REQUESTING SPEECH ACT OF UTTERANCES IN *OCEAN'S ELEVEN* BY STEVEN SODERBERGH: A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The term *sentence* and *utterance* are made different in terms that the former refers to syntactic structure, while the latter points out the actual function of such a structure in real communication. The same things apply to the terms *request* and *requesting*. The first term suggests the structural characteristics of sentence asking people to do something while the second term indicates the real sentence causing people to do something. The first deals with formal grammar while the second deals with pragmatics the actual use of language in communication.

This article attempts to see requesting in its possible different syntactic forms as parts of speech acts in *Ocean'sEleven* by Steven Soderbergh. A pragmatic approach is applied since it uses context as a part of linguistic analysis involving the speaker, addressee, time, location, and genre in the conversation. A syntactic form of a sentence only cannot represent the real meaning of intention.

The analysis of speech act of the conversation in the film brings us to an understanding that pragmatics encourage us to comprehend different kinds of setting to achieve requesting as a part of language use. Pragmatics as a branch of linguistics reveals mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer.

Keywords: request, requesting, speech act, illocutionary act, perlocutionary act

1. INTRODUCTION

People in daily life need language as a tool to communicate with others. Coommunication involves the speaker and the hearer. Griffiths (2006:116) says "in such cases, necessity is relative to the context as it is understood by the speaker and hearer(s) involved in a communication". Communication can be distinguished by the form, sentence meaning and utterance meaning. As stated by Cruse (2006) that the sentence meaning is a sentence which has by character of the words it contains and their grammatical rule, and which is not dependent on context. While, utterance meaning is the meaning which carries when it is used in a particular context. The written communication is usually tied with the grammatical rule and used in formal. Whereas the spoken communication relates to the utterance meaning. Griffiths (2006) also says that abstract knowledge and sentence meaning is a part of semantics. Whereas, acts of communication which rely on context to elaborate on literal meaning is the study of pragmatics. This is the following data to illustrate the explanation above.

(1) *I order you to leave now.*

(Cruse, 2006: 167)

The data (1) above can be interpreted in different meaning. The first meaning, the data (1) is just the sentence which relates to the structure analysis, because it is preceded by the subject *I* and followed by the verb *order*. The second meaning, the data (1) has a requesting meaning where the speaker wants the hearer to leave his/her at the time. This second meaning relates to pragmatics analysis. Crystal (2008: 379) says that "pragmatics has come to be applied to study of language from

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the point of view of the users". In the other words, pragmatics refers to the speaker's intention which is understood by the hearer.

The phenomenon of language abovealso can be found in the movie. *Ocean's Eleven* is a movie that shows various sentence forms which have different contexts. Some of the dialogues from the movie *Ocean's Eleven* that show the sentence forms which have different contexts, as follows:

(2) Today lesson's how to draw out the bluff. That much money, this early in the game I'm saying, he is holding nothing better than a pair of face cards. *Barry?* (00:09:31)

(Soderbergh, 2001)

The italic word in the data (2) is one word sentence. Grammatically, the italic word in data (2) interrogative form. Exactly, the italic word has a requesting in meaning which based on the context, the speaker wants Barry to give money on the casino table as a bet.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Following up the general definition of pragmatics before, Horn & Ward (2006) define the pragmatics as the study of those context-dependent aspects of meaning which are systematically abstracted away from in the construction of content or logical form. In other words, that pragmatics will be an abstract meaning if the hearer interprets the meaning differently with the speaker's utterance. Furthermore, pragmatics is also the central topic of linguistics, thus it has several scopes as the subfield withinpragmatics. One of the overviews of the that is according to Crystal (2008)he says that pragmatic theory has been achieved, mainly because of the variety of including aspects: deixis (refers to personal, locational, situation the utterance takes place), implicatures (has function as the response of the hearer), presuppositions (implicit clarification the past event without an explanation), and speech acts (the act of the process of speaking).

Speech act is a crucial role, because speech act is directly involved to make the conversation conducted. Austin (1962 in Horn and Ward, 2006) thinks that each utterance has a meaning or sense. He also says that every normal utterance has both a descriptive and an effective aspect: that saying something is also doing something. Austin also distingushes the type of speech act into three ways: locutionary acts (the communicative activity), illocutionary acts (the intentions of speakers), perlocutionary acts (the effect which is achieved by the hearer).

A different approach to distinguish the types of speech acts can be made on the basic of structure. According to Yule (1996) a fairly simple structural distinction between three general types of speech act is provided by the three basic sentence types, they are: declarative, interrogative, and imperative. The three form can be differentiated by the form. The form of declarative or statement is preceded by subject and followed by the verb/auxiliary/modal. Then, the interrogative form is contrast with the declarative form which interrogative is preceded by the verb/auxiliary/modal and followed by the subject. Eventually, the imperative form shows a explicit commanding. For instance, *get better soon!*.

Speech acts also relates to direct and indirect speech act. It is easily to diffrentiate a distinction between direct and indirect speech acts. There is a theory that the difference between direct and indirect speech act based on the form of the sentence, as stated by Yule (1996) that a declarative used to make a statement is a

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direct speech act, but a declarative used to make a request is an indirect speech acts. The following data will illustrate the expalanation above.

(3) *It's cold outside.*

(Yule, 1996: 55)

As illustrated in data (3), it is a declarative form. When the data (3) is used to make a statement, it means that the data (3) is a direct speech act, but when the data (3) is used to make a command or request, the data (3) has a function as indirect speech act. The speaker hereby requests the hearer to close the door or the window.

Speech act relates to the utterance in every conversation of speaker. According to Kroeger (2005) that there is a relation between speech acts (statement, commanding/requesting, question) and sentence types (declarative, imperative, interrogative). Kroeger says "the relation also shows the typical or expected sentence type (i.e. grammatical form) that would be used for expressing a given pragmatic function" (2005: 197).

According to Reiter (2000) request consists of two parts: the core request or head act and the peripheral elements. The core request is the main utterance which has the function of requesting and can stand by itself, thus it can be used on its own. Reiter (2000) linguistically distinguishes request with imperatives, interrogatives, negative interrogatives and declaratives. The three are the form which is containing requesting in its function. Furthermore, Blum-Kulka et al (1989 in Reiter, 2000) also state that the types of requesting strategies in all languages will show three major levels of directness: direct, conventionally indirect (ambigous utterance), non-conventionally indirect (need same comprehension with the utterance).

Some interactions that show requesting between speaker and hearer also can be found in the dialogue of the movie *Ocean's Eleven*. *Ocean's Eleven* is a movie having various speaker from various character. This movie also has many utterances which reflecting request and contains of direct and in-direct speech from the conversation. According to Wikipedia, *Ocean's Eleven* is a 2001 American comedy heist film and a remake of the 1960 Rat Pack film of the same name. The 2001 film was directed by Steven Soderbergh.

3. METHODS

To make the research can easily be done, the researcher arranges the problem list and decides the research methods. Relates to the needs of this research, thus this research needs qualitative research. Wei & Moyer (2008: 27) "qualitative research is concerned with gathering and analyzing all sorts of data that are informative. Observational data, documents, interviews, language interactions, and even numerical data are typical data types".

In every research, there are the data have to be served.As previously stated in the introduction that concern with the requesting, thus the research object of this thesis is requesting. Then, to get the requesting speech act, the movie *Ocean's Eleven*is choosen as the data source. Furthermore, the dialogues of the characters which contain of the requesting speech acts are as data of this research.

For this research, the researcher collects the data by taking a note. It means that, the utterance of the speaker in the movie will be noted by the research to collect their utterance as the data. The technique to collect the data will be listed by the five steps: watching the movie, finding the script of the movie, noting and classifying the dialogue in the subtitle into forms and ways-conventionally and non-conventionally indirect of requesting, analyzing the data, and making conclusions.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Form of Requesting Speech Act Used in *Ocean's Eleven*

As previously stated by Reiter (2000) who linguistically distinguishes request with imperatives, interrogatives, negative interrogatives and declaratives. However, this research will concern with interrogatives, negative interrogatives and declaratives. The form of requesting speech acts in the movie *Ocean's Eleven* will be discussed in this following discussion.

a. Interrogative

Interrogative or question is usually used to ask something that is ended by question mark. In verbal utterance, interrogative appears when the intonation of the speaker is deeply emphasized.

(4)   Danny: Which one is the amazing Yen?
          Rusty: The little Chinese guy.
          Danny: *Who else is on the list?*
          Rusty: He is the list.   (00:22:36)

The italic words in data (4) show a requesting speech act in interrogative form. Danny asks to Rusty *Who else is on the list?* Which means that Danny asks for another man to change Yen on the list, but Rusty answers *He is the list*. Which means that Rusty refuses the Danny's requesting.

b. Negative Interrogative

Negative interrogative is almost the same as the form of interrogative before, but it can be differed by using the word not in that form.

(5)   Albert: *Shouldn't somebody help him?*
          Basher: Oh, that's a great idea, Albert. Let's go back the van and we can all get nicked?   (01:00:28)

In that the italic in data (5) means that Albert asks for someone to rescue their friend, Linus, because Linus is trapped in that room. Then, Basher answer *that's great idea*. Which does not mean that Basher agrees with Albert's requesting, but Basher refuses the idea. The refusal can be looked in the next utterance *we can all get nicked?* Which means that they will be all trapped too in that room.

c. Declarative

As discussed in the literary review that declarative is a statement which is preceded by subject and followed by verb.

(6)   Rusty: *We need to talk. Now.*
          Danny: Okay.   (00:45:26)

The data (6) is a short conversation between Rusty and Danny which means requesting speech act which is shown by Rusty's utterance. He explicitly says that *We need to talk. Now.* which means that Rusty asks for Danny to take a time to talk with Rusty. Then, Danny directly answers *Okay* which means that Danny approves.

4.1.1 The Types of Requesting Used in *Ocean's Eleven*

As previously stated in literary review that Blum-Kulka et al (1989 in Reiter, 2000) distinguishes the types of requesting into three major levels of directness; direct, conventionally indirect, non-conventionally indirect. Since, this research concern with the indirectness, thus the following discussion will be about conventionally and non-conventionally indirect speech act in the movie *Ocean's Eleven*.

a. Conventionally Indirect Speech Act

As stated by Blum-Kulka (1989 in Reiter, 2000) said conventionally indirect speech act relates to ambiguity at the utterance.

(7) Saul   : I need something more secure.
     Benedict   : Mr. Zerga, I can assure you that our house is safe......
     Saul   : I can assure you, Mr. Benedict, that your generosity in this matter will not go overlooked. Now, *what can you offer me besides the safe*?   (00:51:44)

In the data (7) the conventionally indirect speech act is shown by the italic words. Saul asks *what can you offer me besides the safe?* to Benedict. It means that Saul ask for Benedict to help him through saving his valuable thing. Actually, Saul can says *Can you save my thing, please?*.

b. Non-conventionally Indirect Speech Act

Non-conventioanlly indirect speech act appears when the speaker uses the different verb to ask, then the hearer needs have same understanding of the conversation context.

(8) Livingston : Basher, we're set.
     Basher   : Hang on a minute, chief.
     Livingston : We don't have a minute. Yen gonna suffocate.
     Basher   : *Well, then you better leave off bothering me, don'tyou think?*   (01:22:50)

In data (8) particularly the italic words in Basher's utterance has a requesting which is conveyed by using negative question. Contextually, Basher asks *Well, then you better leave off bothering me, don't you think?*. It means that Basher asks for Livingston to stop talking and bothering him, because he is being serious.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Due to this research concerns with the indirectness, thus the researcher finds the forms of requesting in the movie *Ocean's Eleven*, they are:

a. Interrogative

The requesting speech acts in interrogative form particularly the italic words in the data are commonly preceded by modal, auxiliary, and WH questions. The interrogative forms are also ended by question mark and uttered by emphasizing the intonation. In the movie *Ocean's Eleven*, the requesting speech acts in interrogative form are unnecessarily preceded by modal, auxiliary and WH questions, but it can be one word sentence for instance, *Barry?*

b. Negative Interrogative

The requesting speech acts in negative interrogative form are almost the same as the interrogative form, but the form can be differentiated by using the negative word, *not*. This form is the least used form in the dialogue of the movie *Ocean's Eleven* compared by interrogative and declarative forms.

c. Declarative

The requesting speech acts in declarative form are commonly used in the movie *Ocean's Eleven* after the interrogative form. This form appears when subject is preceded the sentence. Contextually, the declarative form is a statement which has a meaning to state the speaker's intention. In the movie *Ocean's Eleven*, the requesting speech acts in declarative form are commonly using the words want and need.

5.2 Since this research concerns with the indirectness, thus the researcher finds the types of requesting in the movie *Ocean's Eleven*, they are:

a. Conventionally Indirect Speech Act

The dialogue of the movie *Ocean's Eleven* also contains of requesting strategies in conventionally indirect speech. This form appears when a speaker utters ambigous utterance which is actually used to ask something to the hearer politely. Furthermore, conventionally indirect speech act commonly uses the interrogative form and formal utterance.

b. Non-conventionally Indirect Speech Act

Although this form is least used, non-conventionally indirect speech is also used in the dialogue of the movie *Ocean's Eleven*. This form is different with conventionally indirect speech act. Non-conventionally indirect speech act are commonly used when the speaker asks something but totally uses different verb to the hearer. Therefore, the hearer really needs the same comprehension of the conversation about, in order to the hearer can interpret the speaker's intention.

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