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AN ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACTS USED BY ENGLISH TEACHER IN GIVING FEEDBACK DURING CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Angel Yuliana[1], Marwa Marwa[2], Mahira Dinda[3], Aqli Rahmana[4]
[1] Lancang Kuning University; angelyuliana37@gmail.com
[2] Lancang Kuning University; marwa@unilak.ac.id
[3] Lancang Kuning University; mahiradinda13@gmail.com
[4] Lancang Kuning University; aqlirahmana33@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the types and functions of speech acts employed by English teachers when delivering feedback during classroom interactions, focusing on their pragmatic roles in supporting language learning. Using a qualitative descriptive research design, the investigation is grounded in Speech Act Theory by Searle (1975) and Austin (1962), which provides a theoretical framework for analyzing classroom discourse. Data were collected through audio recordings, verbatim transcripts, and observation notes in authentic English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom contexts. Employing purposive sampling, the study involved experienced English teachers whose feedback was systematically analyzed using Searle's taxonomy of speech acts. The findings indicate that assertives and directives dominate classroom feedback, fulfilling cognitive and instructional roles by confirming correctness and guiding student participation. Expressives, such as praise and encouragement, support learner motivation and emotional engagement, while commissives and declarations though less frequent serve to strengthen relational trust and assert institutional authority. These results highlight the multifunctional nature of teacher feedback, positioning it not merely as evaluative discourse but as a strategic pedagogical tool that facilitates learner engagement, regulates behavior, and enhances language acquisition. The study contributes to the global discourse on pragmatic competence in language education and suggests the integration of pragmatic awareness and communicative strategy training into EFL teacher development programs to optimize classroom interaction and improve learner outcomes.

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Corresponding Author:
Angelin Yuliana
[1] Lancang Kuning University; angelyuliana37@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher feedback plays a crucial role in EFL classroom interaction, serving multiple functions and influencing student participation. Research indicates that teachers employ various types of verbal feedback, including evaluative, corrective, descriptive, interactional, and motivational feedback (Irawan & Salija, 2017). The context of the exchange affects both the provision of feedback by teachers and its utilization by learners, with explicit language-focused exchanges being most conducive to feedback use (Oliver & Mackey, 2003). Evaluative feedback is commonly used to acknowledge and encourage students, promoting a positive learning environment and active participation (Cahyani et al., 2024). However, balancing different types of feedback, such as interactive and corrective, can enhance learning experiences and student comprehension. Teachers' reasons for using oral feedback include professional responsibility, efficiency, and its positive effects on students (Irawan & Salija, 2017). While most students perceive oral feedback positively, some may be sensitive to it (Irawan & Salija, 2017

Effective teacher feedback is multidimensional in nature. It includes a range of communicative intentions, from praising correct answers to reformulating errors and prompting students to reconsider their responses. These communicative moves are embedded in the broader framework of classroom discourse and reflect the pedagogical goals of the teacher. One useful lens through which feedback can be examined is **speech act theory**, originally introduced by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1975). Speech acts refer to the functional aspects of language what we *do* with words rather than merely what we *say*. In the classroom context, teacher utterances are never neutral; each one performs a particular function, such as instructing, affirming, correcting, requesting, or motivating.

Research on speech acts in English language teaching reveals their importance in classroom interactions. Teachers predominantly use directive speech acts, particularly questions and requests, to engage students and manage the learning process (Sari, 2019). This reflects a teacher-centered approach and establishes authority. Studies have identified various types of speech acts, including locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, which serve different communicative functions (Christianto, 2020). The analysis of teacher feedback through speech act theory provides insights into the pragmatic functions of language in the classroom, revealing how teachers balance encouragement and correction. While directive acts dominate, other types such as representatives, commissives, and expressives are also present, albeit less frequently (Sari, 2019). These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of classroom discourse and its role in facilitating language learning and maintaining teacher-student relationships.

Recent studies have examined speech acts in educational settings, particularly focusing on teacher-student interactions. Research indicates that directive speech acts are the most prevalent in classroom discourse (Andewi & Waziana, 2019; Sari, 2019). These acts, including requestives and questions, are frequently employed in teacher feedback. Teachers use various types of directives, such as need statements, imperatives, and permission directives, to guide and engage students (Andewi & Waziana, 2019). Speech acts play a crucial role in shaping classroom dynamics, with questioning and commanding being common strategies used by teachers to assert their position and influence student behavior (Hidayat et al., 2022). Additionally, expressive and declarative speech acts have been found to impact students' motivation and confidence in learning English (Hidayat et al., 2022). These findings highlight the importance of speech acts in facilitating effective communication and instruction in educational contexts.

Research on speech acts in Indonesian EFL classrooms highlights their crucial role in teaching and learning. Studies have identified various types of speech acts used by teachers and students, including locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts (Hidayat et al., 2022; Christianto, 2020). Teachers frequently employ questioning and commanding speech acts, reflecting their authoritative position (Hidayat et al., 2022). Speech acts are classified as direct or indirect, and fall into categories such as assertive, commissive, directive, and expressive (Zulianti & Nurchurifiani, 2021; Zulianti, 2018). The use of speech acts has significant implications for the learning environment, including improving students' understanding, increasing motivation, and building positive teacher-student relationships (Zulianti & Nurchurifiani, 2021; Zulianti, 2018). Additionally, politeness strategies in speech acts can create closeness or formality in the classroom, influencing the overall atmosphere and student engagement (Zulianti & Nurchurifiani, 2021).

Teacher feedback in ESL classrooms plays a crucial role in shaping classroom discourse and student learning. Research shows that feedback serves multiple functions beyond evaluating correctness, including regulating turn-taking and maintaining a supportive climate (H. Darong & Stanislaus Guna, 2023). The context of teacher-student exchanges significantly influences feedback provision and student uptake, with explicit language-focused exchanges being most conducive to feedback use (Oliver & Mackey, 2003). Teachers employ various feedback strategies, including positive feedback through non-verbal cues and praise markers, as well as corrective feedback, which is often more explicit. Improving teacher feedback involves considering factors such as appropriate L1 usage, classroom interactional competence, peer feedback integration, and adherence to cooperative principles (Zhang, 2022). Additionally, innovative approaches like the specific-general-specific feedback sandwich model can enhance teacher-student interaction while addressing time constraints (Zhang, 2022). Overall, effective feedback strategies can promote language acquisition and reduce power imbalances in ESL classrooms.

Research on speech acts in English language classrooms reveals that teachers employ various communicative strategies and feedback types to construct effective discourse. Directives are the most frequently used speech acts by teachers, indicating a teacher-centered approach and authority (Andewi & Waziana, 2019). Teachers utilize multiple communication strategies, including literal translation, code-switching, and nonverbal signals, to enhance student performance. Feedback is provided both orally and visually, on individual and group levels. Three types of speech acts are observed in teacher-student interactions: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary (Christianto, 2020). Illocutionary acts, particularly questioning, are prominent in classroom discourse. These findings highlight the complex nature of classroom communication and the importance of teachers' pragmatic strategies in facilitating language learning and maintaining effective interaction with students.

This collection of papers highlights the importance of pragmatics in language teaching and teacher education. Bardovi-Harlig (1996) emphasizes the role of pragmatics research in developing pedagogically appropriate materials and suggests using a speech act framework to translate research into classroom practice. Tran (2023) focuses on teaching speech acts to enhance students' communicative competence. Ishihara (2010) provides an overview of interlanguage pragmatics research and discusses instructional pragmatics, emphasizing the need for pragmatic-focused instruction and assessment. Ishihara (2011) explores the development of teacher cognition related to pragmatic awareness in a professional development seminar, highlighting the effectiveness of interactive approaches in teacher education. These studies collectively underscore the significance of incorporating pragmatics into language teaching pedagogy and teacher training programs to enhance

communicative competence and classroom interaction (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Tran, 2023; Ishihara, 2010; Ishihara, 2011).

What types of speech acts are used by English teachers when giving feedback to students? What are the functions of those speech acts in the context of classroom interaction? To identify the types of speech acts used by teachers in classroom feedback. To analyze the functions of those speech acts in supporting English language learning. The research is grounded in Speech Act Theory (SAT)**,** a branch of pragmatics introduced by philosopher John Searle (1975)**,** building upon the earlier work of J.L. Austin. This theory focuses on how language is used to perform actions, not just to convey information. According to SAT, when people speak, they are not merely producing sounds or sentences; they are also performing actions such as making requests, giving orders, making promises, or offering apologies. Searle categorized speech acts into five main types, each serving different communicative functions in social interaction. These are statements used by the speaker to represent a state of affairs or to describe the world. In the classroom, assertives are commonly used by teachers to provide explanations, confirm correctness, or deliver factual information. For example, a teacher might say, *"That's correct,"* or *"The past tense of 'go' is 'went'."* The purpose of assertives is to commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition. They are essential in affirming student understanding and guiding them toward accurate language use.

Directives are utterances that aim to get the listener to do something. This type includes commands, requests, suggestions, and instructions. In the teaching context, directives are frequently employed to elicit responses, initiate practice, or correct errors, such as *"Please try again,"* or *"Repeat after me."* These speech acts play a crucial role in classroom management and instructional delivery. The effectiveness of directives often depends on how they are phrased polite, indirect directives tend to maintain student motivation better than harsh commands. Commissives express the speaker's intention to perform a future action, including promises, offers, and refusals. In the classroom, teachers may use commissives to reassure students of support, as in *"I'll help you with this later,"* or *"We'll go over this again tomorrow."* Such utterances build trust and establish the teacher's reliability, contributing to a more comfortable and secure learning environment. Expressives convey the speaker's psychological state or emotional reaction to a situation. These can include expressions of praise, encouragement, regret, or surprise. For instance, a teacher might say, *"Good job!"* or *"I'm proud of your progress."* Expressives are vital in fostering a positive classroom atmosphere and in supporting students' affective development. They also help to strengthen the teacher-student relationship and can significantly influence student motivation and confidence. Declarations are unique in that they bring about a change in the external situation simply by being uttered. These include acts like declaring someone has passed a test, appointing a student as group leader, or announcing a classroom rule. For example, *"You pass the test,"* or *"Class is dismissed."* In educational settings, declarations have institutional authority and are used to formalize decisions or acknowledge achievement.

2. METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, which aims to provide a rich, detailed account of the phenomena under investigation without manipulating the research environment. The qualitative descriptive method is particularly suitable for educational research that seeks to understand language use in its natural context. It allows for the in-depth exploration of the ways in which English teachers employ various speech acts during classroom feedback sessions. Rather than testing hypotheses or establishing causal relationships, the focus is on describing the types and functions of speech acts as they

naturally occur in classroom discourse. By using this approach, the researchers aim to capture the subtleties and complexities of teacher-student interactions and interpret them through a pragmatic lens grounded in speech act theory.

To collect comprehensive and authentic data, this study utilizes multiple instruments commonly used in classroom discourse analysis: Audio recordings of real-time classroom interactions were used as the primary source of data. These recordings captured the authentic verbal feedback given by English teachers during teaching sessions, ensuring that the natural use of language and interaction patterns were preserved. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim to produce written texts that could be analyzed systematically. Transcription allows researchers to revisit and closely examine specific utterances, identify speech act types, and determine their pragmatic functions within the context of teacher feedback.

In addition to recordings and transcripts, observation notes were taken during classroom sessions to provide contextual information about non-verbal cues, classroom dynamics, student reactions, and the general environment. These notes support and enrich the interpretation of the speech acts used by teachers. The triangulation of these three instruments ensures a more robust and credible analysis by combining spoken data with contextual insights. The data collected were analyzed using Searle's (1975) speech act taxonomy, which provides a framework for categorizing the functional use of language. According to Searle, speech acts can be classified into five major categories:

These are utterances in which the speaker expresses a belief or states a fact. In the context of classroom feedback, assertives may include statements such as "That's correct," or "This answer is based on what we learned yesterday," where the teacher affirms or provides information.

These speech acts aim to get the hearer to do something. In feedback, directives often take the form of commands, suggestions, or questions designed to elicit a response or encourage further thought. Examples include: "Try again," "Can you explain why?" or "Please check your grammar."

Commissives express the speaker's intention to commit to some future action. Though less frequent in classroom feedback, commissive acts might appear in statements like "I will review this again with you later," showing the teacher's commitment to assist or revisit the topic. Expressives convey the speaker's emotional state or attitude toward a situation. In feedback, expressives often involve praise or criticism, such as "Good job," "I appreciate your effort," or "That's a great improvement," reflecting the teacher's affective response. Declarations bring about a change in the external situation merely by being uttered. In a classroom context, declarations might include phrases like "That's the final answer," or "You may present now," where the teacher's words enact a decision or shift in classroom procedure.

Each utterance identified in the classroom transcripts is analyzed to determine which category of speech act it belongs to and what function it serves in the broader context of teaching and learning. This analysis sheds light on the pedagogical strategies embedded in teacher talk and reveals how speech acts contribute to managing classroom discourse, scaffolding learning, and fostering positive teacher-student relationships.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

3.1.1. Types of speech acts are used by English teachers when giving feedback to students

The analysis of the classroom interactions revealed the presence of various types of speech acts employed by English teachers when giving feedback. Each type serves different functions and occurs with varying frequency, reflecting the communicative priorities of the classroom setting. The table below summarizes the key findings:

Table 1. Summarizes The Key Findings

Speech Act Type	Example from Data	Frequency
Assertives	"That sentence is grammatically correct."	High
Directives	"Can you say that again more clearly?"	High
Expressives	"Excellent answer!"	Moderate
Commissives	"I'll explain it again if needed."	Low
Declarations	"You've got full marks for that."	Rare

Assertives were among the most frequently used speech acts. Teachers often used them to confirm or deny the accuracy of students' responses, provide factual explanations, and validate correct answers. These utterances function to reinforce student understanding and offer clear instructional guidance. Their high frequency demonstrates the teacher's role as a knowledge provider and evaluator of student output.

Directives were equally prevalent and took the form of questions, prompts, and instructions. Teachers used them to elicit student participation, encourage repetition or clarification, and guide learners through tasks. Examples such as "Try to say it using the past tense," reflect the teacher's intent to involve students actively in the learning process. Directives are fundamental in classroom management and in fostering interactive learning.

Expressives appeared moderately throughout the data. These acts, such as praising student performance ("Well done!" or "That's a great example"), helped to maintain a supportive and motivating atmosphere. Expressives were often used following correct responses or visible student effort, highlighting the teacher's appreciation and acknowledgment of student progress.

Commissives were used less frequently but still held importance in shaping student-teacher rapport. When teachers said things like "I'll help you after class," they were making commitments that reinforced trust and emotional support. Although low in frequency, commissives signal the teacher's investment in student success and their willingness to provide ongoing assistance.

Declarations, while rare, had a notable impact. These speech acts were typically used in formal evaluative moments, such as assigning grades or recognizing achievement. For example, "You've passed this assignment" not only communicates a result but also enacts a change in the student's academic status. Declarations carry institutional authority and are used sparingly but meaningfully in the classroom.

Overall, the frequent use of assertives and directives reflects the instructional and interactive nature of classroom communication. Expressives, commissives, and declarations add depth to teacher talk by addressing emotional support, commitment,

and formal assessment. The variety of speech acts observed suggests that effective teaching involves a balance of cognitive and affective strategies to support learner engagement and success.

3.1.2. The Functions of Speech Acts in the Context of Classroom Interaction

The pragmatic functions of speech acts within classroom interaction serve as the foundation of effective pedagogical communication. Drawing on Searle's (1975) classification, this study identifies how each type of speech act assertives, directives, expressives, commissives, and declarations contributes to the communicative dynamics of teacher-student exchanges. These functions are not merely linguistic; they are didactic tools that influence cognition, emotion, behavior, and participation in the learning process. Assertive speech acts are primarily employed by teachers to deliver information, confirm correctness, and explain linguistic forms. In classroom contexts, they serve two critical functions: (1) establishing epistemic authority and (2) reinforcing students' comprehension. When a teacher states, "Your sentence is correct," they are not only confirming the learner's output but also validating the knowledge structure behind it. This function is crucial for language acquisition as it solidifies correct usage and boosts learner confidence. Empirically, frequent use of assertives correlates with increased clarity in student responses and better retention of target structures (Cahyani et al., 2024).

Directives are the most commonly observed speech acts in EFL classrooms and function to prompt action, regulate classroom behavior, and scaffold learner output. They range from overt commands ("Repeat after me") to indirect suggestions ("Maybe try using a different verb?"). The directive function is central to active learning, as it invites learners to participate, reflect, and correct themselves. It also supports formative assessment by encouraging real-time interaction. According to Sari (2019), directives maintain classroom structure while enabling flexible instructional delivery. The pragmatic function here is twofold: managing instructional flow and facilitating learner agency.

Expressive speech acts serve affective functions, including praise ("Good job!"), empathy ("I understand that was hard"), and encouragement ("You're getting better"). In the EFL setting, they play a vital role in maintaining learner motivation and emotional engagement. Expressives contribute to a psychologically safe environment where learners feel valued and are more willing to take risks with language. They also build rapport between teacher and students, which is linked to increased participation and improved performance (Hidayat et al., 2022). From a pragmatic perspective, expressives align with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory by maintaining positive face.

Though less frequent, commissive speech acts fulfill interpersonal and motivational functions. Teachers make verbal commitments such as "I'll help you after class" to express support and ensure continuity in the learning process. This function enhances teacher credibility and strengthens the socio-affective dimension of the classroom. Commissives also provide psychological reassurance, reducing student anxiety and increasing willingness to engage. The strategic use of commissives can foster a growth mindset among learners, especially when linked to promises of guidance and opportunity. Declaratives enact institutional change through language, such as "You've passed this task" or "Class is dismissed." In the classroom context, these acts serve the function of validating student performance and transitioning phases of interaction. Although used sparingly, their impact is significant due to their authoritative and formal nature. Declarations contribute to the structure of assessment and recognition,

reinforcing the teacher's role as both instructor and evaluator. They are essential for institutional legitimacy and procedural clarity within the learning environment.

Table 2. Summary of Speech Act Functions in Classroom Interaction

Speech Act Type	Primary Functions in Classroom Interaction
Assertives	Confirming correctness, explaining rules, affirming knowledge
Directives	Managing classroom behavior, eliciting responses, providing scaffolding
Expressives	Encouraging effort, building emotional rapport, enhancing motivation
Commissives	Signaling future support, building trust, reducing anxiety
Declarations	Formalizing evaluation, closing tasks, asserting authority

3.2 DISCUSSION

3.2.1. Types of Speech Acts Used by English Teachers When Giving Feedback to Students

The results of this study indicate that English teachers utilize various types of speech acts including assertives, directives, expressives, commissives, and declarations when giving feedback to students during classroom interaction. Each speech act type aligns with distinct communicative purposes and pedagogical goals, and their usage reflects both the linguistic and socio-pragmatic strategies adopted by teachers to enhance student learning. These findings corroborate the theoretical foundation established by Searle (1975), who categorized speech acts based on the speaker's intent and communicative effect.

The most frequently observed speech acts were assertives, consistent with prior research (Christianto, 2020; Hidayat et al., 2022). These utterances are used to assert information, confirm the accuracy of student responses, or provide linguistic clarification. For instance, statements like *"That is the correct answer"* or *"'Went' is the past form of 'go'"* reflect the teacher's commitment to presenting propositional truth, as outlined by Searle.

Such assertives serve a cognitive instructional function by reinforcing correct linguistic forms and structures, as emphasized by Irawan & Salija (2017) and Oliver & Mackey (2003). Directive speech acts were equally prominent, and their use aligns with findings from Sari (2019), Andewi & Waziana (2019) who all highlighted directives as the dominant type in teacher talk. These acts include commands, requests, prompts, and questions that aim to elicit responses, correct errors, or scaffold language output (e.g., *"Repeat the sentence,"* or *"Can you say that in the past tense?"*).

In line with Hidayat et al. (2022) and Zulianti & Nurchurifiani (2021), the frequent use of directives reveals the teacher's role as a facilitator and controller of classroom discourse. Pragmatically, directives serve to structure participation, maintain lesson flow, and engage students in real-time communication. They also reflect the teacher's efforts to balance formative assessment with instructional intervention, ensuring that learners not only recognize their errors but actively revise them. Furthermore, underscores the effectiveness of using indirect and polite directive forms, which are less face-threatening and promote learner willingness to participate. Thus, directives in feedback not only regulate behavior but also shape the interactive nature of classroom language learning.

Although less frequent than assertives and directives, expressives such as *"Good job!"* or *"That's much better!"* play a crucial role in building a supportive learning environment. These findings are aligned with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, where expressive acts maintain the students' positive face and reduce affective filters in learning.

According to Hidayat et al. (2022), expressive feedback boosts learner morale and enhances motivation. This is further supported by Zulianti (2018), who found that students are more responsive and confident when teachers incorporate emotional and personal acknowledgment into their classroom language. Expressives contribute to socio-affective development by promoting psychological security and positive reinforcement. In summary, expressives perform a motivational and relational function, bridging the gap between cognitive learning and emotional support.

Commissive acts, such as *"I'll help you later"* or *"We will review this again tomorrow,"* were less frequently observed, consistent with findings by Zulianti & Nurchurifiani (2021). Despite their low frequency, commissives fulfill a critical function of building interpersonal trust and student-teacher rapport.

In accordance with Searle (1975), commissives indicate the speaker's commitment to future action. In the classroom, this type of feedback signals ongoing support, reassures learners, and promotes sustained engagement. As noted by Tran (2023), such speech acts enhance students' sense of belonging and investment in learning. Additionally, Ishihara (2011) argues that teacher discourse involving future promises can significantly reduce anxiety and improve student self-efficacy in language classrooms.

Declarative speech acts, although rare, were used in key classroom moments such as assigning grades or closing sessions (e.g., *"You've passed,"* or *"Class is over"*). These acts bring about a change in the student's status and are uniquely institutional in function, echoing the work of Austin (1962) and further interpreted by Searle (1975) as performative utterances.

Findings support the argument of Zhang (2022) that declarations, while not central to everyday feedback, play a crucial evaluative and transitional role in classroom discourse. They underscore the teacher's formal authority and mark significant educational outcomes, such as progression, evaluation, or closure.

These findings corroborate numerous studies in EFL and ESL contexts such as those by Christianto (2020), Andewi & Waziana (2019), Hidayat et al. (2022), and Zulianti & Nurchurifiani (2021) which collectively emphasize that teacher feedback is a pragmatic, pedagogical, and relational act. The use of various speech acts reflects not only the teacher's linguistic competence, but also their classroom interactional competence (Zhang, 2022) and pragmatic awareness (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Ishihara, 2010). In conclusion, the diverse deployment of speech acts in feedback highlights the need for teachers to develop a pragmatic pedagogy, where each utterance is crafted with awareness of both its instructional and interpersonal effects.

3.2.2. The Functions of Speech Acts in the Context of Classroom Interaction

The findings of this study not only reveal the variety of speech acts employed by English teachers during feedback but also demonstrate how each type serves distinct communicative and pedagogical functions in shaping classroom interaction. Understanding these functions is essential for improving both instructional effectiveness and student engagement in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. Assertives and directives primarily fulfill cognitive and instructional functions in classroom discourse. Assertives, such as *"That is the correct structure,"* serve to validate student output and reinforce target language forms. As Searle (1975) posits, assertives commit

the speaker to the truth of the proposition, and in pedagogical settings, this means reinforcing accurate language use. These acts help students consolidate grammatical knowledge and understand rules (Christianto, 2020).

Meanwhile, directive acts including commands, requests, and questions serve to prompt student participation, correct errors, and structure interaction (Sari, 2019). They are essential tools for scaffolding (Zulianti & Nurchurifiani, 2021) and guiding learners toward the zone of proximal development. For example, a teacher's question like *"Can you try using the past tense?"* encourages learners to reflect on and self-correct their output. These acts maintain a dialogic flow and create spaces for form-focused interaction (Oliver & Mackey, 2003).

Expressive and commissive speech acts primarily serve affective and interpersonal functions in the classroom. Expressives, such as *"Excellent job!"* or *"That's a good effort,"* play a pivotal role in motivating learners, validating emotions, and maintaining a supportive atmosphere (Hidayat et al., 2022; Tran, 2023). These acts enhance students' emotional security, which is critical in language learning, especially when students fear making mistakes (Zulianti, 2018). Commissives**,** such as *"I will help you with this later"*, convey the teacher's commitment to support beyond the present moment. These utterances function to build trust, reinforce continuity, and foster learner persistence (Ishihara, 2011). They also reflect the teacher's willingness to collaborate with students in the learning process, creating a relational dynamic that enhances engagement (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996).

In combining expressives and commissives, teachers address not only the students' cognitive needs but also their affective and social dimensions, which are often overlooked in traditional feedback models (Zhang, 2022).

Declarative speech acts, though rare, perform highly significant evaluative and institutional functions. When teachers say, *"You've passed this task,"* or *"Class is dismissed,"* they are not merely informing but changing the learner's status or classroom phase. This is consistent with Searle's (1975) view that declaratives bring about a change in the external world through utterance.

Such functions mark transitions in classroom activity, indicate task completion, and confirm achievement or failure. According to Zhang (2022), declarations also reinforce the teacher's institutional authority, making them essential in formalizing feedback and maintaining procedural clarity. Despite their limited frequency, declaratives play a vital role in signaling closure, assessment, and recognition, which are important for student accountability and goal-setting.

Across all speech act types, one overarching function is their role in sustaining interactional flow and maintaining relational harmony. As teachers often switch between assertives, directives, and expressives within a single feedback sequence to adapt to learners' responses and maintain communicative momentum.

This dynamic interplay of speech acts highlights the teacher's pragmatic competence (Ishihara, 2010) their ability to choose language that is not only grammatically accurate but also socially appropriate and pedagogically effective. In doing so, teachers balance the goals of language accuracy, student motivation, and classroom control simultaneously.

Table 3. Summary of Speech Act Functions in Classroom Feedback

Speech Act Type	Definition	Typical Functions in Classroom Feedback	Example in Feedback
Assertives	Statements that convey the speaker's belief or	• Affirm correct answers	"That is the correct answer."

	describe a state of affairs.	• Provide explanations • Clarify concepts	"We discussed this in yesterday's lesson."
Directives	Attempts to get the listener to do something.	• Encourage student responses • Prompt revision or rethinking • Give instructions	"Try to answer that again." "Can you explain further?"
Commissives	Commit the speaker to a future action.	• Promise further support • Offer to follow up later • Express responsibility	"I will help you review this tomorrow." "Let's discuss it after class."
Expressives	Express the speaker's psychological state or emotions.	• Praise effort or success • Show encouragement • Acknowledge improvement	"Well done!" "I'm proud of your progress."
Declarations	Utterances that bring about a change in the institutional state or reality.	• Announce decisions • Change roles/status • End tasks or initiate actions	"That concludes your presentation." "You are ready to move on."

The multifunctionality of speech acts in classroom interaction underlines the need for teachers to possess high pragmatic awareness and adaptive communicative strategies. Teachers should not rely solely on directive or assertive forms, but instead strive for a balanced discourse that includes emotional, interactive, and formal elements (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Ishihara, 2011). Such awareness is especially important in EFL contexts where linguistic performance is closely tied to affective variables. Integrating all five speech act functions helps optimize feedback, enhances student engagement, and ensures a holistic approach to language instruction (Cahyani et al., 2024; H. Darong & Guna, 2023).

4. CONCLUSION

This study has addressed the objectives of identifying the types of speech acts used by English teachers in giving feedback and analyzing their functions within classroom interaction. The findings reveal that teachers employ a wide range of speech acts to fulfill distinct pedagogical and communicative purposes. Assertive and directive acts dominate classroom discourse, supporting the instructional role of confirming knowledge and guiding student participation. Meanwhile, expressive, commissive, and declarative acts, although less frequent, play essential roles in maintaining learner motivation, fostering rapport, and reinforcing institutional norms and procedures.

Beyond their linguistic dimension, these speech acts perform vital cognitive, affective, and relational functions, thereby enriching the quality of teacher-student interaction. Effective feedback emerges as a pragmatic act that addresses both the academic and emotional needs of learners. These results highlight the importance of developing teachers' pragmatic competence to strategically use speech acts for more effective communication.

Future research could explore speech acts in feedback across different educational levels, cultural contexts, or subject areas to provide a broader understanding of their impact on learning outcomes. Investigating how teachers' speech acts evolve with professional development or technological mediation would also be a worthwhile direction.

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