Speech Acts Directive in Dialogues in the English Textbook: A Pragmatic Analysis

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Abstract. This article explores the use of directive speech acts in dialogues presented in English textbooks. Drawing on the theoretical framework of speech act theory by Parker and Riley (1994), the study focuses on understanding how directives—utterances that seek to influence the behavior of the listener—are presented in various dialogues. It examines the various forms and functions of directives, their role in communication, and how they help learners of English understand and practice practical conversational strategies. The article highlights the importance of directive speech acts in both formal and informal contexts, with specific examples drawn from English language textbooks. This study uses qualitative descriptive research where data is found in dialogues in textbooks and then matched with theory and poured into a sentence. This study found that there are five types of directive speech acts, namely, orders, warnings, giving advice, suggestions, and recommendations. In this study, 7 command data, 3 warning data, 2 advice data, 8 suggestion data, and 1 recommendation data were found. In this study, two techniques were found in the delivery of speech acts, namely direct and non-direct. Non-direct techniques tend to contain an element of politeness rather than direct. In addition, the speech actions in this textbook can help students understand, and using directive speech acts effectively can significantly improve communicative competence in language learners.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Speech Acts, Directive, English Textbook.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is the main means of human communication so language is often used by humans to exchange information or for communication itself. Language also has a clear meaning, language is an arbitrary sound symbol system used by society to work together, communicate, and identify themselves (Kridalaksana, 2008). Without communication, humans will not be able to express what they think and maybe what they feel. Language itself is closely related to human life, such as talking together, discussing, learning, and even singing. Language is also very closely related to one of the linguistic sciences, namely semantics. Semantics is a science that discusses meaning in grammar. Semantics according to Verhaar (2016) is a branch of linguistics that discusses the meaning or significance of a word. The Meaning always has a relation with context. The meaning of something will appear based on the context of the sentence. Example "Do you want to watch the movie?". This sentence has multiple meanings. First, this sentence could mean that someone invited you to go to the movie. Second, this sentence could mean that someone just asking, are you going to the movie. This science of context is always discussed in the Pragmatic section. If we talking about pragmatic, we could not If we talk about pragmatics, we cannot ignore speech acts. Because the study of speech acts is an essential part of pragmatics, which focuses on how language functions in communication.

Speech Act Theory, introduced by philosophers like Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), categorizes speech into different acts based on their functions: locutionary acts (the act of producing sounds or words), illocutionary acts (the intended function of the speech), and perlocutionary acts (the effect the speech has on the listener). Wijana (1996) explains that locutionary acts are speech acts to state something. Illocutionary acts are the act of doing something. The last perlocutionary act is a speech that affects the listener.

According to Parker & Riley (1996) illocutionary divide is Representative, Directive, Question, Commissive, Expressive, and Declaration. Among these, directive speech acts are particularly significant in both spoken and written communication, especially in language learning materials such as English textbooks. The functions of speech act directives are so numerous that sometimes this becomes a challenge for language learners because they feel they are misinterpreting the speaker's wishes.

Research on speech acts has previously been conducted by Fitriani et al. (2023) with the title Speech Act in Text Dialogues: An Analysis of English Textbook *Merdeka Belajar* for Junior High School. In his research, he concluded that the distribution of speech acts is as follows: assertive accounted for 29.2% (47 instances), directive accounted for 24.8% (40 instances), commissive accounted for 9.9% (16 instances), expressive accounted for 35.4% (57 instances), and declaration accounted for 0.6% (1 instance). That research focuses on all speech act and their distribution, while this study focuses on directive speech acts and the function of directive speech acts on the sentence.

This paper investigates how directive speech acts are utilized in dialogues in English textbooks used by Grade 11, with a focus on their role in teaching pragmatic competence. By analyzing common directive forms—questions, commands, requests, and suggestions—the study illustrates the practical importance of directives in facilitating everyday communication. Additionally, it examines how textbook dialogues reflect real-life interactions and how these dialogues aid learners in understanding and performing directives effectively.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Speech acts are divided into two categories, namely direct and indirect (Wijana ,1996). In detail, Wijana (1996) states that direct speech acts are speech acts that use types of sentences according to their function, such as news sentences to inform, interrogative sentences to ask, and imperative sentences to command. In addition to direct speech acts, there are indirect speech acts. According to Wijana (1996) indirect speech acts are expressions of imperative sentences that use news sentences or interrogative sentences so that the person being ordered

does not feel like he is being ordered for politeness. According to Suhartono (2020)(2020) the difference between direct and indirect speech acts is that the more opportunities for the speaker to avoid or not get involved, the more indirect the speaker's delivery. For example, the utterance "Hartono, clean the blackboard!" has a high degree of continuity because it does not give Hartono the opportunity to avoid the task of cleaning the blackboard. According to Wijana (1996), utterances that are delivered indirectly usually cannot be answered directly, but must immediately carry out the implied meaning within   them. The Indirect Speech Act included a directive. In the sentence, directive speech acts have more than one role.

According to Parker and Riley (1994), a directive is an utterance used to try to get the hearer to do something. This class includes acts of requesting, Orders, forbidding, warning, advising, suggesting, insisting, recommending, and so on. All types of directive speech acts can be found in every dialogue text or direct speech without us realizing it. According to Searle (1969), indirect speech acts are a way to express intent or intention by using implicit language forms, such as through questions, statements, or invitations that do not directly request or give orders**.** In the context of language teaching, directives are crucial because they mirror real-life communication, helping learners navigate various social situations. Understanding how to issue and respond to directives is an essential part of developing communicative competence in English. Those that have a proportional content identical with of the act they indirectly perform may be syntactically marked o that they cannot have their literal meanings or direct illocutionary force (Brown & Levinson, 2016). More detail Brown & Levinson (2016) said that the motive for the existence of a class of conventionalized or idiomatic indirect speech acts, further politeness motives lie behind which individual indirect expressions are so conventionalized.

3. METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive research. According to Sugiono (2020), the qualitative research method is a naturalistic research method because the research is carried out according to natural conditions, also called ethnography because this method was initially used in the field of cultural anthropology. In this study, data were collected from English textbook dialogues for grade 11, then data were selected which were directive utterances. After the data was found, the data was analyzed by determining the meaning desired by the speaker according to the context, then classified based on its function. In this study, the author uses Parker and Riley's theory as reference material for classification. In this study, the researcher limited the

utterances used to only those taken from dialogues presented in textbooks and did not include dialogues that students had to complete as practice media.

4. RESULTS

The results of the study show that directive speech acts in the language of grade 11 textbooks are very varied and have various functions in sentences. The following are some of the main findings. In this book, there are 12 main conversations with several different themes, namely: making an appointment to watch a movie, offering help, about bullying, expressing an opinion, surprise, inviting to dinner, accepting a party invitation, refusing a party invitation, about smoking, about a party dress, about jewelry for a party, losing a necklace, about regret.

a) Orders

Context: There are two friends, they are Siti and Jane. They already discussed Jane's Assignment and she feels tired, so Siti is offering help to Jane.

(1) Siti : **Tell me what I can do** and I will start right away.

Jane : Thank you! You are an angel.

The utterance "Tell me what I can do" is an Orders. On this utterance, Siti orders Jane to inform her of what Jane needs and assist Siti and she expresses her willingness to start immediately once she gets instruction. This is a clear request for action or guidance from Jane

Context: There are Siti and Jane. They are talking about bullying which occurs in school areas. This situation becomes more serious because they have different opinions.

(2) Siti   : **Hey! Stop! You are getting too serious**!

Jane : Yes! You should be serious about it as well, I would like to point out that bullying is everyone's problem and responsibility. If you condone bullying in any way, shape, or form, it means you are taking part in it whether it is directly or indirectly by being silent.

Data 2 is Orders. Utterance 2 is imperative because there are phrases like "Hey! Stop!".Siti commands Jane not to be serious about this topic; she thinks that it is not a big problem.

Context: That is a conversation between Ariyanto and Mr. Budi. Ariyanto has been successful in developing a new software company. So, he will hold a welcome party for the opening of his new business and invite his friend Mr. Budi to come to the event.

(3) Ariyanto: Mr. Budi, **I would like to** invite you to the opening of my software company.

Mr. Budi: When and where?

Date 3 is a directive statement because in this utterance Ariyanto is Orders Mr. Budi to come for the opening of his software company. Although the sentence uses polite phrasing "I would like to", it still functions as a directive because it is requesting Mr. Budi's attendance at the opening of the software company. He orders his friend to join him at his party and Mr. Budy asks for the place and time of the event.

Context: This is a conversation between two colleagues, Yanti and Mr. Suharto. Yanti will celebrate her 3rd wedding anniversary and will hold a party. Yanti gives Mr. Suharto information about her 3rd wedding anniversary, and she invites him to her party.

(4) Yanti   : Mr. Suharto, my husband and I are celebrating our 3rd wedding anniversary. **We would like you to join u**s.

Mr. Suharto: Oh, thank you! I would be delighted to. When is it?

The Utterance " We would like you to join us" is directive. Yanti is inviting Mr. Suharto to come in her celebrate 3rd wedding anniversary. She orders him to come and join her wedding anniversary party and Mr. Suharto is grateful, and he promises to come to her party.

Context: Conversation between Ray and Jane. Jane asks Ray what he is doing, and Ray says that he is already busy preparing his presentation about smoking. Jane does not really know about smoking, so she asks Ray because she is curious.

Ray : Hey Jane! I am reading an article on smoking.

Jane : Smoking! Why?

Ray : For presentation in Science Class.

(5) Jane : **So tell me what you learned about smoking**.

Data 5 is Orders because the utterance "Tell me" is an imperative clue. Jane orders Ray to share what he has learned from the article about smoking and what will he share about smoking.

Context: Madam Loisel was a pretty girl born into a poor family. She had no expectations and she felt so trapped by her situation that she married a little clerk in a government office. One day her husband brought everyone a surprise, an invitation to attend a party among the nobility. Her husband was very happy with the invitation, but it seemed that his wife was not so happy because she did not have a dress to wear to the party.

    Monsieur Loisel : Sweetheart, I have a surprise for you.

    Madam Loise : Really, what is the surprise?

 (6) Monsieur Loisel : **See for yourself.**

    (He places the invitation on the table)

Data 6 is Orders utterance. Monsieur Loisel instructs Madam Loisel to examine the invitation herself. It means that the guy wants to the woman look directly and describe it by herself.

Context: This conversation is between husband and wife. They get some invitations to go to a party, and she borrows a necklace from her friend. Unfortunately, the necklace is lost, and they have to replace the necklace. Actually, they do not have enough money to buy a necklace, so they take a loan of about 20,0000 francs. This is the last payment of their debt and the wife meets with her friends. The husband orders his wife to meet her friend.

    Monsieur Loisel : Matilda, my love. I have made the last payment on our debt. We have nothing left for ourselves, but at least we are free from the loan of 20,0000 francs.

    Madame Loisel : Free at last.

 (7) Monsieur Loisel : Look! Isn't that Madame Forestier over there? You have not spoken to her since that day. **Go talk to her**.

Data 7 is directive; he orders her wife to meet her friends. The speech act used by Monsieur Loisel here is a command or instruction. The sentence is Orders Madame Loisel to go and speak to Madame Forestier. The phrase "Go talk to her" is a direct command, which is a type of directive speech act.

b) Warning

Context: This conversation took place in the school area between two students. They were expressing their respective opinions about the development carried out by the government.

 (8) A Girl: In my opinion, the government should provide means of sustenance for underprivileged people instead of building tall towers.

    A Boy: I agree with what you are saying but **have you ever thought that building tall towers provides work for unemployed people?**

Date 8 is a directive because she reminds the girl that building tall towers provides work for unemployed people. This means that the government could help underprivileged people to get jobs.

Context: This conversation takes place between a husband and wife in a kingdom. They get an invitation to a party that all the nobles are waiting for. The husband is very happy to get the invitation, but not the wife who does not agree with her husband.

> Monsieur Loisel : Isn't it wonderful?
>
> (9) Madam Loisel : **What do you mean**? **What can I do with it**?
>
> (She tosses the invitation on the table)

The saying "What do you mean?" is a directive. This remark warns the listener that his opinion is unacceptable. In this remark as a warning, the speaker warns the listener that he disagrees with the listener's opinion. The utterance "What can I do with it" is also directed. This remark asks the listener for advice, what he should do for this surprise.

Context: This conversation took place after Madame Loisel lost the necklace that she had borrowed and Madame Loisel did not tell Madame Forestier, her friend, that she had lost the necklace and she chose to replace it. The replacement cost her everything and Madame Loisel had not seen her friend for years.

> Madam Loisel : Uh… Hello. Good day.
>
> Madam Forestier: You must have mistaken me for someone else, excuse me please..
>
> (10) Madam Loisel : **Jeanne, don't you recognize me**? It's me, Matilda.

Data 10 is directive. Madam Loisel is asking for recognition and trying to clarify her identity. She warns that she is her friend, Matilda. She uses phrases of "Don't you recognize me?" which functions as a warning for Madam Forestier to acknowledge her, which is a directive in nature.

c. **Advising**

> **Context:** There are Siti and Jane. They are talking about bullying, which occurs in school areas. This situation becomes more serious because they have different opinions.
>
> Siti: Hey! Stop! You are getting too serious!
>
> (11) Jane: Yes! **You should be serious about it as well**, I would like to point out that bullying is everyone's problem and responsibility. If you condone bullying in any way, shape, or form, it means you are taking part in it whether it is directly or indirectly by being silent.

In Data 11, Jane not only informs Siti that Bullying is a serious problem in our society but also advises Siti about being part of the bully. Jane is advising that Siti should take the issue seriously as well, with the phrase "You should be serious about it as well."

This is a directive speech act as it encourages Siti to adopt a serious attitude toward the issue being discussed (bullying).

Context: This conversation took place in the school area between two students. They were expressing their respective opinions about the development carried out by the government.

> (12) A Girl: In my opinion, **the government should provide means of sustenance for underprivileged people instead of building tall towers**.
>
> A Boy: I agree with what you are saying but have you ever thought that building tall towers provides work for unemployed people?

Data 12 which states "In my opinion, the government should provide means of sustenance for underprivileged people instead of building tall towers", is included in the directive because the speaker indirectly gives advice to the government to prioritize the people rather than development alone.

d. Suggesting

Context: This conversation occurs between two friends who want to make an appointment to watch a movie together. This context applies to four utterances including 13,14,15, and 16.

> (13) John   : Hi, Jane. What are you doing?
>
> Jane   : Nothing much. **Would you like to go to the movies**?

In Data (13) Jane's question "Would you like to go to the movies?" This is a directive, specifically an offer or suggestion. Jane is proposing an action (going to the movies) and asking if John agrees to it.

> (14) Jane: **How about in the afternoon**?
>
> John: Great! What movie do you want to watch?

Data 14 Jane's suggestion "How about in the afternoon?" This is another directive because Jane's speech suggests a specific alternative and asks John if that works.

> (15) Jane: **Let's watch "Ring"**.
>
> John: I would rather not. I am not much into horror movies. How about Peanuts?

Data 15 Jane's "Let's watch 'Ring'" is a suggestion because in this utterance she suggests watching the movie "Ring". It's a suggestion that is shared by the speaker.

> (16) John   : I would rather not. I am not much into horror movies. **How about Peanuts?**
>
> Jane   : Ok. Let's go. When do you want to go?

Data 16 John says, "How about Peanuts?" This is a suggestion. John is suggesting an alternative movie, that is Peanuts because he doesn't really like horror movies like "Ring."

Context: The Minister and Madame Romponneau have the pleasure of the company of Monsieur and Madam Loisel at the Ministry on the evening of Monday, January the eighteenth. In this utterance inform the listener about some Information. Madam Loisel provides the specific content of the invitation, informing both herself and Monsieur Loisel of the details of the event.

(17) Monsieur Loisel: **Isn't it wonderful**?

Madam Loisel: What do you mean? What can I do with it?

Data 17 is directive, he is not asking for something, but he is suggesting to her that the invitation is wonderful. He also seeks agreement from Madam Loisel and expresses his excitement about the invitation.

Context: Madame Loisel feels sad because she doesn't have a dress to attend the party. She felt her dress was already old and looked not modern. This context is for utterances number 18, 19, and 20.

Madame Loisel: "I have nothing suitable to wear to this glamorous occasion."

(18) Monsieur Loisel: "Why… Why, **you can wear your theater gown, of course**. It's really quite suitable."

[Madame Loisel breaks into tears]

Data 18 is directive, he suggests she use her theater gown.

Madame Loisel: "I'll be humiliated in that old gown. It's so tattered and completely out of style. I can't go to the ball wearing that rag."

(19) Monsieur Loisel: "There must be a way! How much do you think a suitable gown would cost? **Something very simple but elegant as well, of course**."

The utterance " Something very simple but elegant as well, of course" is directive, he suggests a solution and tries to engage Madame Loisel in the process of finding a way to afford a new dress.

Madame Loisel: "You just don't understand! It's so annoying! I don't have a single piece of jewelry to wear with my gown."

(20) Monsieur Loisel: "There is one thing, **one possibility that you've forgotten.**"

Data 20 is directive, he shares a suggestion, offering a potential solution to the problem of the missing jewelry. Monsieur Loisel is subtly suggesting that Madame Loisel has overlooked a potential solution to her problem. His statement, though

indirect, is a way of guiding her attention toward something that could solve her frustration (likely the necklace she can borrow from her friend, Madame Forestier).

e. Recommending

Context: Madame Loisel wanted to attend the party but she had no jewelry and felt embarrassed about it. Therefore her husband suggested that she give advice to her friend.

> Madame Loisel: "[Sniffs.] What's that?"

> (21) Monsieur Loisel: "**You old classmate! Madame Jeanne Forestier**! She is really well off. **I'm sure she would be willing to lend you some of her jewelry!**"

> Data 21 is directive. He suggests an option that Madame Loisel could pursue to borrow jewelry from her old friend, he recommends Madame Jeanne Forestier.

5. DISCUSSION

In this research, only five directive speech acts were determined, there are Orders, warning, advising, suggesting, and recommending. In this study, the types of directives found included seven Orders, 3 warnings, 2 advising, 8 suggestions and 1 recommendation.

a. Orders

> In the data, two types of imperative sentences were found, namely direct and indirect imperatives. The direct method was found in data containing the phrases "Tell me what I can do …", "Hey! Stop! You are getting serious", "Tell me what you learned about smoking", "See for yourself" and "Go talk to her!". The indirect method was found in the utterances "I would like to invite you" and "We would like you to join us".

> In addition to the method of how to convey it, sentences containing politeness were also found in this type of imperative sentence. Imperative sentences containing elements of politeness were found in the indirect method, namely using the phrases "I would like…" and "We would like…". In sentences containing elements of politeness in this textbook, they were found in the relationship between superiors and employees in an office. Imperative sentences without politeness are usually found in relationships between peers and also husband and wife relationships.

b. Warning

> Based on the data found in the study, warnings have several purposes, including reminding listeners of potential risks, mistakes, or negative consequences. In this data, warnings do not always imply danger but inform listeners about what to consider or how their actions can be interpreted.

Indirect warnings are warnings expressed not directly, namely rather than directly stating "This is a problem," the speaker can ask questions or suggest alternative perspectives, as seen in the conversation between two students discussing about the construction of tall buildings as a government policy or Madame Loisel's response to her husband.

In terms of politeness, warnings are often framed in a way that maintains politeness. In this data, warnings were found that were not aggressive or coercive but were delivered in a way that allowed for dialogue or reconsideration. such as in the sentence "... but you ever thought that building tall towers provides work for unemployed people!"

c. Advising

In this study, two types of advice were found, namely strong advice and weak advice. In Jane's speech, she conveys direction through the phrase, "You should also be serious about it." The use of "should" here functions as a suggestion or advice. By using the imperative "should," Jane advises Siti, and this advice is a directive feature. Although Jane's statement is not a command or order, it is a strong suggestion for Siti to reconsider her position on the issue. The indirect nature of Jane's directive shows how in conversations about sensitive topics (such as bullying), speakers often use the language of advice rather than stronger imperatives.

Meanwhile, in the girl's speech, "The government should provide a means of livelihood for the less fortunate rather than building tall towers," is also a directive speech act, but it is more indirect than Jane's directive in Data 11. The girl's opinion, framed as "In my opinion," indicates personal preference, but also functions as a suggestion for the government. Through the phrase "should," he indirectly advises the government to prioritize the needs of the underprivileged over development projects such as building high-rise towers. The phrase "should provide" serves as a mild directive that implies that the government should reconsider its priorities. Although the statement is framed as an opinion, it has the force of advice intended to influence policy or action.

d. Suggestion

Based on this data, eight suggested types of direction speech acts. In all the data found, we see how directives are used to suggest actions or solutions. This data could divided into two types there are direct and indirect suggestions. The direct suggestion could be identified from the utterance " Let's watch Ring". While indirect suggestions are often framed in a polite way and take into account the listener's preferences or

emotional state. Indirect recommendations are seen in the utterances "Would you like to go to the movie?", "How about this afternoon?", how about Peanuts?" and so on. In these utterances, the adv suggestion still takes into account the listener's opinion, in these utterances there is also an element of politeness added by the speaker, this can be seen from the use of the phrase would.

Indirect recommendations are usually framed in a polite way, often taking into account the listener's preferences and emotional state. This is especially evident in suggestions in this research could conclude that:

Use modality (e.g., "Would you like", "How about") to soften the impact of the indirective suggestion. Involve the listener's preferences or emotions, as in the case of Madame Loisel's dress, where Monsieur Loisel is sensitive to her feelings about her appearance

Use inclusive language (e.g., "Let's") that the speaker is a decision-maker. This utterance usually is used on directive suggestions.

e. Recommendation

This research found only one recommendation and the type of recommendation is indirect because Monsieur Loisel does not order his wife to contact Madame Forestier. Instead, he recommends it by giving his wife the option of borrowing the jewelry, while emphasizing that it is a possible solution. The structure of the utterance is more suggestive and advisory than a command or obligation. so the recommendation in this utterance is indirect because it only recommends the name of a friend who can help without expressing the obligation to immediately accept the recommendation.

6. CONCLUSION

This study found five types of directive speech actions. There are commands, warnings, advice, advice, and recommendations. This study found seven types of command data, and this data can actually be divided into two types, namely direct and indirect. In this data find five direct data and two indirect data. The type of indirect command can be characterized by the use of the verb modal "would" on this found data. The study also found three data on warnings. i.e. one data using direct techniques and two data using indirect techniques. In data with direct techniques, it tends to be directly warned, but in indirect techniques, the warnings used are implicit. In this study, data was also found regarding advising as many as two data, and all data were carried out with direct techniques. Data on suggestions were found in eight data. The data found was disclosed by direct techniques as many as five data and three indirect data. The data

disclosed by indirect techniques usually still considers the opinion of the listener, such as the use of speech "How about...?" and "Would you like to…?".Finally, data on recommendations was found with a direct technique, namely, the speaker directly mentioned someone or something as a recommendation. In this study, the use of directive speech techniques does not directly add a polite impression to every speech because it always begins with a marker of politeness in speech.

In addition, the teaching of directive speech actions plays a crucial role in developing students' ability to interact effectively in real-world communication. This English textbook also teaches all techniques and various situations using directive speech, which can help students to be able to use it in real life. It is also possible to help students make strides in this field by combining various forms of directives, and by prioritizing the cultural, pragmatic, and contextual aspects of directive speech.

LIMITATION

This study only examines one textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (2017) with the title of an English book for high school class XI. The results of the research will change if the book used also changes, this is possible because there are differences in the theme in each dialogue. In addition, this research is not perfect because it only focuses on directive speech acts.

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