

AN ANALYSIS OF DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS AND CULTURAL VALUES REFLECTED IN THE NETFLIX DOCUMENTARY THE SOCIAL DILEMMA

Elsa Ariska¹, Yusrita Yanti²

¹Student of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Bung Hatta

²Lecturer of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Bung Hatta

Email: ariskaelsa901@yahoo.com¹ yusrita.yanti@bunghatta.ac.id²

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the directive speech acts in *The Social Dilemma*, a Netflix documentary discussing the dark side of social media from the perspective of technologists, researchers, and activists who also care about humanity. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the writer found some types of directive speech acts uttered by the casts. They are performed through direct and indirect strategies. It is found that the reflection of cultural values is illustrated through the directive utterances found. The result shows that the values reflected are mainly tied to the purpose of aligning the use of social media with the values of humanity.

Keywords: *Directive Speech Acts, Cultural Values, The Social Dilemma Documentary*

INTRODUCTION

Social media has now become a part of society's lives. It is recorded there are 130 million people in Indonesia as active social media users in 2018 [1]. On the other hand, in the same year, 217 million people are reported as active social media users in the United States [2]. However, unconsciously, besides the benefits, the use of social media can also bring negative impacts to its users. As a result, raising awareness of the use of social media is very crucial to be conducted. Regarding this phenomenon, there are a lot of platforms that can be used. One of them is through documentaries.

Providing people with lots of information related to social media use, an American documentary entitled *The Social Dilemma* is produced in 2020 by Netflix [3]. The writer realizes many crucial directions are given by the cast in this documentary regarding actions that can be taken by the viewers to avoid the detrimental effects of social media. Thus, the writer decided to conduct a pragmatics study focused on the directive speech acts and cultural values reflected in this documentary.

Theoretically, by performing directive speech acts, speakers urge listeners to do an action [4]. It includes ordering, commanding, requesting, advising, inviting, forbidding, suggesting, and begging. Pragmatically, these meanings can only be gotten by the listeners based on the context influence [5], including physical, linguistics, social, and epistemic context which explains background knowledge shared by speaker and hearer [6]. In delivering their ideas, speakers can apply two strategies, direct and indirect [7].

In addition, speech acts change from culture to culture, and these discrepancies can lead to a variety of communication issues, ranging from the amusing to the severe [8]. It means that the speech acts of one culture are different from the others. Accordingly, the writer tries to get a deep sense of cultural values reflected by those directive utterances. This term refers to principles and ideas that underlie society in living life [9]. It can be divided into harmony, hierarchy, egalitarianism, mastery, affective autonomy, intellectual autonomy, and embeddedness.

Since this documentary is relatively new, no study has ever been done regarding directive speech acts and cultural values reflected by this documentary. In particular, this study is purposed to identify types of directive speech acts uttered by the casts in *The Social Dilemma*, to discover the strategy used by the casts performing the directive speech acts, and also to find out the cultural values behind the directive speech acts uttered by the casts.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is conducted through a qualitative descriptive method. A qualitative method is focused on constructing a comprehension with words [10], while a descriptive approach can be explained as the accurate, correct, or faithful application of data's factual features [11]. The data are all utterances in form of directive speech acts performed by the casts in the documentary *The Social Dilemma* that is sourced from the documentary *The Social Dilemma* which was released by Netflix.

The data are collected by watching the documentary carefully and repeatedly, observing the suitability of the script and the documentary, identifying every utterance spoken by the cast in the movie, and underlining all the directive speech acts used in the script based on Searle's theory and compiling it into a data sheet.

On the other hand, the process of analyzing data includes classifying them into the types of directive speech acts based on Searle's theory, analyzing the classified data by the contexts that influence, identifying the strategy used in delivering the directive speech acts, figuring out the cultural values reflected by each directive speech act based on Schwartz's theory, interpreting the result of the data analysis, and drawing a conclusion based on the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The result shows there are seventy-one data found in types of directive speech acts in the documentary *The Social Dilemma* in terms of ordering, forbidding, advising, commanding, suggesting, and requesting. They are performed through direct and indirect strategies. It is beautiful to realize that the reflection of cultural values including embeddedness, hierarchy, mastery, intellectual autonomy, egalitarianism, harmony, and affective autonomy are illustrated through the directive utterances found.

It is found that the most dominating type of directive speech acts delivered by the casts in the documentary is in form of ordering. These orders are related to the process of how artificial intelligence powers social media through algorithms and the actions that should be taken to overcome the negative impacts brought by social media. On the other hand, regarding strategy use, the data are commonly found in direct strategy, where the words used matches the intention of the speakers. They are found in the forms of using hedges and without hedges. The hedges used include the reason behind the action, additional information, state of agreement, and also exclamation. Furthermore, examining the cultural values reflected through the directive speech acts, it is dominated by embeddedness culture, particularly the value of security. It refers to some crucial points regarding the importance of maintaining safety in social media in various aspects, especially for minors under the age of eighteen.

After all, as reflected by the title, it is indicated that the most common issues discussed through the directive speech act in the documentary are related to the dilemmas led by the use of social media, dominantly related to mental health dilemmas including social media addiction that negatively affects the mindset of the rising generation.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results, it can be concluded that the casts in the Netflix documentary titled *The Social Dilemma* apply directive speech acts in their utterances. The writer found seventy-one data in this study. It includes thirty data in terms of ordering, twelve data in form of forbidding, ten data of advising, eight data of commanding, seven data in suggesting, and four data in the type of request. Each type is found using both strategies, direct and indirect, except types of requesting and commanding which are only delivered through direct strategy. All of them reflect seven cultural values including embeddedness, hierarchy, mastery, intellectual autonomy, egalitarianism, harmony, and affective autonomy. They refer to the purpose of aligning the use of social media with the values of humanity, with the tendency of engaging people to build awareness of the safety aspects of social media, especially among minors.

After conducting the study, some suggestions can be provided by the writer for further researchers with the same interest in speech acts. First, since various sources can be used as objects for studying speech acts, it is better to choose speech rather than the movie for easier data collecting. Second, if the next researcher is interested to conduct a speech act study on the same movie, it is recommended to analyze another type of speech act, such as expressive speech acts. Third, the next researcher may apply another theory to analyze cultural values reflected by the directive speech acts for better comprehension. And fourth, besides cultural values, it is also recommended for the next researchers to analyze language variations and politeness principles in conducting a speech act study.

REFERENCES

- [1] Kemp, S. 2022, February 1. Digital in 2018: World's Internet Users Pass the 4 Billion Mark. We are the Social UK. Retrieved April 17, 2022, from <https://wearesocial.com/uk/blog/2018/01/global-digitaal-report-2018/>
- [2] Published by Statista Research Department, & 28, J. 2022, January 28. U.S. Number of Social Media Users 2026. Statista. Retrieved April 17, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278409/number-of-social-network-users-in-the-united-states/>
- [3] The Social Dilemma A Netflix Original Documentary. 2022, March 14. Retrieved April 16, 2022, from <https://www.thesocialdilemma.com/>
- [4] Searle, J. R. 1976. A Classifications of Illocutionary Acts. *Language in Society*, 5(1), 1-23.
- [5] Yule, G. 1996. *Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- [6] Cutting, J. 2002. *Pragmatics and Discourse*. London and New York: Routledge.
- [7] Crabtree, M., & Powers, J. 1991. *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction to Language and Linguistics* (5th ed.). Columbus: The Ohio State University Press.
- [8] Gass, S. M., & Neu, J. 2006. *Speech Acts Across Cultures: Challenges to Communication in a Second Language*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- [9] Schwartz, S. H. 2013. National Culture as Value Orientations: Consequences of Value Differences and Cultural Distance. *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture*, 547-586.
- [10] Creswell, J. W. 1994. *Research Design: A Qualitative & Quantitative Approaches*. California: Sage Publications.
- [11] Seixas, B. V., Smith, N., & Mitton, C. 2017. The Qualitative Descriptive Approach in International Comparative Studies: Using Online Qualitative Surveys. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management*, 7(9), 778-78

