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Speech Acts Revisited: Examining Illocutionary Speech Acts in Speeches of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk

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Abstract

Pragmatics is an interdisciplinary subfield of applied linguistics that investigates the meaning in context. One of its research areas, speech acts, provides important implications on how the meaning behind the utterances is perceived and what effect it may have on the hearer. Theories and classifications proposed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1979) are particularly useful in understanding the hidden meaning and its effect on the audience. Political discourse is directly connected with speech acts and there is a body of research that focuses on the classification of illocutionary acts embedded within speeches of politicians. In this regard, the present research aimed to analyze illocutionary speech acts of two speeches of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk; speech at the 10th anniversary of Turkish Republic and Address to Turkish Youth which was a part of his great speech that he delivered to deputies and representatives of the Republican Party on 15th-20th October 1927 by employing qualitative content analysis on English translations of the speeches. Subsequent to meticulous analysis, the present qualitative study concluded that Ataturk used more speech acts in his speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic than his Address to Turkish Youth. Speech acts in his speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic primarily featured expressive, representative, commissive and directive speech acts while his Address to Turkish Youth featured representative and commissive, directive, expressive speech acts, respectively. In total, the most used speech acts were representatives, followed by expressives, commissives and directives. No declaration speech act was observed in either speech.

Keywords: Ataturk, Illocutionary Speech Acts, Pragmatics

1. Introduction

Defining pragmatics dates back to Yule (1996) who attempted to explain it in four bases. Though all of these definitions are beneficial for the conceptualization of the field, these are too general to define the pragmatics as a field of study (Thomas, 2014, p.1). The definition of Crystal (1997, p. 301) as ''the study of language from the perspective of users, particularly of their choices, the limitations they encounter in using language in social contexts and the impact that their use of language has on other respondents in the act of communication'' is quite explanatory in that it touches on the cognitive and social aspects of pragmatics (as cited

in Can Daşkın & Can, 2022, p. 4). Some of the study areas of pragmatics as an interdisciplinary field are deixis, presupposition, speech acts, implicatures, and conversational inference (Levinson, 1983).

According to Levinson (2006), deixis studies the deictic or indexical expressions in language, such as you, now, today (p.100). Presuppositions, as the name refers, pertains to the study of the background knowledge of an assumed truth (Stalnaker et al.,1977) Implicatures, as Horn (2006) explains, are centered on what is meant rather than what is said. Conversational inferences are interconnected with implicatures and are basically pragmatic inferences that hearers or observers intend to arrive listening to the speaker (Vergis, 2015). As for the speech acts, which will be the basis of this present qualitative study, Searle (1965) defines speech acts stating ‘‘In a typical speech situation involving a speaker, a hearer and an utterance by the speaker, there are many kinds of acts associated with the speaker’s utterance’’ (p.2) and attributes speech acts to certain communicative functions, such as inquiring, stating, refusing and accepting in reference to Speech Acts theory of Austin (1962). He further lays foundations of his Speech Acts Theory in 1979, which is a revised version of the theory of Austin (1962). With Aristoteles defining humans as political animals, political discourse has long been associated with speech acts and subjected to analyses by experts within the field. Therefore; the present qualitative research aims to determine the illocutionary speech acts within the speech of Ataturk which he delivered to Turkish people at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic and his Address to Turkish Youth that was part of his long speech that he gave to deputies and representatives of the Republican Party on 15-20 October 1927 by speech act classification of Searle (1979).

2. Speech Act Theories and Taxonomies

Inspired by the Chomskyan Revolution, a prolific philosopher and linguist named John Langshaw Austin published his book ‘How to do things with words’ in 1962, where he laid foundations for one of the most groundbreaking theories in the field of linguistics. Austin (1962) posited that different forms of utterances in conversation convey not only meanings, but also various purposes, such as accomplishment, persuasion, requesting, promising and more (Kazazoğlu, 2022, p.139). Thus, he put forth Speech acts theory by categorizing the speech acts into three dimensions:

- *Locutionary Act*
- *Illocutionary Act*
- *Perlocutionary Act (summarized from Yule, 1996, pp. 48-49)*

Locutionary act denotes the first dimension, where meaningful linguistic utterances are uttered. The second dimension features illocutionary act, which represents the purposes of uttering specific expressions. The third dimension illustrates the perlocutionary act where the impact of illocution is observed (Sadock, 2006; Yule, 1996). According to Austin (1962), they are essential for the sustainability of the conversation between the hearer and speaker. Austin proposed a taxonomy for illocutionary acts comprised of five categories; verdictives, exercitives, commissives, expositivies, behabitives and favoured that these are required to be thoroughly revised (Searle, 1979, pp. 8-9). Searle (1969, 1975a, 1979b) thus proposed a comparatively more refined taxonomy that illustrates the five categories of illocutionary act:

Table 1

Austin's Classification (1962)	***Searle's Classification (1979)***
Verdictives give a finding or verdict (e.g., analyse, assess, characterise, date, describe, estimate, hold, rank,)	*Representatives* commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition (e.g., asserting, concluding, reporting, claiming)
Exercitives exercise power or right (e.g., advise, command, direct, order, recommend)	*Directives* show attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something (e.g., ordering, questioning, requesting, suggesting)
Commissives commit the speaker to a course of action (e.g., contract, embrace, guarantee, pledge, promise, swear, vow)	*Commissives* commit the speaker to a future action (e.g., offering, promising, threatening)
Behabitives express attitudes about social behaviour (e.g., apologise, express gratitude, express sympathy, greet, wish	*Expressives* express feelings and attitudes about a state of affairs (e.g., apologising, congratulating, thanking, welcoming, complaining)
Expositives fit utterances into conversations (e.g., affirm, answer, call, class, deny, emphasise, identify, illustrate)	*Declarations* immidiately change the institutional current state of affairs (e.g., christening, declaring war, firing from employment (e.g., you're fired), marrying)

(cited from Can, 2022, p. 40)

Although the taxonomy of Searle is clearly more intelligible than that of Austin, it has also been subjected to criticism owing to the fact that utterances have been examined in isolation and fabricated data has been utilized (Tsui, 1987). According to Katz (2015), the main problem for the taxonomy of Searle stems from his combined categorization of commissives and directives. She further indicates another problematic issue in the taxonomy of Searle, stating ''*…..The greater flaw in Searle's analysis is his insistence on giving each of his categories a unique direction of fit….''* (p. 48). Nevertheless, the taxonomy of Searle was still a useful framework for the political discourse analysis of different politicitans.

3. Speech Acts and Political Discourse

Language and politics is interconnected, as one may implicate from the definition of Aristotle of man as a political animal (Chiron,2004; Simpson et al., 2018). The political language has the power to manipulate the minds of recipients and inflict the so called 'true' ideas of the ones that are in power (Hashim, 2015, p. 699). Therefore, the political discourse is highly style-oriented on account of the fact that the politicians have idiosynctratic personalities and lifestyles (Simpson & Mayr, 2010). The literature clearly illustrates these idiosyncracies among speeches of different politicians.

Simpson et al. (2018) highlights the speech analysis of a conversative British politician Enoch Powell by Chilton. The results of the analysis demonstrate that Powell seems to have used 'indirect-meaning strategy' to give the impression that the immigration will bring off a race war within the nation. Drawing particular attention to speech acts, Dylgjeri (2017) scrutinizes the victory speech of Edi Rama, an Albanian president in 2013. The results of the study portray that the speech of Rama was based on commissive speech acts that featured promises for Albanians. Another study conducted by Hashim (2015) addresses that the speeches that John Kerry in Presidental Campaign in 2004 and George Bush in Inaugural address in 2001 gave mostly featured commissive and assertive speech acts. Aside from

them, Barack Obama, Donald Trump and Joe Biden are no exception when it comes to speech acts analysis. Muskananfola (2009) concludes that both Victory and Inaugural speeches of Barack Obama contain all classifications of illocutionary acts that were addressed by Searle. The same goes for Trump whose speeches mostly included assertive, commissive, expressive, and directive speech acts, respectively (Srikandi, 2020; Vinni, 2021). Joe Biden, on the other hand, turned to representatives, expressives, declarations, commissives and directives, respectively (Sari et al., 2021).

As mentioned by Akinwotu (2013), nomination speeches of Nigerian presidential candidates, Awowolo and Abiola, consist mostly of assertive, expressive and commissive acts. Indonesian political figure, Jokowidodo, is also commonly addressed based on the illocutionary speech acts that he used within his speeches (Humaniora, 2016; Khodijah, 2020; Rosyidi et al.,2019; Sari & Utomo; 2020; Srikandi, 2020). With reference to speech acts that politicians used, the present qualitative study aims to bring novelty by shedding light on the illocutionary speech acts of the speech that Ataturk delivered at the 10th year anniversary of Turkish Republic on 29th October 1933 and ‘’Address To Turkish Youth’’, which he delivered to deputies and representatives of the Republican Party on 15-20th October 1927 (Neyzi, 2001, p. 417) and answer the following research questions:

1- Which illocutionary act(s) did Ataturk use the most in his speech that he delivered at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic and Address to Turkish Youth that he gave on 15-20th October 1927?
2- What are the differences between his speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic and his Address to Turkish Youth in terms of illocutionary acts used?

4. Methodology

4.1. Data Gathering

Speeches of Ataturk were cited from two different resources. The speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic was taken from Ataturk Society of America (n.d.). On the other hand, his Address to Turkish Youth was directly cited from the website of Columbia University. In order to avoid possible mistakes in the categorization of the illocutionary speech acts, transcripts of the speeches taken from Ataturk Society of America (n.d.) and

Columbia University (n.d.) were compared with other English translations provided on different resources.

4.2. Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis was employed for the data analysis. According to Assarroudi (2018), the data are obtained through the description and interpretation of the text analysis. Using the theoretical framework of Searle (1979), illocutionary speech acts were classified into speech act categories in both speeches of Ataturk.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Speech acts along with the speech given at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic

Table 2

	Locution	***Type of the illocutionary act employed***
1.	*''The Turkish Nation ! We are in the fifteenth year of the start of our war of liberation.''*	*Representative*
2.	*''This is the greatest day marking the tenth year of our Republic.''*	*Expressive*
3.	*''May it be celebrated.''*	*Directive*
4.	*''At this moment as a member of the great Turkish nation, I feel the deepest joy and excitement for having achieved this happy day.''*	*Expressive*
6.	*''However we can never consider what we have achieved to be sufficient, because we must, and are determined to accomplish even more and greater tasks.''*	*Directive*
7.	*''We shall raise our country to the level of the most prosperous and civilized nations of the world.''*	*Commissive & Directive*
8.	*''We shall endow our nation with the broadest means and sources of welfare.''*	*Commissive & Directive*
9.	*''Therefore, we should judge the measure of time not according to the lax mentality of past centuries, but in terms of the concepts of speed and movement of our century.''*	*Directive*
10.	*''Compared to the past, we shall work harder.''*	*Commissive & Directive*
11.	*''We shall perform greater tasks in a shorter time.''*	*Commissive & Directive*
12.	*''I have no doubt that we shall succeed in this, because the Turkish nation is of excellent character.''*	*Representative & Commissive*
13.	*''The Turkish nation is intelligent, because the Turkish nation is capable of overcoming difficulties of national unity, and because it holds the torch of positive sciences.''*	*Representative & Expressive*
14.	*''I must make it clear with due emphasis, that a historical quality of the Turkish nation, which is an exalted human community, is its love for fine arts and progress in them.''*	*Representative & Expressive*
15.	*''This is why our national ideal is to constantly foster and promote, with all means and measures, our nation's excellent character, its tireless industriousness, intelligence, devotion to science, love for fine arts and sense of national unity.''*	*Representative & Expressive*

	Locution	***Type of the illocutionary act employed***
16.	*''This ideal, which very well suits the Turkish nation, will enable it to succeed in performing the civilized task falling on it in securing true peace for all mankind.''*	*Representative & Expressive & Commissive*
17.	*''The Great Turkish Nation ! You have heard me speak on many occasions over the last fifteen years promising success in the tasks we undertook.''*	*Representative*
18.	*''I am happy that none of my promises have been false ones which could have shaken my nation's confidence in me.''*	*Expressive*
19.	*''Today, I repeat with the same faith and determination that it will soon be acknowledged once again by the entire civilized world that the Turkish nation, who has been progressing towards the national ideal in exact unison, is a great nation.''*	*Representative & Expressive*
20.	*''Never have doubted that the great, but forgotten, civilized characteristic and the great civilized talents of the Turkish nation will, in its progress henceforth, rise like a new son from the high horizon of civilization for the future.''*	*Representative & Expressive*
21.	*''The Turkish nation, I express my heartfelt wish that you will celebrate, after each decade elapsing into eternity, this great national day, in greater honor, happiness, peace and prosperity.''*	*Expressive & Commissive*
22.	*''How happy it is to say that I am a Turk !''*	*Expressive*

Ataturk's speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic (Ataturk Society of America n.d.)

5.1.1. Representative Speech Acts Within the Speech

Representative speech acts are commonly used by politicans to inform, assert, state and propose. Ataturk relied heavily on representative speech acts in his speech at the 10th anniversary of Turkish Republic. Representative speech acts in his speech primarily consist of assertations and his views regarding the Turkish nation. For instance, within such utterances as *''This is why our national ideal is to constantly foster and promote, with all means and measures, our nation's excellent character, its tireless industriousness, intelligence, devotion to science, love for fine arts and sense of national unity''*, Ataturk corroborates his views by providing reasons why the Turkish nation is to prosper. Some other representative speech acts that he used are statements of facts from past events. These speech acts can be observed in *''The Great Turkish Nation ! You have heard me speak on many occasions over the last fifteen years promising success in the tasks we undertook.''* and *''Today, I repeat with the same faith and determination that it will soon be acknowledged once again by the entire civilized world that the Turkish nation, who has been progressing towards the national ideal in exact unison, is a great nation''.*

5.1.2. Directive Speech Acts Within the Speech

According to Searle (1979), directive speech acts demonstrate speaker's attempts to get hearer to do something (Can, 2022, p.40). These speech acts involve ordering, asking, commanding, advising and advising (Sameer, 2017, p.138). Such utterances as ''*However we can never consider what we have achieved to be sufficient, because we must, and are determined to accomplish even more and greater tasks''* and *'' Therefore, we should judge the measure of time not according to the lax mentality of past centuries, but in terms of the concepts of speed and movement of our century''* can be exemplified for directive speech acts in the speech. What is implicated from these directive speech acts is that Ataturk gave valuable advices for the attainment of prosperity and directed people to work harder and contribute to the well-being of the Turkish nation. In addition to these directive speech acts, Ataturk used indirect directive speech acts in some of his utterances, such as *'' We shall raise our country to the level of the most prosperous and civilized nations of the world'', '' We shall endow our nation with the broadest means and sources of welfare''* and *'' We shall endow our nation with the broadest means and sources of welfare''.*

5.1.3 Commissive Speech Acts Within the Speech

Commissive speech acts are attributed to the actions that are to be accomplished in the future. These future actions include certain communicative functions, such as promises, threats, refusals and pledges (Mufiah & Rahman, 2019). Therefore; certain utterances in the speech indicate the use of commissive speech acts such as, ''*We shall endow our nation with the broadest means and sources of welfare.'', ''We shall raise our country to the level of the most prosperous and civilized nations of the world.''* and *''We shall perform greater tasks in a shorter time.''* Indirect commissive speech acts are also traceable as well as the direct ones; *''I have no doubt that we shall succeed in this, because the Turkish nation is of excellent character'', ''The Turkish nation, I express my heartfelt wish that you will celebrate, after each decade elapsing into eternity, this great national day, in greater honor, happiness, peace and prosperity''* and '' *''This ideal, which very well suits the Turkish nation, will enable it to succeed in performing the civilized task falling on it in securing true peace for all mankind''.*

5.1.4 Expressive Speech Acts Within The Speech

Searle (1979) touches on expressive speech acts stating *'we express our feelings and attitudes (Expressives)'* (p.8). During the speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic, Ataturk expresses his feelings regarding the state of the nation and what the Turkish nation accomplished in the wake of occupations by Entente Powers. Some of his remarks, ''*This is the greatest day marking the tenth year of our Republic'', '' At this moment as a member of the great Turkish nation, I feel the deepest joy and excitement for having achieved this happy day'', '' I am happy that none of my promises have been false ones which could have shaken my nation's confidence in me''* are all expressive speech acts that denote the joy and pleasure that Ataturk feels concerning the state of Turkish Republic. As well as these direct expressive speech acts, indirect expressive speech acts are also present in specific utterances, alongside direct representative and directive speech acts.

5.1.5 Declarative Speech Acts Within the Speech

Declarative speech acts, require an institutional role by the speaker. For instance, that a priet says ''I now pronounce you husband and wife'' and a referee says ''You're out.'' are both acknowledged to be declarative speech acts (Wicaksono, 2018). These utterances most generally contain certain performative verbs, such as ''christen'', ''name'', ''fire'', ''resign''

(Sadock, 2006). Although Ataturk was the founder of Turkish Republic, he apparently did not use his institutional role as the first president of Turkish Republic within the speech at the 10th anniversary of Turkish Republic. Thus; no declarative speech act has been observed in his utterances.

5.2. Illocutionary speech acts along with Address to Turkish Youth

Table 3

	Locution	***Type of the illocutionary speech act***
1.	*''Turkish Youth ! Your first duty is forever to preserve and to defend Turkish Independence and the Turkish Republic (Columbia University, n.d.)''*	*Directive*
2.	*''This is the very foundation of your existence and your future. This foundation is your most precious treasure (Columbia University, n.d.)''*	*Representative & Expressive*
3.	*''In the future, too, there may be malevolent people at home and abroad who will wish to deprive you of this treasure. If someday you are compelled to defend your independence and your republic, you must not tarry to weigh the possibilities and circumstances of the situation before taking up your duty.''*	*Commissive & Directive*
4.	*''These possibilities and circumstances may turn out to be extremely unfavourable. The enemies conspiring against your independence and your republic may have behind them a victory unprecedented in the annals of the world.''*	*Representative & Commissive*
5.	*''It may be that, by violence and ruse, all the fortresses of your beloved fatherland may be captured, all its shipyards occupied, all its armies dispersed and every part of the country invaded''*	*Representative & Commissive*
6.	*''And sadder and graver than all these circumstances, those who hold power within the country may be in error, misguided, and may even be traitors. Furthermore, they may identify their personal interests with the political designs of the invaders. The country may be impoverished, ruined, and exhausted.''*	*Representative & Expressive & Commissive*
7.	*''Youth of Turkey's future, even in such circumstances, it is your duty to save the Turkish Independence and Republic.''*	*Directive*
8.	*''You will find the strength you need in your noble blood !''*	*Commissive & Representative*

Ataturk's Address To Turkish Youth (Columbia University, n.d.)

5.2.1. Representative Speech Acts in Address to Turkish Youth

Representative speech acts in Address to Turkish Youth are primarily composed of descriptions of past events and their possible recurrences in the future. For instance, utterances, such as*''This is the very foundation of your existence and your future. This foundation is your most precious treasure.'', '' These possibilities and circumstances may turn out to be extremely unfavourable. The enemies conspiring against your independence and your republic may have behind them a victory unprecedented in the annals of the world.''* and *'' It may be that, by violence and ruse, all the fortresses of your beloved fatherland may be captured, all its shipyards occupied, all its armies dispersed and every part of the country invaded.''* illustrate these descriptions. Moreover, an indirect

representative speech act is also seen in the eighth utterance *''You will find the strength you need in your noble blood.''*.

5.2.2. Directive Speech Acts in Address To Turkish Youth

Implicated from the statements of Ataturk, Ataturk orders the Turkish Youth to persevere regardless of the hardship that they face. In addition, an indirect directive speech act has been detected in*''In the future, too, there may be malevolent people at home and abroad who will wish to deprive you of this treasure. If someday you are compelled to defend your independence and your republic, you must not tarry to weigh the possibilities and circumstances of the situation before taking up your duty.''* as well as the direct commissive speech act which makes attributions to the future.

5.2.3. Commissive Speech Acts in Address To Turkish Youth

As aforementioned in Section 5.1.3, commissive speech acts are associated with the future actions. Within the third and the eighth utterances in Section 5.2, Ataturk uses direct commissive speech acts with attributions to the future. Similarly, he employs indirect commissive speech acts along with the direct representative speech acts in such utterances as *''These possibilities and circumstances may turn out to be extremely unfavourable. The enemies conspiring against your independence and your republic may have behind them a victory unprecedented in the annals of the world''.*

5.2.4. The Expressive Speech Act in Address to Turkish Youth

Ataturk merely used two expressive speech acts in his Address to Turkish Youth. The set of utterances *''This is the very foundation of your existence and your future. This foundation is your most precious treasure''* incorporates an indirect expressive speech act that contains indicative terms, such as ''very'', ''most precious''of feelings of Ataturk. And, *''And sadder and graver than all these circumstances, those who hold power within the country may be in error, misguided, and may even be traitors. Furthermore, they may identify their personal interests with the political designs of the invaders. The country may be impoverished, ruined, and exhausted.''* suggest an indirect expressive speech act with adjectives ''sadder'' and ''graver''.

5.3. Comparison of Speeches

Table 4

Illocutionary Speech Acts	***Speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic***	***Address to The Turkish Youth***
Representatives	9	5
Directives	7	3
Commissives	7	5
Expressives	11	2
Declarations	0	0

The results indicate that Ataturk mainly employed representative, expressive, commissive and directive speech acts respectively in both speeches given at separate times. The number of illocutionary acts detected within the speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic is clearly more than the ones within Address to the Turkish Youth. Ataturk used expressive speech acts to express his feelings about the state of the new nation and

representatives to state his opinions about Turkish Republic at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic. In his Address to Turkish Youth, however, he mainly relied on representative and commissive acts to address the possibility of reccurence of the dangerous circumstances.

6. Conclusion

The present qualitative research concludes that Ataturk appealed to representative (14), expressive (13) commissive (12) and directive (10) speech acts during the speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic and Address to Turkish Youth, both of which were held at different times. Speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic covers more illocutionary speech acts compared to Address to Turkish Youth. Furthermore, Ataturk used expressives, representatives, commissives and directives in his speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic while he used representatives and commissives, directives, expressives in his Address to Turkish Youth, respectively. The reason for this is due to the distinctive contexts in which the speeches were conducted. Address to the Turkish Youth were given at The Grand National Assembly of Turkey between 15th and 20th October 1927 whereas the speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic were conducted on 29th October 1933. Another differentiating factor is the audience as the speech at the 10th anniversary of the Turkish Republic was addressed to common people whereas Address to Turkish Youth was initially given only to the representatives of Republican Party and deputies on 15-20th October 1927.

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