A STUDY OF DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FACTORS OF CRUELLA IN THE SELF-TITLED MOVIE

Meita L. Sujatna
Tiara A. Pradani
Audry A. Chairunnisa
Dicky Saputra
Muhammad F. Fadhillah
Salsabilla F. Puteri

Meita L. Sujatna, English Department, Faculty of Languages, Universitas Widyatama, Bandung, Indonesia
Email: sujatna.meita@widyatama.ac.id

Tiara A. Pradani, English Department, Faculty of Languages, Universitas Widyatama, Bandung, Indonesia

Audry A. Chairunnisa, English Department, Faculty of Languages, Universitas Widyatama, Bandung, Indonesia

Dicky Saputra, English Department, Faculty of Languages, Universitas Widyatama, Bandung, Indonesia

Muhammad F. Fadhillah, English Department, Faculty of Languages, Universitas Widyatama, Bandung, Indonesia

Salsabilla F. Puteri, English Department, Faculty of Languages, Universitas Widyatama, Bandung, Indonesia

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Abstract

The research is based on the analysis of the utterances of Cruella in the self-titled movie written by Dodie Smith and directed by Craig Gillespie. It focuses on the directive speech acts performed by the main character and their relationship with the portrayal of the main character's personality. It aims to 1) identify the directive speech acts performed and 2) to find the factors that affect the personality development of the main character. The qualitative descriptive method was applied to analyse the data and categorize it using models [1] and [2]. The results showed that the 'asking' category (24.7%) and individual as well as environmental factors were prevalent. It can be concluded that directive speech acts can mould the characteristics of a main character, and justify personality analysis. It is recommended that further analysis of the subject should focus on the directive speech acts categories and their syntactical patterns to strengthen the justification.

Keywords: directive speech acts; personality development; Cruella.

Introduction

Directive speech acts appear not only in daily social interaction but also in various contemporary works, such as films. Their presence provides interesting dialogues, and, more importantly, a way to shape believable characteristics. In turn, the story is amplified by how the main characters behave verbally and non-verbally.

A current example is a comedy crime movie directed by Craig Gillespie depicting Cruella de Vil from [3, 4] novel A Hundred and One Dalmatians. It introduces Estella Miller and her transformation into her alter ego at her young-adult age, emphasizing a drastic change in her physical appearance and demeanor. It was her dialogues that caught the interest of the research, since she performed several directive speech acts to relate to the uniqueness of the characteristics.

Therefore, there are two research questions to be discussed further in this study: 1) What types of directive speech acts Cruella performed? 2) What is the relationship between the directive categories and the portrayal of the main character's personality?

Literature Review

[5] defined the directive speech act as a illocutionary act that aims to produce an effect in the form of the action taken by the addressees, or an implication "to get the hearer to do something" [6], [7]. According to [8], it is one of the most employed function among a pair or group engaged in communication. Its flexible functionality as [8]pointed included command, request, beg or advise.

Its form follows a certain structural convention as [1] pointed out, consisting a least a verb, an object, and a requested task performed by the speaker and the hearer. However, the structure does not always guarantee the nature of the utterance as it also relies on the governing context. Its variants, Jucker and Taavitsainen further stated, derive from the purpose of the utterance, which in turn creates 20 sub-categories: 1) advising, 2) admonishing, 3) asking, 4) begging, 5) challenging, 6) daring, 7) demanding, 8) dismissing, 9) excusing, 10) forbidding, 11) instructing, 12) inviting, 13) ordering, 14) permitting, 15) recommending, 16) requesting, 17) requiring, 18) suggesting, 19) urging, and 20) warning. [9]pointed out that in determining which function the directive speech is loaded in the utterance, one should consider the outcome: "only in the case of directives is the hearer's subsequent act (getting things done) is part of the speaker's intention".

[3] advocated that directive speech acts are often employed in movies for the characters to express ideas, perspectives and meaning. The underlying reason in such expressions is to obtain or provide attention from the listener in a conversation, which in this case is also the audience. Furthermore, directive speech act uttered by the speaker can reveal the speaker's traits.

Together with personality analysis, audience may have better understanding of the characters in a film. From a psychological point of view, [2] concluded that there are two factors that affect personality development, namely individual and environmental factors. Individual factors consist of heredity, intelligence, sex differences, and nervous system factor. Environmental factors are that of physical, social, family, cultural, and school. Other factors which influence the development of personality are that of language, social-role, self-concept, identification, interpersonal relation, and psychological.

Methods

The study employed the qualitative-descriptive method of [10, 11]. The data was retrieved from the official subtitles of the movie. They were chosen based on the presence of directive speech acts. Next, they are categorized into the sub-categories proposed by [1] to determine their function by putting into consideration the paralinguistic features of the speaker when they convey the utterance. The purpose is to put into context factors that contribute to the construction of the implied meaning a

speaker intentionally created. After that, a simple calculation of frequency and percentage determines the dominant type of the directive speech act as the uniqueness of the film.

The last task is to analyze the relationship between the directive speech acts and the factors that influence personality development. It provides the basis to justify the identification of the protagonist/antagonist's characteristics.

Results and Discussions

The directive speech act occurrences in 'Cruella' can be summarized in the following Table 1:

Table 1

Directive Speech Acts Frequency in The Cruella Movie

	Frequency	Percentage
Asking	20	24.7%
Instructing	11	13.6%
Requesting	11	13.6%
Suggesting	10	12.4%
Challenging	10	12.4%
Dismissing	4	5.0%
Warning	3	3.7
Forbidding	3	2.5
Admonishing	1	1.2
Begging	1	1.2
Demanding	1	1.2
Inviting	1	1.2
Permitting	1	1.2
Requiring	1	1.2
Urging	1	1.2
Advising	0	0%
Daring	0	0%
Excusing	0	0%
Recommending	0	0%
Total	81	100%

From the table above, the total number of directive speech acts found in the film is 81, consisting of admonishing, asking, begging, challenging, daring, demanding, dismissing, excusing, forbidding, instructing, inviting, ordering, permitting, recommending, requesting, requiring, suggesting, urging, and warning. The types of directive speech acts that are mostly used by the main character in this movie are asking with 20 data (24.7%), instructing, requesting 11 data (13.6%), and suggesting and ordering 10 data (12.4%) each. Below are example s of the directive speech acts analyses. They represent the types most frequently found.

Asking

Datum 58 – (01:20:14-01:20:26)
Jasper   : "You know, we've all had bad things happen to us. Me, him, you. But we've always been there for each other."
Cruella   : "That's all I'm asking. **Is it so hard to back me up?"**

Jasper   : "No. Not Estella, that's easy, but to help Cruella, it's a nightmare."

Datum 58 demonstrates Cruella's use of the asking directive speech act. The scene depicts a conversation between Jasper and Cruella as they plan their next sabotage of the Baroness' fashion show. Jasper explains how their ability to avoid consequences is a result of mutual support and expresses his concerns about not having similar fortune in the future. Cruella confirms his statement and attempts to build a common ground ("That's all I'm asking."). To diminish Jasper's reluctance, she questions the intensity of the burden ("Is it so hard to back me up?"), which implies that the task is not as difficult as he thinks. It also shows that Cruella is manipulative, a trait of intelligence as a product of individual development.

Instructing

Datum 2 – (00:01:31-00:01:41)

Catherine Miller   : "Remember, you belong here as much as anyone. They're lucky to have you."

Estella   : "Agreed."

Catherine Miller   : "Hey. What do you say to Cruella when she tries to get the better of you?"

Estella   : "Thank you for coming, **but you may go now.**"

Datum 2 exhibits an instructing directive speech act. The scene depicts Estella's first day at school. As they stand near the entrance, hesitation on the parts of the mother and herself is apparent from their facial gestures. The conflict between Estella and Cruella has raised concerns for the mother. Apparently, they are uneased by the thought of the latter dominating the former in the mother's absence. Thus, a strategy is needed to keep Cruella under control, especially during school hours. It is instilled by politely acknowledging Cruella's presence ("Thank you for coming...") but firmly instructing the alter ego to take her leave ("... but you may go now"). The attitude is a product of the family environment, which belongs to the environmental factor.

Ordering

Datum 43 – (00:59:25-00:59:27)

Cruella   : **"Not sure which one, so you'll need to kidnap all of them."**

Jasper   : "All right, sorry. Slow down. What? What are we..."

Datum 43 is an example of an ordering directive speech act. One of the Baroness's Dalmatians accidentally swallows the heirloom neckless after Cruella's failed heist. In an attempt to retrieve it, she proceeds to order her accomplices to kidnap all the canines ("... you'll need to kidnap all of them.") since she is unable to recall the culprit ("Not sure which one,..."). The impromptu directive also shows her impulsive behaviour, typical of an individual development effect.

Requesting

Datum 49 – (01:03:05-01:03:21)

Artie   : "Oh, my. My, my, my. You look amazing. You certainly made a splash."

Estella   : "I'm just getting started, darling. **And I need help.**"

Estella's statement is categorized as a requesting directive speech act. Her failed attempt at obtaining the neckless motivates her to exceed the success of the Baroness in the fashion industry. To do so, she needs to acquire assistance from a person knowledgeable in the field, such as Artie, the pre-owned boutique owner. She does not explicitly mention it in her utterance ("you" or "Artie"). However, the planned visit and the constant eye contact throughout the conversation imply her interest in getting help from Artie. His compliance is the result of comprehending the indirect request. Also, Estella shows her intelligence in gaining compliance, an exhibition of individual development as a psychological factor in her behaviour.

Suggesting

Datum 46 – (01:01:00-01:01:11)
Cruella   : "Oh, it doesn't sound fun. It sounds useful."
Anita   : "Oh."
Cruella   : "I'd like to start my own label. **Why don't we work together to create some buzz for this old rag that you continually fill with that old hag?"**

In this segment, Cruella conveys a proposition to Anita, a reporter and a former classmate. To continue her scheme of overthrowing the Baroness. Cruella plans to dominate media coverage with Anita's help. She performs a suggesting directive speech act by making three suggestions: 1) collaborating ("Why don't we..."), 2) refreshing the situation ("... create some buzz for this old rag"), and 3) renewing the focus of attention ("... old hag"). Furthermore, she implicitly expresses her self-concept as the current news-worthy figure in the industry. She repeatedly uses the term "old" to distinguish herself from her competitor. Thus, the environmental factor is made obvious from her reference.

Conclusion

The research was able to prove that directive speech acts in various categories often appear in films as part of the characters' dialogues. Their main purpose is to convey purposes and supplement the portrayal of the main characters' personalities and build their protagonist/antagonist roles. By analyzing them using [1, 12], it showed that even their varieties, explicit or otherwise, can add value to the traits. Furthermore, the speech acts reflect the individual and environmental factors [2, 13] the director attempts to reveal. The uniqueness of a character can be determined by their frequent use of specific directive speech acts in their verbal behavior.

As a recommendation, further analysis on the subject should focus on the directive speech acts categories and their syntactical patterns from other characters in the same movie. Conducting the same study on other movies with similar protagonist/antagonist roles may also strengthen the findings of speech acts' contribution to solidifying characters as part of the storytelling process.

Organization of the Text.

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