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Commanding and Requesting: Teachers' Speech Acts in Indonesian Vocational English Schools

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ABSTRACT

Effective communication in the classroom profoundly influences educational performance, particularly in language acquisition settings. This study investigates the employment of directive (commanding) and requestive (requesting) speech acts by English educators in Indonesian vocational high schools, a subject that remains under-examined. This research utilizes a qualitative case study design to examine the utilization of speech actions by teachers and their perceptions by students. Data were gathered by classroom observations, audio recordings, and semi-structured interviews with five English educators and five students from a vocational institution in Samarinda, Indonesia. The results indicate that directed speech acts are predominantly employed to uphold discipline and deliver explicit instructions, hence enhancing classroom management and concentration. In contrast, requestive speech acts foster a polite environment that promotes active student engagement and collaboration. Furthermore, educators deliberately integrate the Indonesian language to augment students' understanding and involvement. The study highlights the necessity of a judicious application of both commanding and requesting speech acts to facilitate effective teaching practices that integrate authority with mutual respect. These discoveries have considerable significance for teacher training programs, indicating that professional development should prioritize

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the incorporation of communication tactics that adjust to classroom dynamics and promote a good learning atmosphere. Utilizing multilingual methodologies and contextually relevant communication can enhance teacher-student interactions, hence improving student engagement and educational results.

Keywords: Commanding; Requesting; Speech Act; Vocational School

1. Introduction

Teachers' use of speech acts plays a crucial role in classroom engagement, as it influences the learning atmosphere and promotes efficient communication. The effective utilization of speech acts such as commands and requests plays a vital role in language teaching, particularly in vocational high schools. This is essential for effectively controlling classroom activities and catering to the varied cultural backgrounds of pupils^[1-3]. These verbal expressions are crucial for upholding discipline, conveying directives, and guaranteeing the achievement of educational goals^[4-14]. Teachers in vocational English schools must possess a thorough comprehension and proficient utilization of these speech acts to maximize the learning process.

Command and request speech acts are crucial in improving students' pragmatic competence, which pertains to their proficiency in using language effectively in different social situations^[15, 16]. These speech acts are not solely instruments for managing the classroom but rather play a vital role in developing students' language skills. Commands, such as those used to help pupils enhance their capacity to adhere to instructions precisely, are crucial skills in both academic and practical environments. On the contrary, requests foster a classroom environment that is courteous and collaborative, promoting active engagement and participation^[17-19].

Effectively conveying instructions and requests is of utmost importance in vocational high schools, where the primary emphasis is equipping students with the necessary skills for certain careers. Teachers must provide clear and concise instructions that students can easily understand while fostering an environment of cooperation and mutual respect. The effective use of speech acts, such as directives and requests, plays a crucial role in managing classroom dynamics and enhancing students' linguistic abilities, preparing them for professional settings. Research has shown that teacher behaviors like confirmation, credibility, and immediacy significantly impact student engagement and willingness to communicate

(WTC) in educational settings. For example, teacher confirmation and credibility have been strongly linked to increased academic engagement among EFL students^[20]. Additionally, verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors are found to predict a significant portion of students' WTC and engagement^[21]. Furthermore, teacher appreciation and care are critical in fostering students' willingness to approach communication, with notable cultural differences observed across contexts^[22]. These findings underscore the importance of teacher-student interactions in shaping educational outcomes, particularly in vocational education, where the balance between authority and respect is essential.

Cultural awareness plays a pivotal role in determining the success of speech acts, as teachers need to modify their communication to accommodate the varied backgrounds of their pupils^[23-25]. Cultural subtleties can substantially impact how classroom instructions and appeals are interpreted and acted upon. For instance, certain cultures may perceive direct directives as authoritarian, while others regard them as a form of clear and effective communication. Similarly, the level of formality in requests might differ, as cultural standards determine what is considered courteous. Comprehending these cultural components is essential for educators, particularly in occupational environments where students originate from varied backgrounds.

Although the significance of speech acts in classroom communication is acknowledged, there is a noticeable lack of research on how English teachers in vocational schools specifically utilize them. Previous studies often examine educational environments in general or particular language and cultural scenarios. For instance, research has been conducted on Arabic instructions and the utilization of politeness methods by EFL teachers^[26-28]. Nevertheless, these studies fail to sufficiently consider vocational education's distinctive difficulties and requirements, where instructional objectives and student demographics may vary dramatically from those in other educational environments.

In addition, although research emphasizes the signif-

icance of pragmatic competence, there has been a lack of investigation into the precise impact of commanding and asking speech actions on student learning outcomes in vocational English courses. While it is known that teachers utilize commands to manage classrooms and provide clear directions effectively, there is a notable lack of research exploring the effects of these speech actions on students' academic achievement and vocational readiness. Additional investigation is required to examine how request techniques might be enhanced in English language teaching, specifically in vocational environments.

This study aims to fill these knowledge gaps by investigating the utilization of commanding and requesting speech acts by English teachers in vocational schools and analyzing their impact on student learning outcomes. The study investigates methods to enhance these communication mechanisms to facilitate the teaching-learning process. More precisely, the study addresses three specific inquiries: (1) How can teachers employ authoritative and soliciting speech acts in the context of English language acquisition for vocational students? (2) What motivations drive teachers' utilization of these verbal expressions? (3) What is the vocational students' response to using these speech acts?

This study enhances language instruction by providing a more comprehensive insight into the use of commanding and requesting speech acts by teachers in vocational English schools. This resource provides valuable information on how to manage a classroom effectively, assists in creating specific professional development programs, and helps policymakers and researchers improve teaching methods to enhance educational results in vocational settings.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design utilizing a case study approach. The research aims to explore and deeply examine English teachers' use of commanding and requesting speech acts in a vocational school setting. The qualitative case study approach is suitable as it allows for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena within their real-life context.

2.2. Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at SMKN 6 Samarinda, Indonesia, a vocational high school specializing in engineering majors. The participants included five English teachers, referred to as Teacher 1 to Teacher 5, and five students selected randomly from different positions within the classroom (front, middle, and back). The school predominantly consists of male students, which presents unique communication challenges in the classroom. The five teachers were recruited based on their experience and active role in teaching English at the school. Teachers 1, 2, and 3 have over 10 years of experience, while Teachers 4 and 5 have 7 years of teaching experience. These teachers are responsible for teaching English to first-year students. The five students were recruited to provide insights into the reception of the speech acts used by the teachers, with their seating positions chosen to capture diverse perspectives within the classroom dynamics. In conducting the research, ethical considerations were rigorously upheld. All participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, scope, and nature through an informed consent process. This included a detailed explanation of the study's objectives, the procedures involved, potential risks, and the rights of the participants, including their right to withdraw at any point without any consequence. All participants provided and signed consent forms, ensuring that their participation was voluntary and based on a clear understanding of the research. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing the identities of both teachers and students, with all data handled securely to protect the privacy of the participants.

Despite the limited number of participants, consisting of five teachers and five students, the study offers a comprehensive qualitative examination of the communication patterns at SMKN 6 Samarinda, a vocational high school that emphasizes engineering education. The selection of this particular context was based on its distinctive educational setting, which facilitates a thorough examination of the application of speech actions in vocational environments. The objective was to acquire detailed and subtle understandings of classroom interactions and communication difficulties specific to this school, rather than making broad conclusions applicable to all vocational institutions. Although the study's findings are limited to this particular context, they provide useful insights for comprehending speech acts in vocational

education. Subsequent investigations could expand upon these findings by incorporating a more extensive and varied selection of educational institutions to improve the overall relevance of the outcomes.

2.3. Data Collection

Data were collected through classroom observations, audio recordings, and semi-structured interviews. Classroom observations were conducted over five separate teaching sessions for each teacher. The observations focused on the speech acts employed by the teachers, specifically analyzing the instances of commanding and requesting speech acts. Audio recordings of the teaching sessions were made to capture the exact phrasing and tone of the speech acts used by the teachers. These recordings were essential for a detailed linguistic analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five teachers and five recruited students. The interviews with the teachers focused on their rationale behind using specific speech acts, while the student interviews aimed to understand their perception and response to these speech acts.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data were examined utilizing Speech Act Theory and proposed thematic analysis methodology^[29]. The speech acts observed in the classroom were initially classified into commanding and requesting. Every speech act was meticulously examined to ascertain its precise role within the educational setting, emphasizing how these actions impacted classroom administration and student involvement.

A four-step process was utilized for the thematic analysis. The initial phase, domain analysis, entailed discerning the extent and setting of the speech acts employed in the classroom, thus facilitating comprehension of the teachers' overarching communicative objectives. Subsequently, a taxonomic analysis was conducted to systematically categorize the speech acts according to their purposes, resulting in a precise classification of the observed speech act types.

Subsequently, the componential analysis assessed the discrete elements of each speech act, including the tone, phrasing, and the particular context in which they were utilized. This stage was essential in discerning nuanced disparities in the delivery and perception of the speech acts. The

purpose of the cultural theme identification was to reveal the fundamental cultural themes that could impact the utilization of speech actions in this specific educational environment. The thematic analysis provided a more profound comprehension of the cultural and contextual influences that shape the teachers' utilization of commanding and requesting speech acts.

3. Findings

This study reveals the use of teachers' commanding and requesting speech acts in English language learning in the classroom to vocational students. Then, the researcher shows the reasons for using these speech acts by conducting interviews with five teachers. Finally, the researcher confirmed with the five students regarding their responses to the use of speech acts.

3.1. The Use of Commanding and Requesting Speech Acts by Teachers

The data presented in **Table 1** illustrate the frequency of commanding and requesting utterances used by five English teachers over three classroom sessions. Notably, commanding speech acts were more prevalent, with each teacher using over 30 commands per session, compared to more than 20 requests. This initial observation points to a dominance of commanding speech acts, which can be linked to the teachers' need to maintain classroom control and direct student behavior.

Table 1. Teachers' use of commanding and requesting speech acts.

Teacher	Commanding	Requesting
Teacher 1	33	23
Teacher 2	35	21
Teacher 3	31	25
Teacher 4	32	22
Teacher 5	37	23

According to Searle's Speech Act Theory, commands and requests are both directive speech acts intended to influence the actions of others. Commands typically imply authority and expectation of compliance, while requests, though similar in intent, are often framed with politeness strategies and leave room for non-compliance. Understanding this distinction is crucial when analyzing how these speech acts

function in the classroom.

When examining the use of these speech acts across the three stages of classroom interaction—opening, delivering materials, and closing, it becomes evident that the context in which they are employed significantly influences their form and function.

(1) Opening Stage:

- **Commanding:** Teachers often begin with commands to establish order, such as “Sit down”, “Take out your books”, or “Listen carefully”. These commands transition students from a state of potential distraction to one of readiness for learning.
- **Requesting:** Requests at this stage might include “Could you please take out your notebooks?” or “Can someone close the door?” These are often softened commands intended to encourage cooperation without imposing authority too strongly.

(2) Delivering Materials:

- **Commanding:** During the main instructional phase, commands such as “Pay attention to the board” or “Write this down” are frequent. These utterances are direct and aim to ensure students engage with the lesson content actively.
- **Requesting:** Requests during this phase might include “Could you try this exercise?” or “Would anyone like to answer this question?” These serve to invite participation, encouraging a collaborative learning environment.

(3) Closing Stage:

- **Commanding:** In this stage, commands such as “Hand in your work” or “Review this at home” are used to wrap up the lesson and set expectations for after-class activities.
- **Requesting:** Requests like “Please remember to review this for next time” soften the session’s closure, often aiming to maintain a positive rapport with students.

While commanding and requesting are treated as distinct categories, their usage often overlaps. For instance, a teacher might issue a command framed as a request to soften its impact, such as “Can you please focus on the task at hand?” This blurring of categories highlights the complexity of teacher-student interactions, where the power dynamics, context, and desired outcomes shape the choice of speech

act. Moreover, the thematic analysis reveals that the choice between commanding and requesting is not solely about the teacher’s authority but also reflects pedagogical strategies. For example, frequent use of commands during material delivery may indicate a teacher-centered approach. In contrast, a higher proportion of requests might suggest an attempt to foster a more student-centered environment.

Opening with commanding

The analysis of interview data reveals that English teachers at vocational schools in Samarinda, Indonesia, strategically employ commanding speech acts during the opening stage of classroom interactions. These speech acts are carefully tailored to their students’ specific conditions and needs, reflecting a high degree of pedagogical adaptability and context awareness. The nuanced application of these commands indicates that they are not merely tools for asserting authority but are integral to establishing a conducive learning environment. This section delves into the varied strategies the teachers employ, illustrating how commanding speech acts serve multiple educational purposes, from managing classroom dynamics to fostering positive student engagement.

• **Personalization and Leadership Development**

Teacher 1 exemplifies a personalized approach to commanding by addressing students by name, as in the directive, “Dimas, lead your friends to pray!” This command does more than just initiate a routine activity; it strategically assigns a leadership role to a specific student, promoting a sense of responsibility and ownership within the classroom. The personalized nature of this command also aligns with student-centered teaching philosophies, which emphasize the importance of recognizing and nurturing individual student identities within the learning process. By calling upon Dimas to lead his peers, the teacher reinforces the command’s clarity and cultivates leadership qualities and a collaborative spirit among students. This approach underscores the potential of commanding speech acts to contribute to developing soft skills, which are increasingly recognized as essential in educational settings.

- **Environmental Considerations and Cognitive Focus** Teacher 2’s command, “Turn on the light”, though seemingly straightforward, reflects a deeper pedagogical consideration of the physical learning environ-

ment's impact on cognitive focus. This command ensures that the classroom is adequately lit, minimizing distractions and optimizing students' ability to concentrate on the lesson. The simplicity of this directive belies its importance; effective learning is contingent upon an environment that supports cognitive processes, and proper lighting is a fundamental component of this. By addressing environmental factors through commanding speech acts, the teacher demonstrates an acute awareness of how physical conditions affect student engagement and learning outcomes. This practice aligns with educational research emphasizing the importance of environmental factors in facilitating effective teaching and learning experiences.

- **Politeness Strategies and Relationship Building**
Teacher 3's use of the command "Please take your seats" exemplifies the integration of politeness strategies within commanding speech acts. While the primary function of this directive is to establish classroom order, including "please" softens the command, making it less authoritarian and more relational. This approach indicates a pedagogical philosophy that values positive teacher-student relationships as foundational to a conducive learning environment. Using politeness in commands reflects a balance between maintaining authority and fostering a respectful and collaborative classroom atmosphere. Educational literature increasingly recognizes the importance of such relational dynamics, with research suggesting that positive teacher-student interactions can enhance student motivation, engagement, and overall academic success. Teacher 3's strategy thus exemplifies how commanding speech acts can be employed to support discipline and relationship building.
- **Preparedness and Routine Reinforcement**
Teacher 4's directive, "Take out your book", is essential for reinforcing classroom routines and ensuring student preparedness. This command is not merely a procedural utterance but integral to establishing a disciplined and organized classroom environment where students are consistently ready to engage with the lesson content. The routine nature of this command reinforces the importance of preparedness, instilling

a sense of responsibility and discipline in students. This approach is supported by educational theories that advocate for establishing clear routines and expectations to promote effective classroom management. By consistently using such commands, the teacher helps students internalize the importance of organization and preparedness, which are critical for academic success.

- **Continuity and Cognitive Structuring**

Lastly, Teacher 5's command, "Open your textbooks to page 70", indicates a strategy to maintain continuity and cognitive structuring within the lesson. This directive ensures that students are focused on specific content, facilitating a seamless transition from previous lessons and reinforcing the continuity of the learning process. Commands like this play a crucial role in helping students structure their learning, enabling them to make connections between new information and prior knowledge. The emphasis on continuity is particularly important in educational contexts where the retention and application of knowledge are key objectives. By directing students to specific pages or content areas, the teacher helps to scaffold their learning, making the process more coherent and manageable.

The varied use of commanding speech acts by these teachers highlights the complexity and multifunctionality of such directives in the classroom. Far from mere instruments of control, commands are strategically employed to address diverse pedagogical goals, including fostering leadership, managing the learning environment, building relationships, reinforcing routines, and structuring cognitive processes. This analysis challenges the simplistic view of commanding speech acts as purely authoritarian, revealing their potential to support a positive and effective learning environment. The findings underscore the importance of context-sensitive teaching practices, where a deep understanding of both the educational goals and the specific needs of students informs the choice of speech acts. Future research could further explore how these dynamics vary across different educational settings and student populations, providing a richer understanding of the role of speech acts in classroom interaction.

Opening with requesting

Teachers' strategic use of requestive speech acts re-

flects a deliberate approach to classroom management that prioritizes politeness and collaboration, thereby fostering a respectful and cooperative learning environment. These speech acts are not merely functional directives but are carefully crafted to elicit compliance while maintaining positive interpersonal dynamics within the classroom. The following analysis explores how teachers at vocational schools in Samarinda, Indonesia, employ requesting speech acts during the opening stage of lessons, highlighting the pedagogical implications of these choices.

- Encouraging Participation and Cooperation

Teacher 1's use of the requestive speech act "Count from you, please" during roll call illustrates a nuanced approach to managing classroom procedures. The inclusion of "please" transforms the command into a polite request, thereby setting a tone of mutual respect and cooperation. This polite request not only accomplishes the practical goal of identifying the number of students present but also actively engages students in the process, encouraging them to take ownership of their participation. By framing the request in this manner, the teacher subtly fosters an environment where students feel valued and respected, increasing their willingness to comply with classroom norms and expectations. This approach is consistent with educational theories that emphasize the importance of creating a positive classroom climate, where students are more likely to be engaged and motivated when they perceive their interactions with the teacher as respectful and supportive.

- Promoting Teamwork and Shared Responsibility

Similarly, Teacher 2's directive, "Please share this book", can be interpreted as an effort to promote teamwork and a sense of shared responsibility among students. By framing the task of distributing materials as a polite request, the teacher may facilitate the logistical process and encourage students to collaborate and support one another. While this speech act could potentially transform a routine classroom activity into an opportunity for cooperative behavior, it's important to note that this interpretation requires further empirical support.

The politeness of the request might also signal the teacher's respect for students as active participants in

the learning process, which is important for building a classroom culture that values cooperation and mutual support. Although research in educational psychology suggests that fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility in the classroom can enhance students' social skills and contribute to a more cohesive and effective learning environment, additional evidence would be necessary to substantiate the specific claims made here.

- Facilitating Smooth Transitions and Maintaining Focus

Teacher 3's instruction, "Please open your books", is another example of how requesting speech acts can facilitate smooth transitions and maintain student focus. The polite request directs students to the task at hand and helps create a respectful and orderly atmosphere conducive to learning. By employing "please", the teacher softens the directive, reducing the potential for resistance and encouraging a more positive response from students. This approach is particularly effective in transitioning students from one activity to another, as it signals a shift in focus while maintaining the established norms of politeness and respect. In this context, the use of requesting speech acts aligns with classroom management strategies that advocate for using positive language to guide student behavior and maintain a productive learning environment. It also reflects an understanding of the importance of smooth transitions in sustaining student engagement and minimizing disruptions.

- Implications for Classroom Interaction

The analysis of requesting speech acts in the opening stage of classroom interaction reveals that these speech acts serve multiple functions beyond simply issuing directives. By integrating politeness and respect into their requests, teachers at vocational schools in Samarinda manage classroom procedures and promote a collaborative and respectful classroom culture. This approach aligns with contemporary educational practices that emphasize the importance of creating a positive and supportive learning environment where students feel respected and valued as active participants in their education.

Furthermore, the use of requesting speech acts high-

lights the role of language in shaping classroom dynamics. Polite requests are more likely to be met with compliance and cooperation, contributing to a more harmonious and productive learning environment. The findings suggest that teachers who effectively use requesting speech acts are managing their classrooms and fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration, which is essential for student engagement and academic success.

Learning process with commanding

Teachers employ carefully crafted directive strategies to enhance student engagement and facilitate effective learning in the instructional process. Each command issued by the teacher is not merely instructional but is also designed to fulfill specific pedagogical objectives that support the development of students' academic and cognitive skills. For example, Teacher 2 uses the command "Look at your book" to redirect the attention of students who may be distracted. This directive is important to maintain discipline and ensure that students remain focused on the lesson content. By directing students' attention back to their books, the teacher ensures that they stay engaged with the educational material and that the learning environment remains productive. This illustrates how a simple command can be crucial in maintaining order and engagement in the classroom. Moreover, Teacher 4, through the directive "Practice these sentences", emphasizes the importance of repetition and application in language acquisition. The teacher asks students to practice the sentences in their books to reinforce language skills through repeated practice. This strategy highlights the importance of attention to detail and the practical use of language, which are key to mastering new linguistic concepts. By practicing these sentences, students are encouraged to actively participate in the language learning process, which strengthens their skills through direct experience.

Learning process with requesting

The data illustrates how teachers at Samarinda, Indonesia, utilize polite directives to engage students, promote interaction, and maintain discipline within the classroom. Each teacher employs these strategies with a clear pedagogical intent, ensuring students remain actively involved in the learning process. For example, Teacher 2 argues "Please feel free to ask." Following the explanation of new material, the teacher uses this directive to invite students to interact and clarify their doubts. The polite tone of "please" encourages

students to engage with the teacher, creating an open and supportive environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and participating in discussions. Teacher 5 says, "Doni, answer the question, please." Directed at a specific student who may not be focused on the lesson, this utterance serves as a gentle but firm reminder to stay engaged. By addressing the student by name and adding "please", the teacher combines authority with politeness to correct the student's behavior without causing embarrassment. This strategy helps maintain discipline while encouraging students to take the lesson seriously and participate actively.

Closing with commanding

The closing commands used by teachers in Samarinda, Indonesia, serve as important tools for reinforcing learning, ensuring student accountability, and preparing for future lessons. Each directive is strategically designed to wrap up the lesson effectively while setting clear student expectations. For instance, Teacher 4 states, "Prepare your questions for the next meeting."

This command encourages students to engage with the material at home in preparation for the next class. By instructing students to come up with questions, the teacher fosters a proactive learning environment where students are motivated to delve deeper into the subject matter. This approach promotes continuous learning and ensures students are prepared to contribute to future discussions. Furthermore, Teacher 5 says, "Review our notes for today." This directive reminds students to revisit the day's material, ensuring they reinforce their understanding through review. By asking students to review their notes, the teacher encourages a habit of consistent study, which is crucial for the long-term retention of information. This command highlights the importance of reflection and consolidation in the learning process.

Closing with requesting

During the instructional process, teachers employ carefully crafted directive strategies that are not only instructional but also serve specific pedagogical objectives to enhance student engagement and facilitate effective learning. These commanding speech acts are integral to the classroom dynamic, as they help maintain discipline, direct attention, and promote active participation, thereby supporting the development of students' academic and cognitive skills. The following analysis examines how teachers at vocational schools in Samarinda, Indonesia, utilize commanding speech acts to

achieve these objectives, emphasizing their role in learning.

- **Maintaining Focus and Discipline**

Teacher 2's command, "Look at your book", is a critical intervention designed to redirect students' attention, particularly those who may be distracted or disengaged from the lesson. This directive is not merely a reminder but a strategic tool to reestablish focus and maintain a disciplined learning environment. By directing students' attention back to their books, the teacher reinforces the importance of staying engaged with the educational material, which is essential for effective learning. This practice aligns with classroom management theories that emphasize the need for clear, concise commands to guide student behavior and ensure the instructional flow is not disrupted. The effectiveness of this command lies in its ability to quickly and efficiently refocus students, thereby preserving the continuity of the lesson and minimizing potential distractions.

- **Enhancing Cognitive Engagement through Practice**

Teacher 4's directive, "Practice these sentences", exemplifies commanding speech acts to enhance cognitive engagement and reinforce language acquisition. This command underscores the pedagogical importance of repetition and active practice in mastering new linguistic concepts. By instructing students to practice the sentences in their books, the teacher encourages them to engage in deliberate practice, a process crucial for consolidating new knowledge and skills. This directive is particularly significant in language learning, where repeated exposure and practice are key to developing fluency and accuracy. The command directs students to a specific task and implicitly communicates the value of persistence and attention to detail in the learning process. Educational research supports the notion that deliberate practice, guided by clear and purposeful commands, can significantly enhance student outcomes by promoting deeper understanding and retention of material.

- **Facilitating Active Participation and Skill Development**

Commands such as "Practice these sentences" also play a pivotal role in fostering active participation in the classroom. By directing students to engage

with the material through practice, the teacher transforms a passive learning experience into an interactive one. This approach aligns with constructivist theories of education, which advocate for learning environments where students actively construct knowledge through hands-on experiences and direct engagement with content. Commanding speech acts in this context are not merely about compliance; they are about creating opportunities for students to apply what they have learned, thereby deepening their understanding and enhancing their skill development. This active participation is particularly important in vocational education settings, where applying knowledge to real-world contexts is a key component of the curriculum.

- **Implications for Classroom Instruction**

The analysis of commanding speech acts during the learning process reveals their multifaceted role in classroom instruction. These directives are not just about maintaining order; they are carefully designed to support specific learning objectives, such as maintaining focus, enhancing cognitive engagement, and facilitating active participation. The strategic use of commanding speech acts by teachers in Samarinda demonstrates a deep understanding of how language can be used to guide and shape the learning experience. By employing clear, purposeful commands, teachers can create structured and supportive learning environments that promote student success.

3.2. The Rationale for Employing Speech Acts

The findings of this study reveal that teachers employ commanding and requesting speech acts with their students for five main reasons: teaching effectiveness, discipline and focus formation, creating a conducive learning environment, teaching politeness and ethics, and language use in a multilingual context.

Teaching effectiveness

Teaching effectiveness is a critical theme that emerges from the analysis of classroom interactions, particularly in how teachers manage their instructional practices. In the context of vocational schools in Samarinda, Indonesia, where most students are male, teachers strategically employ commanding speech acts to enhance the clarity and precision of their instructions. These directives are not merely oper-

ational commands but vital tools for ensuring that students clearly understand and accurately follow the instructions provided. This clarity is especially important in vocational education settings, where the practical application of skills requires students to follow directions meticulously.

- **Ensuring Clarity and Reducing Confusion**

One of the key aspects of teaching effectiveness is the ability to deliver instructions in a manner that is both clear and unambiguous. Teachers, such as Teacher 1 and Teacher 5, exemplify this practice by using direct and specific commands like “Budi, look at activity 13” or “Dani, answer question number 5”. These commands are not merely about directing student behavior; they are carefully crafted to ensure that each student remains engaged and focused on the task at hand. The specificity of these commands helps reduce potential confusion, enabling students to understand exactly what is expected of them. In a vocational school context, where students often engage in hands-on activities that require precise execution, the clarity provided by commanding speech acts is crucial for maintaining the flow and effectiveness of the lesson.

- **Accelerating the Learning Process**

In addition to enhancing clarity, commanding speech significantly accelerates learning. Teachers can minimize potential disruptions by issuing specific and targeted directives and ensuring that classroom time is utilized efficiently. For example, when a student appears to lose focus, a well-timed command such as “Look at your book” or “Focus on the task” serves as an immediate intervention that redirects the student’s attention to the material being studied. This prompt redirection not only prevents disruptions but also maintains the momentum of the lesson, allowing the teaching and learning process to proceed without interruption. Therefore, commanding speech acts play a critical role in optimizing classroom time and ensuring that educational objectives are met within the allotted instructional period.

- **Maintaining Discipline and Promoting Understanding**

The effectiveness of commanding speech acts is further reflected in their ability to maintain classroom discipline while promoting a deeper understanding of the material. By issuing clear and assertive commands,

teachers can uphold a structured and orderly learning environment essential for student success. Commands such as “Practice these sentences” or “Answer question number 5” not only guide student behavior but also reinforce the lesson’s learning objectives. These commands encourage active participation and ensure students consistently engage with the content, fostering a deeper understanding of the material. In this way, commanding speech serves as a dual-purpose tool: it maintains discipline and order in the classroom while supporting students’ cognitive and academic development.

- **Implications for Instructional Practices**

The strategic use of commanding speech acts in vocational schools highlights their significance in achieving teaching effectiveness. These speech acts are integral to creating a productive and focused learning environment where instructions are communicated, and students are guided toward achieving specific educational outcomes. The findings suggest that the effectiveness of commanding speech acts lies in their ability to provide clarity, reduce confusion, and accelerate the learning process, all of which are essential for maintaining a high standard of teaching and learning.

Discipline and focus formation

The findings underscore the critical role that discipline and focus formation play in the application of commanding speech acts by teachers, particularly in vocational school settings with predominantly male students. These students often exhibit high energy levels and may be more prone to distraction, necessitating a more assertive and structured approach to classroom management. Teachers, including Teacher 1, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5, recognize that maintaining student focus during lessons is essential to the success of the teaching and learning process. As such, they consistently employ firm and clear commands to direct classroom dynamics and reinforce behavioral expectations.

- **Maintaining Classroom Order through Firm Commands**

The strategic use of commanding speech acts is central to maintaining order within the classroom. For example, Teacher 5’s frequent use of phrases like “Silent please” is an immediate intervention to quell noise

and refocus students' attention on the lesson material. This command is not merely a request for quiet but a clear directive that reinforces the teacher's authority and the expectation of a focused learning environment. By promptly addressing disruptions, the teacher can prevent potential escalation of noise or off-task behavior, ensuring that the instructional flow is maintained. This practice aligns with classroom management theories that emphasize the importance of assertive communication in establishing and maintaining a conducive learning environment.

- **Ensuring Student Readiness and Engagement**

Similarly, Teacher 2's direct instructions, such as "Open your book", ensure that students are ready and focused on the learning activities. This command functions on multiple levels: it directs students to prepare for the lesson, signals the transition into the instructional phase, and establishes a routine that fosters a sense of order and predictability in the classroom. The effectiveness of such commands lies in their ability to create a structured environment where students understand the expectations and are prepared to engage with the content. In educational contexts where maintaining student attention is challenging, these clear and direct commands are essential for minimizing distractions and maximizing instructional time.

- **Instilling Discipline through Commanding Speech Acts**

Beyond maintaining immediate classroom order, commanding speech acts are instrumental in instilling long-term discipline in students. The consistent use of firm commands helps students internalize the importance of listening to and following the teacher's instructions. This internalization process is particularly significant in vocational education settings, where the development of discipline is crucial for students' future professional success. Commands like "Silent, please" or "Focus on your task" are not just about controlling behavior; they teach students the value of discipline, attention to detail, and respect for the learning process. Over time, these repeated directives contribute to forming disciplined habits that students carry beyond the classroom.

- **Creating a Conducive Learning Atmosphere**

The disciplined atmosphere created through the strategic use of commanding speech acts contributes to a more structured and effective learning environment. In classrooms where students are active and easily distracted, the ability to quickly and effectively command attention is crucial. The findings suggest that firm commands effectively ensure that lessons proceed smoothly, with minimal interruptions and maximum student engagement. This structured approach to classroom management supports the immediate educational objectives and fosters a learning culture where discipline and focus are valued and practiced.

Creating a conducive learning environment

Creating a conducive learning environment is a fundamental priority for teachers, particularly in vocational schools in Samarinda, Indonesia, where the need to balance structure and student engagement is paramount. The findings from this study highlight that teachers strategically utilize a combination of commanding and requesting speech acts to cultivate an atmosphere that supports both discipline and active student participation. This dual approach is crucial in establishing a classroom environment where students feel both guided and respected, which fosters better educational outcomes.

- **Balancing Authority and Politeness**

Teachers such as Teacher 1 exemplify the delicate balance between maintaining authority and fostering a positive classroom atmosphere. Through the integration of firm commands and polite requests, Teacher 1 can guide students effectively while also acknowledging their efforts. For instance, clear directives like "Open your book to page 50" are complemented by more polite requests such as "Please identify the subject".

While this approach may help ensure that students follow instructions and could convey a sense of appreciation for their contributions, the impact of such polite requests on promoting a sense of belonging and nurturing relationships is suggested rather than definitively asserted. The combination of commanding and requesting speech acts might support the teacher's authority while creating an environment where students feel respected and motivated to participate actively in the learning process. However, further evidence

would be needed to fully substantiate the claim that these speech acts directly contribute to a positive classroom culture and foster a sense of belonging.

- **Fostering Positive Teacher-Student Relationships**
The use of requesting speech acts can play a significant role in building positive relationships between teachers and students. By incorporating politeness into their directives, teachers may signal respect for their students, which could help create a more amicable classroom atmosphere. While this respect is crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and self-worth among students, particularly in vocational settings where students prepare for professional roles, these outcomes are suggested rather than definitively established. Teacher 1's approach demonstrates that while commands are necessary for maintaining order, the inclusion of polite requests has the potential to enhance student engagement by making them feel more comfortable and appreciated. However, further research is needed to fully substantiate the impact of polite requests on creating this positive dynamic. Such a dynamic between teachers and students is essential for creating a learning environment that is both structured and supportive of personal and academic growth.
- **Maintaining Order and Encouraging Participation**
Teacher 2 highlights the importance of balancing firm commands with polite requests to maintain the flow of classroom activities. In this context, commanding speech acts are employed to establish and uphold classroom order, while requesting speech acts are used to encourage student participation. This balance is essential for creating an environment where students feel both secure and empowered to contribute to classroom discussions and activities. The combination of these speech acts ensures that the classroom remains orderly while providing students with the autonomy to engage in the learning process. This dynamic is particularly important in vocational education, where the development of practical skills often requires active student involvement. By fostering a conducive learning environment, teachers can enhance student participation, a critical factor in achieving better learning outcomes.

Teaching politeness and ethics

The findings underscore the significance of teaching politeness and ethics as a key pedagogical objective among vocational school teachers, particularly in the context of their use of requesting speech acts. This approach reflects a broader educational philosophy where the cultivation of moral and social values is integrated into everyday classroom interactions. Teachers such as Teacher 1, Teacher 3, and Teacher 4 recognize that their role extends beyond the mere transmission of academic knowledge; they are also instrumental in shaping students' character and instilling principles of polite and ethical communication.

- **Integrating Politeness into Classroom Communication**
Teachers like Teacher 1 use requesting speech not only as a means of managing classroom activities but also as a deliberate strategy to create a respectful and inclusive atmosphere. By regularly incorporating expressions such as "please" and "could you please" into their interactions, these teachers model the kind of polite communication they wish to see reflected in their students' behavior. This consistent use of polite language reinforces the importance of respect and consideration in interpersonal interactions, setting a tone that encourages students to adopt similar practices in their communication. These speech acts thus become a subtle but powerful tool in cultivating a classroom environment where mutual respect is practiced and expected.
- **Ethical Education through Polite Speech Acts**
Teacher 3 extends requesting speech acts into ethical education, where the emphasis is on teaching students the value of etiquette and the broader implications of their communication choices. Through phrases such as "Would you mind" or "please", Teacher 3 guides students in their academic tasks and teaches them the importance of respecting others in everyday interactions. This approach highlights the role of language in shaping social norms and ethical behavior, demonstrating to students that polite communication is an integral part of ethical conduct. By embedding these values into routine classroom activities, teachers help students internalize the importance of ethical communication, which they can carry into their lives beyond

the classroom.

- **Fostering Respectful and Inclusive Communication**
Teacher 4 emphasizes the dual role of requesting speech acts in building positive teacher-student relationships and teaching students how to engage in respectful and inclusive communication. This approach aligns with the broader educational goal of developing students who are not only academically proficient but also socially conscious and capable of engaging with others in a respectful and considerate manner. By modeling respectful communication, teachers help students understand the importance of inclusion and respect in their interactions, thereby contributing to a classroom environment that supports academic and social development. The consistent use of polite requests by teachers serves to reinforce the idea that respect for others is a fundamental aspect of effective communication and ethical behavior.
- **Implications for Holistic Student Development**
The strategic use of requesting speech acts to teach politeness and ethics has significant implications for the holistic development of students. This approach not only enhances the quality of classroom interactions but also prepares students to navigate the complexities of social and professional relationships with a strong foundation in ethical communication. By integrating these values into the fabric of everyday classroom discourse, teachers contribute to the development of students who are capable of achieving academic success and equipped with the social and ethical skills necessary for responsible citizenship. Future research could further explore the long-term impact of this pedagogical approach on students' behavior and its potential to influence broader societal norms around politeness and ethical communication.

Language use in a multilingual context

The use of language in a multilingual classroom presents a significant pedagogical challenge, particularly in contexts where students exhibit varying levels of English proficiency. In vocational schools, where the student body is often linguistically diverse, teachers are tasked with navigating these complexities to ensure effective communication and understanding. Teachers such as Teacher 3, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5 demonstrate a nuanced approach to this chal-

lenge by strategically employing code-switching between English and Indonesian. This bilingual strategy is not merely a concession to students' language limitations but a deliberate instructional choice to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

- **Adapting Instructional Language to Student Needs**
Teacher 3 highlights the necessity of adapting instructional language to meet the diverse linguistic needs of students. For example, in instances where commands like "attention please" are not fully understood by students, Teacher 3 opts to translate such directives into Indonesian. This practice ensures that all students, regardless of their proficiency in English, can grasp the essential content of the instructions. By making this adjustment, the teacher prioritizes comprehension and inclusivity, thereby maintaining the flow of the lesson and preventing potential misunderstandings that could hinder the learning process.
- **Flexibility in Bilingual Instruction**
Teacher 4 and Teacher 5 further exemplify this adaptive approach by regularly switching between English and Indonesian in their instructional language. This flexibility is particularly evident when it becomes clear that students struggle to follow commands delivered in English. By shifting to Indonesian, these teachers ensure that no student is left behind due to language barriers. This bilingual approach is a practical response to the linguistic diversity in the classroom and a reflection of the teachers' commitment to equity in education. It allows them to maintain the integrity of their lessons while accommodating their students' varied language skills.
- **Overcoming Language Barriers to Facilitate Learning**
The strategic use of bilingualism in the classroom plays a crucial role in overcoming the language barriers that could impede the teaching and learning process. By switching between languages, teachers can provide clarity and support, ensuring that all students, regardless of their language proficiency, can engage with the material being taught. This approach is particularly important in a vocational school setting, where practical understanding and application of the material are essential for students' future professional success. The ability to adjust language use dynamically within

the classroom facilitates comprehension and fosters an environment where students feel confident and supported in their learning journey.

- Implications for Equitable Learning Outcomes

The use of bilingual strategies in multilingual classrooms has significant implications for achieving equitable learning outcomes. By tailoring their language use to the linguistic needs of their students, teachers demonstrate a deep understanding of the challenges posed by language diversity and a commitment to overcoming these challenges in a way that benefits all learners. This approach underscores the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in teaching, particularly in settings where students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds. It also highlights the role of language as a tool not only for instruction but also for inclusion, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed academically. Future research could explore the long-term effects of bilingual instructional strategies on students' language development and academic achievement, particularly in multilingual educational settings.

3.3. Students' Perceptions of the Use of Speech Acts

The findings of this study report that students' perceptions of the use of commanding and requesting speech acts by teachers reflect the diverse experiences of students, which are greatly influenced by their English proficiency and understanding of the learning context. Three major themes were identified in this study: Understanding and Positive Response to Directive Speech Acts, Challenges in Understanding Speech Acts in English, and Recognition of the Importance of Politeness in Communication.

Understanding and positive response to directive speech acts

The findings reveal a significant alignment between students' perceptions and the effectiveness of directive speech acts used by teachers in maintaining classroom discipline and focus. Directive speech acts, such as commands and instructions, are broadly perceived by students as effective tools for creating an organized and conducive learning environment. This effectiveness is reflected in the feedback provided by students, highlighting how these directives contribute to a

structured and efficient classroom dynamic.

- Perceived Effectiveness of Firm Commands

Students, including those represented by Student 2 and Student 5, consistently report a positive reception to firm commands issued by their teachers. For instance, commands such as "Hasby, finish your assignment" and "silent pleas" are recognized for their role in reinforcing classroom order and ensuring that students adhere to the expected behavior. These direct and unambiguous instructions are seen as pivotal in reducing ambiguity and confusion, thus facilitating a clearer understanding of the tasks at hand. The straightforward nature of these commands helps in setting clear expectations, which in turn enhances students' ability to follow instructions and engage more effectively with the lesson content.

- Impact on Classroom Discipline and Focus

The positive response to directive speech acts underscores their importance in maintaining classroom discipline and focus. Students appreciate the clarity and authority inherent in firm commands, which contribute to a well-structured learning environment. The direct approach taken by teachers in issuing these commands is effective in directing students' attention and minimizing distractions, thus supporting a more disciplined and focused classroom atmosphere. This alignment between students' perceptions and the intended outcomes of directive speech acts highlights their role in achieving educational objectives and fostering a productive learning environment.

- Facilitating Learning Objectives

The feedback from students suggests that directive speech acts are instrumental in facilitating the achievement of learning objectives. By providing clear and precise instructions, teachers help to streamline the learning process, making it easier for students to understand and execute the tasks required of them. The reduction in confusion and the enhancement of focus that result from effective directive speech acts contribute significantly to the overall success of the instructional process. This alignment between students' understanding and the instructional strategies employed by teachers illustrates the critical role of directive speech acts in achieving educational goals

and promoting an efficient learning experience.

Challenges in understanding speech acts in English

The study highlights significant challenges faced by students with limited English proficiency in distinguishing between commands and requests when instructions are delivered in English. These challenges are particularly pronounced in contexts where English is used rapidly or without accompanying contextual clues, which can impede students' comprehension and hinder their ability to follow instructions effectively.

- **Difficulty in Distinguishing Commands and Requests**
Students with varying levels of English proficiency, such as Student 3 and Student 5, frequently encounter difficulties in discerning the nature of speech acts when instructions are provided solely in English. This challenge is exacerbated when commands and requests are delivered quickly, reducing the time available for students to process and interpret the language. In such scenarios, the students often struggle to differentiate between the intent of commands and requests, leading to potential misunderstandings and confusion about the expected actions. This difficulty underscores the need for additional strategies to support comprehension, especially in linguistically diverse classrooms where students' language skills may vary widely.
- **Reliance on Non-Verbal Cues**
In the absence of clear verbal understanding, students increasingly rely on non-verbal cues to interpret the intent of speech acts. Observations from Student 3 and Student 5 reveal that the facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language of the teacher become critical elements in understanding instructions. These non-verbal indicators help students infer the meaning behind verbal commands and requests, providing contextual clues that facilitate comprehension. However, this reliance on non-verbal cues also highlights the limitations of this approach, as it may not always fully convey the intended message, especially if the non-verbal cues are ambiguous or inconsistent.
- **Benefits of Bilingual Instruction**
The use of Indonesian by teachers, as noted by Student 2 and Student 3, emerges as a significant strategy for overcoming language barriers and enhancing un-

derstanding. When teachers switch to Indonesian, they provide a crucial support mechanism that helps bridge the gap in comprehension for students with limited English proficiency. This bilingual approach allows for clearer communication and ensures that students can follow instructions more effectively. The flexibility demonstrated by teachers in adapting their language use not only facilitates better understanding but also reflects a commitment to creating an inclusive learning environment that accommodates the diverse linguistic needs of students.

- **Implications for Instructional Strategies**

The challenges identified in understanding English speech acts underscore the need for instructional strategies that address language proficiency limitations. Teachers must be cognizant of the varying levels of English proficiency among students and consider incorporating bilingual instruction or supplementary non-verbal cues to aid comprehension. By recognizing and addressing these challenges, educators can enhance the effectiveness of their communication and support students in navigating the complexities of language learning.

Recognition of the importance of politeness in communication

The study highlights a crucial aspect of classroom communication: students' recognition of the positive impact of politeness in requesting speech acts. This recognition underscores the role of politeness in enhancing the overall classroom environment and fostering constructive teacher-student interactions.

- **Impact of Politeness on Classroom Atmosphere**
Students' feedback reveals that the use of polite requesting speech acts, such as incorporating the word "please", significantly contributes to a more positive and respectful classroom atmosphere. For example, Student 4 observes that teachers who consistently use polite requests are perceived as more effective in managing the classroom and building rapport with students. This use of politeness in communication not only helps in maintaining authority but also promotes a respectful and collaborative learning environment. The integration of courteous language creates a classroom climate where students feel valued and

respected, which in turn encourages more engaged and cooperative behavior.

- **Balancing Assertiveness and Politeness**

The findings also emphasize the importance of balancing assertiveness with politeness in teacher communication. While assertive commands are necessary for maintaining discipline and focus, the addition of politeness through requesting speech acts helps in mitigating potential resistance and fostering a more amicable relationship between teachers and students. This balance is essential in creating an effective teaching environment where authority is maintained without undermining student morale. Politeness, therefore, serves as a strategic tool in enhancing both the effectiveness of classroom management and the quality of teacher-student interactions.

- **Teacher-Student Interaction and Classroom Control**

Teachers' success in controlling the classroom and managing student behavior is notably influenced by their use of polite requesting speech acts. Polite requests are often perceived as less confrontational and more engaging, which can lead to improved student cooperation and compliance. This approach supports a positive dynamic in teacher-student interactions, where students are more likely to respond favorably to requests made with politeness. The ability of teachers to employ politeness effectively contributes to the overall management of the classroom and the achievement of educational goals.

4. Discussion

This study investigates the use of commanding and requesting speech acts by teachers in a vocational high school setting, particularly within a mining engineering class composed mostly of male students. The findings provide valuable empirical evidence on how teachers utilize these speech acts to manage classroom activities, maintain order, and provide clear instructions. This aligns with existing research on the strategic use of language in educational settings^[30, 31].

Commanding speech acts, such as "Open your book" or "Turn to page 45", are vital for maintaining discipline and clarity in vocational classrooms, where precise instructions are crucial. These authoritative directives, when combined

with teacher behaviors like credibility, confirmation, and immediacy, significantly enhance student engagement and willingness to communicate. Effective teacher behavior, balancing authority with care, not only ensures order but also fosters a supportive environment that positively impacts student outcomes.

In contrast, requesting speech acts are more collaborative and polite, designed to invite student participation and foster a cooperative classroom atmosphere. Unlike commands, which demand compliance, requests are phrased in a way that allows for student autonomy and choice. For example, a teacher might say, "Please take out your book," which softens the directive and promotes a sense of respect and mutual understanding between the teacher and students. This distinction is important because it reflects the teacher's intention to engage students in a manner that is less authoritative and more inclusive, thereby enhancing the classroom's social dynamics. Research suggests that the use of requests can positively influence students' perceptions of the teacher and promote a more engaged and cooperative learning environment.

The choice between using commands or requests is often influenced by the teacher's goals, the classroom context, and cultural considerations. Commands are typically used when immediate action is required or when the teacher needs to assert authority, particularly in situations where students might be distracted or disengaged. On the other hand, requests are more appropriate in settings where the teacher aims to build rapport with students and encourage active participation. The strategic use of requests, especially in culturally diverse classrooms, underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity in communication, as it shows respect for students' autonomy and fosters a positive learning environment^[32]. Thus, understanding the distinction between these two types of speech acts is crucial for teachers as they navigate the complex dynamics of classroom management and student interaction.

The study's findings underscore the importance of using both commanding and requesting speech acts, with classroom observations and teacher interviews providing complementary insights. Observations revealed that commands were predominantly used to manage classroom activities and maintain order. This aligns with teacher interviews, where both educators emphasized the utility of commands in direct-

ing student behavior, particularly in situations where students appeared distracted or unfocused. For example, one teacher highlighted the strategic use of commands like “Look at activity 12” to regain student attention, reflecting a balance between maintaining authority and fostering a conducive learning environment.

Moreover, the interviews revealed that teachers are mindful of cultural considerations when using commands, ensuring that their directives are firm yet respectful. This culturally sensitive approach is consistent with findings from other studies, which emphasize the importance of respecting students as interlocutors while asserting authority^[33].

On the other hand, requesting speech acts were observed to promote active participation and collaborative learning. Teachers used requests to encourage students to engage more deeply with the material and with each other, thereby developing their pragmatic competence. For instance, requests like “Please share this book” were observed to foster teamwork and a sense of shared responsibility among students, which was also confirmed by the teachers during interviews^[34–36]. This finding highlights the dual role of requests in promoting both academic engagement and social interaction, particularly in settings that emphasize interactive learning methods such as discussions and group work^[37].

The study also explored how students perceive and respond to these speech acts. Interviews with students indicated that they rely on both verbal cues and non-verbal signals, such as tone of voice and facial expressions, to distinguish between commands and requests. This reliance on paralinguistic cues underscores the importance of teachers’ delivery methods in ensuring that their intentions are clearly understood, which is consistent with the findings of previous research^[38, 39].

For example, one student noted that he found it easier to follow commands delivered in a firmer tone, especially when the classroom environment was less conducive to learning, such as during late afternoon sessions when concentration levels typically decline. This observation aligns with studies that highlight the role of context—such as the time of day and classroom composition—in shaping the effectiveness of speech acts^[40, 41]. Conversely, another student, who was less engaged in English lessons, admitted difficulty in recognizing and understanding both commands and requests,

particularly when his interest in the subject was low. This highlights the need for teachers to adapt their language and instructional methods to meet students’ varying levels of engagement and comprehension.

The findings of this study offer valuable practical implications for enhancing teaching practices, particularly in vocational settings. Teachers’ use of commanding and requesting speech acts significantly influences student behavior and learning outcomes. Commanding speech acts are vital for maintaining discipline and clarity, particularly in male-dominated classrooms where assertive direction is often necessary. This approach aligns with literature emphasizing the role of authoritative directives in enhancing student engagement and learning efficiency. However, balancing these commands with polite requests can foster a more collaborative and respectful classroom environment, promoting student participation and positive teacher-student relationships. Research supports that incorporating polite requests in classroom management can enhance students’ perceptions of their teachers, encouraging a more engaged and cooperative learning atmosphere. Therefore, educators should strategically use both commands and requests, tailored to their classroom context, to maximize educational effectiveness and student cooperation.

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study highlight the critical role of teachers’ use of commanding and requesting speech acts in English language learning within vocational classes, especially in predominantly male settings. Commanding speech acts are key for classroom management and ensuring students clearly understand instructions while requesting speech acts help foster a respectful atmosphere and encourage active participation. The use of Indonesian by teachers to clarify instructions further aids in students’ comprehension. However, the study is limited by its focus on only these two types of speech acts, the context-specific nature of its findings, and the teacher-centered approach, which may not fully capture students’ perspectives. Future research could expand on this work by exploring other speech acts, considering cultural differences in student understanding, and integrating technology to enhance the effectiveness of speech act teaching, thereby broadening the applicability and impact of

these findings.

Author Contributions

In this article, each author played a specific and crucial role. A.A., as the Lead Researcher and Principal Author, initiated the research idea, designed the methodology, collected and analyzed primary data from classroom observations and teacher interviews, and wrote the main sections of the article, including the introduction, literature review, and data analysis. He also coordinated contributions from all authors to ensure overall coherence. F.G., as Data Analyst and Co-Author, assisted in research design, developed data collection instruments, processed and analyzed qualitative data using analysis software, wrote the results and discussion sections based on the analyzed data, and provided critical feedback and revisions to the draft. G.A.H., as Field Researcher and Co-Author, conducted interviews with teachers and students in vocational schools, observed classroom activities to document teachers' use of speech acts, wrote the research methodology section, ensured ethical compliance, and contributed to the conclusions and implications. C.S., as Literature Review Specialist and Co-Author, compiled a comprehensive literature review on the use of speech acts in language education, identified gaps in existing literature, linked research findings to the literature, provided relevant academic references, and edited the entire article to ensure academic accuracy and formatting consistency.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was conducted and approved by the Institutional Review Board or Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda, Indonesia, June 17, 2024.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are not publicly available due to privacy and confidentiality agreements with the participants. Data were gathered from a limited sample of students and teachers at a vocational school in Indonesia, and sharing these data could potentially compromise their anonymity. However, anonymized data may be made available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request and with the necessary permissions.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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