

AN ANALYSIS OF DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS IN *THE FORGE* MOVIE: A PRAGMATIC APPROACH

Sonya Elizabeth Simanjuntak¹, Dyah Ambar Wuryandari, SS., M.Hum²

¹Gunadarma University, Depok, Indonesia

²Gunadarma University, Depok, Indonesia

Corresponding Author(S): sonyasimanjuntak778@gmail.com

Abstract:

Directive is the type of speech act used by the speaker to encourage or direct listeners to take an action. This research aimed to find out the types of directive speech acts used in *The Forge* movie and to find out the most dominant type of directive speech acts. This research used a qualitative method. The source of the data was taken from *The Forge* movie, while the data of this research were collected from the dialogue that contained the directive speech act. This research used George Yule's theory to analyse the type of directive speech acts. There were 4 types of directive speech acts used in *The Forge* movie with total 102 data. There were command 32 data, order 7 data, request 14 data, and suggestion 49 data. The suggestion is the most dominant directive speech act because *The Forge* movie has a motivational storyline with light and redemptive conflict, where all characters often encourage others through advice, spiritual insight, and positive reinforcement.

Keywords:

Speech Act, Movie, Directive, George Yule



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INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication tool that allows people to express ideas, feelings, and thoughts. In pragmatics, one important element of language is speech act. According to Yule (1996), a speech act is an action performed via utterances, such as requesting, commanding, suggesting, or ordering. This research focuses on one category: directive speech acts, which aim to get the listener to do something. The movie *The Forge* was

selected because of its motivational and redemptive themes, which frequently feature dialogue with directive speech acts. This study is conducted to identify the types and the most dominant type of directive speech acts used in the movie, based on George Yule's classification.

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics concerned with the study of meaning in context. Conversational implicature, or the process by which a speaker implies and a listener infers, is the focus of pragmatics. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics explores how language is used to achieve communicative goals beyond the literal meanings of word. It examines the relationship presupposition, implicature, and politeness. These aspects help speakers convey meaning indirectly, relying on shared knowledge and context. According to Nababan (1987), pragmatics is the use of language for communication that is relevant and appropriate to the context and work situation. Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics concerned with the study of meaning in context. Conversational implicature, or the process by which a speaker implies and a listener infers, is the focus of pragmatics.

Yule (1996, p.47) states that speech acts are actions displayed through utterances. On the other hand, Stephen C. Levinson (1983) stated that speech acts are defined as actions performed through speech, which include various functions such as stating, commanding, asking, and promising. Speech acts are a part of pragmatics studies utterances. The phrase consists of two words, speech and act. Speech act can change the social reality not only describing a given reality. According to Yule (1996, p.48), he proposed to divide speech acts into three categories: Locutionary act, Illocutionary act, and Perlocutionary act. Yule divides illocutionary acts into five types: declarative, representative, expressive, directive, and commissive.

The type of speech act used by the researcher in this research is directive speech. Directive speech acts are types of speech acts that purpose is to encourage or influence the listener to perform an action. George Yule (1996, p. 54) explains that directive is “those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to get someone else to do something.” This speech act includes various forms, depending on the strength and politeness of the request. Some of the main forms of directive speech acts include commands, orders, requests, and suggestions. The types will be explained below:

1. Command

According to Yule (1996, p. 55), “Commands are typically expressed by using the imperative form and are often used when the speaker has some authority over the hearer.” In other words, commands usually use the imperative tense and are delivered by speakers who have some authority or power over the hearer.

2. Order

Order is a type of speech act that directs someone to do something. Yule states that “Orders give a firm direction or instruction to perform an action and the order can be refused” (Yule, 1996, p. 55). In this case, ‘order’ and ‘command’ have similar meanings, but these two types differ. According to Searle and Vanderveken (1985, p. 201), orders and commands differ in terms of the speaker’s authority, where an order does not necessarily require institutional authority or can be carried out by anyone regardless of their position. In this research, the researcher found 16 utterances that contained orders.

3. Request

Yule explains that “Requests are less forceful than commands or orders and are often used with politeness strategies” (Yule, 1996, p. 55). Requests generally use modality words such as could, would, can, please, and leave room for the listener to refuse.

4. Suggestion

According to Yule (1996, p. 55), “Suggestions do not explicitly require the hearer to do something but propose a possible course of action.” So, a suggestion is a form of speech act that proposes an action, without coercion or authority.

A previous research conducted by Sausan (2023) entitled “An Analysis of Directive Speech Acts in Alice Through the Looking Glass Movie” examined the types of directive speech acts using a qualitative method and George Yule’s theory. The findings revealed 66 utterances consisting of commands, orders, requests, and suggestions, with commands being the most dominant type. This research is relevant to the present research because it applies the same theoretical framework and focuses on similar classifications of directive speech acts in a movie context.

The researcher focused on identifying the types of directive speech act in *The Forge* movie. The data were taken from the characters’ directive utterances in *The Forge* movie, and to analyze the data, the researcher used the speech act theory by George Yule (1996).

METHOD

Research Design

This research used the qualitative method by collecting and analyzing data in *The Forge* movie. Qualitative research is a medium to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups give to social and human problems (Cresswell, 2014). Using the qualitative method, the research results would not depend on totals and numbers, and the data were analyzed textually in words, sentences, and paragraphs.

Source of Data and Data

The Source of data for this research are collected from the movie that relates to the directive speech acts, which are reflected in *The Forge* movie. The platform used Netflix. The data of this research are utterances uttered by characters in *The Forge* movie that contain kinds of directive speech acts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the analysis, the researcher found four types of directive speech acts. There are Command has 32 data, Order has 7 data, Request has 14 data, and Suggestion has 49 data, and the total data found are 102 data. Among the four types of directive speech acts, the most dominant is Suggestion. It can be seen from the table below:

Table 1 Types of Directive Speech Acts

NO	Types of Directive Speech Acts	Data
1	Command	32
2	Order	7
3	Request	14
4	Suggestion	49
	Total	102

The table below shows the most dominant types of data in the analysis of directive speech acts in *The Forge* movie. Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the most dominant type of data is Suggestion with 49 data, followed by Command with 32 data, Request with 14 data, and Order with 7 data. The most dominant type is suggestion, which reflects the overall tone and message of *The Forge* as a motivational film. The characters often use language that uplifts, encourages, and guides others rather than directly commanding them.

Discussion

1. Command

Commands are typically expressed by using the imperative form and are often used when the speaker has some authority over the hearer.

Datum 1

Duration: 03:10 – 03:18

Cynthia: “You’re 19 years old. That means **it’s time for you to step up!**”

Analysis:

The utterance “**It’s time for you to step up!**” is a type of directive speech act in the form of a command. The phrase suggests urgency and responsibility, indicating that the speaker, Cynthia, is urging or directing someone to take initiative or assume a role, likely in a situation requiring leadership or responsibility. According to Yule (1996, p. 55), commands are typically expressed by using the imperative form and are often used when the speaker has some authority over the hearer. In this case, Cynthia asserts a position of influence or authority, prompting the hearer to act. This utterance occurs when Cynthia encounters her son, Isaiah, who spends most of his time playing video games and neglecting household responsibilities after graduating from high school. Frustrated by his lack of initiative, Cynthia expresses her disappointment and pressures him to find a job and begin contributing to the household. Thus, this utterance fits the command type of directive speech act.

Datum 2

Duration: 27:05 – 27:10

Isaiah: “Diego, Carlos, **run the conveyer at full speeds!**”

Carlos: “You got it!”

Diego: “Let’s go, let’s go!”

Analysis:

The utterance “**Run the conveyer at full speeds!**” is a type of directive speech act in the form of a command. The sentence uses the imperative structure, which is a typical marker of command as stated by Yule (1996, p. 55). It expresses a clear instruction from the speaker to the hearer to take immediate action, in this case operating a machine at maximum capacity. The use of a direct verb “run” at the beginning of the sentence shows the speaker’s intent to direct the hearer without offering choice or negotiation. This suggests that the speaker holds authority or control in the situation, especially in a workplace environment where compliance is expected. The context of this command occurs when Isaiah is given temporary leadership on the factory floor and needs to ensure the team meets a tight shipping deadline. His assertive instruction reflects not only urgency but also his growth into a more responsible and proactive individual. Therefore, this utterance fits the command type of directive speech act.

2. Order

Order is a type of speech act that directs someone to do something.

Datum 3

Duration: 17:30 – 17:35

Cynthia: So, did you apply anywhere else?

Isaiah: “I checked that one place, but they weren’t hiring.”

Cynthia: “**You’re supposed to keep looking!**”

Analysis:

The utterance “**You’re supposed to keep looking!**” is a directive speech act in the form of an order. The speaker reminds the hearer of their obligation, implying that the action should be continued immediately. Although it is structured as a declarative sentence, pragmatically it functions as an instruction. According to Yule (1996, p. 55), orders give a firm direction or instruction to perform an action and the order can be refused. This utterance is spoken by Cynthia when Isaiah tells her that he only applied to one job and stopped searching after facing rejection. Cynthia, as a mother who is concerned about her son's future, expresses frustration and insists that he continue trying instead of giving up so easily. The context shows that Cynthia is not merely making a suggestion but firmly demanding action, reinforcing her authority and expectations as a parent. In this case, the speaker emphasizes the hearer’s duty, making the utterance a clear form of order.

Datum 4

Duration: 01:50:38 – 01:50:43

Wanda: “Pallet’s full! Ready to move!”

Isaiah: “**Let’s load it up!**”

Cody: “I’ll grab the lift.”

Analysis:

The utterance “**Let’s load it up!**” is a directive speech act in the form of an order. Although it uses persuasive language “let’s”, the speaker is directing the hearer to begin an action immediately. The phrase implies a task that needs to be done together but still carries an imperative tone. According to Yule (1996, p.55), orders give a firm direction or instruction to perform an action and the order can be refused. In this scene, Isaiah has just confirmed that the last pallet is sealed and ready to be moved, and he instructs his team to proceed with loading it for shipment. As the acting leader on the warehouse floor, Isaiah uses this directive to initiate the next critical step in the shipping process. The speaker expects the hearers to respond quickly and act without hesitation, emphasizing teamwork and efficiency under pressure.

Therefore, despite its inviting form, the utterance functions as an instruction, making it a clear order. The speaker expects the hearers to respond quickly and act without hesitation.

3. Request

Requests are less forceful than commands or orders and are often used with politeness strategies.

Datum 5

Duration: 16:40 – 16:45

Isaiah: “I’ve got work in the morning, man. I can’t be out all night.”

Jamal: “Come on, Zay. **Just give me an hour.**”

Analysis:

The utterance “**Just give me an hour**” is a directive speech act in the form of a request. The speaker is asking for cooperation rather than demanding action, and the phrasing shows that the hearer is free to say no, even though the speaker hopes he will agree. According to Yule (1996, p.55), requests are less forceful than commands or orders and are often expressed with politeness strategies. In this context, Jamal is trying to persuade Isaiah, whom he calls “Zay,” to spend time with him for what he conveys will be just an hour. Isaiah, however, has begun taking more responsibility in his life and expresses reluctance because of his work commitments. This moment highlights the growing difference between them; while Jamal still clings to their old lifestyle, Isaiah is striving to move forward. Jamal’s use of the phrase “**Come on**” and the expression “**Just give me an hour**” indicates a pleading tone, which reflects emotional appeal rather than authority. Therefore, although imperative in structure, the utterance still allows space for the hearer to consider or refuse, which is characteristic of a request.

Datum 6

Duration: 46:15 – 46:20

Cynthia: “**Can you lift up the garage door, please?**”

Analysis:

The utterance **“Can you lift up the garage door, please?”** is a directive speech act in the form of a request. The speaker uses a modal verb “can” and the word “please”, which are common politeness strategies used to soften the directive. This phrasing indicates that the speaker is asking for help in a respectful way and leaves room for the hearer to refuse. According to Yule (1996, p.55), requests are less forceful than commands or orders and are often expressed with politeness strategies. In this scene, Cynthia has just arrived home with groceries and is asking Isaiah, her son, to help her by opening the garage door. The situation is casual and domestic, and Cynthia’s tone is gentle, highlighting a familiar yet respectful dynamic between a parent and child. The use of the request form reflects both courtesy and an expectation of support within their relationship. Since the utterance seeks cooperation rather than giving an order, it fits the request type of directive speech act.

4. Suggestion

Suggestion is a form of speech act that proposes an action, without coercion or authority.

Datum 7

Duration: 10:30 – 10:40

Joshua: **“If you’re available to work, we can discuss options in my company.”**

Isaiah: “Really? I mean.. yeah. I’d appreciate that.”

Analysis:

The utterance **“If you’re available to work, we can discuss options in my company”** is a directive speech act in the form of a suggestion. The speaker is not directly telling the hearer what to do, but instead offering a possible course of action that depends on the hearer’s availability. According to Yule (1996, p.55), suggestions do not explicitly require the hearer to do something but propose an option or opportunity. The conditional structure “If you’re available...” indicates that the speaker gives freedom to the hearer to decide. In this context, Joshua is speaking to Isaiah after noticing positive changes in his attitude and behavior. Rather than pressuring Isaiah, Joshua gently offers him an opportunity to move forward in life through employment. The tone is supportive and encouraging, which emphasizes the non-imposing nature of the utterance. Therefore, this utterance fits the suggestion type of directive speech act because it presents a potential action in a flexible and non-imposing way, showing openness rather than obligation.

Datum 8

Duration: 10:43 – 11:04

Joshua: **“If you wanna take time to think... we can talk again when you’re ready.”**

Isaiah: “No, it’s not that. I just... I didn’t think someone like you would even offer.”

Analysis:

The utterance “**If you wanna take time to think... we can talk again when you’re ready**” is a directive speech act in the form of a suggestion. The speaker is not demanding or instructing the hearer but rather proposing a possible course of action that respects the hearer’s pace and decision.

According to Yule (1996, p.55), suggestions do not explicitly require the hearer to do something but offer an option. In the context of the scene, this utterance is spoken after Joshua offers Isaiah a potential job opportunity. Isaiah appears hesitant, uncertain about accepting the offer so soon. Rather than pressuring him, Joshua gently assures him that it is okay to take time before making a decision. The use of the conditional “**If you wanna take time to think**” shows that the speaker is leaving the choice entirely to the hearer. This part of the sentence implies that it is perfectly acceptable for the hearer to delay the conversation. The second part, “**we can talk again when you’re ready**”, uses the modal verb “can,” which expresses possibility rather than obligation. It shows that Joshua is willing to continue the conversation, but only when the hearer feels prepared.

Therefore, this utterance fits the suggestion type of directive speech act because it proposes a future action while respecting the hearer’s freedom to decide when or whether to continue the discussion.

CONCLUSION

After conducting identification and analysis of the directive speech acts found in *The Forge* movie, it can be concluded that the researcher identified four types of directive speech acts based on George Yule’s theory. These consist of a total of 102 data, which are classified into 32 data of Command, 7 data of Order, 14 data of Request, and 49 data of Suggestion. Among these four categories, the most dominant type of directive speech act is Suggestion, with the highest number of occurrences.

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