

## Directive Speech Act used by the Main Characters in *Barbie and the Three Musketeers* Movie

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### ABSTRACT

This study explored the use of directive speech acts by the main characters in the film *Barbie and the Three Musketeers*. The primary objective was to identify and analyze the types of directive speech acts employed, drawing on Searle's theory. A descriptive qualitative approach was utilized to dissect the dialogue in the film, which revealed nine distinct types of directive speech acts: requesting (12 instances), ordering (11 instances), commanding (8 instances), advising (7 instances), challenging (5 instances), permitting (4 instances), inviting (4 instances), begging (4 instances), and prohibiting (2 instances). The analysis highlighted how these speech acts were integral to the characters' interactions and their quest to become female musketeers, a role traditionally seen as male-dominated. The directive speech acts reflected the characters' emotions and propelled the narrative forward, illustrating their determination, resourcefulness, and collaboration. Challenging societal stereotypes, the characters used directive speech acts to assert their agency and challenged the notion that musketeering was exclusively for men. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how language functioned in animated films to shape character development and advance thematic elements.

**Keywords:** *Pragmatics, Speech Acts, Illocutionary Acts, Directive Speech Acts, Barbie and the Three Musketeers*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Dialogues and utterances spoken by characters in movies illustrate a wide range of speech acts, making them a valuable resource for linguistic and pragmatic research. Movies have dynamic interactions that give numerous examples of various forms of speech acts, notably directive speech acts, which can express as imperatives, interrogatives, or declaratives. These actions expose characters' objectives, connections, and emotional states, revealing underlying dynamics such as power dynamics and personal motives (Sari, 2022). Due to their diverse and lively conversations, movies provide an excellent canvas for the study of language and pragmatic phenomena. The representation of directive speech acts, in particular, can appear in a variety of grammatical forms and reveal deeper insights into characters' intentions, relationships, and emotional states. Such research helps reveal the deep power dynamics and psychological motives that drive encounters, emphasizing the value of film as a tool for understanding complex patterns of communication.

Mattel's film production succeeded with many series of their Barbie movies, capturing interest with the strong girl power theme. One of its movie productions is *Barbie and the Three Musketeers*. The Main Character, Barbie, portrayed in Corinne, has managed to accomplish many different types of work in her goal to highlight and perpetuate the girl power that has been inherent to her (Ningtyas, 2021). This movie tells the determined journey of Corinne, the daughter of a chief musketeer, who shares the same passion as her father. Undeterred by societal expectations, Corinne, despite being a woman, relentlessly pursues her ambition to become a musketeer. Her persistence is encouraged by the support of the other three young women, who are all united in a common dream to break the gender barrier in the musketeer rank.

Aramina, Viveca, Renee, and Helene are Corinne's companions in the movie. Aramina is a delicate and caring castle maid. She has the same courage as Corinne, she never gives up on her dreams. Then Viveca, she is another smart castle maid who has expertise in strategy. She often helps her group by giving some solutive suggestions. Next is Renee, a castle maid who is full of energy and has a great deal of bravery. However, sometimes her emotions are unstable and she is quite sensitive to things. The last character is Helene, a skilled musketeer who is also the oldest servant in the palace. Her role is to train and provide support to the four girls in situations that require defense. Helene is

also a stern and long-minded woman, she often gives instructions when training and when giving warnings to them.

In a movie, the concept of directive speech act refers to the use of speech acts with the goal of getting the interlocutor to do something. Various sorts of directive speech acts, such as ordering, requesting, commanding, begging, inviting, permitting, advising, challenging, and prohibiting can be seen in movie. Additionally, the concept itself is related to the movie in a several ways (Searle, 1979). Based on the explanatory about this directive speech act concept, there is the explanation of the data. The context of the example conversation is occurred between Corinne and Serge. They met in the town, with Corinne who came to drop off her horse at the stable. The following is their conversation.

Corinne : "Excuse me. *Can you watch over my horse?*"

Serge : "I suppose there's room for one more. I'm Serge, I work at the castle."

In the conversation between them, the interrogative sentence said by Corinne is categorized into the directive speech act "command". Corinne, who had come to meet Monsieur Traveille, was unable to bring her horse into the castle. Therefore, she met Serge, a gentleman who works at the castle and is responsible for taking care of the horses, and left her horse with him. This is an example of the relevance of the concept of directive speech act which demonstrated the personality of Corinne.

Some of researchers have analyzed about directive speech act. The first previous study is "An Analysis on Directive Speech Act in English Translation of Al-Qur'an Surah Luqman". As a result of this study, 6 types of directive speech acts have been found in the English translation of the Qur'an Surah Luqman in 42 utterances, namely: commanding, ordering, suggesting, prohibiting, questioning, and apprising. According to the analysis, apprise emerged as the dominant one (Munir, 2019). The second previous study is "An Analysis of Directive Speech Act Used In "Among Us" Short Movie by Jay & Arya". The results of this study show that there were 5 types of directive speech acts in the movie. Those were request, question, command, permission, and prohibition. As a matter of fact, question speech act was the most frequently used (Syakila Fitrie & Nugrahani, 2021). The third study is "An Analysis of Directive Speech Act in "Jimmy Kimmel Live" Talkshow: Pragmatics Approach". This study resulted in 31 examples identified as types and functions of directive speech acts. According to the

analysis, request emerged as the dominant one (Situmorang, 2020). The fourth previous study is "Directive Speech Act in Cruella 2021 Movie". This study had 15 data from types of directive speech act which was separated into command, request, permission, prohibition, and question (Syaufa Yardha, 2022). The fifth previous study is "An Analysis of Directive Speech Acts in "Up" Movie". The result of this study found out there are 4 types of directive speech acts used in the Up movie. Those are command, order, request, and suggestion, with a total of 106 utterances. According to the analysis, command emerged as the dominant one (Sari, 2022). The sixth previous study is "Directive Speech Act in the Cartoon Movie of Raya and the Last Dragon". The results of the analysis show that there are 8 types of directive speech acts found in the film, namely question, command, advice, asking, entreating, prohibiting, permitting and suggestion (Gafur et al., 2023).

Directive speech acts play a significant role in character interactions and plot development in movies. Studies have analyzed various films, including "Barbie," "Sleeping Beauty," and "The Choice," to identify and categorize directive speech acts (Ni Kadek et al., 2024; Muhartoyo & Kristani, 2013; Wea & Bram, 2022). Common types of directive speech acts observed include ordering, commanding, requesting, questioning, and prohibiting (Ni Kadek et al., 2024; Muhartoyo & Kristani, 2013; Wea & Bram, 2022). The frequency of these acts varies across movies, with ordering and commanding often being the most prevalent (Muhartoyo & Kristani, 2013; Della & Sembiring, 2018). Researchers have employed qualitative methods, including script analysis and observation, to collect and analyze data (Muhartoyo & Kristani, 2013; Wea & Bram, 2022). The study of directive speech acts in movies contributes to understanding character dynamics and can provide insights for English language teaching and learning (Wea & Bram, 2022).

The similarities and differences that found in the previous studies are; the first study discussed an English translation of Al-Qur'an with Jucker's theory, the second study discussed a short movie with Searle's theory, the third study discussed a talkshow with Searle's theory, the fourth study discussed a movie with Searle's theory, the fifth study discussed a movie with Yule's theory, and the sixth study discussed a cartoon movie with Searle's theory. All of them deal with the same thing, which is directive speech act. However, some of them took on different objects and theory application. This study uses *Barbie and the Three Musketeers* as the object and applies Searle's theory

(1979) about Directive Speech Act. This movie has been thoroughly analyzed by previous scholars, who explored about expressive speech acts, feminism, and gender roles. Therefore, the aim of this study is to conduct a deeper analysis of the directive speech act types used by the main characters in *Barbie and the Three Musketeers* movie.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study's design was descriptive qualitative, which tries to generate descriptive information from individuals through written or spoken words. The study procedure mostly gathered data from *Barbie and the Three Musketeers* (2009) movie. In addition, data was taken from its conversation script from the main characters' utterances that contain directive speech acts. To collect the data, several steps were implemented, i.e.,: 1) Downloading the movie, and its script; 2) Watching the movie and reading the script; 3) Classifying the directive speech acts and the emotional contexts used by the main characters; 4) Capturing through screenshots to support this classification; and 5) creating the codes to systematically facilitate further analysis (see Table 1). To analyze the data, several steps were utilized, i.e.,: 1) Determining the directive speech acts used by the main characters; 2) Explaining how the main characters use directive speech acts; 3) Deriving conclusions.

**Table 1.** Codes

Directive Speech Act:		Context of Feeling: CoF	
DSA			
Ordering	: O	Positive Feeling	: EPF
Request	: R	Joyful	: J
Command	: C	Ambitious	: Am
Begging	: B	Confident	: Con
Inviting	: I	Certain	: Cer
Permitting	: Per	Loving	: L
Advising	: A	Negative Feeling	: ENF
Challenging	: Ch	Perplexed	: P
Prohibiting	: Pro	Panicked	: Pa
		Hesitant	: H

Desperate	: D
Annoyed	: An

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Example of Data Analysis:

1. Datum: 01/DSA/R/CoF/ENF/P:

Corinne : "I think that's everything. Goodbye, Mother. Mother? You can let me go now."

Mother : "Do I have to?"

Context : This conversation happened when Corinne was ready to go to Paris and leave her mother. They hugged, but the mother was reluctant to let go until Corinne asked her.

2. Datum: 02/DSA/C/CoF/EPF/Cer:

Corinne : "Excuse me. Can you watch over my horse?"

Serge : "I suppose there's room for one more."

Context : This conversation happened when Corinne had to leave her horse at the stable. There was Serge, a man who handled the horses and also worked at the castle.

## **RESULTS DISCUSSION**

This study identifies nine different types of directive speech acts, with a total of 57 utterances analyzed. The distribution of these utterances includes 12 instances of requesting, 11 of ordering, 8 of commanding, 7 of advising, 5 of challenging, 4 each of begging, inviting, and permitting, and 2 of prohibiting utterances.

### ***Requesting***



Figure 2. *Corinne: Requesting*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Requesting is one of the most used directive speech acts by Corinne, appearing eight times throughout the film. For example, Corinne uses requesting when she says, "*Promise not to say anything to madame?*" (00:27:22 - 00:27:28, see Figure 2). After the chandelier accident exposed their musketry skills, Corinne asked her friends to keep it a secret. This request arises from her fear that Madame the Bosse, who is already strict, would be furious if she discovered that the girls were practicing musketry—an activity considered taboo for women. Corinne's request reflects her awareness of the societal constraints on women's roles, and how language is used as a tool to protect herself and her friends from potential punishment.

### ***Ordering***



Figure 3. *Helene: Ordering*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Ordering is used 11 times across the film, with Corinne using it 8 times and Helene, Aramina, and Renee each using it once. For example, in Picture 3 (00:29:04 - 00:29:09), Helene responds to Renee's question, *"You ask too many questions."* This utterance serves as an implicit order, as Helene asserts her authority and directs the others to stop questioning and follow her lead. Helene's use of ordering reflects her perceived superiority and control over the situation, given her role and the critical nature of the mission. Helene reinforces her leadership position among the characters by minimizing objections and maintaining authority.

### ***Commanding***



Figure 4. *Helene: Commanding*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Commanding is exemplified in Picture 4 (00:31:39 - 00:31:47), where Helene says, *"I will teach you, but only if you do exactly as I say."* This command highlights Helene's authority, as she sets strict conditions for training and demands strict obedience. Her commanding tone emphasizes her control over the training process and the need for the trainees to follow her instructions precisely.

### ***Advising***





Figure 5. *Viveca: Advising*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

In Picture 5 (00:20:25 - 00:20:34), Viveca uses advising when she suggests, "*She should wash all the draperies in the ballroom.*" This suggestion comes in response to Corinne's offer to make amends for a mistake. By advising Corinne to wash the draperies, Viveca directs her towards a specific action, offering a practical solution while also asserting her influence in the situation.

### ***Challenging***



Figure 6. *Renee: Challenging*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Challenging appears five times in the movie, with Corinne using it three times, and Helene and Renee each using it once. For example, Renee defiantly tells Madame de Bosse, "*We are not leaving without seeing the Prince*" (00:46:50 - 00:46:57, see Picture 6). This utterance is classified as challenging because Renee firmly refuses to comply with Madame de Bosse's command to leave, emphasizing her determination to meet the Prince. The scene underscores Renee's resistance and

assertiveness, illustrating how challenging directives can drive conflict and tension within the narrative.

### ***Begging***



Figure 7. *Corinne: Begging*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Corinne uses the directive speech act of begging four times in the film. For instance, in a scene (00:48:29 - 00:48:41), Corinne desperately pleads with Monsieur Treville, saying, "*But we saw them. They are plotting against the Prince. You've got to do something about it.*" (see Picture 7). This plea, which is classified as begging, reflects Corinne's urgent need for action after realizing that crucial evidence had been hidden. Despite her desperation, Monsieur Treville dismisses her, leading to Corinne and her friends being expelled from the castle and fired by Madame the Bosse. This highlights Corinne's vulnerability and the power dynamics at play, emphasizing her determination despite the obstacles she faces.

### ***Inviting***



Figure 8. *Aramina: Inviting*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Inviting is employed four times by the characters: twice by Corinne, and once each by Aramina and Viveca. For instance, in the scene at 00:22:28 - 00:22:40, Aramina invites Corinne to go back together after receiving permission from Viveca and Renee (see Picture 8). Aramina's utterance, "*You will stay with us. Come,*" exemplifies the inviting speech act as it guides Corinne to join them, reinforcing the bond between the characters and moving the group dynamic forward.

### ***Permitting***



Figure 9. *Corinne: Permitting*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Permitting appears four times in the movie, with Corinne using it twice, and Viveca and Renée using it once each. For example, when Prince Louis asks Corinne, "*May I have the honor?*" (00:58:36 - 00:58:41), and she responds with, "*Uh... Sure*" (see Picture 9). Although Corinne is initially surprised and hesitant, she ultimately permits the request to dance. This instance illustrates how permitting

serves as a subtle negotiation of social dynamics, reflecting Corinne's internal hesitation while still adhering to social etiquette.

### ***Prohibiting***



Figure 10. *Helene: Prohibiting*

(Source: Barbie and the Three Musketeers Movie)

Prohibiting appears twice in the movie, once by Corinne and once by Helene. For example, in the scene where the group discusses reporting a potential plot against the prince (00:40:55 - 00:41:03), Helene asserts, "No! Until we have proof of a plot against the Prince, we trust no one" (see Picture 10). This utterance is classified as prohibiting because Helene discourages her group from taking immediate action without sufficient evidence. Her directive reflects a cautious leadership approach, emphasizing the need for restraint and careful consideration before making critical decisions.

From the findings above, the type of directive speech act that appears the most is requesting, it has 12 data found in *Barbie and the Three Musketeers* movie.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study explored various types of directive speech acts in *Barbie and the Three Musketeers*, uncovering a total of 12 requesting, 11 ordering, 8 commanding, 7 advising, 5 challenging, 4 begging, 4 inviting, 4 permitting, and 2 prohibiting utterances. These speech acts, used by characters like Corinne, Aramina, Viveca, Renee, and Helene, illustrate their efforts to challenge

traditional expectations and strive towards their shared goal of becoming musketeers. Their use of directive speech acts highlights their determination and the film's focus on female empowerment.

The insights gained from this study enhance our understanding of how language operates in animated movies, particularly in shaping character interactions and advancing the plot. By examining these speech acts, we gain a clearer picture of how language can drive narrative and reflect character dynamics. While this research is centered on one movie and focuses specifically on directive speech acts, future studies could expand this analysis to include other types of speech acts or a wider range of movies. This would provide a more comprehensive view of how language functions in animation and influences storytelling.

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