



The Directive Speech Acts in Podcasts: Case Study of Denny's Speech as a Host

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Abstrak: The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the meaning of directive speech acts. Directive speech acts guide conversations and shape meaningful interactions, particularly in media like podcasts. This study examines the use of directive speech acts in Denny Sumargo's podcast featuring Agus, a victim of violence, which gained widespread attention for its emotionally charged narrative. The method used to describe the research data is the descriptive content analysis method with a qualitative approach. By applying Searle's speech act theory, which emphasizes the relationship between utterances and their intended functions, the analysis categorizes Denny's utterances into various directive functions such as requests, suggestions, and clarifications. The findings demonstrate how these acts help maintain conversational structure, uncover critical details, and foster empathy while engaging the audience. This research highlights the relevance of Searle's framework in understanding how directive speech acts can navigate sensitive topics, enhance emotional resonance, and achieve communicative goals effectively in modern media.

Keywords: Directive speech acts, Searle's speech act theory, podcasts, pragmatic analysis, emotional resonance, communication strategies, media interactions, audience engagement, sensitive topics, modern media communication.



INTRODUCTION

Directive speech acts are a crucial element of communication, where speakers aim to influence the responses or actions of their listeners. In interactive settings, such as podcasts, these acts play a vital role in guiding discussions, maintaining a structured flow, and eliciting essential information. One can compel people to do something by using their words. The directive speech act is a functional basic unit in communication. In the podcast, there are several forms of speech that are used. Directive speech acts have functions, purposes, and objectives when used in interaction. Therefore, in the study of pragmatics, it is very interesting to know the functions, purposes and objectives of directive speech from speakers and speech partners. Forms of speech act that will be used to determine the form of speech on the podcast is a directive speech act. Podcast hosts, through effective use of directive speech acts, can navigate complex conversations while fostering emotional connections with their audiences.

Previous research has highlighted the importance of directive speech acts in various media contexts. (Ambarwati et al., 2018) examined expressive and directive speech acts in social media communication, emphasizing their role in structuring interactions and reflecting emotions. Similarly, (Tannen, 2005) discussed the emotional resonance of speech acts in digital and media communication, demonstrating how they shape audience perceptions. Recent studies have specifically focused on podcasts, such as those by Deddy Corbuzier (Shinta et al., 2023) and in formal podcast discussions (Luqman Ihsannur Khoir & Andi Haris Prabawa, 2023), showing how directive speech acts effectively guide sensitive conversations while maintaining clarity and audience engagement. In addition, (Rapida, 2022) using Dell Hymes' SPEAKING framework underscores the importance of understanding communication contexts, such as setting and participants, in analyzing speech acts.

Building upon these findings, this study examines directive speech acts in Denny Sumargo's podcast episode featuring Agus, which aired on September 24, 2024, and has been viewed 5,672,335 times. This episode garnered significant attention due to its emotionally charged narrative, in which Denny guided the conversation empathetically while uncovering critical details of Agus' traumatic experience. By analyzing these speech acts, the study seeks to understand how podcasts balance clarity and empathy to address sensitive issues while engaging audiences.

By examining this viral podcast, the study synthesizes how directive speech acts contribute to guiding discussions and building emotional resonance and societal awareness in modern media platforms. Based on this, this research focuses on the utterances used by Denny, a podcast host, in the context of directive speech acts. The conversation discusses Agus' tragic experience of being a victim of violence, to explore the chronology of events and present empathy to the audience. The use of directives in sensitive conversations needs to be handled with care to avoid imposing on the listener's autonomy, while still directing the flow of the conversation (Brown et al., 1987). To analyze this, the pragmatics approach is used as a foundation to understand the context of the utterance and the communicative purpose of the identified speech act. This approach aligns with (Austin, n.d.; Searle, 1969) perspectives on linking utterances with their meaning and function.

In addition, the relevance of this analysis is also supported by previous research which shows that speech acts have various types and complex functions. Speech acts, including directive, expressive, and others, often depend on the context of communication and social relations between participants (Ambarwati et al., 2018). Pragmatic observations, such as those conducted in social media communication research, show that speech acts reflect the meaning of utterances and can also explore emotions, interpersonal relationships, and conversational structures. (Tannen, 2005) suggests that in digital and media communications, emotional undertones in speech acts can significantly shape how messages are perceived. (Clark, 1996) also stresses that understanding the social context of communication is crucial in interpreting speech acts effectively and accurately. Thus, this analysis provides insight into the use of directive speech acts in podcasts and examines how the context of communication affects the meaning of utterances.

This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how directive speech acts are used in podcasts as an effective communication tool. It also aims to show how Searle's speech act theory can be applied in the analysis of modern media conversations, especially in building informative and emotional narratives. (Bach et al., n.d.) contend that understanding the underlying principles of speech acts such as directives helps reveal how speakers manage social interactions and guide conversations, particularly in emotionally charged media discussions.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a content analysis design to identify and analyze directive speech acts used by Denny in the podcast "Curhat Bang Denny Sumargo." Content analysis has been widely applied in speech act studies, such as those conducted by (Ambarwati et al., 2018; Shinta et al., 2023), where this method was proven effective for exploring communication strategies and contextual nuances in speech acts.

The primary data for this study consisted of conversation transcripts from the podcast episode. Data collection was carried out by identifying utterances exhibiting characteristics of directive speech acts, such as requests for information, suggestions, or clarifications. This approach aligns with methods used by (Rapida, 2022) in her analysis of Dell Hymes' SPEAKING framework, as well as Khoir and Prabawa (2022), which highlights the importance of directive speech acts in structuring conversations and evoking emotional responses in podcasts.

The analysis was conducted in two main stages. First, utterances in the transcripts were categorized based on (Searle, 1969) framework, which classifies speech acts into types such as requests, suggestions, and clarifications. Second, each utterance was analyzed for its communicative purpose and context. This process followed the approach recommended by (Shinta et al., 2023; Tannen, 2005), emphasizing the significance of emotional and social dimensions in directive speech acts in media.

The findings are presented as narrative descriptions supported by direct quotations from the transcripts. Each quotation is contextualized to illustrate how directive speech acts contribute to structuring interactions, maintaining the flow of conversations, and engaging the audience emotionally, consistent with previous research (Ambarwati et al., 2018; Luqman Ihsannur Khoir & Andi Haris Prabawa, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the episode of “Curhat Bang Denny Sumargo” podcast that discusses the experience of Agus, a victim of violence, the communication takes place in the podcast studio with a serious and emotional atmosphere. The setting of this podcast is a place of digital recording, while the atmosphere is filled with empathy to support the discussion of sensitive topics such as violence. Denny, as the host, played his role to guide the conversation with a focus on extracting information and keeping the interviewee comfortable. Another participant in this communication is Agus, who shares his personal experiences with the podcast audience.

The main purpose of this conversation is to dig up detailed information about the violent incident experienced by Agus, while conveying a message of empathy to the audience. In addition, the podcast also aims to raise public awareness of the issue of violence and build empathy. In this conversation, Denny uses communication strategies in the form of questions, suggestions, and clarifications to keep the flow of discussion structured and meaningful.

The communication action sequence involves various techniques, such as asking Agus to provide more detailed information, providing advice or emotional support, and clarifying certain details. Denny kept the tone of his communication empathetic and professional, using spoken language that the audience could easily understand through the digital podcast platform. Social norms maintained in this conversation include respect for Agus' experience and avoiding excessive pressure that could make the interviewee feel uncomfortable. This interview adopts an interactive narrative communication genre, combining informative and emotional elements.

1. Requests for Information

- Denny: "Jadi sekarang ini **enggak bisa lihat saya?**" (*So now you **can't see me, right?***)
- Denny: "**Kamu tahu** orangnya itu?" (***Do you know** who that person is?*)
- Denny: "Itu di CCTV **kelihatan ya?**" (*Was it **visible** on the CCTV?*)

Denny Sumargo often uses questions to dig deeper into the information during his podcast, as seen in the conversation above. Through these questions, Denny attempts to reconstruct the chronology of events experienced by Agus. In the serious and investigative podcast setting, Denny acts as the interviewer, direct and focused on gathering factual information. His main goal is to provide the audience with a deeper understanding of the issues being discussed, using clear and precise verbal communication. In this way, Denny creates a communication environment that respects Agus, giving him space to speak without pressure while building an investigative narrative.

2. Suggestions and Emotional Support

- Denny: "Kalau sudah tidak kuat, **hubungi** saya, **jangan** bunuh diri." (*If you're struggling, **contact me. Don't end your life.***)
- Denny: "Kamu **harus** kuat ya." (*You **must** stay strong, okay?*)

- Denny: "Kalau ada yang bantu, **pakai baik-baik** bantuannya." (*If someone helps you, use their support **wisely**.*)

On several occasions, Denny offers advice and emotional support to Agus, as reflected in the statements above. This demonstrates the strong element of empathy in their communication. In the calm podcast studio setting, Denny plays the role of a guide, offering support to Agus, to help him stay strong and face life's difficulties. The communication is done using soothing and empathetic words, creating an environment where Agus feels valued and listened to. Denny encourages Agus to speak more openly without feeling judged, while also creating space for emotional and reflective storytelling, ultimately deepening the audience's understanding of the importance of support in facing personal challenges.

3. Prompts for Clarification

- Denny: "Tangan saya ini **bisa lihat?**" (*Can you see my hand here?*)
- Denny: "Oh dia **tembus** itu?" (*Oh, it **pierced** through, right?*)
- Denny: "Ini **siapa?** Ibunya? Bapaknya?" (*Who's **this**? His mother? His father?*)

Denny frequently uses clarification prompts to ensure Agus's story is clear, as shown in the conversation above. In the podcast, Denny acts as an active interviewer, asking questions to reduce ambiguity and provide a clearer picture for the audience. In a discussion focused on resolving any uncertainties, Denny asks specific questions to clarify details, ensuring Agus's narrative is easier to understand. With an investigative and in-depth communication style, Denny keeps the conversation clear and prioritizes the accuracy of the information, creating a communication norm that respects Agus as the main source.

(Holmes, 2013)

4. Encouragement to Elaborate

- Denny: "Coba **ceritakan** lebih detail ya, Gus." (*Try to **tell** me more details, Agus.*)
- Denny: "**Apa yang kamu rasakan saat itu?**" (*What were you feeling at that **moment**?*)

Denny also encourages Agus to elaborate on his experiences with statements like the ones above. In a podcast setting that is relaxed yet meaningful, Denny provides space for Agus to share his emotional experiences in more detail, encouraging him to speak more openly without pressure. This reflects a communication norm emphasizing active listening and giving the speaker the opportunity to express their feelings. With a supportive tone, Denny fosters an environment that facilitates open discussion, which ultimately provides the audience with a richer, more empathetic understanding of Agus's personal experience.

5. Directing the Narrative Flow

- Denny: "**Berarti** dari kejadian itu, besoknya malamnya?" (*So after that event, it happened the next night?*)
- Denny: "Oh dia **mengaku** yang menyiram ini?" (*Oh, did he **admit** to being the one who poured it?*)

Denny often directs the flow of the narrative with phrases like the ones above. By using these transitional phrases, Denny ensures that the story being told by Agus remains structured and easy for the audience to follow. In the interactive podcast atmosphere, Denny plays the role of a narrative guide, steering the conversation in a logical and orderly direction. His goal is to ensure that Agus's story stays focused and flows smoothly, maintaining coherence throughout. Through organized communication, Denny makes sure that the audience can follow the story while allowing Agus to speak more deeply.

6. Validating Experiences

- Denny: "Berarti satu pelaku **buron** ya?" (*So one of the **perpetrators** is still at large, right?*)
- Denny: "Polisi sudah **mengeluarkan lembaran buron** enggak untuk orang itu?" (*Have the police issued a **fugitive warrant** for that person?*)

Denny also validates the experiences shared by Agus with statements like the ones above. In the empathetic podcast context, Denny acknowledges Agus's experiences, helping to strengthen the trust between them and build a deeper emotional connection with the audience. Through attentive communication and recognition of Agus's personal experiences, Denny gives the speaker space to feel valued and heard. With this deep communication, Denny encourages Agus to speak more openly, creating an environment where his story receives emotional validation from the audience.

This study aimed to explore how directive speech acts contribute to guiding conversations and engaging audiences in sensitive discussions within modern media. By analyzing Denny Sumargo's podcast featuring Agus, the research examines how directive acts such as requests, suggestions, and clarifications help structure conversations and convey empathy. The findings indicate that directive speech acts are effective in maintaining conversational flow and emotional resonance. Denny's use of clear, empathetic communication ensured that Agus felt respected and comfortable sharing his experiences. This approach not only clarified the narrative for the audience but also fostered a deeper emotional connection, enhancing audience engagement and awareness about sensitive issues like violence.

(Van Dijk, 2009; Yule, 1996)

These results align with previous research. For instance, Ambarwati et al. (2018) emphasized the role of speech acts in structuring interactions and reflecting emotions, while Tannen (2005) highlighted the significance of emotional undertones in media communication. The findings also support Rapida's (2022) insights into the contextual importance of speech acts

in managing sensitive discussions, reaffirming the relevance of pragmatic frameworks in modern media.

(Luqman Ihsannur Khoir & Andi Haris Prabawa, 2023; Rapida, 2022; Shinta et al., 2023)

This study demonstrates the practical application of Searle's speech act theory in media, showing how directive acts can effectively balance clarity and empathy in public discourse. These findings have broader implications for media practitioners, particularly podcast hosts, in addressing sensitive topics while maintaining ethical communication standards. By using directive speech acts thoughtfully, media platforms can enhance audience understanding and foster societal awareness of critical issues.

(Fisyara & Qura, 2024; Lula Mulyani & Diena San Fauziya, 2024; Ni-kentyas & Alber, 2024)

Despite its contributions, this study is limited to the analysis of a single podcast episode, which may not represent the broader spectrum of directive speech act usage in other genres or cultural contexts. Future research could expand the scope by analyzing directive speech acts across various podcast genres or exploring cultural variations in their use. Additionally, integrating quantitative methods, such as audience surveys, could provide more comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of these communication strategies. (EXPRESSION AND MEANING Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts, n.d.; Nurul Hidayah, n.d.-a, n.d.-b; Rizki Amelia, n.d.)

CONCLUSION

The analysis of directive speech acts in Denny Sumargo's podcast episode reveals the significant role they play in managing conversations on sensitive topics. By employing strategic requests, clarifications, and empathetic support, Denny effectively guides the narrative, ensuring both clarity and emotional engagement. This study not only highlights the practical application of Searle's speech act theory but also emphasizes the critical balance required in addressing delicate issues in public media.

The research contributes to understanding how directive speech acts function as essential tools for podcast hosts in navigating complex discussions. It underscores their potential to enhance audience comprehension and empathy, making them vital for impactful media communication. Further studies could explore comparative analyses across different podcast genres to deepen insights into directive speech acts' contextual variations and effectiveness.

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