



İNGİLİZCE DERS KİTAPLARINDA EDİMSSEL ÖGELER PRAGMATIC ELEMENTS IN EFL COURSE BOOKS

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Özet

Edimsel gelişim veya yeterlik özellikle son yıllarda büyük ilgi uyandırmıştır. Konuyla ilgili olarak, İngilizce ders kitaplarında söz edimlerinin varlığını ve aktarımını sorgulamak anlam arz eder, çünkü öğrenenler bu edimsel girdilerden yararlanırlar. Söz edimleriyle ilgili çok çalışma olmasına rağmen, ders kitaplarında söz edimlerini inceleyen çok az çalışma bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışma *Yes You Can* İngilizce ders kitaplarını söz edimleri açısından incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu nedenle, A1 ve A2 seviye 9. sınıf İngilizce ders kitapları seçilmiş ve bu kitapları incelemek için Searle'nin (1976) söz edim kalıpları kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar göstermiştir ki Türk Milli Eğitim Bakanlığının onayladığı İngilizce ders kitapları edimsel unsurlar içermesi açısından geliştirilmelidir. Sonuç olarak, öğretmenler, materyal tasarımcıları ve ders kitabı yazarları için bazı çıkarımlar yapılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: edim bilim, edimsel gelişim, söz edimleri, ders kitapları, ders kitabı inceleme

Abstract

Pragmatic development or competence has been great concern particularly for the recent decades. Regarding this issue, questioning the existence and delivery of speech acts in EFL course books may be sententious, as learners employ them for pragmatic input. Although much research has been conducted referring to speech acts, comparably little research has been managed to investigate speech acts in English course books. This study aims at analyzing *Yes You Can* EFL course books from the perspective of speech acts in pragmatics. For this purpose, four 9th class EFL course books, the levels of which are A1 (Beginner) and A2 (elementary) were selected and the pragmatic modes of Searle's (1976) speech acts were applied to examine the books in the study. The results displayed that the evaluated EFL course books approved by the Ministry of Turkish National Education should be developed in terms of having pragmatic compounds. Conclusively, some implications for instructors, material designers, and course book authors were proposed.

Keywords: pragmatics, pragmatic elements, speech acts, course books, course book evaluation

1. Introduction

A course book should contain various compounds such as cultural, societal, pragmatic issues which are given implicitly or explicitly. Containing pragmatic knowledge in designing course materials draws little attention. This drawback may somewhat account for artificiality of the course books. Course book authors should contain more pragmatic knowledge in course books and as a result enhance the authenticity of the course books and pragmatic knowledge of EFL learners (Gholami, 2015). Material designers and course book authors does not give *pragmatic knowledge* its deserved consideration. It should be given more attention, though. Parts aiming to promote language learners' pragmatic competence should be covered in course books to avoid making pragmatics a negligible dimension of target language instruction. Moreover, the aimed pragmatic input should be presented in a more authentic and contextualized way. Considering the students' linguistic competence important, students' airing the aimed pragmatic information could be aided by daily conversational models. Material designers and course book authors ought to incorporate various kinds of activities for developing pragmatic proficiency with the content by means of consciousness enhancing activities and chances for speech practice (Aksoyalp and Toprak, 2015). Considering all the mentioned issue, this paper tries to explore the existence of pragmatic dimension in EFL course books, in terms of the extent of speech acts. That's to say, whether pragmatic compounds exist in the analysed EFL course books or not is tried to be found out in the study.

2. Literature Review

For the comprehension of what people meant through what they uttered, it is not adequate to have a knowledge of the meanings of the words (semantics) and also how they have been

attached together in a sentence (syntax); who said the sentence and in what context it was said are also needed to be aware of, and to be able to make assumptions as to why they uttered it and what they expected us to comprehend. *There is one piece of cake left* can be comprehended as a proposal (would you like it?) or a caution (it's mine!) or a scolding (you didn't finish your cake), based on the circumstance, even if the follow-up comments in parentheses are never said. Pragmatics may be practically described as the study of language use in context – compared to semantics, the study of literal meaning separate from context (Birner, 2013). Pragmatics is a hastily developing discipline featured through a wide output of research. This has lots of factors. One of the reasons is that an enhancing number of phenomena are currently seen to be based on context for their clarification and should be interpreted in pragmatics (Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann, 2012). Pragmatics is defined as the science of the connection of signs with their interpreters. Since most signs have living organisms as their interpreters, it is an adequately certain feature of pragmatics to declare that it deals with the biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with psychological, biological and sociological phenomena which arise in the functioning of signs (Morris, 1938). In many second and foreign language teaching contexts, curricula and materials developed in recent years include strong pragmatic components or even adopt a pragmatic approach as their organizing principle (Rose and Kasper, 2001).

2.1. Speech Acts

Linguistics and language philosophy have leaned to examine linguistic proficiency as the speakers' competence to employ and comprehend single sentences without much taking into account their ability to contribute to conversations up until now. Likewise, speech act theory tends to work on segregated illocutionary acts carried out through using sentences in single

contexts of utterance. Nevertheless, it is apparent that speech acts are hardly carried out alone in the use of language. Adversely, speakers carry out their illocutionary acts within all dialogues where they are usually in verbal interaction with other speakers who respond to them and perform in turn their own speech acts with the collective intention of conducting a particular sort of dialogue. Beyond all, the use of language is a social model of linguistic manner. It covers sequences of utterances from many speakers who tend by their verbal interactions to attain general objectives such as discussing news, coordinating their joint action, negotiating or more simply exchanging greetings (Vanderveken, 2001). When we say *Eat something this morning?*, we do something. What we do is called 'asking a question'. Attentiveness in such an act, structurally related to the sentences, and called speech acts, has been one of the fundamental components of pragmatics for a long time (Verschueren, 2003). The concern of speech acts can go back to the view that people employ language not only to define phenomena in the real world but also to do things. The founder of philosophical speech act theory is the philosopher John L. Austin. In a presentation made in Harvard in 1955, texted afterwards as the essay *How to do things with words* (1962), he disputed against the prevailing philosophical doctrine that interpretations could only be attached to sentences on the ground of their coherence with truth, and displayed that there are various things we do with language (Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann, 2012). To utter something means doing something. The act of speaking is initially an act. This is the main intuition following the theory of speech acts, and though it seems somewhat forthright, it promotes significant questions as to how to receiver is able to decide what type of act the speaker aimed to carry out. The philosophy of speech acts, then, is naturally a pragmatic theory as it covers an objective on the part of the speaker and an assumption on the part of the hearer. It was understood in lots of ways how a speaker's intention can be more than is apparent slightly

from the semantics of the sentence said, and it was also understood how the context must be taken into consideration when figuring out a speaker's aimed meaning (Birner, 2013).

2.2. Searle's Theory of Speech Acts

The concept of speech act was first introduced by the philosopher John Austin who made a distinction between *constative* and *performative* utterances in his search for ways of coping with language as a form of action (Verschueren, 2003). The philosopher John Searle followed the work started by Austin, by emphasizing that speaking a language is employing in a principle governed form of behaviour and offered a number of happiness circumstances (different from Austin's) for several descriptive examples of speech acts (Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann, 2012).

As stated by Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann (2012), Searle (1976) put forward some dimensions of variation making it possible to categorise speech acts into larger classifications referring to a number of basic things we can do with language. According to them the five categories are as in the following;

- Representatives (or assertives). These are illustrated by speech acts expressing the speaker's belief that something is true. Examples of speech acts are stating, suggesting, boasting, complaining, claiming, concluding, deducing.
- Commisives. By using a commissive the speaker commits him to do some feature act. Examples of speech acts are promises, pledges, and vows.
- Directives are speech acts whereby the speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something. Examples of speech acts are asking, ordering, commanding, requesting, begging, pleading, praying, entreating, inviting, permitting, and advising.

- Expressives are illustrated by speech acts where the speaker expresses a psychological state towards the hearer. Some examples are thanking, congratulating, apologising, condoling, deploring, welcoming.
- Declarations declare the verdict that something is the case (e.g. acquit, disqualify).

2.3. Course Book and Course Book Evaluation

Owning a course book in teaching and learning process is a crucial factor and is seen as an essential tool, choosing a convenient book or supplying a course book is of great concern too (Nemati, 2009). Materials (with reference to course books) are a significant dimension of the curriculum in the English classroom. They are the most apparent characteristics of an instructor's methodology, and can devote highly to a course's syllabus (White, n.d.). Tomlinson (2006) states that there is no flawless course book as every course book is employed in different circumstances by different learners who own diverse aims, demands, wishes, competency levels, and cultural backgrounds. Thus, it is too hard for a course book to please all learners or instructors. Nevertheless, each course book has to be evaluated occasionally to specify its flaws and ameliorate them.

Aim of the Study

This study seeks to understand the extent of pragmatic elements referring to speech acts in the EFL Course Books *Yes You Can series* for the 9th grade state high school students applied by the Turkish Ministry of National Education. That's to say, this study aims at identifying the existence of pragmatic elements like speech acts in EFL course books used by the state schools in Turkey, regarding the pragmatic modes of Searle's (1976) speech acts.

Research Question

To what extent do the EFL course books applied by the Turkish Ministry of National Education contain pragmatic elements, in our case speech acts?

Significance of the Study

This study refers to the extent of pragmatic elements regarding the speech acts in the EFL Course Books applied by the Turkish Ministry of National Education. The findings will have great value as an exploratory study on the pragmatic dimension of EFL course books, by providing implications for instructors, material designers, and course book authors as well. Furthermore, the findings will stand as a data-base for the Department of Foreign Languages. They may also be used to recommend ways to enhance pragmatic features of EFL course books. The findings of the study will also be a guide for researchers in their research conduction on pragmatic features provided in course books or other teaching materials.

Framework of the study

This study aimed at investigating the pragmatic features — speech act information — included in English Student Books used by state high schools. The material covered the course books *Yes You Can series* used in high school English courses.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Subjects

The subjects of this study were 4 student EFL course books used in state high schools. The names of the books are shown in following table.

Table 1

The Books Investigated in the Study

Books	Details
<i>Yes You Can Student's Book (A1.1)</i>	State Books, 2014
<i>Yes You Can Student's Book (A1.2)</i>	State Books, 2014
<i>Yes You Can Student's Book (A2.1)</i>	State Books, 2014
<i>Yes You Can Student's Book (A2.2)</i>	State Books, 2014

3.2. Instrumentation

The model of Searle (1967) was applied in order to investigate the speech acts by adopting the speech act classifications. Searle's classification of speech acts are as in the followings (as stated by Universitat Des Saarlandes, n.d.)

Assertives :

They commit the speaker to something being the case. The different kinds are: suggesting, putting forward, swearing, boasting, concluding. Example: "No one makes a better cake than me".

Directives :

They try to make the addressee perform an action. The different kinds are: asking, ordering, requesting, inviting, advising, begging. Example: "Could you close the window?".

Commissives :

They commit the speaker to doing something in the future. The different kinds are: promising, planning, vowing, betting, opposing. Example: "I'm going to Paris tomorrow".

Expressives :

They express how the speaker feels about the situation. The different kinds are: thanking, apologising, welcoming, deploring. Example: "I am sorry that I lied to you".

Declarations :

They change the state of the world in an immediate way. Examples: "You are fired, I swear, I beg you".

3.3. Data Analysis and Results

The analysis of the present study has been carried out by careful inspection of the course books on the basis of Searle's (1976) speech acts. Basically, the quantitative analysis performed in this study contains some simple statistical analyses like counting the frequencies of the occurrence of each sub-category of Searle's (1976) speech act taxonomy.

Table 2

Overall Frequencies of Speech Acts

Books	Pragmatic Features (Speech Act Information)				
	Assertive	Directives	Commissives	Expressives	Declarations
<i>Yes You Can</i> (A1.1)	f 0	f 14	f 7	f 0	f 0
<i>Yes You Can</i> (A1.2)	f 0	f 4	f 3	f 0	f 0
<i>Yes You Can</i> (A2.1)	f 0	f 3	f 3	f 0	f 0
<i>Yes You Can</i> (A2.2)	f 0	f 2	f 3	f 0	F 0

As Table 2 shows, for the first book *Yes You Can* (A1.1) the frequency of speech acts are for those of assertive ones equals 0, directive ones 14, commissive ones 7, expressive ones 0 and those of declarative speech acts are 0. As a result, it can simply be concluded that the overall minimum frequency belong to expressive and declarative speech acts, i.e. 0, and the overall maximum ones refer to directive speech acts, i.e. 14. The sample sentences below exemplify these themes:

- Could you give me that book? (Directives, p.85)
- They are going to drive all the way to Alaska. (Commissives, p.91)

Regarding the second book *Yes You Can* (A1.2) the frequency of speech acts are for those of assertive ones equals 0, directive ones 4, commissive ones 3, expressive ones 0 and those of declarative speech acts are 0. As a result, it can simply be concluded that the overall minimum frequency belong to assertive, expressive and declarative speech acts, i.e. 0, and

the overall maximum ones refer to directive speech acts, i.e. 4. The sample sentences below exemplify these themes:

- Would you like to have a seat? (Directives, p.57)
- I am going to climb Mount Everest. (Commissives, p.70)

For the third book *Yes You Can* (A2.1) the frequency of speech acts are for those of assertive ones equals 0, directive ones 3, commissive ones 3, expressive ones 0 and those of declarative speech acts are 0. As a result, it can simply be concluded that the overall minimum frequency belong to assertive, expressive and declarative speech acts, i.e. 0, and the overall maximum ones refer to directive and commissive speech acts, i.e. 3. The sample sentences below exemplify these themes:

- Can you help me Lisa? (Directives, p.22)
- I am going to start up a new hobby. (Commissives, p.61)

Finally, for the fourth book *Yes You Can* (A2.2) the frequency of speech acts are for those of assertive ones equals 0, directive ones 2, commissive ones 3, expressive ones 0 and those of declarative speech acts are 0. As a result, it can simply be concluded that the overall minimum frequency belong to assertive, expressive and declarative speech acts, i.e. 0, and the overall maximum ones refer to commissive speech acts, i.e. 3. The sample sentences below exemplify these themes:

- Could you give the names of some of your works?? (Directives, p.21)
- I'm going to go shopping and buy a birthday present for my cousin. (Commissives, p.22)

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to evaluate whether the course books in an EFL context contained pragmatic features, in our case the speech acts of Searle (1976). Namely, the frequencies of the speech acts classification of Searle (1976) were used in the study. For the purpose of the study, 4 English course books with different language proficiency levels approved by the Turkish Ministry of National Education were analysed by using the Searle's (1976) speech act classification. The data analysis clearly displays that the quantity of pragmatic data in these evaluated course books is exceedingly far from being sufficient for EFL learners to attain pragmatic competence. In other words, the most extent of the pragmatic scope was assigned to speech acts as they surround most of the language functions. Nonetheless, the findings of this study display that only few sentences or phrases are formed in terms of referring to speech acts, and these sentences or phrases which are quite limited in number are mainly contained in the Yes You Can A1.1. However, in four of the EFL course books analysed, it was seen that these four books are highly insufficient in terms of having elements of speech acts. This is a very weak point of these selected EFL course books. Teaching speech acts, or teaching natural dialogues is a crucial aspect of teaching English as a foreign language. So, the course books which cover the most important part of students' learning process especially in the countries of non-native English speakers should contain pragmatic features like speech acts in order to compensate for the lack of natural context.

5. Recommendations

Research in the field of pragmatic characteristics in EFL course books may greatly contribute to course book design so that the course books which will be written in the future would cover various pragmatic linguistic forms. A pragmatically rich course book helps learners to

develop pragmatic consciousness. Considering the mentioned issue, we can give some suggestions for the enrichment of pragmatic elements in language course books. The course books evaluated in this study are being employed in EFL courses but to check whether EFL learners receive adequate pragmatic data, there has to be further analysis of other course books, materials, and the real instruction procedures. Besides, aimed pragmatic input has to be given in a more contextualized style. Moreover, students' exposure to the objected pragmatic information should be aided by natural colloquial models. Also, course book authors ought to incorporate diverse kinds of activities with content in order to improve learners' pragmatic competence. An evaluation targeting a larger corpus would be more informative and supply more generalizable results.

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