The application of Searle's taxonomy is premised on the fact that its strength lies in the ability to blend the crucial aspects of Grice's intentional theory of meaning with Austin's conventional theory of speech act (Leech, 1983, p.177).

Data Analysis and Discussion

The data analysis is presented via quantitative and qualitative means. The study adopts the use of tables for the quantitative analysis. Each of these tables presents the number of occurrences and equivalent percentages of direct and indirect acts used in the analysis of the data which frames up our discussion and findings. Due to space constraint, the data are analysed qualitatively using ten sample extracts which represents one-third of the total data in the table.

Qualitative Analysis

Conversation 1

Conversational event (A lecture room: Some students who were late pleaded to be allowed inside the class room. Hence, the lecturer asked the students that were already in the class room thus :)

Lecturer: Should we allow them in?

Students: Yes sir.

Lecturer: **Direct-Directives** (Requesting/suggesting). The lecturer makes use of referent power to request from the students if they should allow their colleagues (the late offenders) in.

Students: **Direct-Representatives** (asserting). The students affirm their support to allow them in. their affirmative response is as a result of willing transfer of power by undermining the lecturer.

Indirect Speech Acts

Student: **Indirect- Expressive** (convincing/apologising). The students try to convince and apologise to the lecturer to admit them into the class without regard for an earlier instruction that late comers would not be allowed to enter the class.

Lecturer-No indirect speech act is identified in the lecturer's utterance.

Conversation 2

Conversational event: (In the office of a lecturer, the lecturer had just commenced the marking of her students' test scripts numbering about 100 while her colleague in the same office was busy reading. Then, a student entered into the office unannounced. The following conversation ensued between the lecturer marking the scripts and the student:)

Student: I can see that you have a lot to do ma but...

Lecturer: Get out.

(student gets out)

Direct Speech Acts

Student: **Direct- Representative** (asserting). The student states to the lecturer that it is obvious that she has a lot to do.

Lecturer: **Direct- (ordering)**. The lecturer orders the student out of her office by the use of the imperative, 'get out'. There is a demonstration of legitimate power towards the student. The lecturer is more powerful and has a greater command by giving a control. The student getting out shows that he is compelled to respond due to the power play and context.

Indirect Speech acts

Student: **indirect- Expressive** (empathising). The student indicates empathy towards the lecturer's busy agenda in preparation for his demand.

Lecturer: **indirect-Directive** (reprimanding). The lecturer reprimands the student for his misconduct.

Conversation 3

Conversational event (A lecturer's office: the following were some of the extracts of a conversation between a lecturer and a student in his office)

Lecturer: (Hands out some amount of money to the student) Kindly, get me a bottle of coke and toast bread at the staff common room.
Student: Alright sir. (Hurries out)

Direct Speech Acts

Lecturer- Direct-Directives (Requesting). The lecturer requests from the student to help him go on an errand. The utterance is an order. However, the imposition of the request is mitigated by the use of the adverb, 'kindly'. Referent power is exhibited in the lecturer's request as it seeks to appeal to the student's reasoning which resulted in the student's response and subsequent action to quickly attend to the lecturer's needs.

Student- Direct- Representative (accepting/offering). The student is compliant in his utterance which indicates his acceptance to go on the errand.

Indirect Speech Acts Unidentified in both of the interlocutors' utterances.

Conversation 4

Conversational event (A lecturer's office: a student knocks and enters the office shared by three lecturers two of which are absent. The following conversation ensued between the student and the lecturer present :)

Student: Good morning ma, I am looking for that mummy that sits on that chair.

Lecturer: There is no mummy that sits on that chair, when you know whom who you are looking for, you call back.

Direct Speech Acts

Student- direct-Representative (asserting). The student states to the lecturer her intention of seeking for a lecturer in the office.

Lecturer- direct-Representative (asserting). The lecturer asserts the fact that there is no one called mummy who sits on the chair.

Indirect Speech Acts

Student-Indirect- directives (requesting). The student indirectly requests from the lecturer the whereabouts of the lecturer she seeks. In the Nigerian context, the endearment 'mummy' is used for an elderly female to show respect. This is wrongly used by the student in the wrong context to accord respect to her lecturer.

Lecturer-Indirect- directives (rebuking). The lecturer indirectly reprimands the student's inappropriateness through the use of legitimate power. The lecturer's response is a statement of the fact there is no 'mummy' in the said office but the intended act is to caution the student of the wrong use of endearment to refer to her lecturer hence, instructing (ordering) her to call back.

Conversation 5

Conversational event (A lecturer's office: A knocks and enters the office and the following conversation ensued between the student and a lecturer)

Student: Good afternoon ma.

Lecturer: (shouts angrily) Yes! yes!!, yes!!!

Student: (Silence).

Direct Speech Acts

Student- direct- expressive (greeting). The student addressed the lecturer courteously in the conventional way.

Lecturer-direct- representative (affirming). The lecturer's response affirms the student's greeting.

Indirect Speech Acts

Student- unidentified.

Lecturer-indirect- directives (requesting, ordering). The exclamations imply an order. Through the use of legitimate power, the lecturer requests by ordering from the student what he wants as it is obvious that he needs something from the lecturer. As a result of this, the student should not waste her time with unnecessary salutations. Wrong timing could have also resulted in the lecturer's outburst.

Conversation 6

Conversational event (An examination hall: an examination in progress)

Lecturer: I guess you all seated on this row are writing ENG 103?

Students: Yes sir.

Lecturer: Your time is up, bring your papers forward or else you will mark it yourself, at the count of 1! 2!! 3!!! 4!!!!

Students: (Rush to submit their scripts to the lecturer).

Direct Speech Acts

In the lecturer's first utterance, the direct speech act discerned is that of representatives with the sub act (stating). The lecturer merely states his presumption that the students are writing Eng 103 paper. The lecturer's second utterance demonstrates legitimate power as it exhibits the general acts of directives and commissives. The lecturer first of all "orders" (directives) the students to submit their scripts and then goes ahead to "threaten" (commissive) that they will mark their scripts themselves if they fail to comply with the directive. The subsequent act of the student rushing to submit their scripts shows their compliance to the lecturer's directive.

Students- Direct- Representative (affirming). The student affirms in response to the lecturer that they are indeed writing the said examination.

Indirect Speech Acts

In the lecturer's first utterance, he questions the students if they are actually writing Eng 103 exam since he is not sure. He implicitly interrogates in form of a declarative sentence. Thus, the general act used is 'directives' with the sub act: (interrogating/questioning).

Student - Unidentified.

Conversation 7

Conversational event (A telephone conversation between a lecturer and a student:)

Student: Good day ma.

Lecturer: Good day.

Student: I don't know if we can have the Eng 307 class at 2-4pm on Monday.

Lecturer: It is okay.

Direct Speech Acts

Student- direct- representative (informing). The student informs the lecturer that she doesn't know if they can have the lecture at the said time.

Lecturer- direct- representative-(affirming). The lecturer understands the student's utterance as being a request to the said lecture hour and date, thus her affirmation in her response to indicate approval. The lecturer's response is an endorsement to the student's request as the student seeks for her endorsement due to her position as the teacher and instructor in the classroom.

Indirect Speech Acts

Student- indirect-directive (requesting). The student requests from the lecturer if 2-4pm chosen as the lecture hour as well as the date will be convenient for her.

Lecturer- indirect speech acts is unidentified in the lecturer's utterance.

Conversation 8

Conversational event (A student knocks on a lecturer's office door and he is summoned in)

Student: Good afternoon ma.

Lecturer: Afternoon.

Student: The HOD asked you to see her.

Direct Speech Acts

Two instances of direct speech acts are evident in the student's utterances. In the first utterance, the student uses 'expressive' to (greet) the lecturer which is a conventional way of addressing the lecturer courteously. In the second utterance, the student makes use of 'directives' to (inform) the lecturer of the HOD's request.

Lecturer- direct- expressive (greeting). The lecturer responds to the student's greeting.

Indirect Speech Acts

Lecturer -indirect- directive (soliciting). The lecturer indirectly solicits from the student on his mission to her office.

Student- indirect speech act is unidentified in the student's utterance.

Conversation 9

Conversational event (Outside a lecturer's office serving as a lecture class; students await the lecturer to summon them in)

Lecturer: You can all come in, its time.

(The students go in; meanwhile a student leaves the door open)

Lecturer: My AC.

(The student is perplexed not quite getting the message)

Lecturer: The breeze is going out.

Student: Oh, sorry! (Shuts the door).

Direct Speech Acts

Three utterances are made by the lecturer. In the first utterance, the lecturer makes use of 'directive' to (invite) the students to his office for the lecture. The lecturer in the second utterance uses the general act of 'representative' to (state) his possession to the student, which is the AC. The same general act in utterance two but different sub act of (informing) is identified in the third utterance; the lecturer informs the student that the breeze is going out.

Student- direct- expressive (empathising, apologising). Empathy is indicated in the student's exclamation of 'oh!' followed by an apology for leaving the door open.

Indirect Speech Act

Lecturer-indirect-directive (requesting). The lecturer employs legitimate power to indirectly request that the student to shut the door. The act is face-saving to mitigate the imposition on the student.

Students: indirect speech act is unidentified in the students' utterances.

Conversation 10

Conversational event (lecturer to students at the end of a lecture)

Lecturer: Thank you, thank you, and thank you.

Direct Speech Act

Lecturer- direct- expressive (thanking). The lecturer thanks the students.

Indirect speech Act

Lecturer-indirect-directive (requesting). An exercise of legitimate power is portrayed. The lecturer implicitly requests that the students leave his office as the lecture has already been concluded.

Quantitative Analysis

Figures and Percentages of Direct Speech Acts in the Conversations

Interlocutors	Representatives	Directives	Commissives	Expressives	Declarations	sub Total
Lecturer	19 / 53%	19 / 76%	2 / 100%	8 / 44%	0 / 0%	49 / 60.5%
Student	17 / 47%	6 / 24%	0 / 0%	10 / 56%	0 / 0%	32 / 39.5%
Total	36 / 100%	25 / 100%	2 / 100%	18 / 100%	0 / 0%	81 / 100%

The table above shows that the total number of direct speech acts in the conversations equals eight-one (81) with the lecturers' utterances having a higher percentage of sixty percent (60%) and the students' utterances providing forty percent (40%). The total occurrence of direct speech acts of representatives is thirty-six (36) where the lecturers' utterances reflects nineteen (19) instances; the students' utterances reflects seventeen (17) instances. In the same manner, the lecturers' utterances reflects higher instances of directives than those of the students with the lecturers' utterances reflecting nineteen (19) counts while the students' utterances reflects six (6) occurrences providing a total of twenty-five (25). The higher percentage of directives by the lecturers result from their propensity to make enquiries, always get the students to have something done to their own benefits (the lecturers) or rebuke them for inappropriateness amongst others, examples are conversations sixteen (16), twenty-four (24), and thirty (30).

The lower figures of direct speech act of directives by the students indicate that the lecturers have higher differential power over the students. Contrary to the directive sub acts employed by the lecturers, the students mostly make use of the sub acts of

requesting to demand something from the lecturers and in offering assistance for the lecturers' benefit and well being, examples are conversations two (2) and twenty-two (22). A total number of two (2) instances of commissives are observed in the conversations, the students' utterances taking up a hundred percent (100%) occurrence while the lecturers' utterances record no instance. The lecturers' utterances take in the lower number of expressive than the students; fifty-six (56%) and forty-four (44%) respectively. There are no instances of declarations in both the students' and lecturers' utterances mainly because of the general context in which the conversations are made.

Figures and Percentages of Indirect Speech Acts in the Conversations

Interlocutors	Representatives	Directives	Commissives	Expressives	Declarations	Sub total
Lecturer	0 / 0 %	13 / 62%	1 / 20%	3 / 37.5%	0 / 0%	17 / 50 %
Student	0 / 0%	8 / 38%	4 / 80%	5 / 62.5%	0 / 0%	17 / 50%
Total	0 / 0%	21 / 100%	5 / 100%	8 / 100%	0 / 0%	34 / 100%

The total number of indirect speech acts in the conversations is thirty-four (34) counts which are lower than the direct speech acts and carry a higher percentage. The indirect speech acts of the students and lecturers record equivalent percentages of fifty percent (50%) respectively. The speech acts classification of directives carry the highest number of indirect speech acts by the interlocutors respectively. There are no occurrences of representatives in the interlocutors' utterances. The lecturers' utterances carry a higher occurrence of directives of sixty-two percent (62%) than the students' which carry thirty-eight percent (38%). The indirectness of directives especially in varying sub acts of rebuking, requesting, ordering and so on in the lecturers' utterances define his or her decision in choosing to be polite. Examples of instances where these are evident are conversations nine (9), ten (10) and nineteen (19). The indirectness of directives in the students' utterances is done to avoid or minimise the impoliteness on the lecturers' in enquiring, requesting, condemning, etc. In commissives, there are a total number of five instances of occurrence, where the students' utterances took the lead equivalent to twenty percent (20%) and the lecturer eighty percent (80%).

In identical manner, expressives carry a higher count of five (5) in the students' utterances than the lecturers' which carry three (3), making a total of eight (8). Just like the direct speech acts, there are also no records of indirect acts of declarations in the interlocutors' utterances.

Findings and Conclusion

Adegbija (1989, p. 66) asserts that in the Nigerian context, it is expected that the younger persons should show respect to the older ones whether by age or social status. These findings from the study support this notion as there are instances where the subordinates are older than the superiors, the social status thus come to play in relation to context. The university context allows one to accord respect towards the superior irrespective of the higher age difference the subordinate (student) may have over the superior (lecturer).

The study reveals that the desire to be polite usually necessitates indirectness in the utterances in the conversations. Even in informal settings within the campus such as office corridor among others, The lecturers' utterances in the conversations exhibit more of direct speech acts than the indirect acts as they only use indirect speech acts when they decide to or choose to mitigate the imposition on the students and avoid the potential threat their utterances may pose to the students which leaves the power relationship between the interlocutors rather implicit. The students on the other hand, make use of indirect speech acts by employing politeness tactics as apology, hedging, admitting infringement and begging for forgiveness to present their requests; so as not to appear impolite towards the lecturers while the direct strategies are less favoured by them. Even much more, regardless of the familiarity between the students and lecturers, the students feel the need to respect their elders especially mentors who guide, teach and convey knowledge to them. This findings thus corresponds with Fairclough (1989, pp.156-157) submission that the societal factors that influence the use of indirect speech acts in communication is power relation.

It is discovered that while the legitimate power was frequently employed by the lecturers through their utterances, the referential and expert power were rarely utilised. For instance, only two utterances in conversation one (1) and fifteen (15) exercised the referent and expert power respectively. The exercise of coercive and reward power bases were conspicuously absent in the lecturers' utterances. The absence of the use of coercive power coincides with Agustina and Cahyono (2016, p.98) submission that "the coercive power is common and useful in lower degree of education such as in elementary and secondary school but not in the university level"

The speech act analysis of teacher-student conversations carried out in this paper has been able to authenticate that the choice acts of employed by interlocutors with asymmetrical relationships as in campus-related interactions are implicitly guided by social variables of power and social distance.

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Transcript of Conversations

Conversation 11

Conversational event (A lecturer on her way out of a faculty building, a student walks up to her and the following conversation ensued)

Student: Excuse me ma, will you be in school tomorrow?

Lecturer: How is that your business?

Speech Acts: i. **direct** lecturer-directive. Student- expressive, directive ii. **Indirect** lecturer-directive, student-unidentified. Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power

Conversation 12

Conversational event: (A lecture theatre: a lecture is ongoing, the following conversation ensued between the lecturer and a student:)

Lecturer: Give us a brief summary of what has just been discussed.

Student: ..em..em.. I have no idea ma.

Lecturer: You are unserious. What type of silly response is that? (Now addressing the rest of the students in the class) you all have a lackadaisical attitude to your studies (now facing the student again). If you continue this way, you will just fail.

Speech Acts: i. **direct-** lecturer: directive, representative. Student: representative ii **indirect-** lecturer: expressive, Student- unidentified. Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power

Conversation 13

Conversational event (A lecturer's office : The following are extracts of a conversation between a lecturer and his student in the lecturer's office)

Student: Sir, I have been having a bit of difficulty with my proposal.

Lecturer: Help yourself with a thesis on the shelf that should serve as a guide.

Speech Acts: i. **direct-** lecturer: representative. Student: representative ii **indirect-** lecturer: unidentified, Student- directive

Conversation 14

Conversational event (A lecturer on her way for a lecture; a student walks up to her and offers to help with her handbag)

Student: Can I help you with the handbag?

Lecturer: (smiles) No, thanks. It compliments my outfit.

Speech Acts: i. **direct-** lecturer: representative, expressive. Student: directive ii **indirect-** lecturer: expressive, Student- commissive

Conversation 15

(A lecture class: towards the end of a lecture)

Lecturer: Turn in your assignments (students all submit to him)

Whose work is this?

Student: She's not present. She called in sick.

Lecturer: Her work is also sick.

Speech Acts: i. **direct-** lecturer: directive, representative. Student: representative ii **indirect-** lecturer: directive, Student- unidentified. Lecturer's Power exercise: expert power

Conversation 16
Conversational event (A lecture room, a test in progress)
Lecturer (Addressing the students) You are to answer all the questions, no side talks; anyone found wanting would be sent out and scored zero. Is this understood?
Students: Yes ma!
Speech Acts: i. direct- lecturer: representative, commissive. Students: directive ii Indirect- unidentified in both lecturer and students' utterances. Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power

Conversation 17
Conversational event (A lecturer's office : the following conversation ensued between a lecturer who is a level adviser and a student)
Lecturer: (Shoves a paper to the student) what does your CGPA indicate?
Student: It shows i'm not in good standing.
Lecturer: You are almost a step from being withdrawn from the school. Anyway, if you sit up this session, I am sure your CGPA will rise to a minimum of 2.5.
Speech Acts: i. direct- lecturer: directive, representative. Student: representative ii Indirect- lecturer: directive, Student- unidentified

Conversation 18
Conversational Event (An office corridor, some students are discussing and making a disruptive noise)
Lecturer :(storms out of office) Hello, stop shouting, you are disturbing us for God's sake!
Student: We are sorry sir.
Speech Acts: i. direct- lecturer: expressive, directive, representative. Students: representative ii Indirect- lecturer: directive, Students- unidentified. Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power

Conversation 19
Conversational event (An examination hall; a student stands up to submit her script and in the process, the seat is slammed making a disturbing noise)
Lecturer- Haven't you been told severally (sic) to always assist your chair while standing up?
Student: I am sorry sir.
Speech Acts: i. direct- lecturer: directive. Student: expressive ii Indirect- lecturer: directive, Student- expressive. Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power

Conversation 20

Conversational event (A telephone conversation between a lecturer and a student)

Student: Good morning ma. I am sorry to disturb you ma. I don't know if you will be in the office today.

Lecturer: Yes, I will. Anything the matter?

Student: Can I bring my course form for signing ma?

Lecturer: Yes, you can.

Speech Acts: i. **direct**- lecturer: representative, directive. Student: expressive, representative ii **indirect**- lecturer: unidentified, Student- directive

Conversation 21

Conversational event (A conversation between some students and a lecturer at the end of a lecture)

Students: The lecture was enlightening, we enjoyed it.

Lecturer: Thank you.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-expressive, students-Representative. ii **Indirect** students - expressive, Lecturer (Unidentified).

Conversation 22

Conversational event (A lecturer's office: a student walks into a lecturer's office who is also his level adviser and the following conversation ensued)

Student: I want to sign my course form sir.

Lecturer: Sign it.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-directive, student-Representative. ii **Indirect** student-directive Lecturer-directive.

Conversation 23

Conversational event (A lecturer's office, a conversation between a lecturer who is probably a level adviser and a student)

Student: Do you know when our results will be uploaded ma?

Lecturer: Very soon.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-representative, student-directive. ii **Indirect**- student (unidentified) Lecturer-commisive.

Conversation 24

Conversational event (A student on his way out of a lecturer's office)

Conversation 20

Conversational event (A telephone conversation between a lecturer and a student)

Student: Good morning ma. I am sorry to disturb you ma. I don't know if you will be in the office today.

Lecturer: Yes, I will. Anything the matter?

Student: Can I bring my course form for signing ma?

Lecturer: Yes, you can.

Speech Acts: i. **direct**- lecturer: representative, directive. Student: expressive, representative ii **indirect**- lecturer: unidentified, Student- directive

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Lecturer: Sign it.

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Conversation 23

Conversational event (A lecturer's office, a conversation between a lecturer who is probably a level adviser and a student)

Student: Do you know when our results will be uploaded ma?

Lecturer: Very soon.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-representative, student-directive. ii **Indirect**- student (unidentified) Lecturer-commisive.

Conversation 24

Conversational event (A student on his way out of a lecturer's office)

Lecturer: Shut the door behind you.

Student: Alright sir.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-directive, student-Representative. ii **Indirect** student-commisive, Lecturer-(unidentified). Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power

Conversation 25

Conversational event: (A school restaurant; all the seats are occupied)

Student: (Stands up from own seat and offers to the lecturer) you can sit here ma.

Lecturer: Thank you very much, that's kind of you.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-Expressive, student- Directive. ii **Indirect** student-commisive, Lecturer (Unidentified).

Conversation 26

Conversational event (A student has just confided in his lecturer that he is an orphan; the rest of the conversation goes thus)

Lecturer: I am sorry to hear about your parents' demise. May God grant them eternal rest.

Student: Amen. Thank you very much ma.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-expressive, student-Representative, Expressive. ii **Indirect** (Unidentified).

Conversation 27

(A lecturer's office: A student's seminar paper is being accessed by a lecturer in his office)

Lecturer: Your analysis is good.

Student: You are a genius in it sir.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-Representative, student-Representative. ii **Indirect** student- Expressive, Lecturer (Unidentified).

Conversation 28

Conversational event (A friendly conversation between a female lecturer and a female student in the lecturer's office)

Lecturer: Your bag is lovely.

Student: (Blushes) Thank you ma, but it is kind of old.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-Representative, student-Representative, Expressive. ii **Indirect** Student-Expressive, Lecturer (Unidentified).

Conversation 29

Conversational event (A lecturer's office: the lecturer initially requests for some documents which will be needed for the lecturer's signature on the student's form, the student immediately went to get them, on his return, the following conversation ensued:)

Student: (Hands over some papers) these are the papers you requested for sir.

Lecturer: I am sorry I cannot attend to you now. Come back later.

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer- Expressive, Representative and directive, student- Representative. ii **Indirect** Student- directive, Lecturer -expressive. Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power

Conversation 30

Conversational event: (A student opens a lecturer's door without knocking and steps into the office; the following conversation ensued:)

Student: Em...please ma...

Lecturer: (cuts in angrily) You couldn't knock before you came in you just barged (sic) in as if we share the same office. Get out!

Speech Acts i **direct** Lecturer-Directive, student-Expressive. ii **Indirect** Student- Expressive, Lecturer- directive. Lecturer's Power exercise: Legitimate power