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Directives in English

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

قَالُوا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا اِلاّ مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَلِیْمُ الْحَكِیْمُ ﴿۳۲﴾

صدق الله العلي العظيم

(سورة البقرة الآية: ۳۲۹)

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH

They said, “Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. It is you who are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.”

(Surah al-Baqarah: 32)

God Almighty has spoken the truth

Dedication

To My dear family

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank My dear supervisor (Dr. Iqbal Sahib Dishar Alsadi)

for helping me accomplish this valuable project. Thanks go to the all the staff of the English language Department in general.

I am grateful to the efforts of every one who contributed to my education throughout these years, I also thank my families and everyone who supported me complete my study.

Abstract

Directives in English are a type of sentence used to give commands, instructions, requests, or advice. They are typically formed using the base form of the verb and often omit the subject, as it is usually understood to be "you." Directives play an essential role in both spoken and written communication, enabling speakers to influence the behavior of others. They can vary in tone from polite suggestions to firm orders, depending on the context and word choice. Understanding how to form and use directives appropriately is important for effective and respectful communication in English.

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

Introduction In English communication, directing refers to the way a speaker guides, instructs, or influences someone else to take a specific action. It is a fundamental part of interaction, especially in everyday conversations, education, management, and social situations. Directing involves the use of directive utterances—statements that aim to make the listener do something. These can range from polite requests to firm commands, and they vary based on context, relationship between speaker and listener, and the level of formality.

Understanding how to use and respond to directing language is essential for clear and respectful communication in English. It not only helps in expressing needs and instructions but also builds cooperation and mutual understanding..

Directives are a fundamental part of the English language, used to express commands, make requests, offer advice, or give instructions. They serve as a means for the speaker or writer to influence or direct the actions of another person. In most cases, directives use the base form of the verb and omit the subject, which is generally understood to be "you." For instance, sentences like “Turn off the light,” “Please be quiet,” or “Don’t forget your keys” are all examples of directives.

These expressions are commonly used in everyday life, whether in informal conversations at home or formal interactions in professional settings.

Understanding how to use directives effectively allows individuals to communicate clearly, respectfully, and appropriately in various social and cultural situations.

1.2 Speech Acts Theory

Speech act theory, a cornerstone of pragmatics, explores how language functions not just to convey information, but also to perform actions within a specific context (Searle, 1979: 22). Pioneered by J.L. Austin in his influential book "How to Do Things With Words" (1962), the theory argues that utterances can create changes in the world through the very act of speaking .

Imagine saying "I apologize for my mistake." This simple sentence performs several speech acts at once.

First, it literally conveys the proposition that you regret an action (locutionary act) .

Second, by using the word "apologize," you intend to take responsibility and potentially seek forgiveness (illocutionary act) .

Finally, the desired outcome might be to repair a damaged relationship (perlocutionary act) .

The seeds of speech act theory were sown by J.L. Austin, a British philosopher, whose landmark work, "How to Do Things With Words," published in 1962, challenged the prevailing notion of language solely conveying factual information. Austin argued that utterances often function as **actions**, altering the world around us. For instance, saying "I apologize" does not merely state regret; it performs the social act of expressing an apology, potentially changing the relationship between the speaker and hearer.

John R. Searle, another influential figure, further refined the theory by introducing the concept of **illocutionary force** (Searle, 1969: 23). This refers to the specific **communicative act** an utterance performs, such as asserting, requesting, promising, or commanding. For example, the statement "This cake is delicious" not only describes the cake but also performs the illocutionary act of expressing an opinion.

The theory doesn't stop at identifying the actions performed through language. It delves into the factors that influence the **felicity** (successful completion) of these actions :

- **Speaker's intention:** Did the speaker intend to perform a specific act through their utterance? (Kurniawati, 2012: 8).

- **Hearer's interpretation:** Did the hearer understand the speaker's intention and the illocutionary force of the utterance?
- **Social context:** Are the social conventions and norms conducive to the act being performed successfully?
 - **Shared knowledge:** Do the speaker and hearer share the necessary background knowledge for the act to be understood? (For instance, the illocutionary act of a request ("Please pass the salt") may not be successful if the speaker whispers it while facing away from the hearer, lacking the appropriate social context. (Kurniawati, 2012: 8 – 9)`)

1.3 Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

1.3.1 Direct Speech Act

Direct speech acts exhibit a strong correlation between the grammatical structure of the sentence and its intended illocutionary force (what the speaker hopes to achieve with the utterance) For instance, a declarative sentence like "It's raining" directly performs the act of stating a fact. Similarly, an imperative sentence like "Open the window" directly issues a command. The hearer readily grasps the speaker's intention based on the sentence type and the surrounding context. (Verschueren, 1999: 112).

This straightforwardness arises from the conventional association between grammatical forms and specific speech acts, Language users develop shared understandings about how certain sentence structures are typically employed to achieve particular communicative goals. For example, questions phrased with an interrogative pronoun ("Who has the salt?") are generally understood as requests for information, while those without ("You have the salt?") might carry a more accusatory tone. (Verschueren, 201: 12).

The success of direct speech acts relies heavily on common ground between speaker and hearer, Both parties must be familiar with the conventional force associated with the grammatical form used. For instance, a sarcastic statement like "That was fantastic," uttered after a disastrous experience, might be misinterpreted by someone unfamiliar with this form of irony. Cultural differences can also come into play. A blunt request in one culture might be perceived as impolite in another,

highlighting the role of social context in interpreting direct speech acts. (Clark, 1996: 98).

Despite their apparent simplicity, direct speech acts are not without limitations. Speakers can exploit this very directness for effect. Irony, as discussed by Lakoff (1992), relies on the hearer recognizing the mismatch between the literal meaning of the utterance and the speaker's true intention. Similarly, an exaggerated compliment ("You're the most intelligent person I know!") might be interpreted as insincere due to its hyperbole.

1.3.2 Indirect Speech Act

Unlike direct speech acts, where form aligns directly with function, indirect speech acts employ **indirect forms** to achieve their illocutionary purpose. This implies that the literal meaning of the utterance often deviates from the speaker's true intention, requiring the hearer to engage in **inference** to understand the underlying message (Grice, 1975: 41).

examples:

- **Request:** "It's getting late." This seemingly innocuous statement indirectly suggests a request to leave, relying on the hearer to recognize the speaker's discomfort with the extended duration.
- **Complaint:** "This weather is terrible, isn't it?" This seemingly neutral comment might indirectly express a complaint about the discomfort caused by the weather, hoping the hearer will take action (e.g., closing a window).
- **Suggestion:** "You seem tired. Perhaps you should go home?" This statement phrased as a question indirectly suggests going home, allowing the hearer to maintain a sense of agency while fulfilling the speaker's intention.

Understanding indirect speech acts requires delving into the realm of **conversational principles** outlined by H.P. Grice. These principles, known as **Gricean maxims** (Grice, 1975: 45), include maxims of quantity (be informative), quality (be truthful), relation (be relevant), and manner (be clear and avoid ambiguity). By seemingly violating one or more of these maxims, speakers indirectly signal their true intentions. (Kecskes, 2010: 33).

Furthermore, similar to direct speech acts, indirect speech acts also rely on **felicity conditions** for successful performance (Austin, 1962: 14).

These conditions ensure that the act is performed appropriately and effectively.

An indirect request like "I wonder if someone could close the window" might be infelicitous if the speaker themselves is physically capable of doing so.

Indirect speech acts offer several advantages in communication. They can be seen as **more polite** than their direct counterparts, particularly in situations where a direct approach might be perceived as rude or demanding. Additionally, they can create a sense of **cooperation** and shared understanding between the speaker and hearer, as the hearer actively participates in deciphering the intended message. (Austin, 1962). However, their reliance on inference can also lead to **misunderstandings**. If the hearer fails to recognize the speaker's intention or misinterprets the context, the desired outcome might not be achieved. Additionally, cultural norms significantly influence the interpretation of indirect speech acts, as different cultures have varying degrees of tolerance for and reliance on indirectness in communication (Kecskes, 2010: 34).

1.4 Classification of Speech Acts

1.4.1 Classification by Austin.

As stated in the previous section, illocutionary act is one of the three types of speech acts proposed by Austin which contain purpose, function, and the force of utterances. Austin categorizes illocutionary acts into five types. This classification is based on the performative verbs in any utterances (Searle, 1979: 8-9). They are as follows:

1.4.1.1 Verdictives

Austin advocates that verdictives deal with delivering of a verdict upon evidence or reasons. The verdicts are usually delivered by a jury, an arbitrator or umpire. These kinds of speech acts are typified by the verbs, acquit, hold, calculate, describe, analyze, estimate, date, rank, assesses, and characterize, grade, estimate, diagnose.

1.4.1.2 Exercitives

These have to do with the giving of a decision in favor of or against a certain course of action or advocacy of it. In other words, executives deal with the way people exercise power, right, or influence on other people. A familiar example is the utterance „I pronounce you husband and wife“ which is usually said by priests in marrying; thus, it turns two persons into a couple. Other examples of exercitives are order, command, direct, plead, beg, recommend, entreat and advice, dismiss, nominate, veto, declare closed, declare open, as well as announce, warn, proclaim, and give. (Noriana, 2017: 4)

1.4.1.3 Commissive

Commissives are associated with the speaker's commitment to a certain course of action. Some of the apparent examples include promise, vow, pledge, covenant, contract, guarantee, embraces, and swear.

1.4.1.4 Expositives

Expositive is used to make statements fit into the ongoing discourse such as clarifying and arguing. The list of words of expositive include affirm, deny, emphasize, illustrate, answer, report, accept, object to, concede, describe, classify, identify, and call.

1.4.1.5 Behabitives

Behabitives are concerned with people's behavior and social attitude towards other people's imminent or past conduct. These are associated with such matters such as apologizing, congratulating, blessing, cursing or challenging.

1.4.2 Classification by Searle

The classification of speech acts as stated by Searle in Mey (1993: 162) are representatives, declaratives, directives, expressives, commissives. In Yule (1996: 53-55)

1.4.2.1 Representatives

Representatives are those kinds of speech act that state the speaker's belief and thus, the belief may have different degrees of force.

e.g. "the earth is flat."

The above sentence describes about the speaker belief on the earth's shape. The speaker said to the listener as he/ she believes that the earth is flat. In using a representative, the speaker attempts to make words fit the world.

1.4.2.2 Declaratives

Declaratives are those kinds of words and expressions that change the world via their utterances such as betting, naming, baptizing, marrying and so on. A special institutional role in a specific context is required in order to perform a declaration appropriately. If the speaker doesn't have that role, her or his utterance will be infelicitous or inappropriate. The example below illustrates the act of declaration:

e.g. "I declare you as husband and wife." (Noriana, 2017: 5) The above utterance can only be appropriate and successfully performed if it is said by the priest. Thus, the utterance has an effect in which it turns two singles into a married couple.

e.g. "I will pick you up tomorrow."

The above utterance indicates the speaker commit herself/ himself to pick the hearer up the next following day. The utterance is done by the speaker as future act that he/ she will do to the hearer. are declarative, interrogative and imperative

1.4.2.3 Expressives

Expressive are those words and expressions that state what the speaker feels. A wide range of psychological states can be expressed and the proposition ascribes an act to the speaker or the hearer.

e.g. "congratulations!"

The above utterance indicates the speaker's feeling of happiness and proud to the hearer's achievement. The speaker wants to show his/ her support to the hearer. (Noriana, 2017: 5)

1.4.2.4 Directives

Directives deal with the acts that speakers use in the attempt of getting someone else doing something. These types of speech acts express the speaker's wish in which the future act is carried out by the hearer.

e.g. "close the door, please!"

The above utterance is intended as a command to the hearer to close the door. The speaker recognizes the hearer to follow his/ her command.

1.4.2.5 Commisives

Commissives are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some course of future actions. In performing commissives, an intention is expressed by the speaker and the proposition in terms of future act will be done by the speaker. (Noriana, 2017: 5)

Chapter Two

2.1 Definition of Directive

Directives are speech acts that a speaker uses to get someone else to do something. These speech acts include requesting, questioning, command, orders, and suggesting. For example, when someone says “Could you lend me a pencil, please?” the utterance represents the speaker requests that the hearer to do something which is to lend him a pencil. (Hidayat, 2016: 6)

Directive is one of the classes of speech act that concerns with the act of getting someone to do something. Another definition of directive is stated by Yule. He identifies directives as kind of speech acts that speakers use to get someone else to do something.

Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that directives are expressions in which the speaker intends the addressee to do certain action. (Kurniawati, 2012: 15)

2.1.1 Forms of Directive

Holmes in Richards and Schmidt (1983) divides directives into three major categories on the basis of their form: imperative, interrogative, or declarative.

2.1.2 Imperatives

Imperative forms were the most frequently occurring realizations of directives expressions in direct speech acts. Nevertheless it is very rarely performed in the indirect one (Huang: 2007:111). There are six structural variants of imperatives were identified below:

a. base form of verb

e.g: Speak louder

e. imperative + modifier

e.g: 'Children looking this way please.'

2.1.3 Interrogatives

Two major types of interrogative were identified: modal and non-modal forms. a. Modals an interrogative clause is to be interpreted as a command to do if it fulfills the following conditions: it contains one of the modals 'can', 'could', 'will', 'would' (ands sometimes 'going to')

2.1.4 Declaratives

Declarative directives fell into two contrasting categories according to their relative explicitness and the amount of inference required interpreting the directive intent. a. Embedded agent Such forms occur most typically in two types of setting:

- 1) the transactional work setting, where who is to do what is very clear and a statement of need (or desire) by a superior implied an obligation on the part of the subordinate.
- 2) in families, when solicitude on the part of the hearer could be assumed.

E.g: 'I'd like everyone sitting on the mat.'

'I wonder who can put their hand up without speaking.' (Kurniawati, 2012 :17)

A kind of speech act that the speaker's intention to make someone else to do something which means makes the world fit words. In other words, speaker wants the situation. The directive utterances consist of asking, inviting, ordering, begging, requesting, suggesting, recommending, demanding, permitting, etc. Example:

Don't take that way.

This directive utterance explains the forbidding utterance. (Kristani, 2013: 952)

2.2. Classes of Directive

Searle states there are five types of directive speech acts such as commanding, inviting, forbidding, requesting, and suggesting (1979, p. 13):

2.2.1 Commanding

Command is a type of directive in the form of an order, where there is a task given from the speaker to the hearer (Searle, 1979, p. 13). Regarding that there is a “task” implied within the utterance, it means that there is also the obligation to finish the task given for the hearer. As the instance: *Close the door, now!*

2.2.2 Inviting

Inviting in directive speech acts is the utterances of the speaker’s attempt to get the hearer involved in a certain event or to carry out an action (Searle, 1979: 13).

In order for the speaker’s attempt in inviting the hearer involved in their invitation, the speaker has to facilitate the circumstance in which the hearer will perform the action. For example: *If you don’t mind, you can join us this Saturday.*

2.2.3 Forbidding

Forbidding is used when the speaker attempts to forbid the hearer from carrying out an action in which the speaker puts emphasise on his or her utterance (Searle, 1979: 14) such as in the utterance *don’t you dare come near me!*

2.2.4 Requesting

Request has the purpose to get the hearer to do something in circumstances that the speaker believes the hearer will be able to perform the action (Searle, 1979: 14), such as *Could I ask you a favour of picking me up this afternoon?*

2.2.5 Suggesting

Suggestion is the speaker’s attempt in providing or giving an alternate option for the hearer in carrying out an action (Searle, 1979: 13).

Usually, the utterance implied by the speaker is in a tactful way to avoid any misunderstanding that may offend the hearer’s feeling. As the instance: *As for me, I would suggest to do a thorough observation on that case to avoid any miscalculation.* (Allan, 1986: 199)

defines four classes of directive. They are as follows:

2.2.6 Requestives

This class includes: ask, beg, implore, insist, invite, petition, plead, pray, Example I want you to join us to the party tonight.

2.2.7 Questions

This class includes ask, inquire, query, question, quiz. Example: Did you go to the party last night? (The required action is answering the question).

2.2.8 Requirements

This class includes: bid, charge, command, demand, dictate, direct, enjoin, instruct, order, prescribe, require. Example: Repeat my statement!

2.2.9 Prohibitives

This class includes: enjoin, forbid, prohibit, proscribe, restrict. Example: Don't you ever go there! (Kurniawati, 2012: 18).

Chapter Three

3.1 Functions of Directive Speech Act

There were three functions of language found in Maleficent's directives: expressive, conative, and referential.

3.1.1 Expressive Function

When Maleficent met Stefan as her very first contact with human being, it excited her. Yet, at the same time, the Moors was not a friendly place for human being like Stefan, and this was realised by Maleficent. Therefore, she suggested Stefan to stop coming to the Moors for his own sake. **Young Stefan : We'll see each other again.**

Young Maleficent : You really shouldn't come back here, you know.

3.1.2 Conative Function

As the protector of the Moors, Maleficent had the authority to command all creatures in the Moors to follow her command. Just like she did when she fought with the human king below.

The bold utterance above was identified as commanding type in directive speech act with the aim to give an obligation from Maleficent as the speaker towards the creatures of the Moors as the hearer (Searle, 1979, p. 13). Regarding that this utterance was in the form of commanding, therefore the function of language in this type was as the conative function. It was because the creature of the Moors and as the hearer was expected to give reaction to Maleficent as the speaker (Jakobson, 1960: 355).

3.1.3 Referential Function

The first time grown up Aurora met Maleficent, she had no idea that Maleficent was a fairy who casted a sleeping spell into her. She was excited to meet another creature besides herself. Saying that Maleficent needed not to be afraid for she would not do anything harm to her.

Maleficent : I am not afraid.

Aurora : Then come out.

Maleficent : Then you'll be afraid.

The bold utterance above was identified as suggesting type in directive speech act with the aim to provide an alternate option from Maleficent as the speaker for Aurora as the hearer in carrying out an action which to

give an alternate option for Aurora to be afraid if she came out of her hideout (Searle, 1979: 13).

Regarding that this utterance was in the form of suggestion, therefore the function of language in this type was as the referential function. It was because Maleficent referred to the chance that Aurora might be afraid if she came out. (Jakobson, 1960: 353).

3.2 Directive Utterances

Directive utterances are a type of speech act that speakers use to get someone else to do something. These utterances can vary in strength from mild suggestions to firm commands.

According to Searle (1976) in his classification of speech acts, directives are those kinds of speech acts that are attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. This includes commands, requests, suggestions, advice, and instructions.

Searle states there are five types of directive speech acts such as commanding, inviting, forbidding, requesting, and suggesting (1979: 13):

3.2.1 Commanding

Command is a type of directive in the form of an order, where there is a task given from the speaker to the hearer (Searle, 1979, p. 13). Regarding that there is a “task” implied within the utterance, it means that there is also the obligation to finish the task given for the hearer. As the instance:
Close the door, now!

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Inviting in directive speech acts is the utterances of the speaker’s attempt to get the hearer involved in a certain event or to carry out an action (Searle, 1979: 13). In order for the speaker’s attempt in inviting the hearer involved in their invitation, the speaker has to facilitate the circumstance in which the hearer will perform the action. For example: *If you don’t mind, you can join us this Saturday.* (Searle, 1979: 14)

3.1.3 Forbidding

Forbidding is used when the speaker attempts to forbid the hearer from carrying out an action in which the speaker puts emphasis on his or her utterance. such as in the utterance *don't you dare come near me!*

3.1.4 Requesting

Request has the purpose to get the hearer to do something in circumstances

that the speaker believes the hearer will be able to perform the action such as *Could I ask you a favour of picking me up this afternoon?*

3.1.5 Suggesting

Suggestion is the speaker's attempt in providing or giving an alternate option for the hearer in carrying out an action (Searle, 1979: 13). Usually, the utterance implied by the speaker is in a tactful way to avoid any misunderstanding that may offend the hearer's feeling. As the instance: *As for me, I would suggest to do a thorough observation on that case to avoid any miscalculation.* (Searle,1979: 14),.

Conclusion

In conclusion, directing in English plays a vital role in effective communication. It allows speakers to guide, instruct, or influence others through various forms such as commands, requests, suggestions, and advice. Mastering directive language helps individuals express their intentions clearly, maintain respectful interactions, and achieve desired outcomes in both formal and informal settings. Whether in daily conversation, the classroom, or the workplace, the ability to use directives appropriately enhances cooperation, understanding, and overall communicative success.

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