

SPEECH ACTS IN UNDERGRADUATE CLASSROOMS: A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS AT KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, PESHAWAR

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Abstract

This research determines and classifies the various kinds of speech acts that take place in undergraduate classes in KMU Peshawar. It also discusses the role of speech acts in different communicative roles as well as how they demonstrate fascinating deviation and distinctive patterns in classroom talk. The research is qualitative and descriptive survey research. The study involves non-participant classroom observation of undergraduate classes in KMU, with particular attention paid to the students of the 5th semester to the 8th semester. The researcher relies on purposive sampling to sample the classrooms that would offer valuable information regarding the use of speech acts in a medical university setting. The theory of speech acts as the primary tool of analysis is the theory of Searle (1969). The scholar uses the discourse analysis and pragmatic analysis as a means of studying the interaction in the classroom. The audio recordings and comprehensive notes of six weeks of classroom observations are cross-matched and coded to define and classify speech acts. The research discovers that there are various speech acts that are used by teachers and students such as expressive, directive, assertive, commissive, and declarative acts. Such speech acts are useful in building rapport, learning, participation, reinforcing professional and ethical values, and classroom management. The discussion further brings out special tendencies and breakages in the way speech acts are executed which is a replica of the cultural and professional setting of medical education. The results indicate that the language used by teachers should be conscious to facilitate effective communication, student interest, and a positive learning environment. The knowledge of the functions and patterns of the speech acts can assist the educators in improving the interaction in the classroom and assist the students in their professional growth. In the future, the scope can be extended to other medical universities or research the use of speech acts in various fields. Other researches can also be done on how speech act awareness training to teachers influences classroom communication and student performance.

Keywords; Communication, Pragmatics, Speech Acts, Classroom Interaction, Khyber Medical University (KMU)

1. Introduction

Language is a dynamic instrument preceding communication it articulates shared facts, communicates and bargains identities. The role of language in classroom in educational field plays a significant role to shape the learning experience. The, approach towards speech acts in pragmatics, provides an insight through which we look at the different aspects of communication in class rooms (Altikriti, 2011). The English language plays a special and significant role in the system of Pakistani education. As the vehicle of instruction, it does not only impart content of the subjects, but also provides broader academic and professional opportunities (Rahman, 2008). During the undergraduate stage, English classrooms turn out to be the main areas where an individual becomes proficient in language and has the practical skills. The ability to use and understand speech acts is necessary in such an environment, because it determines the success of communication, interpretation and interaction between the teacher and students.

Pragmatics is concerned with language application as a situation in social life as opposed to merely the structure. Through exploring the practical nature of speech actions, teachers and students would acquire very useful skills in making inferences and convey information in a productive manner. This method also adds more understanding about sociocultural factors that contribute to the language use in classroom settings (Procel et al., 2023). How the cultural norms, societal expectations, and language policies influence the speech acts in classrooms provide a good platform that can be explored. The research recognizes the relationship between language and culture to be complex and attempts to demonstrate how culture bears on the pragmatism of choices constructed by both instructors and learners during the undergraduate level (Vaughan and Clancy, 2011). One of the most important parts of language is known as speech acts, which entails the different forms in which people use language to achieve various objectives such as giving requests, giving orders, promising as well as expressing opinions. Speech acts are particularly important in the learning situation when an efficient communication of the teacher with students takes place (Zahroh and Susanto, 2022). Although the research about classroom discourse and use of speech acts in classroom has been extensively examined, it is observed that there is a clear deficit in studying the exact kind of speech acts which teachers and students in undergraduate classes execute in KMU Peshawar. Although the previous researchers might have conducted the research on the overall application of speech acts in classroom, there is no research conducted as the type of speech acts performed by teachers and students along with the deviation or peculiarities of the type of speech acts in supporting the communicative functions in undergraduate classes in Khyber Medical University, Peshawar. This study fills the gap by analyzing the types and unique patterns of speech acts used by teachers and students in undergraduate classrooms at Khyber Medical University, Peshawar.

This study is grounded in the theoretical framework of speech act theory, as established by Austin (1962) and further advanced by Searle (1969), which suggests that language is not only used to carry information but also to carry out actions. According to this framework, every utterance in the classroom can be analyzed in terms of its illocutionary force what the speaker intends to accomplish and its locutionary effect how it influences the listener and enables them how language is used as a tool for interaction, and meaning-making in the educational setting, particularly within the culturally diverse context of Pakistan.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Language learning can only be achieved through effective classroom communication, and several studies have emphasized the role of speech acts in questioning, teaching, and responding (Bashori et al., 2021). Research indicates that explicit teaching and reflective teaching can be used to promote pragmatic competence in learners (Chong-yuan, 2021; Pangemanan et al., 2025; Fathi et al., 2024), and difficulties in perceiving social norms may result in communication failures, particularly in expert settings such as medical universities (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). It is recommended that teachers make informed cultural practices that are contextually relevant (Cohen, 2016). Past studies have addressed the topic of deviation of speech acts in literary, as well as political, terms, including the study by Hayat et al. (2015), which discusses deviations of speech acts in *Waiting for Godot*, and a study by Hamza et al. (2024), which addresses speech act deviation in Trump speeches. Nevertheless,

no earlier research has been done on the forms and exclusive patterns of speech acts in teachers and students in the undergraduate classrooms of Khyber medical university, Peshawar. This leaves a gap in the research and the current study fills this gap by offering information that can be used in pedagogy and enhance communication in classrooms in this regard.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What types of speech acts are performed in undergraduate classrooms at Khyber Medical University Peshawar?
2. How far these speech acts, along with serving different communicative functions, offer us insights into interesting deviations and unique patterns?

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To identify and categorize the different types of speech acts performed in undergraduate classrooms at Khyber Medical University Peshawar.
2. To explore speech acts, along with serving different communicative functions, offer us insights into interesting deviations and unique patterns.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is important to various sub-branches of linguistics. In Linguistics, the role and presentation of speech act deviations in actual academic contexts. In the case of Discourse Studies, it provides understandings on how meaning is created and bargained in the form of speech acts within the institutional setting. In the field of Applied Linguistics, it enlightens pedagogical actions because it recognizes patterns of communication that can be used to improve teaching and learning of language (Pangemanan et al., 2025). It also enriches the knowledge on how speakers act using language in the study of Pragmatics. This study is important in the sense that it fills a gap in the research on speech acts in Pakistani higher education, that is, in KMU Peshawar. It is novel because it gives the first empirical study of speech acts in this situation I.e. medical university, the prevailing types, distinct patterns, pragmatic issues and also provides the context-specific solutions to enhance communicative competence in undergraduate classrooms. It is anticipated that the results will show the prevalence of speech acts, point out that communicative learners have pragmatic difficulties, and propose ways to improve the communicative competence in the undergraduate classroom in KMU Peshawar.

2. Literature Review

The literature review is a critical chapter as it brings forward gaps in past studies, creates a general background of the current study, and gives justification to why the study is necessary. It shows how the current study adds to the existing knowledge and covers those gaps that have not been well covered by the previous studies. These research gaps can be highlighted as the primary purpose of the literature review. It also provides the summary of the previous studies by numerous scholars in different perspectives, establishing the reliability, credibility, authenticity, and validity of the existing study. Properly developed literature review enhances the basis of the research and gives the reader a better insight.

Raza et al. (2025) analyse the employment of internal and external modification strategies by Pakistani teachers in applying casual leaves to the principals. The study of the real applications in two government colleges based on the adapted CCSARP framework reveals that the most common internal modifiers are humbly and kindly, which are frequently used

with external ones, such as grounders and gratitude. The findings reflect the differences in degrees of formality and hierarchy consciousness. The authors recommend that teacher education should aim at equipping pragmatic competence in effective institutional communication.

Khamkhien (2022) conducted research on the application of speech acts in rejecting suggestions, offers, requests, and invitations by Thai students based on the social status of interlocutors. The participants of the study were 157 Thai university students who were invited to answer the scenarios that included refusals in the situations with lower, equal and higher status people. The researcher administered the Oral Discourse Completion Test (ODCT) and the taxonomy of refusal by Beebe et al. (1990) and discovered that the majority of the students engaged in both direct and indirect strategies. The excuses, reasons, and explanations that they gave out were often interpreted as compilations of various elements of the speech acts.

In the novel *Hard Times*, Salih (2022) performed a discourse-pragmatic analysis of the illocutionary acts of speech in the novel by Charles Dickens. The research was more precise in the ways in which characters, and particularly the main character, engage various forms of illocutionary speech acts in the entire novel by utilizing the pragmatic theory of speech acts put forward by Austin. They applied a mixed-methods technique, which is a combination of the qualitative and quantitative analysis. The study established that the protagonist employed five forms of illocutionary speech acts, including directive, representative, declarative, expressive, and commissive speech acts. There were 473 speech acts in total that were analyzed and 16% of the speech acts were directive, 18% commissive, 19% representative, 31% expressive, and 16% declarative. The researcher gave examples of the novel under each type, e.g. requests, promises, statements, emotion expressions and utterances, and how the speech acts of the protagonist could be used to fulfill various objectives depending on the situation.

The author of the article, Christianto (2020), discussed speech acts in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom where speech acts are functional units of language to accomplish communicative objectives. The purpose of the study was to determine and examine the speech acts, conducted by teachers and students in EFL classroom. Data were gathered using a qualitative research method and pragmatic speech theory as the collected data were through the interactions occurring in natural classrooms. The research discovered that there were three categories of speech acts locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary that were employed by teachers and students. Locutionary acts were carried out without any intention whereas the illocutionary acts involved intended meaning or forces to the listeners. When the speaker was observed to have been responsive to the listeners in terms of receiving their feedback, the effect of what the speaker said was observed, even through the perlocutionary act. The study was meant to enhance the knowledge of the readers on the pragmatic speech act theory and how it can be applied in the classroom communication.

Che Hassan, & Nor (2022) analyzed Facebook comment speech acts about the topic of COVID-19 and were referring to those posted on the official page of the Malaysian National Security Council in July and August 2021, when a movement control order was implemented. The researchers gathered 555 remarks to updates and safety policies posted by the agency

that has a massive subscriber base and can get the feedback within minutes. Through computer-aided qualitative data analysis, the researchers sought to establish the frequency of speech acts according to the Searle taxonomy of speech acts. These findings revealed that 34 per cent assertive, 33 per cent expressive, 31 per cent directive, 1 per cent commissive, speech acts as well as 1 per cent quotations were present in the comments.

Syafitri (2020) examined the application of expressive speech acts in the status of Facebook users. The research was divided in two parts: to recognize the expressive speech acts that are used in Facebook statuses, and to examine their different functions. The study investigated the reasons and methods of using expressive speech acts in posts made by the users. Facebook statuses were used to gather data through non-participant observation and by taking notes. The pragmatic observational identity method developed by Sudaryanto (2015) was used in the analysis. The results showed that there were fourteen expressive acts of speech in the statuses such as expressions of annoyance, anger, apology, agreement, encouragement, sorrow, disappointment, disagreement, hope (volition), complaint (exclamation), satire, gratitude, pride, and congratulation. These acts were in declarative, exclamative and interrogative. The researchers concluded that the postings on Facebook statuses usually have implicit meanings, and users tend to be immediate and indirect in some instances.

In the article by Azizah (2020), the concept analysis of directive and commissive speech acts in the film "Kartini" was made. The purpose of the study was to determine, assess, and narrate the various types of directives and commissive speech acts in the movie through a descriptive qualitative study. The study was specifically interested in directive speech acts manifested through the advice, permission, questions, command, requests, and prohibitions, and the commissive ones were recognized as promises and offers. The findings revealed that the directive speech acts in the film were of different types, such as, prohibiting, requesting, questioning, commanding, as well as, advising. The commissive speech acts were identified in the forms of promises and offers.

In The Daily Talk Show, Suryanti (2020) investigated representative speech acts with the purpose of identifying them and discussing the aspects of their application. The study employed the taxonomy of representative speech acts proposed by Searle to identify the following categories: stating, agreeing, complaining, predicting, concluding, believing, reminding, assuring, reporting, suggesting, claiming, and deducing. The data were gathered by means of non-participant observation and taking notes which led to the discovery of 30 representative speech acts. The most frequent ones were believe (20%), state and complain (each 16.67%), agree, predict, suggest (each 10%), claim, assure (each 6.67%), and remind (3.33%). There were no cases of report, conclude or deduce. It was also found that setting, participants, act sequence, instrumentalities, and end were found to have a great effect on the use of representative speech acts, whereas key, norm, and genre were also found to have lesser effects.

Santos and Kurniadi (2020) examined the speech acts that EFL teachers employed in teaching and their reasons, as well as the consequences of the speech acts and their suitability in teaching and learning. The case study was concerned with the illocutionary speech acts in EFL classrooms. The findings indicated that assertive speech acts were of 57 percent, directive were 40 percent, expressive were 25 percent and complimentary were 1 percent.

The most prevalent were aggressive speech acts, which is probably a result of classroom interactions being based on the discussion.

After reviewing the literature on the speech acts, the researcher discovered that there is a significant gap: there is no literature review on the topic of undergraduate classes in Khyber Medical University, Peshawar. Although the majority of the past studies have focused either on elementary school setting or have examined speech acts in other settings like novels, plays, movies, Facebook discussions, talk shows, article headings, and refusals, minimal consideration has been given to the use of speech acts in undergraduate classroom setting particularly in Khyber medical University. It is against this background that the researcher decided to provide a pragmatic study of the speech acts in undergraduate classes in Khyber Medical University, Peshawar.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a qualitative design. The data for the study is collected data from classroom observations. As stated by Creswell (2014), Merriam and Tisdell (2016) qualitative researcher uses non-numerical data in order to explore a problem and present complete understanding of the issue (Vanderstoep and Johnston 2009), According to Dörnyei (2007), a qualitative study is essentially centered on language. Furthermore, the researchers pragmatically analyze classroom communication in context, which plays important role in understanding language function in real life. To explore the data using this method, the researchers use Searle's (1969) theory of speech act.

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a descriptive, qualitative survey design, focusing on undergraduate-level education in Pakistan, the research explores how speech acts are performed and interpreted within this context.

3.2 Participants/Textual Data

This study sample, encompassing all undergraduate-level students at KMU Peshawar. The analysis specifically includes classrooms from the 5th to the 8th semester, while those in the 1st to 4th semesters is excluded, as they may not yet meet the required level. Although the research is usually done in general university setting, the current case is peculiar as it deals with a medical university setting, striving to reveal new approaches.

3.3 Sampling

The study employs a deliberate non-probability sampling technique in order to select a representative and meaningful sample of the large population. The given approach is chosen due to the fact that it is suitable to find participants possessing sufficient experiences and information on speech acts in the specified context to conduct an in-depth analysis of them (Stratton, 2021). In particular, observation of classrooms is carried out with the help of purposive sampling. The research incorporates all 5 th -8 th semester classes.

3.4 Data Collection

The main method of gathering data is the non-participant observation of classrooms. The researcher was in a position to observe classes that were taught by 6 teachers over a period of six weeks. The researcher was present in these classes as a faculty member and made personal observations in these classes, taking detailed handwritten notes and audio recordings of the classes. The notes are cross checked with the audio recordings to analyze them.

3.5 Data Analysis

The researcher employs a qualitative research method in this study, where the analysis of data will be based on the descriptive analysis methods, i.e. discourse analysis and pragmatic analysis. The data is filtered exhaustively in order to extract pertinent information. The researcher recognizes, explores, appraises, and examines different kinds of speech acts and the expression of deviations or unusual mannerisms in the course of serving communicative functions and labeling them with corresponding codes or names under each category. Moreover, the researcher does give an elaborate description of the speech acts that the teachers and students use and points out their deviations or peculiar patterns and functions in classroom setting.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of Speech acts

This part will provide a detailed discussion of the speech acts occurring in different KMU classroom environments. The analysis includes the interactions of teachers and students in various subjects and in various weeks and gives emphasis on the nature of the speech acts found in the classroom discourse and the functions performed by these speech acts. Within each of the subsections, a description of the particular speech acts identified in each of the classes is presented, which gives us insight into what aspects of the learning process are communicative practices informing the learning environment.

4.1.1 Week One: Teacher 1 -Computed Tomography

In Week One, speech acts that were observed between the students and the teacher in Computed Tomography lesson were as follows.

Teacher: Hi, good afternoon, dear students!

1. Teacher: How are you, dear students?
2. Student: We are fine, sir.
3. Student: What about you, sir?
4. Teacher: I am well.

The interaction activity in the classroom was initiated with Speech Act 1 in which the teacher welcomed the learners by uttering, Hi, good afternoon, dear students! This speech act is an expressive type of speech act since the teacher is demonstrating an act of goodwill and providing a friendly and positive atmosphere to the lesson. Such greetings according to the classification of Searle (1969) is vital in building rapport and developing a respectable classroom atmosphere, which is especially important in terms of Pakistani education culture. Next, in act 2 of the speech, the teacher used, how are you, dear students? This question can be used as a directive speech act, because it is supposed to provoke an answer of the students and it means that the teacher cares about their well-being. This is not just to monitor the students but to engage them in the process and open up a communication channel and this is what fits in the relational and interactive aspect of classroom communication as outlined in the speech act theory.

In reply, Speech Act 3, the students replied, that they were fine, sir. It is an assertive type of speech act, since the students give the information asked, and meet the order of the teacher, ensuring the continuation of the friendly and respectful communication. These reactions are common in the classroom environment and they agree with cultural values of deferences and

politeness. It went on and Speech Act 4 came where a student posed, What about you, sir? This statement is also a directive speech act that is shown to be equally polite and interactive. The student shows concern about the health of the teacher and this resembles the earlier concern of the teacher and as such, the teacher and the student appear to respect each other and this helps to strengthen the relationship between the teacher and the student. Speech Act 5 is a reply of the teacher, which is the assertive speech act, that concludes the greeting sequence and comforts the students that she is okay. This traditional greeting exchange not only adds the social ritual of greeting, but it establishes a collaborative and respectful environment in which the lesson would work. The pattern of speech acts expressive (1), directive (2, 4), assertive (3, 5) demonstrates that the language in the classroom has a number of communicative purposes, such as social bond construction, expression of politeness, and interaction. Teacher: The CT lab is quite dim today.

4.1.2 Week One: Teacher 2 – Medical Surgical Nursing II

During Week One, the following speech acts were observed between the teacher and students in the Medical Surgical Nursing II class.

5. Teacher: Understanding nursing competence and its types is important.

In the speech act 5, the teacher says, it is significant to know the nursing competence and its types. This utterance serves as assertive speech act since the teacher is uttering a statement regarding the importance of understanding the concept of nursing competence and its different manifestations. The illocutionary force in this case is to educate and stress the importance of this knowledge which will shift the focus of students on a critical area of their professional growth. The focus on the significance of the competence in nursing by the teacher acts as a means of encouraging the students to pay attention to this subject and to recognize its usefulness in their future practice. The perlocutionary effect can consist in a higher concentration of the student, their greater willingness to work with the material, and understanding of the basics of their subject better.

6. Teacher: What is the difference between medical and surgical nursing?

In the speech act 6, the teacher poses the question of what is the difference between medical and surgical nursing? This statement is a directive speech act in the sense that the teacher is making students clarify and differentiate two paramount areas in the nursing profession. The illocutionary force will be to provoke the understanding of students, a critical thinking, and to evaluate their skills of formulating the differences basing on their knowledge and coursework. A question of this nature not only brings out the discussion in the classroom, but it also aids students in consolidating the learning experience of comparing and contrasting valuable concepts. The perlocutionary effect can involve students to think over, exchange their opinions, and enrich their understanding of medical and surgical nursing.

7. Students: Sir, surgical nursing is a specialized area within the broader field of nursing.

8. Teacher: Excellent!

The students reply in Speech Act 7, saying, Sir, surgical nursing is a specialized branch of the overall nursing profession. This statement is an act of assertion since the students are giving information and explaining the difference between surgical and general nursing. The illocutionary force is to show their knowledge of the topic, and to bring pertinent knowledge to the classroom discussion. The response given by the students does not only respond to the

question proposed by the teacher, but also contributes to explaining the concept to their colleagues which strengthens the idea of learning together. The perlocutionary effect can involve the teacher being satisfied with how the students have understood and other students getting a better understanding of the topic. The teacher responds in Speech Act 8 by saying, Excellent! This statement is an expressive speech act because the teacher is talking about approval and praise to the answer provided by the students. The illocutionary force will be to give some positive reinforcement that will enhance the confidence of the students that will motivate them to participate even more. The positive reinforcement of this nature will assist in developing a positive and encouraging classroom atmosphere.

4.1.3 Week Three: Teacher 3 – Professional Ethics for Nurses

In Week Three, a range of speech acts emerged during the classroom exchanges between Teacher 3 and the students in the Professional Ethics for Nurses course

9. Student: I am sorry for being late!

In the speech act 9, the student says, I am sorry I was late! This is an expressive speech act because the student is literally speaking out and apologizing about him/herself being late. Expressive speech acts according to the classification by Searle (1969) are the speech acts where the speaker reflects his state in terms of psychological condition or emotions in relation to a given situation. The illocutionary force, in this instance, is to admit an infraction of the classroom norms, namely, the anticipation of being punctual and to express true remorse of this infraction. The explicit apology that the student uses shows his knowledge and appreciation of the social and professional expectations in the academic setting. There are a number of useful communicative and relational roles of such utterance in the classroom. The apology assists in ensuring good interpersonal relations in the social setting between the student and the teacher, and also between peers. It evokes the fact that the student understands the consequences that his/her lateness can cause to the lesson and is ready to accept the responsibility of his/her deeds. This would help to develop a culture of responsibility and respect that is necessary in both educational and professional work, especially in a course regarding professional ethics in nurses. Perlocutionary effect of this speech act might involve the teacher getting to feel respected and also being sure that the student appreciates the norms of the classroom. It can also help establish a more empathetic and collaborative classroom environment, since other students will see the value and the necessity of punishment and correction of minor violations of behavior. Moreover, the apologizing process can act as an example of how to behave professionally, and this practice would enforce ethical values required in the nursing practice.

10. Teacher: From today, you are the new class representative.

In Speech Act 10, the teacher announces, “From today, you are the new class representative.” This utterance functions as a declarative speech act, as the teacher is not merely describing a situation but is actively bringing about a change in the social reality of the classroom by assigning a new role to a student. According to Searle’s (1969) classification, declarative speech acts are those in which the speaker, by virtue of their institutional authority, enacts a new status or condition through their utterance. The illocutionary force of this statement is to officially appoint the student as the class representative, thereby conferring upon them new responsibilities and a recognized position within the group. This act is performative in nature;

the very act of stating it makes it so, provided the teacher has the recognized authority to make such an appointment. The teacher's declaration also serves to inform the rest of the class of this new arrangement, ensuring transparency and clarity regarding classroom roles. The perlocutionary effect may include the newly appointed class representative feeling a sense of pride, responsibility, or motivation to fulfill their duties, while other students may recognize and respect the new representative's role. This speech act can also contribute to the smooth functioning of classroom management and communication, as the class now has a designated intermediary between students and the teacher.

11. Teacher: You have a final term examination in the coming month.

In the speech act 11, the teacher says, you have a term examination next month. This is a speech act that serves as an assertion speech act since the teacher is delivering a factual information on something that is going to happen which will be of importance to the students in their academic work. The classification of assertive speech acts according to Searle (1969) is that in which the speaker makes commitment to the truth of the said proposition. An illocutionary force of this statement is informing and reminding students on the upcoming examination and so, redirecting their focus on how important it is to be prepared beforehand. Through such announcement, the teacher creates a clear understanding, and student can arrange his/her studying efforts, which is the key to academic success. The perlocutionary effect can be the heightened awareness of the students, their sense of urgency to start or work harder on their revision, and the more concentrated attitude toward their studies.

12. Teacher: Principles like respect, beneficence, and justice are very important to follow in both clinical and professional settings.

According to Speech Act 12, the teacher mentions that such values as respect, beneficence, and justice are highly essential principles to be followed not only in the clinical environment but in professional one. This statement represents an assertive type of speech act because the teacher is stating something regarding the importance of core ethical principles in the field of nursing and healthcare practice. Searle (1969) has defined it as assertive speech acts where the speaker makes the statement with the promise that it is true. The illocutionary power of this statement is to bring out the need to follow these ethical principles, thus directing the focus of the students to the values that form the basis of professional behavior. The teacher emphasizes the values of respect, beneficence, and justice, which allows not only transferring the necessary knowledge but also influencing the attitude and expectations of students on how they should behave ethically in their future positions. The perlocutionary effect can involve more awareness of ethical norms by the students, a greater desire to apply the norms in practice and a more profound understanding of the importance of ethics to clinical and professional spheres.

4.1.4 Week Four: Teacher 4 – Introduction to Nursing Research

In Week Four, the interactions between Teacher 4 and the students in the Introduction to Nursing Research class revealed a variety of speech acts.

13. Teacher: We would be happy to offer a research assistant position at this university.

The teacher mentions in Speech Act 13, we would be delighted to provide you with a research assistant position in this university. This statement is a commissive speech act since the teacher is stating that he is willing and committed to offer students an opportunity to work as a research assistant. Illocutionary force used in this case is to educate and encourage the students by suggesting that their practice and efforts might be rewarded with concrete benefits, i.e., a research assistantship at the university. This is a motivational speech act where students are encouraged to be top students and professionals because they know that their efforts can be awarded. The perlocutionary effect of this utterance can be that, students get to feel inspired to do well in their studies and to participate more in studies and research activities, hoping to be selected to hold such a post. The aspiration and positive mood in the classroom also is formed with the assistance of the statement of the teacher: students observe a visible connection between their achievements in the studying process and their future.

14. Teacher: Be it that you do not concentrate on studies, your career as a researcher can be endangered.

In the Speech Act 14, the teacher says, “Unless you focus on your studies, your research career might be jeopardized. The speech act is commissive speech act because the teacher is reminding the students of the adverse effects of failing to concentrate on their scholarly duties. The illocutionary force, in this case, is to warn and encourage the students by reminding them of the fact that their present research is directly connected to their future research opportunities. The teacher is trying to show that she wants her students to put in their studies in order to protect their future as students and professionals by putting forward a condition of such results. The perlocutionary implication of this utterance could be that students will be keener and more dedicated to their education and understand that the only way they can achieve success is through hard work in the long run. This is also a speech act that can be used to support the importance of hard work and responsibility in the academic set up.

15. Teacher: Before we move on would you like to take a little break?

In Speech Act 15, the teacher poses a question to the students saying, Would you like a quick break and then we continue? This statement is a directive speech act since the teacher is initiating a polite request and asking the students to choose in terms of whether they would like to take a break or not. The illocutionary force used in this case is to provide students with the time to take a break and have a drink that shows that I consider their comfort and well-being during the lesson. The teacher should also motivate students to participate in classroom decision-making by formulating the suggestion to a question. The perlocutionary act of this speech can be that students will feel important and respected and this can lead to a better involvement and attention of the students once the lesson returns. Other students will share their preference and short break will ensure that the focus and productivity are maintained.

16. Teacher: Have you considered following something special in nursing in terms of research?

The teacher, in the act of speech 16, poses the question: Have you ever considered becoming a unique researcher in the field of nursing? The speech act is a directive type because the teacher is asking the students to consider their academic and career goals. The illocutionary force in this context will be to persuade the students to think of less traditional or new avenues of research in the nursing profession and thus become creative and think independently. The perlocutionary impact of such speech act can be that students start thinking about their personal interests and possible contribution to the field and it might motivate students to find new subjects of research or methods. Other students would then react by giving their ideas or showing curiosity in unconventional research directions.

4.1.5 Week Five: Teacher 5 Trends and Issues in Health Care.

In Week Five, several kinds of speech acts were detected in classroom conversations between Teacher 5 and the learners in the Trends and Issues in Health Care Teacher: We will adapt our teaching methods to keep up with the progress in health care and technology.

14. Teacher: We have to change and give something back to the society, and do our best to improve health care standards.

In the act of speech 17, the teacher says, we have to reform and serve society and we must work to raise the standard of health care. This statement is an assertive speech act, because the teacher is stating his/her solid belief that the collective responsibility of health care professionals in bringing positive change is there. The illocutionary force in this case is to encourage and uplift the students to see their future roles as not only a job, but a chance to do anything significant to the society and to strive on to ensure the quality of health care is enhanced constantly. Perlocutionary effect of this speech could be the feeling of greater purpose and responsibility in students, who would in turn take an active and ethical role in their school work and future occupations. This message can create the feeling of unity and mission in the classroom environment because students will feel that the work they do has a much greater effect than the individual success.

15. Teacher: What is your opinion on the role of media in influencing the trends in health care?

In the second act of the speech by the teacher, he poses the question: What do you think of the role of the media in creating health care trends? The utterance is done as a directive speech act because the teacher is asking students to express their views and have a critical discussion concerning the role of media in health care. The illocutionary force in this case is to get students to think and deliberate on how media coverage, communicating to the masses, and delivering information can influence what people think, what policies and practices the health care industry is doing. The perlocutionary effect of such speech act can be that students start thinking in terms of the complex interdependence of media and health care and refer to their own experience, ongoing events or to scholarly materials to reflect in the discussion. This question can be actively discussed, help to give rise to various opinions, and lead to a better examination of the social aspects that determine trends in health care.

16. Teacher: What are the special aspects of health care reporting that make it different on other news?

In Speech Act 19, the teacher asks the question, what are the distinguishing characteristics of health care reporting that make it different than the rest of the news? This statement can be defined as a directive form of a speech act since the teacher is asking the students to think and state their interpretation of particular aspects that make health care journalism different as compared to any other form of news coverage. The illocutionary force in this case is to reflect the students towards analyzing and discussing elements like accuracy, sensitivity, ethics, use of technical language and the probable health and policy implication on the people. The perlocutionary effect of such speech act can be the fact that the students will participate in the thoughtful discussion basing their arguments on the examples of the events that currently happen or on their personal observation to determine and describe the peculiarities of health care reporting. It can result in better understanding of the issues and work journalists have to cope with in the health sector, and the significance of open and adult communication in forming the opinion of the populace.

17. Teacher: Welcome, my dear students, how you are doing?

In Speech Act 20, the teacher welcomes the students in class by saying, how are you doing, my dear students? This statement would be directive form of speech act because the teacher is asking the students to talk about their present condition or emotions. The illocutionary force involved here is to form a relationship, to make the atmosphere relaxed and show concern about the well-being of the students. This type of greetings will contribute to establishing a favorable atmosphere of the session and promote open communication. The perlocutionary effect can be that students will feel that they are being heard and feel appreciated, which can raise the level of their comfort and their readiness to take an active part in classroom discussions.

4.1.5 Week Five: Teacher 5 Trends and Issues in Health Care.

In Week Five, several kinds of speech acts were detected in classroom conversations between Teacher 5 and the learners in the Trends and Issues in Health Care Teacher: We will adapt our teaching methods to keep up with the progress in health care and technology.

14. Teacher: We have to change and give something back to the society, and do our best to improve health care standards.

In the act of speech 17, the teacher says, we have to reform and serve society and we must work to raise the standard of health care. This statement is an assertive speech act, because the teacher is stating his/her solid belief that the collective responsibility of health care professionals in bringing positive change is there. The illocutionary force in this case is to encourage and uplift the students to see their future roles as not only a job, but a chance to do anything significant to the society and to strive on to ensure the quality of health care is enhanced constantly. Perlocutionary effect of this speech could be the feeling of greater purpose and responsibility in students, who would in turn take an active and ethical role in their school work and future occupations. This message can create the feeling of unity and mission in the classroom environment because students will feel that the work they do has a much greater effect than the individual success.

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4.2 Discussion

The discourse of speech acts within KMU classroom scenario illustrates that there is a dynamic interaction of assertive, directive, expressive, commissive and declarative acts all of which are communicative and pedagogical in their roles. The results are in line with the earlier studies on the speech act theory and how it is applied in institutional and educational settings. The assertive speech acts like stating facts, explaining, and reminding could often be seen in the interactions observed in the classroom under analysis (e.g., Understanding nursing

competence and its types is important; You have a final term examination in the coming month). It is in line with the results of Santos and Kurniadi (2020), who found that assertive speech acts were the most common in EFL classrooms and the percentage of utterances taught was 57. The prevalence of assertives in both the research studies can be explained by the instructional character of classroom discourse, in which the role of the teachers is to deliver information, to explain the concepts, and to provide information. On the same note, Suryanti (2020) discovered that assertive (representative) speech acts like stating, believing, and assuring were prevalent in the talk show context, which is driven by the demand to provide information and credibility. Questions, requests, orders were also rather the feature of the KMU classrooms (e.g., What is the difference between medical and surgical nursing? Would you like to have a short break before we continue?). Such things are used to generate responses, motivate action and influence the behavior of the student. The article by Azizah (2020) also found similar categories of directives speech acts within the movie "Kartini" such as questioning, requesting, and commanding, and pointed at the flexibility of the directives in different communicative situations. The combination of direct and indirect directives used in the classroom, which are frequently diminished by signs of politeness (e.g., a sign of politeness like the word please), is an indication of being sensitive to social hierarchy and the necessity to preserve the respectful learning environment. This is resonated in Raza et al. (2025) where the authors discovered that the most common methods of internal and external modification used by Pakistani teachers included humbly and kindly to negotiate institutional hierarchies and provide pragmatic competence. Expressive speech acts like greetings, apology, praise, encouragement became central in building a rapport and a good classroom environment (e.g. Hi, good afternoon, dear students, I am sorry I am late, excellent). Syafitri (2020) confirmed the value of expressives in social harmony and emotional bonding by stating that the Facebook statuses of apology, gratitude, pride, and encouragement represent a wide range of expressive actions. A large prevalence of expressive speech acts (33 percent) in online comments was also reported by Che Hassan & Nor (2022), which demonstrates their importance in digital and in-person communication. Expressive are not only used to complete social rituals, but positive reinforcement to encourage students and demonstrate the behavior expected in the profession in the context of the classroom as was in the case of the Professional Ethics for Nurses course. Commissive speech acts were also less common and manifested themselves in the form of an offer and a warning (ex: We would be happy to offer you a research assistant position at this university; Your research career can be ruined because you do not concentrate on your studies). These actions are indicators that the speaker is ready to do it or will do it in the future, according to the analysis of Azizah (2020) of promises and offers in the dialogue in movies. Changes in classroom roles and responsibilities were carried out through declarative speech acts, as was the case with the appointment of a new class representative, which Salih (2022) confirmed has the performative character of declaratives in literary speech. The speech acts used in the classrooms in the KMU illustrate a high degree of pragmatic competence both on the part of the teachers and students as they maneuver institutional norms, societal hierarchy and cultural expectations. According to Raza et al. (2025), it is essential to build pragmatic competence during teacher training when formality and hierarchy are the main determinants of communication. Risks of indirectness and

exchanges (e.g., asking the teacher how well she is), the use of politeness strategies could be seen as the evidence of awareness of these social interactions. Khamkhien (2022) emphasizes the importance of social status in determining speech act strategies, in which students use both direct and indirect refusals based on the status of the interlocutor. Equally, the KMU data indicate that teachers and students accommodate their speech acts to preserve respect and politeness particularly in requests and apologies. Communicative goals facilitated by functional application of speech acts in classroom include information exchange, participation, motivation and relationship-building. Christianto (2020) emphasizes that locutionary, illocutionary, and the perlocutionary acts are important in the classroom communication because each one of them helps to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The analysis of KMU proves the idea that teachers can use speech acts to address the content and organize the classroom process, promote critical thinking, and assist the student development. The speech act analysis in KMU classrooms is correlated with the previous research findings in different settings. Acts of assertion, directive, expressive, commissive and declarative are all important in classroom discourse manifesting universal and context-specific patterns of communication. Cultural awareness and pragmatic competence apply to the strategic application of speech acts that can improve the quality of interaction in the classroom and lead to positive learning experiences. Further studies and educator education must further focus on the cultivation of pragmatic skills that will promote good and respectful communication in schools.

5. Conclusions

The speech act analysis conducted on KMU classroom environments shows how language is a complex process in pedagogical interactions. Expressive acts are used by teachers to create a friendly environment and tone, assertive acts are used to present information and stress on the main points, directive acts are used to encourage the discussion and make the students active, commissive acts are used to motivate and warn students, and declarative acts are used to provide roles and responsibilities. Students, on their part, react with assertive and directive behavior which is an indication of understanding, engagement and respect to classroom norms. These communicative practices do not only serve to transmit knowledge, they also help to create a working learning environment that is collaborative, respectful and ethically based. The results provide strong arguments on the importance of speech act theory as a tool that can be used to analyze classroom discourse and emphasize the importance of educators being sensitive to their language selections to facilitate effective teaching, learning, and professional growth. Finally, speech acts when used strategically lead to better interaction in the classroom, help students achieve their learning goals, and equip students to meet the communicative needs of their job in the future.

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