
GRAMMATICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE TEACHER-STUDENT DIRECTIVES AS THE INSTRUCTION TO HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS IN MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS: A STUDY CASE

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Absract:

Directives, apart from declaratives and interrogatives, are forms of teacher – student interactions which are important in second language learning. Forms of directives the classroom teachers apply during the classroom interactions, especially in high schools, determine the colors of the teaching-learning activities conducted in classroom. This study intends to figure out the nature of directives used by novice teachers during their teaching practice teaching in high schools in Jakarta. The types of directives the novice teachers apply will be analyzed using the grammatical perspectives. Drawing from the theory on the types and functions of directives proposed by Holmes (1983) and Mauri and Sauza (2012), this study will also try to find out whether certain types of directives are more preferable than the others and how the novice teachers utilize the types in creating the more conducive learning environment. The discussion of the types as well as the functions of directives will hopefully give a richer insight into the possible directives the novice teachers may apply in their classes. The proper choice of the directives used will eventually play an important role in the success of the practicum as well as the second language teaching.

Keywords: *Directives, practicum, conducive, novice teachers, classroom interaction*

1. INTRODUCTION

Directives are forms of language which cannot be separated from language classroom interactions. Teachers ask students to repeat words or phrases, to form groups, or to do certain assignments using directives. Moreover, teachers also use directive to gain some information from the students. Directives play an essential role in the realization of the teaching-learning activities and interactions. Activities in all phases and processes in the foreign language classrooms will involve directives. Teachers use directives to give instructions, to manage classroom behaviors and other similar tasks (Ellis, 1992; Nikula, 2002; Kaanta, 2004; Wrench, J.S., Richmond, V.P., & Gorhan, J. 2009).). How teachers realize their functions as managers, controllers, or instructors is fascinating but not easy to describe (Kaanta, 2004; Dalton-Puffer, 2005). The present study intends to reveal the types of directives foreign language teachers use in their classrooms and how they apply the types in the teaching learning interactions. This study is limited to the practice teaching of student-teachers doing in various high schools in Jakarta. This study is hopefully significant for foreign language teachers since they will more realize that there are various types of directives they can use in making the teaching learning more successful and the environment more interesting.

2. DIRECTIVES

Directives are the whole speech acts directed by a speaker whose primary function is to get the listener to do or perform a certain action (Ellis, 1992; Searle, 1976). In foreign language classes, directives can be used to manage classroom situations, to start an interaction between the teacher and the students or between the students themselves, and to instruct or inform the students to do something.

3. METHODOLOGY

The data were directives which were recorded during the practice teaching of ten (10) student-teachers in teaching English as a foreign language in five (5) different high schools in Jakarta. There were eighteen to thirty one students in each of the classes and they were between thirteen to sixteen years old. All of the classes were equipped with LCDs and LCD screens, however, two of the classrooms are not air conditioned. The recording took nine hundred (900) minutes and the directives were identified and categorized using Holmes' (1983) Teacher Directive Table. The frequencies of each type of the directives found were counted and functions of the directives were also discussed.

4. FINDINGS

The following discussion will cover the types of directives and the functions of directives.

Types of directives:

This present study shows that there are 1585 cases of directives found during the 900 minute recording of the practice teaching of the participants. Table 1 below shows the types of directives and their frequencies.

Table 1: Types and Frequencies of Directives Used in the Classes (Holmes, 1983)

Types of directives	Forms and examples	Frequency
Imperatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base form of verbs: 'Speak louder' - You/Name + Verb: 'You, do number 10'; 'Sinta, stop.' - Present participle verbs: 'Smiling, smiling' - Verb ellipsis: 'Your hands up' - Verb + modifier: 'Come here please Jo' - Let + 1st person pronoun: 'Let's read together.' 	541 198 8 6 472 153
Interrogatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using modals: 'Would you read the next line?' - Non – modals: 'Have you finished?' (Implied: 'Stop talking!') 	66 12
Declarative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embedded agent: 'I want you to open page 26.' - Hints: 'I am sure, Usman can give another example.' 	21 8

Total 1585

Other types of directives:

Besides the types of directive mentioned above, the data show that the student-teachers also apply different forms of directives:

- All the student-teachers often call the students' names to ask them to perform certain action;
T: Lilies! (The teacher asks Lilies to come up to the front of the class to write her answer)

There are hundreds of cases of this like in the data, however, there is not any grammatical explanation for such forms

- Two of the student-teachers use expressions: 'Hello' or 'Hello there' to ask the students to stop making a lot of noise and pay attention to the following instructions.

There are twelve cases of this form found in the recording

It can be seen in the above explanation that although no verbs are used in the directives, apparently circumstances help the students understand what the teachers mean by the utterance; therefore, they

perform actions as they are supposed to. (Coulmas, F, 2005; Wrench, J.S., Richmond, V.P., & Gorhan, J. , 2009).

This shows that in the classroom teachers are able use various forms of directives both the types mentioned by Holmes (1983) and the possible means of giving directive such as the single word utterances. Beside having a complete mastery of the linguistic forms of directives, teachers should also have to be sensitive looking at the classroom atmosphere and the students' conditions to be able to pick up the most appropriate directives, so that the intended goal of giving the directives can be achieved and the conducive classroom can be created. Teachers' creativity plays an important role in making the use of directives effective.

Functions of directives

The implementation of directive utterances depends very much on the intended meanings the teachers want to pass on the students. Looking at the intended meanings or what the teacher want the students to do, directives may have the following functions (Coulmas, F, 2005; Wrench, J.S., Richmond, V.P., & Gorhan, J. 2009; and Suparno, 2013).

First, teachers give directives to the students ask the students to do something. In any classroom situation, the position of the teachers is higher than the students'. As the manager, controller, or director of the class, teachers have stronger power or rights in handling the class and the students. However, the stronger position does not always determine the essence of the directive giving. In some cases, teachers do not impose the power on the students, instead the teachers ask them something which makes them perform certain actions. In asking the students the directives usually in the interrogative forms with or without question words.

Example:

T: Timothy, What about the second answer?

S: The second answer is correct.

(The teacher actually asks the students to mention which answer is correct)

T: Did you do something last night?

S: Yes, I watched a soccer game.

(Actually the teachers asks him to mention the activity the student did last night)

Ordering: This is the strongest form of imperative because in giving this type of directive the teachers impose their power and rights as teachers who are higher than the students'. Imperative is the common form of giving this kind of imperative.

Example:

T: Repeat after me: 'lake'

S: 'lake' (The student repeat the word)

Requesting. This form of directive shows that the teacher respects the students by requesting them to do something. Interrogative is the form the class teachers use in giving this type of directives.

Example:

T: Would you write your answers on your note book?

S: Ok, mam. (The students write the answers on their note book)

Inviting is the next function of directives. To reach its goal the teachers, to make students do something, invite the students to perform certain actions together, and because the directives suggest the participation of the speaker in performing the action; therefore, 'Let + 1st person pronoun' is the type of directives used by the teachers to reach the intended message.

Example:

T: Let's discuss the answers.

S: (join the discussion of the answers)

Suggesting is a function of directives in which the teacher as the directive giver proposes something to the students. The type of the directive usually used by the teacher in giving this kind of meaning is interrogative using a question word: 'What about'; 'How about'; 'Why don't you'

For example:

T: What about doing Exercise A first?

S: All right, mam. (The student does Exercise A)

Permitting is another function of directives in which the teacher gives the directed student to do certain actions. In order to reach the intended meaning, the teacher can use the declarative type of the directives.

For example:

T: You can join this group, Amelia?

S: Ok, sir. (The student moves and joins the group)

The next function of directives is offering. Here, the teacher asks the students to do something by offering something. Declarative type of directive is commonly used to express this intended message.

For example:

T: Joko, There is enough space on this board.

(Joko writes the sentence on the space the teacher showed.)

5. THINGS TO BE PAID ATTENTION TO IN IMPLEMENTING DIRECTIVES

As the manager and controller of the class, teachers have to be able to use the most appropriate types of directive to convey the intended meaning, and the students perform the action. A good mastery of English as the target language is essential. Varying the types of directives, since directives are found in all stage of the teaching-learning activities, will make the classes more colorful and boredom can be avoided. Since the novice teachers have not get enough teaching experience, it is necessary for them to learn the various types and functions. Looking at the frequencies of the types of directive mentioned in Table 1, it is clear that the student-teachers should use the interrogative and declarative types of directives more. It is understandable that experiences will make their performance better.

Directives do not stand alone. To be effective or successful the use of directives should also be accompanied by some other factors. Classroom teachers should bridge the gap between the teachers and students. In the recording the students-teachers have shown excellent attitudes and body movement in giving the directives. They move closer to the students, they give the directives with loud enough voice, and they also give warm facial expressions as well as relaxed gestures. Smiles and warm looks also make the relationship between the student-teachers and the students warmer, and the use of the directives become less harsh.

It is undeniable that in the classroom teachers have stronger positions than the students, and giving directives usually implies or strengthens the position. Healthy classes should avoid this situation; therefore, teachers should able to lessen the power differences. Using interrogative and declarative types of directives would be able to bridge the gap. However, the student-teachers doing the practice teaching have not shown that they have realized the power differences. They mostly use the imperative type than the declarative and interrogative ones. Fortunately, the student-teachers are not much older than the students, and that makes them able to get closer to the students. Their high spirit and young energy could balance their lack of teaching experience.

In the English as a foreign language classes, verbal communication should be more encouraged that the students will be able to get more practice in using the target language. Teachers of English should also be able to get more verbal responses from the students upon their directives. In the recording data it seems that verbal responses from the students' side do not get the high attention. The student-teachers seem more interested in having the directives done. As a result, during the directive giving, students do not give long enough responses. They mostly say 'Ok'; 'All right', 'Yes, mam' or 'Sorry'. For better results of practice teaching, in the teacher training, this kind of facts should be introduced and realized.

Attention is the key for the success of giving directives. High school students often chat with their classmates in class. They do not give full attention to the teachers, let alone the student-teachers. Getting the students' attention is the first thing the student-teachers should get before giving the directives. Calling the names of the students and greeting the students are ways the student-teachers use in grabbing the students' attention.

6. CONCLUSION

Directives can be given in imperative, interrogative, and declarative types. Language teachers in class should be able to utilize the available forms and pick up the appropriate type in conveying the message. Teachers, especially student-teachers, should have a good mastery of English to be able to use all the type at ease. Being able to use various types of directive is a means of measuring their professionalism.

Teachers use directive for various functions: asking, ordering, requesting, inviting, suggesting, permitting, and offering. They have to realize both the types and functions of directives to ensure the existence of conducive atmosphere in classrooms. Student-teachers have not got enough teaching experience. They should learn them all in their teacher training program to ensure the best result of their practice teaching.

Giving directives is not imposing power from the teachers to the students. Using less direct directives (interrogative and declarative types) will bridge the gap and help teachers build better relation with the students which finally make the teaching and learning activities more enjoyable, and the objectives of the English language classes will be reached

Action responses are common in classes, however, in English language verbal responses should also get the attention of the teachers as the managers and planners. It would be much more desirable if the students can give both action and longer verbal responses to the directives given

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