



Speech Acts in Porter-Student Conversations in Selected South West Nigerian Universities

**BILEWUMO,
Julius Olaolu Ph.D**

Joseph Ayo Babalola
University,
Ikeji-Arakeji,
Osun State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Conversation is the sum total of the interactions between interlocutors within any specific discourse floor. Whether a speaker`s choice of words is polite or not, all utterances made in a conversation perform one action or another. When a conversation is not appropriately coded, it may express unintended meanings which can give rise to misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Therefore, this study investigated speech acts of porter- student conversations in selected South - west Nigerian universities. Using the purposive random sampling technique, data for this study were collected from two universities, one private and one public. The data comprised ten recorded porter-student conversations from each university giving rise to twenty conversations, in addition to the interviews of sixty students and sixteen porters. The study adopted Searle`s model of speech act. The analyses revealed that the conversations employed more of the expressive, representative and directive speech acts, than the commissive and no declarative. A comparison of the speech acts showed that the private university manifested a high percentage of representatives with 48.9% and directives 34%, while the public university manifested 27.3% of representatives and 52.7% of expressives. The study concluded that porters- students` conversations exhibit a high level of expressive, directive and representative speech acts. Porters and students in the public university had the highest number of expressive speech act. It is therefore recommended that there should be periodic trainings in communication skills for both public and private universities` porters and students.

Keywords: *Speech act, Expressive, Student-Porter conversations, Universities*

Introduction

The sum total of the interactions between interlocutors within any specific discourse floor is referred to as a conversation. Many scholars have attempted to define this concept. According to Osisanwo (2008:24) a conversation occurs when at least two people are talking. For it to be a conversation, each person must talk one after the other. There must be a string of at least two turns. Even if the second person does not talk, he must show evidence of having heard the utterance by carrying out an action such as nodding with the head, gaping or starring at the person in disbelief or winking in response or silence.

Utterances that are intended to be understood non literally are a common feature of everyday language use. Although some canonical forms of non literal usage are so salient that they have names (irony, metaphor, hyperbole etc.), more mundane examples of non literal usage pervade everyday talk. When we say that we understand what others say, we are implicitly claiming to comprehend what they intend for us to understand. Given the flexible relationship between the literal and intended meaning of an utterance, it is remarkable how well we understand each other. Occasionally, misunderstandings do occur (e.g. when an addressee interprets an ironic statement literally), but for the most part, we understand non literally intended utterances correctly, usually without being consciously aware of the other possible meanings that such an utterance could have had in different contexts.

Despite the facility with which this is accomplished, the process by which a listener constructs the intention of an utterance is exceedingly complex and a matter of some contention among Psycholinguists. In large part, the process depends upon the existence of knowledge that is shared between speaker and addressee or common ground as it is often called. The most elemental kind of common ground which communication relies on is knowledge of the language they are speaking. Addressees cannot derive the intended meaning from messages if those meanings reside outside the realm of shared knowledge. Moreover, since what is common ground for a given speaker will vary as a function of the addressee (that is it will vary from addressee to addressee), the speaker is obliged to generate only those utterances which he believes the addressee is capable of understanding.

Speech Acts

When a speaker speaks, an action is performed. Language is not only used in saying things, but also in performing actions (Austin, 1962). Thus, according to the speech act theory that was postulated by Austin (1962) which claims

that engaging in speech acts means performing some acts. This implies that the utterances people make or the things they say are equivalent to actions. For instance, when someone says “I name this child Julius” or “I declare you husband and wife” a new social and psychological reality is created. Simply put, speech acts are the language functions performed by our utterances. Austin distinguishes between two major classes of speech acts. These are the constatives and the performatives. According to him, a constative is an utterance that is traditionally known to have truth or falsity e.g. “my house is more beautiful than yours” could either be true or false. In uttering a performative, on the other hand, a definite language function is performed, because a performative cannot be subjected to true/ false value. Thus, in the utterance “I promise you a book”, a speech act of promise has been performed. If a mother says to her son “ I will buy you a gift if you come first in your class” a speech act of promise has taken place.

Three concepts are very significant in an attempt to understand the speech act theory. These are locution, illocution and perlocution. Locution is the act of making an utterance of a certain grammatical order while illocution act is the force (i.e. function) of that utterance. Perlocution is the effect of that utterance on the hearer(s). Austin`s posthumous work “How to Do Things with words” (1962) had an enormous impact on linguistic philosophy, and thereby on linguistics, especially in its pragmatic variant. Austin`s thinking (which in the course of time came to be known as the speech act theory) was further developed and codified by the American philosopher John R. Searle, who had studied under Austin in the fifties, and subsequently became the main proponent and defender of the former`s ideas.

In his 1979 article “A classification of illocutionary acts”, Searle states the following: “ The primary purpose of this paper is to develop a reasoned classification of illocutionary acts into certain categories or types”(p. 27). In saying this, Searle takes an exception to Austin`s original classification (into verdictive, expositive, exercitive, behabitive and commissive acts; 1962:109f). Among other things, Searle criticizes Austin for operating with overlapping criteria,

for having incompatible elements within his categories, for including elements in his category, and so on. But mainly, Searle is unhappy about the fact that Austin apparently does not pay attention to the difference between speech acts and speech acts verbs; the existence or non existence of the latter cannot (and should not) be a criterion for the existence or non–existence of a particular speech act (Mey 2001: 117).

Searle`s Classification of Illocutionary Acts

Inspired by Austin, Searle (1969) proposed a five- way classification of illocutionary acts. These acts include: (1) representatives: these acts constitute assertions carrying true or false values e.g. , statements ; (2) directives: in

these speech acts there is effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something e.g. request, advice; (3) commissives: speech acts of this kind create an obligation on the part of the speaker, that is, they commit the speaker to do something e.g. promises ;(4) expressives: these speech acts express an attitude or an inner state of the speaker which says nothing about the world e.g. apologies, congratulations, compliments ; and (5) declarations: speech acts in which declarative statements are successfully performed and to which psychological state is expressed e.g. an excommunication. This classification should not be taken as categorical, but rather, should be understood in terms of continuum, especially in cases where a particular speech act may be interpreted as the result of the interface of two types of illocutionary acts.

This study is aimed at investigating how interlocutors (porters and students) employ speech acts in their utterances for effective communication conversations or utterances. The study will explore the range at what speech acts are deployed in porter-student conversations and how these have contributed to meaning negotiations. It sets out, to investigate the forms and effects of speech acts strategy that are deployed in porters–students` conversations in an institutionalized context such as the halls of residence.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to discover the speech act types that are used in porter- student conversations in selected South- west Nigerian universities. The specific objectives are to:

1. discover the speech act types in porter- student conversations in selected Nigerian universities;
2. discover the meaning of these speech acts in interpreting porter- student conversations in selected Nigerian universities;
3. determine the frequency of various speech acts in the porter- student conversations in selected Nigerian universities and
4. determine the effects of speech acts on the porter- student conversations in selected Nigerian universities

Research Questions

1. What speech act types are used in porter- student`s conversations in selected Nigerian universities?
2. How can meaning be enhanced by the various speech act types in porter- student conversations in selected Nigerian universities?
3. What is the frequency of the speech acts found in porter- student conversations in selected Nigerian universities?
4. What are the effects of the use of speech acts in porter - student conversations in selected Nigerian universities?

Methodology

The data for this study were collected through random sampling and instrumentation. The data were collected in halls of residence of Joseph Ayo Babalola University, IkejiArakeji, Osun State, (JABU) and Federal University of Technology Akure, (FUTA) Ondo State, Nigeria. Joseph Ayo Babalola University is a private university owned by the Christ Apostolic Church while Federal University of Technology is a public University. Joseph Ayo Babalola University commenced operation in 2006 with two halls of residence, one for females and one for males. At the beginning of 2014/ 2015 academic session, the halls have increased to eight due to increase in students` enrolment. Four halls are for males and four for females. The female halls have a total capacity of four hundred and ninety three (493) students while the male halls have a total capacity of four hundred and sixty two (462) students. At the Federal University of Technology, Akure , (FUTA) there are five halls, three for males and two for females. The female halls in FUTA have a total capacity of four hundred and sixteen (416) students while the male halls have six hundred and twenty four (624) students` capacity. The total number of porters in the halls in FUTA is thirty (30) while that of JABU is thirty two (32). In FUTA there are three shifts with two porters per shift, while in JABU there are two shifts with two porters per shift.

Population

The population of the students in the halls of residence in JABU is 955 which is made up of 493 females and 462 males, while that of FUTA is 1040 and is made up of 416 females and 624 males. The total number of porters in the halls of residence in JABU is 32 out which 16 are females and 16 are males, while that of FUTA is 30 out of which 12 are females and 18 are males. In all, we have the total population of 1995 students and 62 porters in both JABU and FUTA halls of residence.

Sample size and sampling Technique

The purposive random sampling technique was used for the collection of data. In JABU two female and two male halls (50%) were randomly selected out of eight halls for the study, while in FUTA one female and two male halls (60%) were selected out of five halls. Four porters were interviewed in the female halls and four porters (25%) in the male halls in JABU while three porters in the female halls and five porters (26%) in the male halls were interviewed in FUTA. The total number of porters interviewed was sixteen (16) 26%. Fifteen female and fifteen male students were interviewed in JABU, while twelve female and eighteen male students were interviewed in FUTA. In all, sixty students (3%) were interviewed and these were restricted to the students that were resident in halls on campus.

3.4 Research Instrument

Different research instruments were used. There were interviews (oral interview), observation of the porters and students during interactions, and tape- recording of porters and students' conversations. The recordings of the conversations were done first before the interviews with the porters and students.

Method of Data Analysis

The analysis of the conversations is purely qualitative. A total number of sixty conversations between students and porters were recorded. However, twenty conversations were used for speech acts` analysis. Ten conversations from each of the two universities in the data were further broken into male and female halls, that is, five halls each. The types of speech act found were based on the frequency of their occurrence. Searle`s model of speech act theory was adopted.

Speech Act Analysis of Porter-Student Conversations

The following abbreviations or codes are used for the collection and analysis of data:

FSPR- Female Student Private University

MSPR- Male Student Private University

FPPR- Female Porter Private University

MPPR- Male Porter Private University

FSPB- Female Student Public University

MSPB- Male Student Public University

FPPB- Female Porter Public University

MPPB – Male Porter Public University

Conversation 1

FPPR: Please close the door oo

FS1PR: Ok, ma

FS2PR: Mummy, I have taken it oo. Mummy, I have taken it oo .

The conversation is between two female students and a female porter. The porter used directive speech act, student1 and students 2 used expressive and representatives speech act types respectively. "Please, close the door" is a directive act. The two female students` utterances "Okay ma", and "Mummy, I have taken it oo. Mummy, I have taken itoo" are expressive acts. The use of "okay ma" and "mummy" by the students reflects some level of respect. It is common in Nigerian cultures to refer to a female who is older as mummy even if she is not the biological mother of the speaker. It also shows the intimacy or closeness between the interlocutors. Also, the use of " oo " at the end of the sentence is common to many Nigerian English users during interactions.

Conversation 2

FP1PR: What happens?

FSPR: (silence)

FP2PR: Can't you respond?

FSPR: I am looking for a job

FP1PR: You are seeking for a job?

FSPR: I came for my result

FP1PR: But come, do you come for your result or I don't understand, are you staying long?

FSPR: I am not staying... do you know what happens, I am not staying for long

FP1PR: Eh, I am listening

FSPR: I would have gone out, but I am tired, I can't go

FP1PR: When are you going?

FSPR: Tomorrow

FP2PR: Which block are you staying?

FSPR: I am staying with my younger sister

FP1PR: If you are staying, whatever you want to do, go and collect a note from Students' Affairs' Office. Don't let me remind you tomorrow

FP2PR: Which room did she say she is?

FP1PR: Whatever room, this is where she will pass tomorrow.

Conversation 2 involves a female student and two female porters. The female student who is a graduate of the school came to collect her result and she needed to pass a night in the hostel. The speech act's type identified in the porters' utterances is directives- "Please come ...", "... go and collect a note from the Students' Affairs Office" while the representative occurred five times in the student utterances. The representative acts are: "I am looking for a job," "I came for my result", "I am not staying long", "Tomorrow", "I am staying with my younger sister". The student uses many representative acts because she needs to convince the porters so that they can allow her sleep overnight in the hostel. The porters want to be sure of the status and personality of the students that come to the hostel.

Conversation 3

FPPR: Where are you coming from?

FSPR: I went to...

FPPR: That your skirt, you better look for a pin to hold it

FSPR: Thank you ma.

In conversation 3, a female student and a female porter are involved. Expressive and representative acts are identified in the student's utterances, while the porter makes use of directive act. The representative act is "I went to...", while the expressive act is "Thank you ma". The directive act is "That your skirt, you better look for a pin to hold it. The porters are expected to correct the students if they put on dresses that are not acceptable to the university. That is

why the porter in this conversation gave a directive to the student to look for a pin to hold her skirt and she appreciated it.

Conversation 4

FSPR: Please key o. we want to enter

FPPR: Regular student?

FSPR: No, conversion

FPPR: Then why are you around on Wednesday?

FSPR: We have lectures

FPPR: You will have to pay three hundred naira

FSPR: For what? When did that start?

FPPR: Ah, that is the normal thing. If you come before Thursday, you will have to pay three hundred naira

FSPR: To which account or whom?

FPPR: To the Bursary

FSPR: (Beckons to other Porter) Madam, please give us the key. It is late already.

FPPR: If we allow you in for the night you will write down your names and pay the money the tomorrow

FSPR: (Silence).

Conversation 4 involves a female conversion student and two female porters. Conversion students are admitted into the first degree programmes and they attend lectures from Thursday to Saturday. They are mostly working class group of people who need a degree for the upward mobility in their places of work.

Representative speech act type occurs three times and directives one time in the student`s utterances while the porter`s utterances manifest one representative and one directive. The representative acts are: “conversion”, “we have lectures”, please key o, we want to enter” “regular school”. The directives act are: “ please madam, give us the key”, if we allow you in, this night, you will write down your names and pay the money tomorrow”. The conversion student is supposed to be on campus from Thursday but if for one thing or the other she is around before Thursday she has to pay the sum of three hundred naira per night. If the student arrives late, porter can allow her to stay in the hostel and pay to the Bursary the next morning. Therefore, the student is allowed after writing her names.

Conversation 5

FSPR: Good afternoon ma. Please I want to register for accommodation

FPPR: Conversion or regular?

FSPR: Conversion

FPPR: Have you paid?

FSPR: Yes

FPPR: How much did you pay?

FSPR: One hundred thousand naira

FPPR: Where is the evidence of payment?

FPRS: (Brings out the receipt) why did you relocate us from our former hostel to this place that is smelling I left some of my things, more importantly my laboratory coat

there. It is unfair. How do we get those things back?

FPPR: (Apologizes) You can go to the Dean of Students` Affairs` office to claim whatever

property you left there.

FSPR: This is the evidence of payment I have made

FPPR: Do you have your passport photograph here?

FSPR: (Tries to bring out her documents) Yes.

Conversation 5 involves a female conversion student and a female porter. There are occurrences of six representative acts in the student`s utterances and one directive in the porter`s utterances. The representative acts are: "I want to register for accommodation", "conversion", "one hundred thousand naira", "yes", "I left my things...". The directive act is "where is the evidence of payment?". A conversion student can be allowed to register for accommodation after she must have paid a certain percentage of the school fee for which she must provide the evidence of payment. The student is surprised that the conversion students have been moved to another hostel and she is wondering how to get her belongings that are in the former hostel.

Conversation 6

MSPR: I have a professor test. Okay, go and eat the I. D. card

MP1PR: Eh, eh, we will eat it oo

MSPR: We have a test today and you are disturbing us

MP1PR: You will go to the gate today, unless you shave

MP2PR: Please let them go, but tomorrow we will not allow you

MP1PR: No, Mr. you are not going anywhere. Are we the ones you are asking whether we want to eat the I. D. card? Are we the one you are talking to like that? Look here, as old as I am you are telling me I want to eat your I. D. card. That is too indecent of you, a whole undergraduate for that matter. In fact, what do you mean?

MSPR: That is not what I said.

MP1PR: It is not true, that is a lie

In conversation 6, a male student and two male porters are involved. The student`s utterances have two representative act and one directive while that of the porter one have one directives. The representative acts are: "I have a professor test", "we have a professor test" while directive acts are: "go and eat the I.D. card", "you will go to the gate today unless you shave". Students are expected to put on their identity card on campus. In addition, males are to have

a clean shave always. The student in conversation six is very rude and impolite by telling the porter to “eat the identity card” because he is told to have a clean shave. If the porter is not old enough to be the father of the student, at least he should be considered as an elder brother. Students are supposed to give respect to the university staff irrespective of the status without exception. The student should have obeyed a simple instruction “go and shave

Conversation 7

MPPR: Wait, Mr. Man

MSPR: Good morning sir

MPPR: You cannot go out with this your beards (collects the student I. D. card)

MSPR: I am going to the salon to shave, give me my I. D. card

MPPR: Go and shave first and come back for your I.D. card

MSPR: Compliance officers will demand for my I.D. card when they meet me

MPPR: Tell them it is with me.

Conversation 7 involves a male student and a male porter. Two representatives and one directive acts are present in the student utterances while that of the porter manifest four directives. The directive acts are: “wait, Mr. man”, “you cannot go with your beard”, “tell them it is with me”, “you cannot go out with your beard”, “go and shave first and come back”. The representative acts are: “I am going to the salon to shave”, “compliance officers will demand for my I.D. card”. Male students are aware that they must have a clean shave, the rules and regulations are clear about it. Some of them will deliberately leave their beards unkempt and this action may lead to confrontations between them and the porters.

Conversation 8

MPPR: Just get back

MSPR: Don` t push me now

MPPR: I didn` t push you, just get back, follow my instruction

Conversation 8 involves a male student and a male porter. The student utterance manifests one directive while that of the porter manifest two directives. The directive acts are: “just get back”, “don` t push me” “...follow my instruction”. The student in the conversation is not dress compliant, he is told to go back and dress properly before is allowed to leave the hostel.

Conversation 9

MPPR: Good morning, Titus

MSPR: Good morning, sir

MPPR: Are you going out with the bathroom slippers?

MSPR: I want to get a bucket of water

MPPR: With these your books, and no bucket, I don` t believe you

MSPR: I am collecting a bucket from my friend

MPPR: Go and drop your books.

In conversation 9, a male student and a male porter are involved. The student's utterances contain two representative and one expressive act while that of the porter have one expressive and one directive act. The two representative acts are: "I want to get a bucket of water", "I am collecting a bucket from my friend". The two expressive acts are: "good morning Titus", "good morning sir". The directive act is "go and drop your books". The expressive acts suggest probably both speakers are very close and familiar with each other. By mentioning the student first name

"Titus", the porter is familiar with the student and may be a sign of cordiality between them. Putting on of bathroom slippers is restricted to the hostel, hence the student is told to drop his books if he is sure he is going for a bucket of water.

Conversation 10

MSPR: Good morning sir, I want to drop this key for my room mates

MPPR: Drop it at the appropriate place

MSPR: Thank you sir.

Conversation 10 has a male student and a male porter. The student utterances have two expressive acts and that of the porter's has one representative. The representative act is "drop it at the appropriate place" while the expressive acts are: "good morning sir, I want to drop this key for my room mates", "thank you sir". The student uses expressive acts probably because he needs the porter's favour while the porter uses a representative act because of the background knowledge both speakers have as regards the appropriate place to put the key.

Conversation 11

MSPB: Well done sir. Good afternoon sir (comes for room allocation)

MPPB: (Collects the receipt from the student) Since on 19th you are just coming

MSPB: I travelled back home

MPPB: You are to stay in room forty.

In conversation 11, a male student and a male porter are involved. The student utterances have one representative and one expressive, while that of the porter contain one directive. The representative is "I travelled back home" while the expressive is "well done sir". The directive is "you are to stay in room forty". The representative act is used to give the reason why the student has not been around while the expressive act is used to reflect some level of respect the speaker has for the hearer.

Conversation 12

MPPB: Where are you going?

MSPB: To photocopy documents

MPPB: Go straight

MSPB: Are they there?

MPPB: Yes.

Conversation 12 has a male student and a male porter. The student's utterances manifest two representative acts while that of the porter contain one directive. The representative acts are: "to photocopy documents," "are they there?". The directive act is "Go straight". In this male hall, there is a business centre where students can type and photocopy their documents. The porter directed the student to the approved place because she is a female and not allowed to go into male hall at a particular period of the day.

Conversation 13

MSPB: Good afternoon sir

MPPB: Hello, Lawrence

MSPB: Please sir, always demand for the receipt of hall dues before giving them the key to their rooms.

MPPB: Are you teaching me my job?

MSPB: No sir, we just need your assistance

MPPB: Okay, no problem.

Conversation 13 involves a male student and a male porter. The student's utterances have two expressive and one directive acts while that of the porter manifest two expressive acts. The expressive acts are: "no sir, we just need your help," "okay, no problem", "good afternoon sir". The directive is "please sir, always demand for their receipt of the hall dues before giving them the key to their rooms". The expressive acts reflect close relationship and cordiality between the speakers. The student is the President in this particular hall and he wants all the students to pay their annual dues and that is why he solicits for assistance of the porter. The use of "sir" in the student's utterances is an indication that he respects his hearer.

Conversation 14

MSPB: Good afternoon sir

MPPB: How are you?

MSPB: Fine, thank you.

MPPB: How is your health?

MSPB: I am getting better. I went to the Health Centre in the morning.

MPPB: Did you see a doctor

MSPB: I have been attended to by the doctor

MPPB: You need rest

MSPB: Yes, I do.

Conversation 14 involves a male student and a male porter. There are two expressive and two representative acts in the student's utterances while that

of the porter have four expressive acts. The expressive acts are: “you need rest,” “fine, thank you,” “how is your health?”, “how are you”, “Good afternoon sir”, “did you see the doctor?”. The representative acts are: “I have been attended to by the doctor”, “I went to the health centre in the morning”. The conversation indicates that both speakers are friendly and are interested in the affairs of each other. The porter and the student’s relationship is like that of a father and a son, a father is always interested in the affairs of his son. The porter goes further in counseling the student to have some rest.

Conversation 15

MPPB: What can I do for you?

MSPB: The net on our window has spoilt

MPPB: Write your complaint in that book

MSPB: I wrote the same thing last week

MPPB: It is not our faults. We have forwarded your complaint to the Students’ Affairs Office

MSPB: Let me write it again.

Conversation 15 involves a male student a male porter. Two representative acts are present in the student’s utterances while that of the porter have two expressive and one directive acts. The representative acts are: “the net on our window has spoilt”, “ I wrote it last week”. The expressive acts are: what can I do for you”, it is not our faults. We have forwarded your complaint to the students’ affairs’ office”. The directive act is “write your complaint in that book”. The net in the student room is spoilt and needed a replacement. There is always a complaint book in the porter lodge where students write their complaints which will be forwarded to the Students Affairs Office. The porter uses expressive acts to show that he cares about the student’s welfare.

Conversation 16

FPPB: Let me see your receipt

FSPB: (Gives the receipt to the Porter) I paid two weeks ago

FPPB: Have you paid your Union dues?

FSPB: Yes, I have

FPPB: Any evidence?

FSPB: Here is the receipt that I was given

FPPB: You are allocated to room sixty seven

FSPB: Thank you ma.

Conversation 16 has a female student and a female porter. The student’s utterances manifest three representatives and one expressive, that of the porter have three directives. The representative act are: “ I paid last week”, “this is the receipt that I was given”, yes, I have”. The directive acts are: “have you paid”, “any evidence”, “you are allocated to room sixty seven”. The expressive is “thank you ma”. The expressive act “thank you ma” indicates some respect

for the porter. She probably sees the porter as a mother or at least as an elder sister who deserves respect.

Conversation 17

FSPB: Good morning ma

FPPB: Morning. How are you?

FPBS: I am fine. Thanks, ma

FPPB: Deborah, always remember to drop your key for your room mates whenever you are going out. Your room mates complained yesterday when they could not get the key to the room.

FSPB: Okay ma

Conversation 17 involves a female student and a female porter. The student's utterances contain three expressive acts, while that of the porter have one expressive and one directives. The expressive acts are: "good morning ma", "morning. How are you?," "I am fine"," okay ma" while directive is "... drop your key for your room mates...". The expressive acts, especially that of the student means that she has good home training. The use of "ma" in all her utterances reflects good behaviour and inter- personal relation

Conversation 18

FS1PB: Yemi, how are you?

FS2PB: I am fine. Thanks.

FPPB: Are you staying in this hall?

FS1PB: No, I came to greet my friend, Tola in room sixty three.

FPPB: Okay, you are free to see your friend.

In conversation 18, two female students and a female porter are involved. The students' utterances contain two expressive acts and one representative while that of the porter have one expressive. The expressive acts are: "Yemi, how are you?," "I am fine, thanks" "okay, you are free to see your friend" while the representative is "are you staying in this hall". By calling the student first name, the porter's action means that she is familiar with Yemi and she knows the hall she stays. The speakers exhibit harmonious relationship.

Conversation 19

FPPB: You, come here. Have you dropped the key for your room mates? Yesterday, they

complained, you went with the key

FSPB: It was a mistake. I forgot to drop the key.

FPPB: Don't forget to drop the key today

FPBS: I am dropping it right now.

FPPB: Okay.

Conversation 19 has a female student and a female porter. One expressive and one representative acts are present in the student's utterances, that of the

porter`s have two directive acts.

The representative act is “I am dropping it right now” while the expressive is “it was a mistake, I forgot to drop the key”. The directive acts are: “you come here, have you dropped the key for your room mates”, don`t forget to drop the key today”. The representative act “it was a mistake, I forgot to drop the key” is a form apology. It was a mistake on her part not to have dropped the key for her room mates.

Conversation 20

FSPB: Good morning ma

FPPB: Morning!

FSPB: Please, when will Mummy Adebayo (Mrs. Adebayo) be around?

FSPB: She is on afternoon duty

FSPB: I will come and see her by 3.00pm today.

Conversation 20 involves a female student and a female porter. Two expressive and one commissive acts are present in the student`s utterances while that of the porter contain one expressive and one representative. The expressive acts are: “good morning ma”, “morning”, “please, when will mummy Adebayo (Mrs. Adebayo) be around”,. The representative act is “she is on afternoon duty while the commissive is “I will come and see her by 3.00 pm today. The student referring to Mrs. Adebayo as Mummy Adebayo shows level of familiarity and cordiality. In Nigerian setting, young people can call a female adult mummy without being the biological mother.

Results and Discussion of Findings of the Speech Act Analysis of Porter- student Conversations in Selected South- west Nigerian Universities

Table 1: Result of the Speech Acts Analysis

	FSPR	MSPR	FPPR	MPPR	FSPB	MSPB	FPPB	MPPB	TOTAL	%
Representatives	16	6	1	-	7	6	1	1	38	37.3
Expressives	2	5	-	1	12	5	3	9	37	36.3
Commissives	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.9
Directives	1	1	5	9	-	1	6	3	26	25.5
Declarations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		0
Total	19	12	6	10	20	12	10	13	102	100

Source: Researcher`s Study 2015

The result of the speech act analysis in Table 1 shows a total number of 102, the representatives has 37.3%, expressive 36.3%, commissives 0.9%, directives 25.5% and declarations 0%. The implication is that porters- students` conversations have more of speech acts that describe situations through assertions and claims- representatives. This is followed by expressives acts

that express an inner states of the speaker e.g. greetings, compliments while directives acts follow the expressive acts in terms of percentage. The commissives has the least while declarations none. This means that students and porters `conversations hardly contain speech acts which get the hearer to get something done e.g. vowing, promising, pledging- commissives, and acts that cause changes in institutionalized e.g. naming of something or somebody, declaring a male and a female adults husband and wife, and sentencing a criminal into jail.

Table 2: Result of Speech Acts Analysis of Students- Porters` Conversations in the Private University

	FSPR	MSPR	FPPR	MPPR	TOTAL	%
Representatives	16	6	1	-	23	48.9
Expressives	2	5	-	1	8	17.0
Commissives	-	-	-	-	0	0
Directives	1	1	5	9	16	34.0
Declarations	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total	19	12	6	10	47	100

Source: Researcher's Study 2015

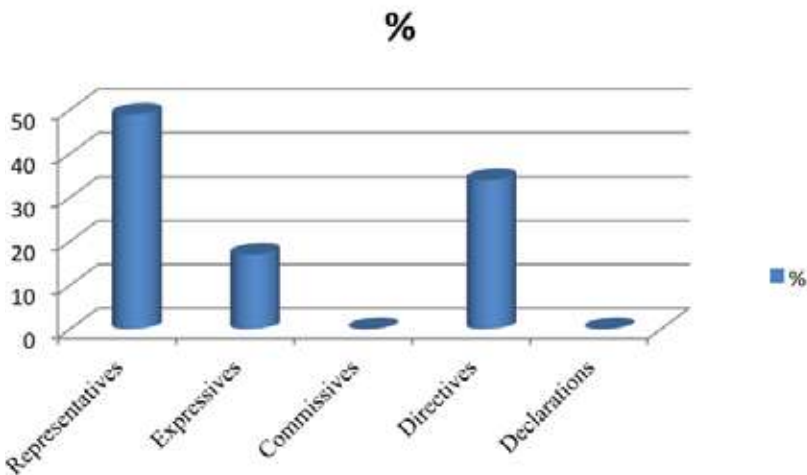


Figure 1: Result of Speech Act Analysis of Students- Porters` Conversations in the Private University

The result in Table 2 shows that the representatives has 48.9% , expressives 17.0%, commissives 0%, directives 34% and declaration 0%. This is shown in Figure 1. The implication of this is that students and porters` conversations contain highest percentage of speech acts that describe situation though assertions and claims- representatives e.g. “I want to register for accommodation”, I left my things...”. This is followed by acts that make the hearer to do something e.g. “please, close the door”, go and collect a note from the Students` Affair Office”. The expressives act is the least among the three act types in the private university e.g. “thank you ma”, “Good morning sir”. There are no commissives and declarations acts at all probably because porters and students do not want to get themselves committed to one promise or the other.

Table 3: Result of Speech Act in Students- Porters ` Conversation in the Public University

	FSPB	MSPB	FPPB	MPPB	TOTAL	%
Representatives	7	6	1	1	15	27.3
Expressives	12	5	3	9	29	52.7
Commissive	1	-	-	-	1	1.8
Directives	-	1	6	3	10	18.2
Declaration	-	-	-	-	0	0
Total	20	12	10	13	55	100

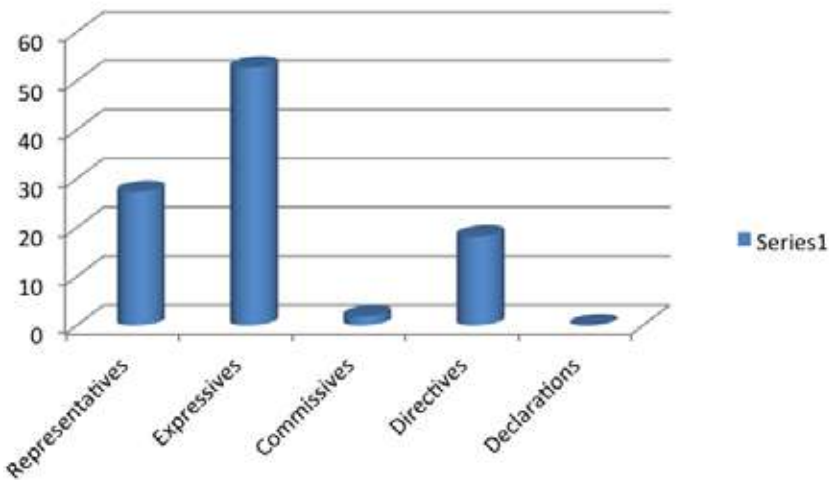


Figure2: Result of Speech Act in Students- Porters Conversation in the Public University

The result in Table 3 shows that the representatives act has 27.3%, expressives 52.7%, commissives 1.8%, directives 18.2% and declarations 0%. This is shown in Figure 2. The implication of this is that students and porters' conversations in the public university have highest percentage of expressive acts, that is, acts that express an attitude or inner state of the speaker e.g. "Well done sir", "Good afternoon sir", "Hello, Lawrence", "How is your health", "Did you see a doctor". The expressives act is followed by the representatives 27.3% that is, acts that describe situations through assertions and claims e.g. "To photocopy documents", "The net on our window has spoilt", "I paid last week", "Here is the receipt I was given", "I came to see my friend, Tola in room sixty three". The representatives act is followed by directives 18.2% that is, acts in which there is an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something e.g. "Go straight", "Please sir, always demand for their receipt of the hall dues before giving them the key to their room", "Write your complain in that book", "Any evidence", "Drop your key for your room mates". The commissive act is 1.8% while declaration is 0%. The implication is that students and porters in the public university do not like to commit themselves in one promise or the other.

Conclusion

The porters- students' conversations exhibit a high level of expressive, directive and representative speech acts. Porters and students in the public university have highest number of expressive speech act.

Recommendations

There should be periodical trainings in communications skills to porters who are to man hall of residence in the tertiary institutions for relative harmonious atmosphere in the halls. The trainers should concentrate on the aspect of the language the porters are likely to use in the course of discharging their duties. Students should be taught ways of making request, asking and answering questions politely so that they would understand that in saying something, they are performing some actions.

References

- Austin, J.L (1962) *How to do Things with Words*, London : Oxford University Press.
- Dairo, L.A. and Onadeko, T. (2008) *Understanding Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics*. New York: Peace Concept.
- Edmonson, W (1981) *Spoken discourse: a model for analysis*. London: Longman
- Farinde, R.O (1997) A Linguistic Study of Police/ Accused Discourse. An Unpublished M.A Thesis, Department of English, University of Ibadan
- Mey, J. C. (2001) *Pragmatics: An introduction (2nd edition)* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers
- Onadeko, T. (1999) "A Discourse Analysis of Conversational Strategies in Magistrate Courts in Nigeria". Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Ilorin, Ilorin.
- Osisanwo, W. (2008) *Introduction to Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics*. Lagos : Femolus-Fetop Publishers.

- Schegloff, E. (1972) "Sequencing in conversational openings". In J.Gumperz and E. Hymes(eds.) *Direction in Sociolinguistics*, New York: Holt 346- 380.
- Searle, J. R. (1969) *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

