A Content Analysis of Speech Acts in 'Action Pack 6 '
and Their Appropriateness

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Abstract: This study is concerned with the content analysis of speech acts in Action Pack 6. The purpose of this study is to find out the extent to which the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking are included in Action Pack 6, and to find out the extent to which the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking are appropriate to students' level, age, and interests. The researcher noticed that there was an imbalance in the provision of the speech acts in Action Pack 6, based on the fact that pragmatic competence is one of the vital aspects of communicative competence. Additionally, it would have been valuable if students were provided opportunities to interact with native speakers of English.

Keywords: speech acts, appropriateness, Action Pack 6.

تحليل لمحتوى أفعال الكلام في كتاب الصف السادس 'Action Pack 6' ومدى ملاءمتها

ذكريات علي الصبيحات

وزارة التربية والتعليم || الأردن

الملخص: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل محتوى أفعال الكلام في كتاب الصف السادس Action Pack 6. الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو معرفة المدى الذي يتم فيه تضمين أفعال الاعتذار والتعبير والتحية والطلب والشكر في كتاب Action Pack 6، ومعرفة مدى تصرف الكلام: الاعتذار والإطراء والتحية والطلب والشكر ومدى مناسبتها لمستوى الطلاب وعمرهم واهتماماتهم. لاحظ الباحث وجود خلل في توفير أفعال الكلام في 6 Action Pack، بناءً على حقيقة أن الكفاءة البراغماتية هي واحدة من الجوانب الحيوية للكفاءة التواصلية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، كان من المفيد لو تم تزويد الطلاب بفرص للتفاعل مع الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أفعال الكلام، الملاءمة، كتاب الصف السادس (Action Pack 6).

Introduction

Traditionally, foreign language (FL) classrooms have been considered as poor input environments for developing pragmatic ability in a Target Language (TL); compared to real interaction outside the classroom, classroom discourse is functionally and formally limited for the achievement of this goal. This fact is associated with the ways in which the classrooms are organized to enable or prevent the acquisition of the TL pragmatics (Rueda, 2006).

This fact might be ascribed to numerous reasons, including the teachers" low level of communicative competence, particularly of pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences which are hard to learn in FL situations where the interaction with native speakers is either very limited or is not present at

all. Another reason might be the fact that language curricula can be too overloaded with topics to cover during the course and teachers find themselves skipping the communicative activities in the book in order to keep up with the syllabus (Koran, 2016).

Bardovi-Harlig (1998 cited in Vitale, 2009) suggests that the following factors have a direct influence on the acquisition or pragmatic competence: input, instruction, level of proficiency and length of stay living in the L2 culture, and the L1 culture. Shortcomings pertaining to input may be found in academic materials such as textbooks or even the instructor. The present author's cursory analysis of several textbooks reveals that speech acts are not presented at all; therefore, primarily using textbooks to teach students pragmatic information about a language may be ineffective. Also significant to the type of input available is the input provided by the instructor.

Theoretical Framework

Speech Acts are not descriptive; instead they are pronounced to affect an actual situation; they usually do not refer to past events, and they usually appear in the first person, and use the simple present tense, indicative (I promise I'll come tomorrow) (Cicognani, & Maher, 1997).

Searle produced the following categories of speech acts (see also Table (1) below), which he considered more internally consistent than Austin's (Katz, 2016).

- Representatives: a class of utterances that can be described as true or false. Their illocutionary point is to commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition, their direction of fit is word-to-world, and their expressed psychological state is belief in a proposition. Examples include state, suggest, and insist, as well as verbs like boast and deduce that add nuances of illocutionary force.

- Directives have the illocutionary point of persuading a listener to perform some action. Their direction of fit is world-to-word, and their expressed psychological state is the desire that the listener do the action. Examples include ask, order, invite, permit, advise, and challenge.

- Commissives are borrowed from Austin with little modification. Their illocutionary point is to commit the speaker to some future action, their direction of fit is world-to-word, and their expressed psychological state is intention to do the action. Examples include promise and vow.

- Expressive have the illocutionary point of expressing the speaker's psychological state regarding a past event. They have no direction of fit, and their expressed psychological state depends on the individual speech act. Examples include thank, congratulate, apologize, and deplore.

- Declarations are speech acts that cause a change in the state of the world by virtue of being uttered. Their illocutionary point depends on the act, they have both word-to-world and world-to-word direction of fit, and they express no psychological state.

Table (1) Different types of classifications of speech acts

Allan (1994)	Bach & Harnish (1979)	Searle (1975)	Vendler (1972)	Austin (1962)
Statements	Causatives	Representatives	Expositive	Expositive
	Commissives	Commissives	Commissives	Commissives
Invitational	Directives	Directives	Interrogatives	Executives
Authoritative			Executives	
	Effectives	Declarations	Operatives	Verdictives
	Verdictives		Verdictives	
Expressive	Acknowledgements	Expressive	Behabitives	Behabitives

Source: (Proost, 2006)

Research concerning the performance of speech acts by FL learners have provided various explanations for the differences between learners and native speakers (NS) realizations, namely, availability of input, proficiency, length of exposure, and transfer As a way to compensate for this imbalance, recommendations have been made since the late 1980''s, for the inclusion of explicit pragmatic instruction as part of foreign and second language (L2) curricula (Rueda, 2006).

Pragmatic competence is a central component incorporating the ability to use the language to express a wide range of functions, and interpret their illocutionary force in discourse according to the socio cultural context in which they are uttered. Pragmatic Competence can be defined as the ability to use available linguistic resources (pragma linguistics) in a contextually appropriate fashion (socio pragmatics), that is, how to do things appropriately with words (Rueda, 2006).

Pragmatic instruction in the FL classroom needs to fulfill three functions (Rueda, 2006)

- Exposing learners to appropriate TL input,
- Raising learners'' pragmatic and meta pragmatic awareness about the instructed aspect, and
- Arranging authentic opportunities to practice pragmatic knowledge

Analyzing curricula in general and text books in particular plays an important role in EFL teaching and learning process, due to the fact that it helps supervisors textbooks' authors and researchers to find the points of strength and weakness in the textbook and to what extent it is suitable for both students and teachers(Al- Ghazo, & Smadi, 2013).

A common claim across the research is that textbooks provide poor input for pragmatic learning, e.g., learning appropriate speech acts, discourse features, and politeness in context. The claim is twofold: a lack of pragma linguistic knowledge (i.e., linguistic forms involved in a linguistic action) and that of socio

pragmatic knowledge (i.e., culture-based knowledge of a speaker's assessment of contextual factors on the linguistic action) (Konakahara, 2012).

In the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was introduced as a response to audio-lingual teaching method and their disappointing outcomes. The mechanistic nature of audio-lingual pattern practice could not prepare learners for using target language in everyday conversations (Jalilian & Roohani, 2016).

Communicative, or pragmatic, competence is the ability to use language forms in a wide range of environments, factoring in the relationships between the speakers involved and the social and cultural context of the situation. Speakers who may be considered "fluent" in a second language due to their mastery of the grammar and vocabulary of that language may still lack pragmatic competence; in other words, they may still be unable to produce language that is socially and culturally appropriate. Speakers employ a variety of communicative acts, or speech acts, to achieve their communicative goals, including Searle"s seminal broad categories — classification, Commissives, declarations, directives, Expressives, and representatives — as well as more specific acts such as apologies, requests, complaints, and refusals (Tanck, 2002).

In the past, the learning of a second or foreign language (FL) was equated with linguistic or grammatical accuracy. However, since the adoption of the communicative approach, this focus has passed to second place, giving primary importance to the achievement of functional abilities in the target language (TL) with the final purpose of understanding and producing language that is appropriate to communicative situations in accordance with specific sociocultural parameters. Failure to do so may cause misunderstandings and sometimes communication breakdowns as well as the stereotyping of the TL learners as insensitive, rude, or inept (Rueda, 2006).

Communicative language teaching (CLT) aims to develop the communicative competence of the learners such: (Richard, 2006)

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions - Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication)

- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)

- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies) (Al-Ghazo, 2013).

Problem of the Study

Formally, Action Pack 6 is the main EFL textbook course used for teaching English as a foreign language for the Jordanian sixth grade students in public schools. It is introduced as the main source of teaching English for that grade. Student's Book is one of the most important components of Action Pack 6. Based on the importance of the book, the researcher thinks it is of great importance to shed the light on the extent to which the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking are included by the teachers and students in Action Pack 6.

Questions of the study:

This study aimed at answering the following questions:

1- To what extent are the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking included by the teachers and students in Action Pack 6 ?

2- Are the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking appropriate to students' level, age, and interests ?

Purpose of the study

This study aimed to analyze the Student's Book of Action Pack 6 of grade six, as a main textbook used for teaching English as foreign language in the public schools of Jordan in the academic year 2017/2018 to find out the extent to which the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking are included by the teachers and students in Action Pack 6, and to find out the extent to which the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking are appropriate to students' level, age, and interests.

Significance of the Study

The finding of the study would be useful for teachers: The findings of the analysis would be useful for teachers in many ways. First, knowing to what extent the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking are included by the teachers and students in Action Pack (6) is helpful in understanding the pragmatic components of the text.

Second, knowing the extent to which the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking are appropriate to students' level, interests and age in Action Pack 6 which is helpful in suggesting a clear, concise method for teaching.

(b) Supervisors may make use of the findings of making decisions to what extent are teachers successful in the process of dealing with the pragmatic components of the textbook, and to what extent they are proficient in using and teaching the Student's book.

Action Pack

The MOE adopted Action Pack, a twelve-level series covering the basic to secondary stages, in phases starting with the academic year 2000 and culminating in 2010 with Action Pack 11 and Action Pack 12 for the eleventh and twelfth grades (Al-Omari, Bataineh & Smadi, 2015).

Method of the Study

Content analysis was used as the method of research in this study. It is a methodology employed in social sciences for studying the Content of communication. Content analysis is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding).It allows inferences to be made which can then be corroborated using other methods of data collection.

Content analysis is also a research tool focused on the actual content and internal features of media, and is used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner. Texts can be defined broadly as books, book chapters, essays, discussions, newspaper headlines and articles, historical documents, speeches, conversations, advertising, theater, informal conversation, or really any occurrence of communicative language. To conduct a content analysis on a text, the text is broken down, into manageable categories on a variety of levels word, word sense, phrase, sentence, or theme and then examined using one of content analysis' basic methods: conceptual analysis or relational analysis. The results are then used to make inferences about the messages within the text(s), the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of which these are a part. Content analysis offers several advantages to researchers who consider using it (Al-Ghazo & Smadi, 2013).

In particular content analysis:

- looks directly at communication via texts or transcripts, and hence gets at the central aspect of social interaction.

- allows for both quantitative and qualitative operations.

- provides valuable historical/cultural insights over time through analysis of texts.

- allows a closeness to text which can alternate between specific categories and relationships and also statistically analyzes the coded form of the text.

- can be used to interpret texts for purposes such as the development of expert systems (since knowledge and rules can both be coded in terms of explicit statements about the relationships among concepts).

- is an unobtrusive means of analyzing interactions • provides insight into complex models of human thought and language use.

Review of literature

Alemi and Rezanejad (2014) explored the frequency of occurrences and proportions of speech acts of complaints and compliments in the four volumes of the textbook English Result. It was found that the textbooks were rich in terms of the number of the two speech acts; however, regarding their presentation, there were only one or two dominant strategies in both cases. In general, the textbooks were reported to provide learners with adequate amount of complaints and compliments, but with low variations in strategy types, which may result in learners'' insufficient conceptual and practical knowledge of speech acts to be applied appropriately in different contexts.

Vellenga (2004) examined the treatment of speech acts in ESL integrated skills textbooks and EFL grammar textbooks published in the USA. It is found that the models of speech acts, which are seldom presented to learners, contain very little contextual information such as social relationships between interlocutors, power differences, and other contextual factors. This paper reports on a qualitative and quantitative study of 8 English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks to determine the amount and quality of pragmatic information included. Detailed analysis focused specifically on the use of meta-language, explicit treatment of speech acts, and met pragmatic information, including discussion(s) of register, illocutionary force, politeness, appropriacy and usage. Findings show that textbooks include a paucity of explicit meta-pragmatic information, and teachers'' manuals rarely supplement adequately. Teacher surveys show that teachers seldom bring in outside materials related to pragmatics, and thus, learning pragmatics from textbooks is highly unlikely.

Implications suggest that textbook developers could include authentic examples of speech acts and sufficient meta-pragmatic explanations to facilitate acquisition of pragmatic competence.

Jalilian and Roohani (2016) attempted to evaluate the Touchstone series in terms of compliment and complaint speech acts. Four Touchstone textbooks (Book 1, Book 2, Book 3, and Book 4) were selected and content analysis was done. Data analysis showed that, first, the total frequency of the complaint speech act was higher in Touchstone, Book 4 than the other three textbooks; second, the frequency of complaint and compliment speech acts in the Writing section was quite low, but the Conversation section had a high frequency of compliment speech act in the Touchstone series; third, the expression of annoyance or disapproval complaint strategy was frequently used in the Touchstone series; fourth, the compliment strategy of noun phrase + looks/is (intensifier) adjective was very frequent in the Touchstone series; finally, there was a significant difference between the frequencies of the two speech acts, in general, in the four Touchstone textbooks. Considering the weaknesses and strengthens of Touchstone series, implications for teachers, material developers, and textbook writers are provided.

Results and Discussion of the First Question:

Table (2) below presents the frequencies and percentages of the speech acts Under Study and their inclusion in Action Pack 6. These findings are quantitatively presented and then qualitatively interpreted with some examples.

The first question sought to answer the question "To what extent are the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking included by the teachers and students in Action Pack 6.

Table (2) Frequencies and Percentages of the Speech Acts in Action Pack 6 and Their Inclusion in Action Pack 6

Percentage	Frequency	Speech act
3.68%	5	Greeting
2.94%	4	Thanking
5.15%	7	Apology
18.38%	25	Compliment
69.85%	95	Request
100%	136	Total

Analysis of the data, as is somewhat clear from Table (2), indicated that the most frequently used types of speech acts in Action Pack 6 belonged to the categories of requests and compliment, respectively. According to the table, the difference between the frequencies of these speech acts is significant and meaningful. In other words, the speech acts in Action Pack 6 are not distributed equally and not at the same or close levels of frequency.

For the speech act of compliment, the results revealed that (25) compliment examples were found, in pages (4, 12, 15, 16, 28, 36, 40, 56, 60, 68). The following forms were found:

- NP is/ Looks (really) ADJ (for example: "your work is very good" (page 4)
- I (really) like/ love NP (for example: "I liked the books/ I loved looking at all the books: page 12
- ADJ NP (Good, Well done: page 20).
- What (a) ADJ NP (e.g., What a great race!, page 28).
- PRO IS ADJ NP (e.g., that``s a wonderful idea, page 40).

For the speech act of greeting, the results revealed that they occurred (5) times in the book, in pages (4, 26, 26, 44, 70). The following forms of greeting were found:

- Time- free greeting: "Hello everyone" (page 44).
- Time- bound greetings: "Good morning everyone" (page 4).

Regarding the speech act of request, the results revealed that the request forms were the most common speech acts found in the textbook, with (95) examples.

Request forms: the following forms were used in imperatives: e.g. "today you are going to write about them" (page 4).

- Permission directives: e.g., can Kareem and I go with them?" (page 24). 4- Request questions: e.g., "can you repeat that please" (page 4).

Finally, the results revealed that thanking forms were found in (4) examples (pages 8, 44, 44, 68). The following thanking forms were traced in Action Pack 6:

1- "Thank you for taking us around..." (page 8). 2- Thank you, "Samira/ aunt Muna" (page 44).

Regarding the speech act of compliment, the results revealed that it occurred (7) times in the book. The following categories of apology forms were found:

- An expression of apology: the apologizer uses words such as "sorry", or "apologize": (I'm sorry) is used in page 27.

- An explanation or account: the apologizer describes the situation which caused him to commit the offence: such as the example in page 38.

  The examples provided didn't contain a response to the apology.

Results and Discussion of the Second Question:

Table (3) presents the frequencies and percentages of the speech acts Under Study and their appropriateness to the students of grade six. These findings are quantitatively presented and then qualitatively interpreted with some examples.

The second question sought to answer the question "Are the speech acts of apology, compliment, greeting, request, and thanking appropriate to students' level, age and interests".

Table (3) Frequencies and Percentages of Speech Acts in Action Pack 6 Under Study and Their Appropriateness to the Students of Grade Six

Percentage of appropriateness	Frequency of appropriateness	Speech act
3.68%	5	Greeting
2.94%	4	Thanking
5.15%	7	Apology
18.38%	25	Compliment
69.85%	95	Request
100%	136	Total

The researcher thinks that this content includes appropriate activities that foster students' learning of language. These activities suit their age level and interests. Activities are appropriately developed to help students to learn language. They are not only appropriate for the students' proficiency but also to their age and instructional needs.

The researcher also thinks that, the exercises on speech acts are interesting; the activities help the students to express their daily interests customs and environment.

The exercises are excellent for developing students' linguistic abilities to express various matters which relate to the use of language in daily life. They include many appropriate statements and vocabularies that urge students to express their daily interests and needs..

These activities are very interesting, they help students to talk about their environment.

These findings disagree with the relevant literature, which suggests that Jordanian EFL classroom does not provide the students with the chance to learn English speech acts (Zayed, 2014). However, teachers themselves are unable to use many forms and responses of the speech acts; accordingly, this is reflected on their students.

Conclusions

The researcher noticed that there was an imbalance in the provision of the speech acts in Action Pack 6, which nictitates making amendments, based on the fact that pragmatic competence is one of the vital aspects of communicative competence. Additionally, it would have been valuable if students were provided opportunities to interact with native speakers of English, under the supervision of the teacher, who seeks to encourage the students to use the speech acts with the visiting native speaker guests. However, discovering the strategies generally used in a language shall facilitate interpretation of results obtained from comparative studies. In this concern, following suggestions may be made for further studies:

1- Studies should be conducted on the level of competence of the responses given in communication situations.

2- The use of speech acts and the forms of realization of other speech acts should be described by other studies and extra activities.

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