

## Female EFL Preservice Teachers Speech Acts Used in Classroom Interaction

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### Abstract

**Background:**

Using speech acts in the learning process by teachers and preservice teachers is inevitable. However, there are still many preservice EFL teachers who need help to use these speech acts effectively. This study aims to determine the use of directive speech acts and the reasoning by three Female EFL Preservice Teachers (FEPT).

**Methodology:**

This research was conducted on three female students participating in the Practical Field Experience II program at three Samarinda Vocational High Schools. To collect data, the researcher observed three FEPT people carrying out the teaching and learning process by recording videos. Then, to get reasons for using the speech acts, the researcher conducted interviews with them.

**Findings:**

This study found six types of speech acts: asking, requesting, advising, begging, commanding, and forbidding. The most used speech is asking. Then, the reason for using these speech acts is to make students more active and able to follow the lesson well in class.

**Conclusion:**

This study concluded the importance of mastering pragmatic competence by FEPT before teaching and learning. By mastering these competencies, FEPT could effectively carry out the teaching and learning process.

**Originality:**

This finding complements a large amount of previous literature on the use of directive speech acts by teachers and EFL preservice teachers. By examining the use of directive speech acts by female EFL preservice teachers, the researcher hopes to complement the lack of research on this topic.

<b>Keywords</b>	: female; efl teacher; speech acts; utterances
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Preservice teaching globally has been widely recognized as a program to prepare students as prospective teachers. In fact, there are still many preservice teachers who experience difficulties in carrying out teaching in the classroom (Christofferson & Sullivan, 2015; Danyluk et al., 2021). There is no exception for EFL preservice teachers (henceforth, EPT) who have to teach foreign languages.

One of the main supports of communication in the classroom in the EFL context is pragmatic competence (Hussein et al., 2019; Koran & Koran, 2017). With these competencies, an EPT can use influential speech acts. As prospective teachers, EPTs must have the ability to communicate with students by using appropriate and effective speech acts.

Many studies are related to using speech acts in the classroom. Several studies have focused on all types of speech acts performed by teachers (Andewi & Waziana, 2019; Armistany, 2019; Swandewi et al., 2017). Then, research is related to the use of one of the speech acts as a directive by looking at the distribution of its functions (Meidini et al., 2023; Nisa & Abduh, 2022; Rahmawati et al., 2021a). Most of the researchers focus on teachers who use speech acts in class. However, few studies have examined the use of speech acts by EFL preservice teachers, especially regarding gender.

Because of the importance of using directive speech as a form of teacher-student communication in the classroom, using speech functions such as commanding, requesting, and asking becomes undeniable. The global use of speech acts as an introduction to communication and refers to opinions Austin (1962) which were later developed by (Searle, 1969). Alharbi (2020) reports the importance of using speech acts as an inseparable part of the teaching and learning process. However, it still does not mention the speech function used. Other findings state that EPT's use of speech acts online is also dominated by directive speech acts (Aditiya et al., 2021). This finding also does not yet explain the gender of EPTs who are teaching. Meanwhile, other findings also show that the extensive use of directive speech acts can burden students, such as feeling inferior, depressed, and uncomfortable (Sapoetra, 2021). This study also needs to review the reasons for using these utterances.

Referring to several research results, it was consistently found that the use of directive speech acts was the most widely used speech act by teachers and EPTs. The most used speech functions are commanding, requesting, and asking. Then, teachers and preservice teachers found something similar in implementing online learning via Zoom. As future educators, EPTs

must have the ability to communicate effectively with students in various contexts and avoid using utterances that can burden students.

This study aims to complement previous literature regarding the use of directive speech acts by teachers and female EFL preservice teachers (therefore, FEPT) both online and in the classroom. By focusing on FEPT, researchers can further explore the use of speech act functions that they use in learning English. In addition, this research was also conducted to determine the reasons for using these directive speech acts.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study type that explains the use of directive speech acts and their functions by FEPT and the reasons for using these utterances. Then, all speech acts are described according to the theory of (Searle, 1969). Sutopo (2006) suggests that the purpose of qualitative research was to present a comprehensive illustration of the data that had been collected, which includes words, sentences, and pictures, which were expected to produce a more concrete explanation compared to numerical data. Then, this research could be categorized as a structured case study, bearing in mind that before carrying out the research, the researchers had identified the focus and issues to be addressed in the research context, which was explained through the formulation of the problems that had been prepared.

In this study, all data were directive utterances made by three FEPTs. These FEPTs conducted internship activities in SMK 5, SMK 3, and Medical Vocational High School Samarinda. In collecting data, the researcher used video recordings of lessons carried out by FEPT to tenth graders in three vocational schools. In addition, the researcher conducted interviews with three FEPTs regarding the use of directive speech acts like digging further related to the research findings.

To analyze data, researchers used data analysis techniques formulated by (Santosa, 2017). This technique was divided into four stages: domain analysis, taxonomy, componential and cultural themes. First, domain analysis was done by sorting the data on video recordings of learning by 3 FEPT. Second, taxonomic analysis is carried out by categorizing utterances according to their functions, such as commanding, requesting, or asking. Third, the componential analysis stage combines data from the first to the third FEPT. Finally, the cultural theme is carried out by looking at the relationship between the functions of the directive speech acts performed by the three FEPTs.

### 3. FINDINGS

This study revealed speech act functions carried out by three FEPTs in different schools at the vocational school in Samarinda, namely Medical Vocational High School Samarinda, SMK 3, and SMK 5 Samarinda. These findings revealed the use of directive speech. Then, the researcher also explained why the FEPTs used these speech acts.

#### 3.1 *The use of directive speech acts by FEPT*

Following the results of data analysis, six directive non-speech functions were obtained in the teaching and learning process of 3 FEPT students: requesting, asking, advising, begging, forbidding, and order.

Table. 1 directive speech acts used by FEPT

No	Function	FEPT 1	FEPT 2	FEPT 3	Number of data	Percentage
1	Asking	15	14	7	36	51%
2	Requesting	10	3	8	21	30%
3	Advising	2	3		5	7%
4	Begging	2	1	1	4	6%
5	Commanding	-	1	3	4	6%
6	Forbidding	1	-	-	1	1%
Total		30	22	19	71	100%

Table 1 above shows the use of directive speech in asking, with 36 (51%). Next, the function of requesting was 21 (30%), advising 5 (7%), and begging 4 (6%). Furthermore, directive speech acts with the function of commanding amounted to 4 (6%), and prohibiting 1 (1%). The following is a review of directive speech acts according to the function of their use carried out by 3 FEPTs.

#### 3.1.1 *Asking*

Overall, the utterances of asking were the most frequently used by three FEPTs, namely 36 data. The data regarding asking speech can be seen in the example presented below.

Data 005

*What is the meaning?*

In data 005, the utterance *What is the meaning?* was a type of directive speech act that had the function of asking. The utterance was a question given by the speaker to the speech partner. Judging from the context, FEPT wanted to ask about students' understanding of the important phrases in a text they were studying.

Data 030

*Which one is right?*

In data 030, *which one is right?* was a type of directive speech act that had the function of asking. This utterance was made by FEPT, who wanted to confirm their students' understanding of the multiple-choice questions in the textbook.

### **3.1.2 Requesting**

The utterances of requesting were the second most utterances spoken by FEPT. The utterances were carried out by FEPT so that students carried out an activity in the teaching and learning process. It was found that 21 utterances, or 30% of the data. The following was an example of requesting speech data.

Data 010

*I need you to check your book*

In data 010, the utterance *I need you to check your book* was a type of directive speech act with the function of asking. This speech was carried out by FEPT, who wanted their students to pay attention to the material explained by FEPT.

Data 025

*Look at this example*

In data 025, the utterance *Look at this example* was a directive speech act with a request function. This speech was carried out by FEPT, who wanted their students to pay attention to the material explained by FEPT, especially the explanation on the blackboard.

### **3.1.3 Requesting**

Two FEPTs carried out the utterances of advising with 5 utterances or 7% of the data. This utterance was carried out by FEPT so that students could do something positive, such as doing their homework or paying attention while studying. The following is an example of an advising speech act.

Data 002

*It's better to use English*

In data 002, the utterance *It's better to use English* was a directive speech act with an advisory function. This speech was carried out by FEPT, which wanted its students to use English in asking, speaking, and writing assignments.

Data 051

*Don't forget with your homework*

In data 051, the utterance *Don't forget with your homework* was a directive speech act with an advising function. This speech was carried out by FEPT, who wanted their students to remember the homework they had been given.

### **3.1.4 Begging**

The three FEPTs carried out the utterances of begging with 4 utterances or 6% of the data. This utterance was carried out by FEPT by adding the word please at the end or the beginning of the utterance with the aim that students would follow what FEPT said. The following is an example:

Data 008

*Silent, please!*

In data 008, *Silent, please!* was a type of directive speech act that had the function of begging. This speech was carried out by FEPT, which wanted its students to pay attention to what he explained or not to chat with his friends.

Data 022

*Listen to me, please!*

In data 022, the utterance *Listen to me, please!* was a type of directive speech act that had the function of begging. This speech was carried out by FEPT which wanted its students to listen to the explanations given and not chat with their friends.

### **3.1.5 Commanding**

Two FEPTs carried out the utterances of commanding with 4 utterances or 6% of the data. This utterance was carried out by FEPT so that students followed what FEPT wanted in the teaching and learning process, such as orders to read books. The following is an example of a commanding speech act.

Data 037

*Read the text!*

In data 037, the utterance *Read the text!* was a type of directive speech act that had a commanding function. This kind of utterance was carried out by FEPT so that one of the students read the text, which was an example of learning.

Data 060

*Answer this question!*

In data 060, the speech *Answer this question!* was a type of directive speech act that had a commanding function. This utterance was carried out by FEPT so that all students answered the questions in their textbooks.

### **3.1.6 Forbidding**

Forbidding utterances are only carried out by one FEPT with 1 utterance or 1% of the data. This speech was carried out by FEPT so that students did not carry out activities that were not good.

Data 020

*Don't go to the toilet!*

In data 020, the story *Don't go to the toilet!* was a type of directive speech act that has the function of prohibiting. This speech was made by FEPT so that one of the students only asked permission occasionally to go to the toilet.

## **3.2 Reasons for using directive speech acts by FEPT**

This section will explain the use of the six speech functions performed by the three FEPTs. There were only three utterances made by the three FEPTs, namely requesting, asking, and advising. The interview was conducted one week after the teaching video was taken. Following their reasons related to the use of directive speech acts.

### **3.2.1 Use of asking speech act**

Forbidding utterances are only carried out by one FEPT with 1 utterance or 1% of the data. This speech was carried out by FEPT so that students did not carry out activities that were not good.

FEPT 1

"I use the expression of asking because I want to confirm the explanation I gave. Because what I convey is still simple, that's why I often ask students. The students often do not pay attention to the lessons, so I ask."

FEPT 2

"Because I do not have much experience in teaching, to be honest, I was nervous about delivering material in front of the class. I speak with requesting speech acts to communicate with the students. After explaining the material according to the textbook, I often check students' understanding."

FEPT 3

"I speak with this utterance to check their understanding of the material. Usually, I associate it with something that students have experienced. However, students often do not pay attention to us as preservice teachers either. In short, I use asking questions at the beginning of learning, evaluation, and closing in learning".

### **3.2.2 Use of requesting speech act**

Forbidding utterances are only carried out by one FEPT with 1 utterance or 1% of the data. This speech was carried out by FEPT so that students did not carry out activities that were not good.

FEPT 1

"Because I am not their permanent teacher, students often ignore me in teaching. That is why, I use many requesting speech acts to them. These utterances usually ask them to pay attention to me or do something."

FEPT 2

"I often use requesting speech acts to follow the lessons well. I do it to them to make them pay attention to my explanation. In addition, sometimes, students want to avoid opening the book and taking notes on the material that I explain.

FEPT 3

"I speak with this utterance to ask their understanding of the materials. Usually, I associate it with something students have experienced. However, students often do not pay attention to us as internship teachers either. So, I used the requesting speech act at the beginning, in the process of learning and evaluations stage".

### **3.2.3 Use of advising speech act**

FEPT 1

"I use advising speech act so they know the importance of learning English. I mostly use English so that they understand it more easily. I often remind them to feel confident and active in learning English."

FEPT 2

"I often speak in advising speech to students to make them follow the lesson well. I speak to them, advising them to pay attention to my explanation. In addition, sometimes students do not want to open the book and take notes on the material that I explain".

### **3.2.4 Use of advising speech act**

FEPT 1

"I used this speech act because some students make noise by mocking their friends. As a result, the class atmosphere became chaos. I tried to calm them down, but they paid no heed. The chaos was made by the students sitting at the back".

FEPT 2

"I speak using this speech act because some students were just making noise and laughing. They ignore my explanation. During my teaching for several meetings, those students always do the same thing. That is why I beg to them for not making noise".

### **3.2.4 Use of begging speech act**

FEPT 1

"I used this speech act because some students make noise by mocking their friends. As a result, the class atmosphere became chaos. I tried to calm them down, but they paid no heed. The chaos was made by the students sitting at the back".

FEPT 2

"I speak using this speech act because some students were just making noise and laughing. They ignore my explanation. During my teaching for several meetings, those students always do the same thing. That is why I beg to them for not making noise".

### **3.2.5 Use of commanding speech act**

FEPT 2

"I did not realize I was given command. I did this speech act to make them do the activities in learning such as reading texts. However, they often ignored it. I keep looking for ways to communicate well with students. I communicate in and outside of class, such as helping the English club at school".

FEPT 3

"I speak using the commanding speech act because I want to look firm before them. I punished them, for example, those making noise or bullying friends. I also speak

using this speech act to make students do the learning activity such as choosing one of them to read aloud or questions in the book".

### ***3.2.6 Use of prohibiting speech act***

FEPT 1

I speak with this speech act because I was very annoyed with one of the students who was repeatedly allowed to go to the toilet. Often during my teaching, some take turns going to the toilet. After several similar incidents, I forbade students who had already gone to the toilet. Actually, in the class I entered, only a few children often made noise and disturbed their friends. For that, I try to keep handling the class".

## **4. DISCUSSION**

This research revealed the use of directive speech acts with six speech functions by three FEPT students in the teaching and learning process in class. This study showed the dominance of the use of certain utterances by FEPT as was done by previous researchers (Basra & Thoyyibah, 2017; Rahmawati et al., 2021b; Shaharuddin & Harun, 2022; Susanti, 2008). The main difference in this study was that the research focused on women who were preservice teachers. In addition, this study explicitly details the use of directive speech acts and their functions by female EFL preservice teachers.

The findings in this study indicated the extensive use of requesting, asking, and advising speech acts used by FEPT in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. With his background as an intern student, very little use of command speech was carried out by FEPT. This finding was in line with Pustaka's previous observations regarding the dominance of the use of directive speech acts (Basra & Thoyyibah, 2017; Widya, 2017). In addition, this finding followed previous research on the large use of asking speech. The teacher does this to confirm students' understanding of the material presented or ask students to be active (Krisdiah et al., 2022; Suryandani & Budasi, 2021). The large use of utterances of asking, advising, and begging also indicates the influence of gender, especially women who tend to have patience in teaching (Aminifard et al., 2014; Harooni & Pourdana, 2017).

The results of this study also showed that there were differences in the use of directive speech acts by FEPT and EFL teachers. Previous literature showed the dominance of the use of commanding speech by teachers (Fitriani & Prihadi, 2020; Suhartini & Wulansari, 2015). The number of these utterances cannot be separated from the dominance of the teacher in the teaching and learning process, which aims to instruct students to be more active. Then, findings related to using speech-asking students were also found in previous studies. However, this research was conducted with teachers for low-grade students, such as elementary and

kindergarten (Nisa & Abduh, 2022; Sari, 2018). These speeches aim to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning, making students active in class so students can focus on learning.

This research also aligned with previous findings regarding using directive speech acts in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Several previous studies also found the dominance of asking speech acts (Meidini et al., 2023; Rahmawati et al., 2021b). However, there are several different research results on teachers' use of speech functions. Sudarmawan et al. (2022) found the dominance of the use of utterances reminiscent of learning in college. Then, at the school level, the most widely used speech is commanding (Febrianti et al., 2022).

Judging from the reasons for using directive speech acts, all FEPTS stated that they did so so that students took the lesson seriously. With their status as preservice teachers, some students do not care about FEPT when teaching. This finding aligned with previous research stating that EFL preservice teachers have weak power (Dewi et al., 2020). Then other opinions state that directive speech acts are helpful for interaction between teachers and students to make them more communicative. However, it is necessary to pay attention to the use of directive speech acts not to frighten students (Zahra et al., 2023).

This research provided theoretical and practical implications for educators and policymakers. In terms of theoretical implications, this research complemented previous studies regarding using non-directive speech by EFL preservice teachers. This research complements previous literature on the use of directive speech acts by EFL preservice teachers by providing new empirical knowledge regarding the influence of gender in the use of directive speech acts (Dewi et al., 2020; Zahra et al., 2023). The existence of a comprehensive understanding related to the use of directive speech acts can help the teaching and learning process to be better. Then, the practical implications of this research are related to the types of utterances commonly used by FEPT in the teaching and learning process in the classroom and the reasons for using these utterances. In this way, policymakers can evaluate internship activities and prepare all preservice teachers to be better prepared to enter school.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The findings in this research concluded that the asking speech act by three FEPT students was widely used. The reason for using these speech acts is to make students more active in the teaching and learning process in class. With a background as a preservice teacher, all FEPTs experienced difficulties in controlling the teaching and learning process. In addition, students consider all FEPT teachers to be substitute teachers, so they often ignore explanations

in learning. The lack of experience in teaching in the classroom is a challenge that FEPT must acknowledge. In order to run optimally, more mature preparation is needed, such as maximizing micro-teaching courses. Then, FEPT can communicate with accompanying teachers and supervisors regarding their problems in teaching.

The findings in this study have several limitations that can be developed. First, future researchers can examine how the use of speech acts by male EFL preservice teachers. Then, all participants in the study were limited to coming from only one region in Indonesia. Next, this study only limited the data to directive speech acts, a type of speech act used by FEPT. Finally, it is necessary to develop teaching materials by considering the use of speech acts by a teacher or English preservice teacher in class.

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