

## 1. Introduction

Language is a means of communication through which human beings can achieve certain goals by sending and receiving messages. Chomsky (1986: 15) defines language as “a set of very specific universal principles which are intrinsic properties of the human mind and part of our species’ genetic endowment”. Many of the communicative acts people attempt to produce and comprehend are speech acts such as requesting, apologizing, warning, thanking, greeting, advising and criticizing.

Levinson (1983: 5) defines pragmatics as “the study of language usage”. Kasper and Rose (2002: 2) define it as “the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context”. Pragmatic studies are concerned with speech acts within a social context. The ability to comprehend and produce these acts is referred to as pragmatic competence which is concerned with both cultural and linguistic knowledge and the social distance of the interlocutors. In performing any action such as warning, promising, threatening or complaining, some universal aspects are drawn from the social context in which each action is performed.

To communicate effectively with people from different cultures, one needs to be aware of their cultural background (e.g., thoughts, customs, beliefs) in addition to their language ability. Language and culture are interdependent so much so that knowing the culture of the target language helps second/foreign language learners to communicate effectively. The relationship between language and culture is embedded in the rules of speaking in any speech community. Hymes (1972: 278) maintains that “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless”.

Searle (1969: 16) states that “language is a form of rule-governed behavior” and defines speech acts as “the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication”. He suggests that by speaking a language, one performs speech acts, such as giving commands or asking questions, which are performed in accordance with certain linguistic rules.

### a. Definitions of Speech Acts

Widdowson (1996: 106) argues that the study of the meanings of speech acts is not essentially different from the study of sentence meaning, and therefore it is part of semantics. The meaning of a speech act is dependent too on its being performed in an appropriate context. Therefore; we have two types of study: A: a study of the meanings of sentences and, B: a study of the performances of speech acts.

Cutting (2002: 16) says that "Austin defines speech acts as the actions performed in saying something". Speech act theory clarifies that the action performed when an utterance is produced can be analyzed on three different levels.

Crystal (2003 : 427) defines "speech act" as a term derived from the work of the philosopher J. L. Austin, and now used widely in linguistics, to refer to the theory which analyzes the role of the utterance in relation to the behavior of speaker and hearer interpersonal communicative. It is a communicative activity which is defined with references to the intentions of the speakers while speaking and the effects they achieve on listener, i.e. how the listeners interpret the meaning behind the speakers' utterance. Yule (2006 : 118) also defines speech acts as an "action performed by a speaker with an utterance".

Austin pointed out that there are many utterances that do not report or constate anything. Therefore they are not true or false, but rather than the uttering of the sentence of the sentence is or part of an action, e.g. I name this ship Jane, I bet you ten pence it will rain tomorrow. By uttering such sentences the speaker actually names the ship or makes the bet, but he is not making any kind of statement that can be regarded as true or false. These sentences are not constative, they are performative (Palmer,1981 : 62).

A lot of other utterances do preposition in the form of either statements or questions but other grammatical form are also possible, for example :

**I had a busy day today.**

**Have you called your mother?**

**Your dinner's ready.**

Such utterances are connected in some way with events or happening in a possible world. i.e. one that can be experienced or imagined a world in which such a preposition can be experienced or imagined a world in which such a preposition can be either true or false.

They have been called constative utterances". Austin focuses on the group of sentences labeled by him "performative" and he states that this kind of sentences contain certain words saying of those words constitutes the performing of an action "I do", for example in saying "I name this ship "Queen Elizabeth", the speaker is not describing what he is doing nor stating how he is doing it, but actually performing the action of naming ship, from that moment the ship is named. (Coulthard,1985 : 13).

## 1.2 Levels of Analyzing Speech Acts

Yule (1996: 48) says that we have three levels in analyzing speech acts. The first level of analysis is the words themselves. The second level is what the speaker is doing with their words. The last level is concerned with the result of uttering the words. These levels will be discussed in detail:

### 1 - Locutionary Act:

Locutionary act is the basic act of utterance, or producing a meaningful linguistic expression. If we have difficulty with forming the sounds and words to create a meaningful utterance in a language, then we might fail to produce an illocutionary act.

### 2 - Illocutionary Force:

Illocutionary force is used when we form an utterance with some kind of function in mind. The illocutionary act is performed via the communicative force of an utterance. We might use the utterance to give a statement, an offer, an explanation, or for some other communicative purposes. This act is known as the illocutionary force of the utterance.

### 3 - Perlocutionary Act:

We do not simply create an utterance with a function without intending to have an effect. This dimension is called perlocutionary act. Depending on the circumstances, we will utter many utterances on the assumption that the hearer will recognize the effect we intended.

Cutting (2002: 16) mentions that Austin developed, but soon abandoned, the performative hypothesis that behind each utterance there is a performative verb, such as "to order", "to warn", "to admit", and "to promise" that make the illocutionary explicit.

Verschueren(1999 : 22- 3) also refers to these levels as follows :

- 1- A locutionary act : It means the act of saying something. When one utter a string of sounds, he is using a language in a normal way and we can say that this string of sound contain the constative aspect of the speech act. For example "I promise to come here tomorrow".
- 2- An illocutionary act : Which refers to what is done in saying something. When a speaker utters a sentence, he/she performs a certain action through that utterance, e.g. when one says "I promise to come here tomorrow", he is not just uttering a series of sounds, but he is doing something in that utterance. For example, he is not just speaking but he is promising.
- 3- A perlocutionary act : It means what is done by saying something. When a speaker utters a sentence, he/she does a certain action by that sentence, for example, "I promise to come here tomorrow". The speaker makes us count on his coming here tomorrow.

### 1.3 Speech Acts Classifications

#### 1- Austin's a classification of speech act.

Allen & Corder (1973 : 45) states that Austin developed the theory of the speech act and he classified speech act according to their illocutionary force into five types.

- 1- Verdicatives : which consist in the delivering of finding official or unofficial, finding evidence or reasons as to value facts. It judges on things (by judges) . It has a connection with the truth and falsity. It shows whether the content of a verdict is true or false. It uses verbs such as (read it as, assess, put it at, date, value, describe, analyze ... etc.).
- 2- Exercitives: Giving of a decision in favour of or against a certain course of action supports it. It represents a decision that something should be so as a distinct from a judgment is that it is so . e.g. warn, appoint, direct, beg, give, advise, vote for, command ..etc.
- 3- Commissives : means to "commit speaker to specify to at a specific action". There is a distinction between intending and promising . e.g. Promise, mean to, adopt, plan, intend, swear, give my word,... etc.
- 4- Behabitives : Which mean the reaction to other people behavior and fortunes. It also includes attitudes and expressions of attitudes on others, past behavior. There is a connection between both stating or describing with what our feelings are and expressing. e.g.
  - a - For apologize we have "apologize".
  - b - For sympathy we have "deplore" , "compliment" , "control" , "congratulate" and so on.
  - c - For thanks we have "thank" .
  - d - For attitudes we have "don't mind" , "criticize" , "overlook" , "commend" ... etc.
  - e – For greeting we have "welcome" , "bid you forwell"
  - f - For wishes "bless , "curs" , "toast" , "wish" ...
  - g - For challenge "dare" , "protest" , "challenge" ... etc.
- 5- Expositives : It may be used in acts of exposition involving the expounding of views, the conducting of arguments and the clarifying of usages and references, etc. "deny , state , identify , class , ... etc. (Allen & Corder, 1973 : 45)

#### 1.3 2- Searle's classification of speech act

Searle proposes five macro-classes of illocutionary act :

- 1- Representation : The point or purpose is to commit the speaker to something being the case in other words, it is an utterance in which the speaker fits his words to the world and which

incorporates his belief. The degree of belief can obviously vary between “swear”, “suggest” and “hypothesizes” and affect features can be incorporated in “boast” and “complain”. Coulthard ( 1985:22-4)

Yule (1996: 53) indicates that representatives are these kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be the case or not. Statements of facts, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions are examples of the speaker representing the world as he/she believes it is. For example:

**The earth is round**

**Chomsky didn't write about peanuts**

2- Directives : They are all attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. In this class, the speaker wants to achieve a future situation in which the world will match his words and thus his class includes not simply “order” and “request”, but more subtly “invite” “dare” and “challenge”. Coulthard ( 1985:22-4)

Yule (1996: 54) says that directives are these kinds of speech acts that speakers use to get someone else to do something. They express what the speaker wants. They are commands, orders, requests, suggestions, and they can be positive or negative. For example:

**Don't touch it**

**Open the door, please**

3- Commissive : A category taken from Austin, are like directives concerned with uttering the words to match the world, but this time, the point is to commit the speaker himself to acting and it necessarily involves intention Coulthard ( 1985:22-4).

Yule (1996:54) states that these kinds are those of speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future action. They express what the speaker intends. They are promises, threats, refusals, pledges. They can be performed by the speaker alone, or by the speaker as a member of a group.

For example:

**I'll be back**

**will not do that**

4- Expressive : It is much less well defined, there is no dynamic relationship between words and world and no primitive psychological verb instead the illocutionary point of this class is into expressing the psychological state. As example he offers “thank” , “apologize” and “deplore” Coulthard ( 1985:22-4).

Cutting (2002: 17) says that the expressive group include acts which the words state what the speaker feels, such as "apologizing",

"praising", "congratulating", "deploring", and "regretting". For example:

**A man without a wife is like a radio without a wave**

**I'm rich and I'm poor- rich is better**

5- Declarations : They consist of acts which in their uttering after the world and includes many of those which Austin (1962) considered performatives . They typically require an extra linguistic institution which provides rules for their use , a court committee , church , rule book , except for special cases of declarations concerned with language use itself for example 'I define , abbreviate , name or call Coulthard ( 1985:22-4).

Yule (1996: 53) indicates that declarations are these words and expressions that change the world by their very utterance. The speaker has to have a special institutional role in a specific context in order to perform a declaration appropriately. For example:

**I hereby pronounce you man and wife**

**This court sentences you to ten years**

A major difference between Austin and Searle lies in the assignment of the illocutionary force of an utterance . It is the successful realization of the speakers' intention , but for Searle a production of the listener's interpretation Coulthard ( 1985:22-4).

#### **1.4 Felicity Conditions of Speech Acts**

Austin stresses the conventional nature of the performative act and that and an agreed procedure must be followed. There are four conditions that must be satisfied if the performative act is not misfire.

- 1- There must exist an accepted conventional procedure, having a certain conventional effect, by this condition. Austin draws attention to the fact that there is a limited number of performative act and one cannot arbitrarily adapt a procedure to perform what appears to be a similar act. They are procedures for christening babies but not dogs, for naming ship but not houses.
- 2- The particular person and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure involved (Coulthard, 1985 : 14 – 34).

This condition emphasized the fact that the uttering of the correct and appropriate words is sufficient to achieve the successful performance of the act.

- 3- The procedure must be executed by all particulars participants both correctly and completely.
- 4- These conditions cover misfires which occur despite the existence of a conventional procedure and the presence of the appropriate circumstances . The problem may be verbal or non verbal . The

marriage ceremony includes yes – no questions " Do you take this woman ..... but "yes" is not an acceptable answer and the ceremony has a fixed point for the ring to be place on the finger . Failure to produce the ring or placing it on the finger at a different point in ceremony would again cause the act to misfire .

Also the actual speech act will take the grammatical form of having :

- 1- A first person subject .
- 2- A verb in the present tense .
- 3- It may or may not also include the word hereby . For example I (hereby ) name this ship Jane Parker et al (2005:14-35).

### **1.5 The Constitutive Rules**

Constitutive rules which control the ways in which an utterance of a given form is heard as realizing a given illocutionary act. Searle's aim is not to describe the constitutive rules for the illocutionary act for the promising. He suggested that four rules govern the making of a promise:

- 1- Propositional content rule: In a promise, a future act must be predicated of the speaker himself, he cannot promise to have done something nor promise that someone else will do something.
- 2- Preparatory rules:
  - a) A promise is defective if the promisor doesn't believe the promisee wants the act performed, or even if the thing promised is unknown to the promisor, something the promisee doesn't want it to be done, otherwise whatever his intention, the speaker will be uttering a warning or threat.
  - b) A speaker cannot promise to do something he would (be expected to) do anyway as Searle observes, any husband who promises his wife not to be unfaithful during the next week is likely to provide more anxiety to that comfort .
- 3- Sincerity rule:

The speaker must intend to perform the action . It is off course possible for someone to make a promise with an intention at all of honoring it, but then, Searle contends, he is abusing the procedure.
- 4- The Essential rule: The uttering of the words count as the understanding of an obligation to perform the action.

(Coulthard, 1985 : 18)

### **1.6 Direct and indirect speech act**

Direct speech act means using language in such way there is a direct connection between sentence meaning and speaker meaning. The form of the utterance the speaker uses parallels with what the speaker is intending to convey. For example when we want to know a certain thing

that we don't know we use a sentence like “can you tell me the name of the book”, here we use the form of a question as a direct speech act.

Indirect speech act on the other hand means when a speaker uses a form of an utterance which its meaning is different from the structure of the utterance, there is no connection between the form and function of the utterance. The speaker intends another meaning behind that utterance, for example when your statement makes a request or orders (ibid:19).

"It's cold here"

The speaker means the meaning of the sentence and something else which the listener should interpret correctly. The listener may also detect an extra or indirect meaning, there should be an agreement between the speaker's intended meaning and the listener interpretation of the utterance. We use the indirect speech act because of the view that considers it more polite especially in certain societies (Finch, 2000 : 183).

According to Cutting (2002: 19) speech acts can be classified into two types: direct and indirect speech acts. He says that Searle's explanation is as follows: he says that the speaker using a direct speech act wants to communicate the literal meaning that the words express; there is a direct relationship between the form and the function. This means that a declarative form such as: "I go to school everyday" has the function of a statement or assertion; an interrogative form such as "what are you doing?" has the function of the question; and an imperative form such as "give me the pen. please" has the function of a request or order.

Searle(1979:17) on the other hand explain that someone using an indirect speech act wants to communicate a different meaning from the apparent surface meaning; the form and function are not directly related. This means that there is a pragmatic meaning, and one speech act is performed through another speech act. Thus. a declarative form such as "I was going to get another one"; an interrogative form such as "can you pass me the salt" has the function of a request or order.

Finch (2000 : 183) stresses that in indirect speech act, the only approach which can be taken here is pragmatic. Searle (1979:19) suggests that in understanding indirect speech acts we combine our knowledge of three elements :

- 1- The felicity condition of direct speech act: in which the speaker should be in an appropriate situation to make the utterance. E.g. “I can't promise you my expensive watch if I don't have one”.
- 2- The context of the utterance: It means the situation in which it is made. This gives the clue as to how it should be interpreted.

3- The conversational principles: These principles represent assumptions which both speakers and listeners should hold about relevance, orderliness and truthfulness.

The combination of these three elements draws much on inference because much of what is meant is not stated or found in the utterance itself, but in the intended meaning, which should be interpreted correctly by the listeners.

### **1.8 Warning is Used for Getting the Attention of the Addressee**

Austin (1962: 118) classifies warning under exercitives in which one exercises the power, right and influence over another, suggests that warnings can sometimes be performed nonverbally as 'swinging [one's] stick', for example, can be understood as a warning. Along the same lines, Searle (1969: 67) suggests that most warnings are essentially hypothetical 'if -then' statements: "If you do not do X, then Y will happen".

Warning may also serve as an indirect speech act. For example,

**In it is raining heavily outside.**

One may warn the hearer by uttering an explicit warning (producing the illocutionary effect of warning). Alternatively, the perlocutionary effect of warning can be expressed by making the addressee aware that this rain is dangerous (causing him/ her to be warned). A warning can serve two functions, directive or assertive (warning the hearer to do or not to do something), depending on the presupposed interests of both hearer and speaker. Searle (1979: 28-9) maintains that warning is a speech act which belongs to either directive or assertive syntax. The difference between assertive and directive functions is that the former tells one something that may or may not be in one's best interest while the latter tells one what to do in a certain case.

Along the same lines, Allwood (1977: 55) reports that the act of warning should be identified through the intention to warn (i.e., the intention to make somebody aware of danger), some specific type of explicit behavior that the agent conducts to warn others, some specific contexts, and some person actually being warned (i.e. taking the warning in his/her course of action). Moreover, Leech (1983: 208) claims that there are cases like warn, which belong to both the assertive and the directive categories, as shown in the following examples:

- a. They warned us that the food was expensive (assertive).
- b. They warned us to take enough money (directive).

Wierzbicka (1987: 177-8) claims that 'the verb **warn**' stands for a speech act which is extremely common and versatile. This versatility can

be reflected, among other things, in a wide range of syntactic patterns which can be used to make a warning". She also proposes the following formula for the illocutionary force of warning: "I say this because I want to cause you to be able to cause that bad thing not to happen to you". Maintaining her claim, she reports that "[i]n indirect speech, one can warn that, warn about, warn of, warn off, warn not to (do something) or warn to (do something)".

In this study, warning refers to the different strategies used for getting the attention of the addressee and making him/her alert to a specific danger or bad consequences. It also refers to the way in which speakers use these strategies either directly or indirectly, politely or impolitely.

### **1.8 Population of the Study**

A population is the group of persons whom the survey is about. A research population is known as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects to which the researcher likes the results of the study to be generalized.

The population of the study includes all students in second year in department of English – College of Education for Human Sciences, who are considered to be speakers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The whole population of the current study are (40) during the academic year 2015-2016. The students come from various language backgrounds and academic fields and they vary in age.

### **1.9 The Analysis of the Results**

#### **1.9.1 Scoring Scheme of the Achievement Test**

Scoring scheme is the way according to which the obtained results are interpreted properly. The whole mark is given to the test is 100 which is distributed among (20) items. These items which, are achievement test, are related to warning. The researcher asks the students to "Do as Required", he presents (20) sentences in real situations. Each sentence has a support "word(s)" that students should use in their answers.

The test consists of (20) sentences. Each sentence is given two marks. The pass mark is (20) out of (40).

Any students who give correct answers for all sentences will be given forty marks. A student who fails to give the right answer for all sentences will be given zero.

After forming a test on the students of second year, the results that are obtained are the following:

- (1) Students who got (1-10) are (3)
- (2) Students who got (11-20) are (10)
- (3) Students who got (21-30) are (17)

(4) Students who got (31-40) are (10)

The statistical means that are used to measuring the students' responses is:

**The Total of Students' Marks**

**The Total o Students' Number**

**685 = 17.125**

**40**

**17.125 is the real average.**

The Hypothetical average , if the students answers all the sentences correctly, will be (40).

**40 = 20**

**2**

The hypothetical average is (20) while the real average is (17.125).

The test's results show that students' performance in warning is weak. The real average which is (17.125) is less than the hypothetical one which is (20). There are high differences between the real and the hypothetical average. So their performance is low in speech acts especially in warning.

Teachers should be receptive to new ideas and be ready to incorporate those that improve learners performance and increase their achievement into the classroom activities. They have a responsibilities to enable the students to interact and be able to understand, learn, and speak English language fluently.

## **2. Conclusion**

This research has come up with the following conclusion:

We can conclude that utterances contain both constative and performative elements, are all sayings and doings at the same time. Constative and performative terminology are replaced by three-fold distinctions. 'Locutions' are act of saying something, '\illocutions' are what is done in saying something and 'perlocutions' are what is done by saying something.

Speech acts enable the learners to communicate in the field of their specification simply because the main concern of speech acts courses is the communicative needs of the learners that are actually used in their practical life.

Speech acts can grow the students' knowledge in foreign language and can enable the students to respond to what they write and finally give beneficial feedback.

In summary, speech acts are trends, not absolutes, and are provided as an illustration of the possible differences in written foreign language. An understanding of possible differences in speech acts will give us a better

understanding of the possible gap between the opportunities of teachers and students. This can also be reflected in classes in which students are aware of and comfortable with what is expected of them. Teachers should teach academic genres and understand that not all students will have the same assumptions about what is appropriate and valuable. In addition, cultural differences in the organization and presentation of ideas should be considered in the assessment of written work and provision of feedback to different students. It is important to recognize the cultural foundations of the techniques of writing and give a prominent place to explanation of writing requirements and patterns in speech acts. Students need to be informed that in all modes of written assessment, there is a great deal of emphasis placed on different presentation, and progression of ideas is expected.

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### **Appendix (A)**

Use the prompts below to warn your friend. Give the reasons in brackets as your justification:

1. student breaks a rule, and you're sure the student knows what rule was broken. Warn him
- 2.The stove is hot. Warn the child use the prompt (burn)
3. There is a bull in the meadow. (warn)
- 4.The food was expensive. Use the prompt (take enough money).
5. Warn your child not to speak about people behind their backs. ( not cool)
- 6.Warning a child against talking to adult strangers asking for directions. (call the police immediately)
- 7.Warning a brother against driving without a license. (get arrested or a ticket)
- 8.Warning a friend against climbing a tree in the woods.(hurt yourself)
- 9.Warning children against playing around an electric outlet.(danger)
10. Warning against driving recklessly. (slow down).

11. drink that milk. (sour)
12. eat that bread. (stale).
13. go too close to the machine (dangerous).
14. work overtime every (not good for your breath).
15. exceed the speed limit (cause an accident).
16. drink alcohol (bad for your health).
17. your brother is about to jump into cold water. You are warning him (get a cold)
18. warn your friend that there is a vicious dog behind him.
19. your friend is smoking too much warn him.
20. park here. (block the entrance).