

## Parentinguistic: Have Parent's Speeches Been Effective Towards Their Children?

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Directive Speech Act, Speech Effectiveness, Direct, Indirect	Parents are responsible for guiding children on how to adapt to their surroundings by teaching them what is acceptable and what is not.. One of the ways to educate children can be conveyed through speech. This research focuses on the effectiveness of directive speech acts spoken by parents to children. This type of research is qualitative and descriptive through a pragmatic approach. The data in this study comes from directive speech acts delivered by Chris Gardner to his son, Christopher in the film <i>Pursuit of Happyness</i> . The data were collected using listening and note-taking techniques and then analyzed using Spradley's (2016) analysis technique. The result of this study found a total of 117 directive speech act data. The Directive Speech Act is delivered both directly and indirectly. In the direct strategy, 89 data were found, and 28 data were found in the indirect strategy. In its effectiveness, the Directive Speech Act is effective as much as 110 data, while the Directive Speech Act is ineffective as much as 7 data.

### INTRODUCTION

Humans are social creatures who must have relationships with other people, at least the relationship between parents and children. In any relationship, humans use speech to achieve certain goals. However, have parents used speech effectively to achieve the expected goals and objectives? In reality, ineffective speech can lead to non-fulfillment of the intent conveyed by the speaker, miscommunication, to conflicts that lead to anger. Uncontrolled anger can cause a person to utter harsh words that can hurt someone. What's more, the anger that parents throw at their children can cause trauma, to the point of straining relationships. If the relationship between parents and children is strained, it can cause children to fall into deviant acts; such as drugs, promiscuity, etc. In one study, every child's head has 10 trillion brain cells ready to grow. Every single shout or one other negative treatment can kill those 10 billion brain cells, and vice versa one time of praise or one other positive treatment can grow 10 billion brain cells in it. Anger aimed at disciplining a child will be in vain, if the child is less than 10 years old, which cannot be denied or resisted (Edy, 2020). Therefore, emotional control is very important for parents to master in educating children. One way to prevent anger is to apply effective communication. Effective communication is communication that makes it easy for the other person to catch the intent and message of the speaker.

Stephen (2019) simplifies the definition of communication as an art or effort in order to convey a message or something so that other people understand us. Humans use 75 percent of all time to communicate. From things as simple as greeting, answering, listening, asking, thanking, and so on. These things are a form of sending or receiving information. Then, communication is also commonly studied in pragmatics which is a branch of linguistics. One of the topics in pragmatics is the directive speech act, which is a type of speech act that intends to ask the listener to do what the speaker intends to do. Directive speech acts can be conveyed directly or indirectly. Speech acts are conveyed directly when there is a direct link between structure and intent, and vice versa, speech acts that are conveyed indirectly are not directly related between structure and intent. In reality, children are a phase that still needs parental guidance, because children do not yet know what is good or bad for them. However, the directions given by parents to children are often

misinterpreted by children. This happens because the way to direct the parents is not right so it triggers ineffective communication. For example, a mother was scolding her child for coming home from school in the rain without an umbrella. Then Mother grumbled:

- (i) Mother: Son, why come home from school in the rain? Why don't you use an umbrella? What if you get sick? Mother is so troublesome.
- (ii) Mother: Mama will let you play ball for two hours. But at six in the afternoon, you should be home. Then, at seven in the evening, you start studying until nine o'clock.

Example (i) is an example of a directive speech act with an indirect strategy, because simply a mother only wants her child, not to be caught in the rain and not to use an umbrella, so she won't get sick. But what if the child catches this expression? The mother doesn't want to be bothered if her child is sick, or worst of all, the child will think that he can only bother his mother so that she doesn't love him anymore. If the child catches the mother's words like that, then the mother's speech is ineffective. Meanwhile, example (ii) is an example of a directive speech act with a direct strategy. From this example, the mother wants her child to study, while the child wants to play ball. The mother's utterances can be effective because the mother makes offers that keep the child able to play ball, but learning activities are still carried out. Previously, there were many studies on directive speech acts. As was done by Aquatama (2016), who examined speech acts in the film *The Pursuit of Happyness*, but in the previous study the focus was on the illocutionary actions of the main character, Chris Gardner. Research on directive speech acts has also been conducted by Suhartini and Wulansari (2015), and Rahmawati et al (2021). Meanwhile, in the field of effective communication with children, Hastasari (2020), Andjani and Mubarok (2015) have also researched it.

Effective communication is a gap in this research because no research specifically examines the effectiveness of parental directive speech acts to children. This research focuses on directive speech act strategies used by parents to their children, and whether these speech acts are effective or not. To answer these formulations, this study uses theory from Yule (1996) regarding direct/indirect speech, and Edy (2020) regarding effective communication. This study takes data from the film *The Pursuit of Happyness*. This film based on a true story tells about a father named Chris Gardner and his son, Christopher, who are struggling from the economic downturn their family is facing. Once upon a time Chris got an internship as a sales opportunity but he didn't get a salary for several months. This made him unable to support his family, so he was abandoned by his wife and child. But Chris Gardner insisted on taking Christopher, who was still 5 years old, with him and taking care of him himself. Chris's economic problems also make him unable to pay the rent for a place to live. So that makes them homeless and have to stand in line every evening to be able to live in a homeless shelter. In such circumstances, Chris carried out his duties as a single parent who was obliged to educate his children. From the explanation above, this research focuses on discussing linguistics in the aspect of parenting so that in terms it can be called parenting linguistics or in short it is called "Parentinguistic". Then this research was entitled *Parentinguistic: Have Parents Speeches Been Effective Towards Their Children?*

Parenting is a term in the way of raising children. As stated by (Black et al, 2017) parenting is the best effort in educating children as a manifestation of a sense of parental responsibility towards children. Parenting aims to introduce children to religion, social and culture. Therefore, parenting is crucial in the formation of children's character. One of success in parenting is communicating with children. To improve children's communication skills, Yogi (2021) formulates four things that can intervene in children's abilities; (1) a good or conducive environment. In fact, children imitate what people around them do, so placing children in a conducive environment can make children's growth especially psychologically optimal. (2) sincere attitude. The sincerity of parents and children can strengthen the emotions and closeness of parents and children. (3) nonverbal expressions. Expressions in the form of gestures, gazes, facial expressions, etc. influential in strengthening the aims and objectives of parental communication. (4) engagement process. This process

means involving children in every chat, discussion, and communication. So that children will consider themselves accepted, this is related to existence and actualization.

One of the things parents do to educate their children can be conveyed through speech. Speech is usually studied in the language of pragmatics. As defined by Yule (1994), pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning conveyed by speakers and received by listeners. One of the scopes of pragmatics that will be discussed in this study is the speech act. The speech act is an action performed at the initiation of an utterance. Pragmatically, there are at least three types of actions that speakers can convey. Searle (1969) divides these types into; (1) Locutionary acts (The Act of Saying Something). Is speech that is solely intended to inform something without any inclination to influence the interlocutor to do something. Locutionary acts are very easy to identify because there is no need to consider the context of the speech. (2) Illocutionary acts (The Act of Doing Something). An utterance that functions to say something also aims to do something. This speech needs further identification because it must pay attention to who the speaker and the interlocutor are. (3) Perlocutionary acts (The Act of Affecting Someone). It is a speech act whose purpose is to influence the interlocutor. This speech is quite difficult to identify because you have to pay attention to the context of the speech. Searle (1975) also categorizes speech acts into 5 types. The first type is a declaration, defined as an utterance that can affect the world. Usually said by people who have influence, such as presidents, judges, priests, etc. The second type is representative, which means a speech act that can bind the speaker to the proposition being spoken. For example, demanding, concluding, and describing. The third type is called expressive, which intends to express what the speaker feels. For example, expressing sadness, or congratulating listeners. The next type is commissive, which indicates the speaker is committed to doing something in the future. The last type is the directive, which is a speech act that aims to ask the listener to do what the speaker means. Eg ordering, commanding, suggesting, etc.

This research specifically examines the directive type of speech act. Directive speech acts can be in the form of directions for ordering, ordering, requesting, warning, suggesting, inviting, and others (Peccei, 1999). For example, because the garage is messy. Ed said to Fey "Clean up!" that meant Ed ordered Fey to clean up the mess. Strategically, speech acts can be delivered directly or indirectly. Direct speech acts occur when there is a direct link between structure and intent. Simply put, when using a declarative sentence to inform, an interrogative sentence to ask, and an imperative sentence to order, beg or invite. Meanwhile, an indirect speech act occurs when there is no direct link between the structure and its intent. Examples of its use when ordering someone by saying an interrogative sentence. This is usually used so that the person being ordered does not feel that he is being ordered (Rohmadi, 2017).

- 1) Please pass the salt.
- 2) Can you get some salt?

Sentence (1) is an imperative sentence that has the same structure and intent, namely directly asking the listener to fetch salt. So that (1) is a direct speech act directly. Sentence (2) is interrogative and expresses a question. Usually, the speaker's goal in asking a question is to get an answer. But (2) has a different purpose: it is a request, where the speaker's aim is for the hearer to pass on his salt. This is an indirect speech act; which Searle defines as an utterance in which one speech act is performed indirectly by performing another.

In studying each speech, there are 5 aspects that must be considered according to Leech (1993); (1) Speakers and interlocutors. This aspect is related to age, background, socio-economic, gender, level of intimacy, etc. (2) Context of speech. These are all relevant physical aspects or social settings of the speech in questions. This aspect relates to background knowledge and shared understanding between listeners and speakers. (3) Purpose of speech. In conveying speech, there are various forms. So that one goal can be conveyed with a variety of utterances. (4) Speech as a form of action or activity. In certain situations, pragmatics is related to

verbal acts. That said, pragmatics deals with language at a more concrete level than grammar. (5) Speech as a product of verbal acts. As described in (4), this aspect is a form of verbal action in pragmatics.

To find out whether a parent's speech act to their child is effective, Edy (2020) defines effective communication as communication that allows listeners to easily receive messages from speakers. To achieve effective communication there are 5 conditions introduced by Stephen (2019); respect or mutual respect, empathy or the ability to place oneself in a situation and condition, audible or easy to listen to and understand, clarity or clarity of the message that will not lead to misinterpretation, and the last is the humble or humble attitude which includes serving, appreciating, forgive, gentle, etc.

Non-effective communication can be realized if there are obstacles. Ludlow & Panton (1992) divide these barriers into 7: status effects or differences in social status between listeners and speakers; semantic problem or language factor used by the speaker; perceptual distortion or perspective between oneself and others; cultural differences or differences in culture, religion, etc; physical distractions or physical distractions; poor choice of communication channels or media used; and no feedback or no response from the other person.

## **METHOD**

This study applies a descriptive qualitative method because the data obtained is described textually. The data in this study are in the form of directive utterances from parents to their children. The source of data in this study was obtained from the film *The Pursuit of Happyness*. The data in this study were collected using observing and note-taking techniques. The researcher listened to the conversation between Chris Gardner's character and his son, Christopher in the film *The Pursuit of Happyness* which contains directive speech acts.

In analyzing Then the researcher recorded the speech. After the data is collected, the researcher categorizes the data into direct or indirect speech acts based on Yule's theory (1996). After the data is categorized, the researcher analyzes whether the utterance is effective or ineffective according to Edy's criteria (2020).

This study applies an analytical technique introduced by Spradley (2016). There are 4 stages of analyzing techniques: domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and finding cultural themes. The first stage is domain analysis; Yule's pragmatic approach is applied to sort out what is included in the directive speech act. After the data is obtained, then the taxonomy analysis stage takes a role in separating whether the directive speech act is delivered directly or indirectly according to Searle (1976). The next step is to implement Edy's effective communication to show whether the directive speech act is effective or not. The next stage is componential analysis. At this stage, the findings from the domain and analysis stages are presented in table form to show this relationship. The last stage is finding cultural themes. At this stage, the differences and similarities of direct or indirect strategies on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of communication are analyzed to conclude whether dominant data or submissive data.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This research is only focused on the search for directive speech acts on the characters of Chris Gardner and his son, Christopher in the film *The Pursuit of Happyness*. Bach (1979) classifies directive speech acts in the form of: request, question, demand, prohibition, permission, and advice. In a simple directive speech act aims to make the listener take an action. Based on the results of the analysis, a total of 117 utterances were found.

In searching for the directive speech act, speech act was found in the form of direct or indirect. Searle (1975) defines an indirect speech act as one thing that is spoken but also has meaning in other ways. So conversely, a direct speech act is one thing that is spoken and only has that meaning.

Lastly, this paper aims to examine whether directive speech acts delivered directly or indirectly are effective or ineffective. Effendy (2008) indicated that communication was ineffective when there were: differences in perception, emotional reactions, inconsistencies in verbal and non-verbal communication, suspicion, and no feedback.

Effective directive speech acts were found in 110 data. From this data, there are 85 direct strategic data and 25 indirect data. The following describes an example of data analysis.

- a. Chris Gardner : Yeah, make a list.
- b. Chris Gardner : Give me a kiss.
- c. Chris Gardner : Let's get ready for bed.
- d. Chris Gardner : Hey, uh, put your plate in the sink.

Phrases (a), (b), (c), and (d) are direct directive speech act strategies. The context of utterance (a) occurs when Christopher wants to make a list of wishes that will be his birthday present, but from that list, only one item can be realized. So, Christopher made the list, so he would know exactly what object he wanted most as a gift. Christopher told his intention to his father, and his father allowed it. The expression Yeah, make a list is a form of directive speech act direct strategy because the expression is an imperative form, which has the same structure and purpose. Then the speech is effective because Christopher really wants to do it, and Chris' speech is a form of speech act that aims to agree. This context is in line with Effendy's (2008) principle of communication effectiveness, namely the absence of different perceptions.

In the story (b), the context of the datum is Chris asking Christopher to kiss him before leaving for work. In the speech, Kiss Me is an imperative form that has the same structure and intent. The speech was effective because Christopher also gave his father a kiss. In this way, the Ludlow & Ferguson principle of no feedback does not occur.

Furthermore, expressions (c) and (d) occur when Chris and his family have finished dinner, then he tells his son, Christopher to go to bed. Before going to bed Christopher had to put his dirty dishes in the sink. What Chris said only had that meaning and no other meaning. So what Chris said was a direct directive speech act. These expressions can be categorized as effective communication because they avoid the obstacles mentioned by Ludlow & Pantan.

- e. Chris Gardner : Can you spell everything you're thinking of?
- f. Chris Gardner : Don't use that one, okay?  
Christopher : OK
- g. Chris Gardner : You gotta trust me, okay?  
Christopher : I trust you

While speeches (e), (f), and (g) are indirect directive speech acts. Datum (e) tells a story about Christopher wanting to make a wish list that he would ask his parents for a birthday present. From the lists made, he is only allowed to choose one. So, he should consider it carefully. Christopher also told his intention to his father, and his father responded with Can you spell everything you're thinking of? which sentence is an interrogative sentence, which means that the child makes as many lists as possible. So the expression is a directive speech act but delivered indirectly. However, this expression is effective because Christopher already wants to do that. In this way the perceptual distortion introduced in the communication barrier by Ludlow & Pantan does not occur.

Furthermore, speech (f) is in context when Christopher asks whether the word "f\*ck" is spelled correctly. Chris also told me that the word was spelled correctly. But he advised his son not to use that word by saying Don't use that one, okay? which sentence is interrogative, but intends that the child does not say the word. The phrase is effective because after hearing the advice, Christopher replied Okay. The principle of no feedback in Ludlow & Panton does not occur here.

The last phrase (g), tells when Chris and Christopher found an overnight stay and Christopher wanted to sleep, but Chris had to fix his scanner outside and couldn't accompany his son to sleep. Then Chris left the door open so that when Christopher called him, he could hear his son's voice. The clause You gotta trust me, okay? not only meant to ask but meant to beg Christopher to trust his father. Then Christopher replied I trust you. In this way, the expression is effective because it avoids indications of Effendy's ineffectiveness at the point of no feedback.

The second characteristic is non-effective. Within this characteristic, seven data points were identified: four were categorized as direct strategies, while three were categorized as indirect strategies. The following is an example of ineffective speech act analysis.

- a. Chris Gardner : Time to get up, man.  
Christopher : All right, Dad.  
Chris Gardner : Come on.
- b. Chris Gardner : Stay here, Christopher.
- c. Chris Gardner : All we gotta do is push this black button right here.
- d. Chris Gardner : You gotta close your eyes.  
Christopher : You close your eyes. I wanna see.  
Chris Gardner : Alright. Come on. We push it together.

Speeches (a), (b), (c), and (d) are directive speech acts that are delivered directly. The context in example (a) is Chris waking Christopher from his sleep because it was already morning. However, this speech was ineffective because Christopher only answered All right, Dad but did not wake himself up from sleep. What Christopher did was inconsistent between verbal and non-verbal according to Effendy.

The context in example (b) when Chris accompanied his son to play in the park, he saw a scanner thief that he planned to sell. Chris chased the thief and told Christopher to stay in the park, and not go anywhere. The phrase Stay here. Christopher is an imperative sentence which is structurally in accordance with what is intended. These words are meant to prohibit. However, these words were ineffective because Chris was about to follow his father and was curious about what had happened. In context, Christopher doesn't respond but still follows his father. There are no feedback barriers in the conversation.

Next, sentence (c) tells when Christopher asked his father whether the scanner his father was selling was a time machine, as said by the thief in the park. Chris agreed to that, and explained how the thing worked. But Christopher did not respond because he doubted his father's words, and thought it was just a fantasy. So that the datum is classified as ineffective because no feedback communication barriers occur in the conversation.

Finally, data (d) talks about Chris explaining how his scanner works to become a time machine. Chris told Christopher to close his eyes, so that the tool can work. But Christopher doubted his father's clue by telling his father to try it first. An indication of Effendy's point of suspicion occurred in the conversation.

Furthermore, non-effective directive speech act also occurs in the indirect strategy. There are 3 data that can be found in these strategies and traits. The following describes an example of this data.

- e. Chris Gardner : Did you hear what I said?
- f. Chris Gardner : Did you hear me?

g. Chris Gardner : You wanna push it?

Speeches (e), (f), and (g) are directive speech acts which are conveyed indirectly. Datum (e) and (f) told that when Chris was accompanying Christopher in the park to play, Chris saw his burglar detector which he planned to sell. Chris chased the thief and told Christopher not to go anywhere. However, Christopher instead followed his father, so his father said (e) and (f) so that his son does not follow him. The phrase that Chris said was an interrogative sentence that meant to prohibit. However, the ban was ineffective because Christopher did not respond to anything and instead followed his father to chase the thief. So that the two data are not effective because there is an indication of no feedback as formulated by Ludlow & Pantou.

Finally, (g) tells the story of Christopher making sure that the scanner his father sold was not a time machine as the thief said the scanner was in the park. However, Chris actually told his son that the scanner he was selling was actually a time machine. He explained how the tool worked to his son and told him to try it by saying *You wanna push it?* which is an interrogative sentence. Even though the utterance is in the form of an interrogative, the utterance is a directive speech act which aims to make an offer but is conveyed indirectly. However, this sentence is non-effective because Christopher doubts his father's words, and thinks what his father said was just a fantasy and nothing would happen.

In Alexander's research (1996) entitled *Communicative Intense Expressed by Parents in Interaction with Young Children* which specifically discusses parenting, implies that as time goes by, and as children get older, the use of parental directive speech to their children tends to decrease. Then, it can be concluded that directive utterances by parents are actively used by parents to younger children, including toddlers. This is because toddlers do not yet have adequate knowledge and experience about what is good and bad for them. So that the younger the child, the more they need direction from parents (Kurniawan, 2021).

From the findings that have been obtained, it is concluded that the most dominant directive speech act is effective and has a direct strategy. This is based on the fact that a direct directive speech act only has one meaning, so the message conveyed is clear and does not lead to multiple interpretations. Thus, the majority of the data in this film is in line with the principle introduced by parenting experts Fiber and King (2017) which states that indirect speech is the most effective way to win over human hearts, including children. As in the scene when Chris was about to say goodbye and asked Christopher first, Chris directly asked Christopher by saying Give me a kiss. However, direct requests are effective, because Chris and Christopher are used to doing these actions.

In order for parent-to-child communication to be conveyed effectively, parents should pay attention to what will be conveyed, what mood they are in, and ask questions that can help determine the child's feelings for sure (Duncan et al, 2007). Like in the scene when Christopher asks if his father's scanner is a time machine, Chris actually says yes and demonstrates how to use it. At first Christopher didn't believe what his father said because it sounded illogical. However, Christopher finally followed his father's instructions. In that scene, the communication that was initially ineffective was conveyed to be effective because Chris took advantage of his son's curious mood.

Meanwhile, indirect directive speech acts are found to be ineffective at least. Most of the data is ineffective because it is delivered with anger. As concluded by Edy (2020), the message conveyed while angry is actually difficult to accept and even makes listeners, especially children, wrong in accepting the message. Like in the scene when Chris meets his scanner thief while waiting for his son Christopher to play in the park. When he was about to chase the thief, Chris shouted at Christopher to stay where he was and not follow him. In the end Christopher was determined to pursue his father. From this example, it is clear that Christopher misunderstood his father's orders and interpreted his father as being in a precarious situation. If related to

Duncan et al's suggestions in order to achieve effective communication, Chris ignored all of these suggestions because he was in a hurry so he didn't have time to pay attention to what was going to be said.

There are three factors that cause someone to tend to use indirect speech acts; (1) lack of familiarity between speakers and interlocutors. This usually happens when someone is dealing with strangers or someone who has not had an intense relationship with the other person. (2) social distance between speakers and interlocutors. This factor includes differences in educational status, social strata, age, position, etc. This factor gives power and authority to the speaker, but people who are less dominant will tend to use indirect speech. (3) power. This last factor is related to superior and inferior. It usually occurs in teachers and students, parents and children, artists and admirers (Cutting, 2002; Searle, 1969; Yule, 1996 in Kurniawan, 2021; 161-162).

In order to make communication effective, Stephen (2019) provides tips on communicating; (1) eye contact. This effort aims to create a good impression on the other person. (2) Facial expressions. All human emotions are expressed differently through facial expressions. So that when communicating, showing an expression of interest in the other person's conversation is important so that the other person feels valued. (3) Posture. As with facial expressions, posture also conveys condition and mood. Moving too much implies being in a hurry, lifting head indicates end of question, etc. Paying attention to body posture is also useful to help visualize the message conveyed verbally by the speaker. To convey the message effectively, the speaker must also be a good listener. Unfortunately, most parents are only proficient at speaking and advising but are very lacking in listening. Lack of parental listening ability can reduce sensitivity in communicating. Stephen also gave tips on being a good listener, which he shortened by LISTEN; (1) Look and Look Interested, or hear and look enthusiastic about the other person. (2) Identify the Issue, or try to find out the point to be conveyed by the interlocutor. (3) Suspend the Judgment, or don't be in a hurry to make sure the point the other person wants to convey. (4) Test Your Understanding, or validating the listener's understanding with the intent conveyed by the speaker. (5) Exclude your Emotions, or delay in reacting and showing emotions until the speaker has finished conveying the points to be conveyed. (6) Notes, Noises, and Non-Verbal, intending to write down important points, make sounds, and movements such as nodding, shaking the head as a response that the listener is really listening to the other person's speech.

Thus, parental speech to children must consider various aspects. Both linguistically and in the procedure. The use of directive speech acts either directly or indirectly has its own effectiveness depending on the context and situation. Because this research examines the relationship between parenting and linguistics, so that in the future research related to this can be called Parenting Linguistics or briefly called *Parentinguistics*.

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to find the effectiveness of directive speech acts in the film *The Pursuit of Happyness*. As a result, a total of 117 directive speech act data were found. The directive speech act is conveyed either directly or indirectly. The direct strategy found 89 data, and the indirect strategy found 28 data. In its effectiveness, directive speech acts that are effective are found in 110 data, while directive speech acts that are non-effective are found in 7 data.



From the film *The Pursuit of Happiness*, it can be concluded that the delivery of an effective directive speech act does not depend on its form. It can be directly or indirectly. However, effective communication to children depends on how parents pay attention to the intentions to be conveyed, and the mood of the child.

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