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An Analysis of Directive Speech Act Used
In "Among Us" Short Movie by Jay & Arya

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Abstract

This study analyzed the directive speech acts used in Among Us short movie that was produced by Jay Samuelz and Arya Lee. The objectives of this research were to identify the types of directive speech acts used in the movie, to describe the most frequently type used in the movie, and to describe the meaning of directive speech acts used in the movie. This study employed Searle's theory of speech act as a guide to analyze and discuss the directive speech act in Among us short movie. This study was categorized as a descriptive qualitative research. The results of this study shows that there were five types of directive speech acts in the movie. Those were request (26%), question (53%), command (7%), permission (4%), and prohibition (10%). As a matter of fact, question speech act was the most frequently used. Furthermore, the meaning of the directive speech acts performed in Among Us short movie was highly influenced by the context of its situation in the movie. Furthermore, with so many riddles to solve, this kind of situations being the biggest factor in the most frequently used of question speech acts, since all of these conflicts require clues to resolve them. The characters in Among Us short movie have used the question speech acts in getting solutions to all of the problems that arise.

Keywords: pragmatics, speech acts, short movie, Among Us

Introduction

Language has a great deal of influence. "Only if words are sensed, bodily presences, like echoes or waterfalls, can we understand the ability of spoken language to affect, change, and transform the perceptual world," (Abram, 1997). This point encapsulates many of language's most powerful features. In communication, we need a partner or a listener in order to understand and respond to what we say. Speakers and listeners normally speak in the same language, making it easier for the message to be understood. However, in some cases of conversation, speakers were unable to get their messages across due to cultural gaps or divergences. Any ways to prevent this kind of confusion are by learning about the pragmatics that deal with meaning depending on its social context.

Pragmatics is a subfield in linguistics, the study of language. Conversational implicature, which is a mechanism in which the speaker implies and the listener infers, is the subject of pragmatics. Simply stated, pragmatics studies language that is not directly spoken. Conversely, the speaker suggests or points at a meaning, and the listener infers the correct intent. One of the key matters of pragmatics is speech acts.

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Speech acts are utterances which has a communication purpose. When we command, apologize, greet, order, complain, invite, praise, or deny, we perform speech acts. In a speech act, a single word can be used. Such as in, "Sorry!" to perform an apology, or several words in a sentence, such as in, "Please accept my sincere apologies for forgetting your special day." Speech act is a real-life experience that necessitate not only language knowledge but also culturally acceptable use of that language.. Since language learners' natural instinct is to depend on what they know to be appropriate in their first language in order to realize what is transferable to other languages. Something that works in English can lose its meaning when translated into another language. In the meantime, speech acts can be classified into five categories as Searle in Levinson (1983: 240) states that the classifications are representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration. This study will focus on one of which often used by speakers in daily conversation, which is directive speech acts.

Directive speech acts are utterances that attempt to persuade someone else to do something. They can be anything from a gentle appeal to a more forceful order or insistence. When and how we communicate orders, as well as how people react to them, are all influenced by context. In most movies, the directive speech act is often used. Movie can represent a person's thoughts, feelings, and meanings. Generally, every film has a storyline and a certain goal. There are numerous utterances throughout the movie that have diverse meanings from one another. Furthermore, we must understand their conversational goals, and to avoid misunderstandings, it is necessary to comprehend the meaning of the discourse.

This research focuses on directive speech acts in Among Us short movie. There are two reason of choosing this topic. First, directive speech act is a kind of speech acts that often used by speakers in daily conversation. The second reason is directives shows a strong relationship between speaker and hearer. It is essential for second language learners to understand the speech acts overlap between the first and target languages, how they differ, and what is inappropriate to say.

Based on the study's background, this study appears to have some problems. First, the types of directive speech acts found in the short movie Among Us; second, the most frequently types of directive speech acts used in Among Us short movie; third, the meaning of directive speech acts in the short movie Among Us.

The following are the objectives of the research problems: To identify the different types of directive speech acts found in Among Us short movie; to describe the most frequently types of directive speech acts used in Among Us short movie; and, finally, to describe the meaning of directive speech acts used in Among Us short movie.

The research' significance were described as follows. First, to support language teachers, especially pragmatic lecturers in understanding various types of speech act and how they are used with additional details when teaching speech act material; to make students easily understand with the concept of speech act; and, to offer some references for future researcher who interested in speech act material.

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Literature Review

1. Speech Acts Theory by Searle

Similar to Austin's work, Searle segments utterances into an utterance act, propositional act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act although it is the illocutionary act which becomes the central subject to Searle's framework (Schiffrin, 1994: 55). This view allows Searle to explicitly associate speech acts with the study of language and meaning. Searle as cited in Mey (1993: 117) argues that Austin's taxonomy does not maintain a clear distinction between illocutionary verbs and acts. Thus, Searle established his own classification of speech acts which includes representatives, directives, commissives, expressive and declarations (Mey, 1993: 131).

2. Directive Speech Acts

Directives deal with the acts that speakers use to persuade others to do something. These types of speech acts express the speaker's desire that the hearer carry out the future act. According to Searle, there are five types of directive speech acts; command, request, permission, prohibition and question. In addition, Yule (1996: 54) proposes that directives can be perceived negative and positive. The examples below are such kinds of directives:

a. Request

A request is a directive speech act whose illocutionary purpose is to get the hearer to do something in circumstances in which it is not obvious that he/she will perform the action in the normal course of events (Searle 1969). By initiating a request, the speaker believes that the hearer is able to perform an action.

The structure of a request may consist of two parts: the head act (the actual request) and modifications to the request (external or internal).

Request strategies are divided into three types according to the level of inference (on the part of the hearer) needed to understand the utterance as a request.

The perspective of requests can be emphasized, either projecting toward the speaker "Can I borrow your notes?" or the hearer "Can you loan me your notes?". Since we must take into account many factors when we make requests (for example, the age, social distance, gender, and level of imposition), speakers often employ different strategies (linguistic and non-linguistic) to minimize the effects of our request on the other person. Examples of head acts and modifications, as well as interactional data among Mexican Spanish speakers, are presented below.

b. Question

Say something in order to obtain an answer or some information. In speech act of question, we can easily come up with a number of alternate ways to ask the same question by using sentence types other than interrogative.

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The example of interrogative sentence:

"Did Bobby get an A on the exam?"

A positive answer ("yes") to that question would give the questioner the actual answer she wanted, but now consider this following question:

"Do you know if Bobby got an A on the exam?"

This is still in the form of a question, but it probably is not an inquiry about what you know. Most of the time, the answer "yes, I do" would be ostentatiously uncooperative. The normal answer we would expect in real life would be "Yes, she did", or "No, she only got a B", or something of the sort. Here the reply is directed to the speech act meaning, not the literal meaning. A simple "yes" answer that responds to the literal meaning would usually be taken for an uncooperative answer in actual social life (for example *"Yes, I do"*) would be heard as *"Yes, I do, but I'm not necessarily going to tell you"*.

c. Command

A command is an order or the authority to command. A person who can be trusted to give orders to his friend about what he should do. In this case, the speaker in authority expresses a desire that an addressee should (not) act. The speaker who commands has the authority and/or duty to do so. The command's recipient is responsible and/or obligated to carry it out.

The meaning for the term command does not appear to extend to such utterances as It's hot in here. This utterance might have the intended perlocutionary effect of getting the addressee to open a window, but it does not have that as a directive illocutionary point.

The example of command:

"Close the door, please."

"Would you close the door?"

d. Permission

Permission is the act of permitting someone to do something or let something to happen. If someone who has authority over you gives you permission to do something, they say that they will allow you to do it.

The example of permission:

"She asked permission to leave the office."

"Finally, her father relented and gave permission for his youngest daughter to marry."

The modal 'can' is most often used to ask for or give permission but 'may' and 'could' are also possible even though they are not used as often as 'can'.

"Can I borrow your camera?"

"You can sit here, the seat is free."

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> *"Could I open the window?"*
>
> *"May I ask a question?"*

e. Prohibition

Prohibition is the act of prohibiting or outlawing something, such as when my mother forbade watching television during dinner (causing everyone to skip dinner). To express prohibition you can use:

It is prohibited to ...

You aren't allowed to ...

You mustn't ...

You aren't permitted to ...

It is forbidden to ...

Examples:

> *"It is forbidden to walk on grass."*
>
> *"Parking is strictly prohibited between these buildings."*
>
> *"Students aren't allowed to come too late to school."*
>
> *"Drivers mustn't park their cars here."*
>
> *"Smoking isn't permitted in hospitals."*

Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the directive speech acts in Among Us short movie. The dialogues in Among Us short movie was considered as the main source of data. The data were collected by downloading the video and the script of dialogues in the short movie. The collected data were analyzed by using the following steps. First, identifying the types of directive speech acts found in the script movie; second, grouping the types of directive speech acts; last, interpreting the findings.

Finding and Discussion

The finding is about the directive speech acts which were found in the dialogue of the short movie Among Us. It is presented in 3 stages: the first is the type of directive speech act found, the second is the type that is most frequently used, and the third is its meaning.

1. The type of directive speech acts found in Among Us short movie

The data shows that there were 5 types of directive speech acts found in Among Us short movie. Those were requests, questions, permissions, commands, and prohibitions. From 58 utterances found, there were, 16 (26%) requests; 30 (53%) questions, 4 (7%) commands, 2 (4%) permissions, and 6 (10%) prohibitions.

*Table 1: The types of directive speech acts found in Among Us short movie*

Directive speech acts	f	f%
Request	16	26

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Question	30	53
Command	4	7
Permission	2	4
Prohibition	6	10

2. The most dominant type used in Among Us short movie

The data shows that there were 26% belong to request, 53% belong to question, 7% belong to command, 4% belong to permission, and 10% belong to prohibition. As a matter of fact, the directive speech act of question was the most frequently used which came with the highest percentage.

Figure 1: Frequency of directive speech acts in Among Us short movie
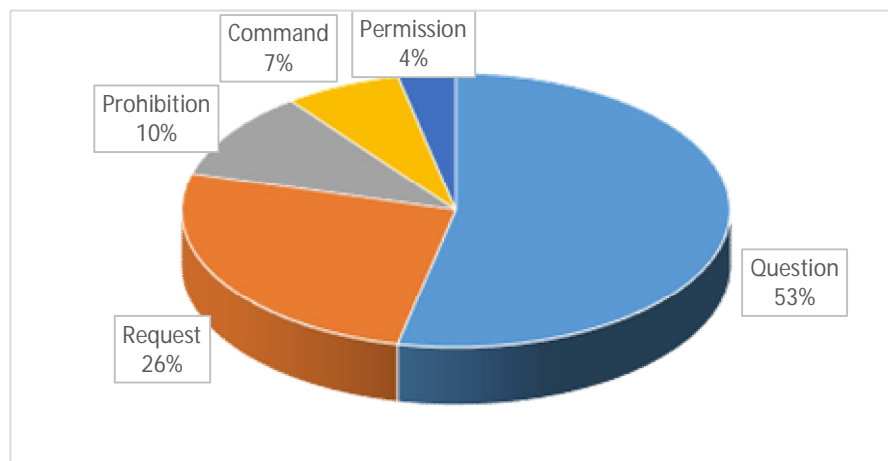
3. The meaning of directive speech acts in Among Us short movie

Directive speech acts in Among Us short movie were well realized. It helped the hearer and the speaker to perfectly understand each other, especially, when the characters faced the conflict up. There were a lot of conflict which made them produce a lot of directive speech acts. It began with the death of Yellow, and then the mysterious virus, until the death of Captain. All of these incidents were the context of situation that heavily influenced the meaning of directive speech acts found in Among Us short movie. Furthermore, with so many riddles to solve, so that all of these conflicts require clues to resolve them, the characters in Among Us short movie have used the question directive speech acts more and more, in terms of getting solutions to all of the problems that arise. Other directive speech acts, such as request, command, permission, and prohibition, also help to make the story relatable and tense to watch.

The samples of directive speech acts' meaning were described as follows:

a. Request

The sample of request utterances' meaning in Among Us short movie was an utterance from Purple. She said, "Get me out of here." At first glance it's similar to a command, but based on the context of the situation, it's a request, since she isn't a captain and lacks the ability to issue commands within the team. She used the phrasal verb "get out" to direct request to everyone while she was locked in the extermination

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chamber. She requested everyone to get her out of the extermination chamber. But, referring to the aim of request, which is to persuade the listener (Orange and team) to do something, that is unclear whether the listener will do it. The crew, as listeners, did not comply with Purple's request in this moment. Instead, they left Purple and got rid of her because they were worried if Purple could kill them too.

b. Question

The sample of question utterances' meaning in Among Us short movie was the utterance from Purple. She said, "Well, there must be a way to detect it, right?". The meaning of how she ended her question with the word "right" was to imply the listener that what she said wasn't only correct, but she knew that the listener already in agreement with it. She asked about how to detect the virus which aims to clarify the motive for Yellow's death, may be able to use blood analysis or signs of pupil dilation.

c. Command

The sample of command utterances' meaning in Among Us short movie was the utterance from White, who was took over the leadership of the team after Orange was found dead. He said, "Shut up! That's enough, Green." He used the phrasal verb "shut up" to direct a command for Green. He was commanded to stop blaming Blue, who was accidentally saw Orange in a position of a knife-pierced head. Since White took the authority of the team, he started to control the whole discussion. So there wouldn't any wrong accusation as before.

d. Permission

The sample of permission utterances' meaning in Among Us short movie was directed by White. He said "The scanners in MedBay would probably be able to detect something." Based on the context of situation, when everybody was looking for a way to detect the virus, he used the auxiliary verb "would" to direct a permission. He gave a permission to everyone if they wanted to use his scanners to detect the virus He said "The scanners in "MedBay" would probably be able to detect something." Based on the context of situation, when everybody's looking for a way to detect the virus, he used the auxiliary verb "would" to direct a permission. He gave a permission to everyone if they wanted to use his scanners to detect the virus, as he owned scanners in a medium-sized production room, which called MedBay.

e. Prohibition

The sample of prohibition utterances' meaning in Among Us short movie was found when Green used the compound words "should have never" to direct a prohibition to everyone. He said "We should have never trusted this guy." Since he thought Blue was the one who should be suspected of the captain's death, he was the one who was standing in front of the captain's dead body. So that Green insisted everybody to stop trusting Blue anymore.Results and discussion presented as much as 40-60% of the length of the article. The major part of the results contains the data analysis and hypothesis testing. Discussion is an important part of the overall content of a scientific article, load response research problem, interpretation of the findings integration of findings from research into the existing body of knowledge, the preparation of a new theory or modifying existing theories.

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This study employed Searle's theory of speech act as a guide to analyze and discuss the directive speech act in Among us short movie. Based on the research objectives, there are three sections of discussion about directive speech acts in the short film Among Us, its types, most frequently type, and meaning. The used of directive speech acts in Among Us short movie were identified. According to Searle, there are five types of directive speech acts; command, request, permission, prohibition, and question. This result was supported by the result of Fara Della's research (2018). In her research, she found that five types of directive speech acts which same as this research found in Among Us short movie. There were 58 utterances which consisted of five types of directive speech acts: 16 requests (26%), 30 questions (53%), 4 commands (7%), 2 permissions (4%), and 6 prohibitions (10%). The question directive speech act was the most frequent. The meaning of the directive speech acts performed in Among Us short movie was highly influenced by the context of its situation in the movie, as well as being the biggest factor in the most frequently used of question directive speech acts. The movie's various riddles, notably the mystery style that was presented, made the characters in the movie constantly wonder in terms to understand and find a way out of every conflict they encountered.

This research finding also compared with some expert studies on directive speech act analysis. There were four studies that used as references by the researcher when writing the final project. Two of them was conducted by Muhartoyo and Keilly Kristiani, also Fara Della, and Barbanas Sembiring, both study was about analyzing directive speech acts in the Sleeping Beauty movie, same subject but different theory, the one was according to Austin, and the other was according to Searle. The one which used Austin's theory, found the dominant directive speech acts was ordering (21,6%), while the one which used the same theory with this study, that is Searle's theory was found command (51 utterances) which frequently used.

The third research was conducted by Alex Kurniadi, it was a bit different with this research objectives, it was a linguistics study about analyzing directive speech acts in the Legend of Hercules movie manuscript, but he also studied the dominant linguistics form of directive speech acts, which the dominant was interrogative sentence (57%), and request (27,3%) was the dominant type of directive speech act.

Last but not least, this research also compared with Tita Nur Fitria's research, the study was about analyzing directive speech acts in Koi Mil Gaya movie, she found the dominant directive speech acts was command (84%.) Here was an example of directive speech acts which supported by her statement, "A command is an order or the authority to command. A person who can be trusted to give orders to his friend about what he should do. In this case, the speaker in authority expresses a desire that an addressee should act. The speaker who commands has the authority and/or duty to do so. The command's recipient is responsible and/or obligated to carry it out." (Tita Nur Fitria, 2018.) It was occurred after the team exterminated Purple. There was a command from Captain, he said, "Okay everybody, let's go. We still got a lot of tasks to do." Since he owns the authority of the team, Orange used the phrasal verb "let's go" to direct a command. He as a speaker gave a command to his team in order to left the room and then do their another tasks. Later, the team as a hearer left the room out to do their another tasks. It was perfectly proved the statement.

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Another sample of directive speech acts in this research which corresponded with Searle's theory (1969), a request is a directive speech act whose illocutionary purpose is to get the hearer to do something in circumstances in which it is not obvious that he/she will perform the action in the normal course of events. When Green said, "Would you mind?" even if the utterance was an interrogative sentence, it doesn't always mean that was a question. Based on the context of its situation, which is discussing the possibility that one of them could kill each other. He used the modal verb "would" to direct a polite request. It such of sarcasm, he requested everyone if they wanted to kill each other like what happened at that moment, Yellow and Orange were their own friends, but somebody was killed both of them.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, there were five types of directive speech act in Among Us short movie. From the total 58 number of data. 16 utterances of request (26%), 30 utterances of question (53%), 4 utterances of command (7%), 2 utterances of permission (4%), and 6 utterances of prohibition (10%). Question is the most frequently type used in Among Us short movie. It came with the highest percentage from 30 utterances, which is 53%. The context of each situation in the movie greatly influenced the meaning of the directive speech acts shown in Among Us, as great as being the most important factor in the used of various directive speech acts type in Among Us short movie. Specially, in the used of question, which was the most frequent. Since the story shown so many brainteasers to answer, so that the characters required clues to resolve all of the riddles, question directive speech acts further and further used to provide them solutions to all of the challenges in the movie's storyline. After all, directive speech acts in Among Us short movie were skillfully realized, it allowed the hearer and speaker to understand each other perfectly since the speakers delivered the speech acts well.

Hopefully, the results of this study are expected to be used as reference material to learn more about English speech acts and can give valuable contribution for:

1. Reader

    The result of this study can be applied as media for English language learning. Watching a movie or another literary works can be interesting media to learn, not only for enjoyment but also for educational purposes. It will be easier for people to communicate with others if they grasp speech acts.

2. Researcher

    The results of this study can be referable and give benefit for further researchers who want to analysis directive speech acts or other speech acts with the different object, such as novel, comic, magazine, etc.

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