INDIRECT SPEECH ACT IN JUDY CHRISTENBERRY'S NOVEL THE COWBOY'S SECRET SON : A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the core of a descriptive theory of Indirect Speech acts, i.e. uttererances used by the speaker to the hearer based on the three type of felicity conditions such as content condition, preparatory condition, and sincerity condition. The data examples taken from the English novel "The Cowboy's Secret Son" contains some of indirect speech act uttrances that are included to the pragmatic study. The researcher explains and analyzes every utterance based on the theory of Yule (996), Searle (1976, 1975), Austin (1962), Mey (1993), Bach and Harmish (1979), and Levinson (983). The result of the research is founded that the speaker uses indirect speech act is to convey the request to the hearer to do something in the future. Moreover they use indirect speech act which has two meanings such as literal meaning and non-literal meaning or indirect meanig. In other words, they use indirect speech act to avoid the hearer to get upset, feel bad, angry and for politeness. And, generally they use indirect spech act because they have recognized the matters they are uttering.

Keywords: Theme, Rheme, Thematic Progression

Rationale

In linguistic communication, people do not merely exchange information. They actually do something through talking or writing in various circumstances. Actions performed via speaking are called speech acts." In English, specific labels are commonly given, such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, or request. As Yule (1996:47) suggested the descriptive terms for different kinds of speech acts are directly related to the speaker's intention in producing an utterance, since he/she normally expects that the hearer will recognize his/her communicative intention. Concerning this, both speaker and hearer are usually helped in this process by the context/circumstances (speech events), which surround the utterance.

Moreover, as Yule (1996: 56) said that the speech act is an 'indirect' speech act brings an indirect relationship between structure and function (a relevant aspect to be mentioned is that 'indirect speech act' in English portrays a polite way of speech).

Whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, we have an indirect speech act. Thus, a declarative used to make a request is an indirect speech act. For example; "It's cold outside", is

declarative, "*I hereby tell you about the weather*", is statement. "*I hereby request you that you close the door.*" is request. Yule (1996: 56)

A fairly simple structural distinction between three general types of speech acts is provided, in English, by the three basic sentence types. Based on the examples as "*you wear a seat belt*", "*do you wear a seat belt?*", and "*wear a seat belt!*", there are easily recognized relationship between the three structural forms (declarative, interrogative, imperative) and the three general communicative functions (statement, question, command/request).

Different structures can be used to accomplish the same basic function, for example where the speaker wants the addressee not to stand in front of the TV, as in "*Move out of the way!*", is the imperative structure which represents a direct speech act, accomplish the three basic function of all utterances to be a command/request in indirect speech act, as in "*Do you have to stand in front of the TV?.*", hence the interrogative structure is not being used only as a question, "*You're standing in front of the TV.*", and *You'd make a better door than a window.*" However, the declarative structures as in "*You're standing in front of the TV,* " and *You're make a better door than a window,* " are also indirect speech act.

The term of felicity conditions is still in use and it is not restricted only to performatives anymore. As Yule (Yule, 1996: 50) observes, felicity conditions cover expected or appropriate circumstances for the performance of a speech act to be recognized as intended. He then, works on originally Searle's assumptions, proposes further *classification of felicity conditions* into five classes: *general conditions*, *content conditions*, *preparatory conditions*, *sincerity conditions* and *essential conditions*.

According to Yule (Yule,1996:50), general conditions presuppose the participants' knowledge of the language being used and his non-playacting, content conditions concern the appropriate content of an utterance, preparatory conditions deal with differences of various illocutionary acts (e.g. those of promising or warning), sincerity conditions count with speaker's intention to carry out a certain act and essential conditions 'combine with a specification of what must be in the utterance content, the context, and the speaker's intentions, in order for a specific act to be appropriately (felicitously) performed.'

Levinson (1983: 274) suggests that it may be a mistake (and is certainly un-pragmatic) to attempt to map syntax onto speech acts; it may be preferable to look at the function/ purpose of each speech act in context, and accept that they can serve a wide range of purposes. Grundy (1995: 101-5) argues that language is made up of segments that are meaningless in isolation morphemes and phonemes only convey meaning when they combine into words, which in turn combine into sentences (so that it can be a noun or a verb, according to the context in which it appears). These are possible solutions to the problem posed by indirect speech acts; they

simplify analysis and are thoroughly pragmatic in their attention to context rather than syntactic form.

Based on the above explanations the writer would like to concentrate on the indirect speech acts in Judy Christenberry's novel *"The Cowboy's Secret Son"*, which will be categorized into three kinds of *felicity conditions* such as *content condition,* *preparatory condition* and *sincerity conditions.* In this case the writer will know which the most felicity condition among the three selected conditions to use the indirect speech act and the functions of using indirect speech acts utterance to convey their request in communications.. The theory will be taken from linguistic study about pragmatic by Searle, George Yule, Austin, Levinson, and some other philosophers as well as references books.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of the relationship between the linguistic forms and the users of those forms. As Yule (1996: 4) said in this three parts distinction, only pragmatics allows humans into the analysis. The advantage of studying language via pragmatics is that the person can talk about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of action (for example, requests) that they are performing when they speak.

The big disadvantage is that all these very human concepts are extremely difficult to analyze in a consistent and objective ways. Two friends having a conversation may imply some things and infer some others without providing any clear linguistic evidence that it can point to as the explicit source of the meaning of what was communicated. Thus, pragmatics is appearing because it's about how people make sense of each other linguistically, but it can be a frustrating area of study because it requests people to make sense of them and what they have in mind.

Speech Acts

Speech acts relationship with the utterance performance in doing something with his words like a *statement*, an *offer*, an *explanation*, or for some other *communicative purposes*, as Yule (1996 :47) said that actions performed via utterances are generally called speech acts and, in English, are commonly given more specific labels, such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, or request.

However, Searle (1976 :16) states that speech acts are the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication. They are not mere artificial linguistic constructs as it may seem, their understanding together with the acquaintance of context in which they are performed are often essential for decoding the whole utterance and its proper meaning. The speech acts are used in standard quotidian exchanges as well as in jokes or drama for instance.

The problem of speech acts was pioneered by Austin which were posthumously published in his famous book *How to Do Things with Words.* It is Austin who introduces basic terms and areas to study and distinguishes locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

The Locutionary, Illocutionary and Perlocutionary Acts

Locutionary act: makes a meaningful utterance; **illocutionary act**, performed act by a speaker by virtue of the utterance having been made, defined with respect to speaker's purpose (e.g. warning); **perlocutionary act**:, act which achieves a particular effect on the listener (e.g.,frightening) For example, S says to H "*I will come tomorrow*" (a promise) (by Searle 1976) :

1. Since this is a well-formed, meaningful English sentence, a successful locutionary act has been performed if S knows English.
2. A successful illocutionary act (promise) has been performed if S intends to come tomorrow, believes she can come tomorrow, thinks she wouldn't normally come tomorrow, thinks H would like her to come tomorrow, and intends to place herself under an obligation to come tomorrow and if both S and H understand the sentence, are normal human beings, and are in normal circumstances.
3. A successful perlocutionary act (persuasion) has been performed if H is convinced that S will come tomorrow.

Indirect Speech Act Utterances

In speaking to another, we make use of sentences or, to be more precise, utterances. People do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they perform actions via those utterances, and indeed that whole chunks of conversation are related to the surrounding chunk by the structure of conversation.

Through conversation we establish relationship with others, achieve a measure cooperation, keep channels, open for further relationships, and so on. The utterances we use in conversation enable us to do these kinds of things because conversation itself has certain properties which are well worth examining.

Moreover, as Yule (1996: 56) said that the speech act is an **'indirect'** speech act brings an indirect relationship between structure and function (a relevant aspect to be mentioned is that 'indirect speech' in English portrays a polite way of speech). In a clear way, it seems that **a speech event** refers to the meticulous way to invade the other's environment through language. For example, an **indirect request** presupposes some conditions to be stated." There is a definite difference between **asking someone to do X** and **asking someone if the preconditions for doing X**. So, a request is considered as an imposition by the speaker on the hearer, therefore it is better for the speaker to avoid a direct imposition through a direct request. For this purpose, to make use of a speech event is a significant way of interaction without being aggressive/direct to the hearer. As we could observe, an indirect speech act is associated with politeness within English environment.

Whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, we have an indirect speech act. Thus, a declarative used to make a request is an indirect speech act. For example; "*It's cold outside*", is declarative, "*I hereby tell you about the weather*", is statement. "*I hereby request you that you close the door.*" is request. Yule (1996: 56). A fairly simple structural distinction between three general types of speech acts is provided, in English, by the three basic sentence types. Base on the examples as "*you wear a seat belt*",

"do you wear a seat belt?", and *"wear a seat belt!"*,   there is an easily recognized relationship between the three structural forms (declarative, interrogative, imperative) and the three general communicative functions (statement, question, command/request).

Conventional Indirect Request

Conventional   indirect requests may be expressed as questions as in (e1) and (e2): or as assertions (e3). In context, (c4) and (e5) may also be immediately understood as a ***complaints***, meant as an indirect request for action.

(e1) Could you close the window? indirect request

(e2) Would you mind closing the window? indirect request

(e3) I would like you to close the window. indirect request

(e4) The window is still open! complaint / indirect request

(e5) I must have asked you a hundred times to keep that window closed!

complaint/indirect request

The expressions which can occur not only with direct assertions (a & b), but also with assertions in the guise of interrogative (c & d) or in the form of imperatives (e & f), Levinson (1983: 266) :

- The square root of a quarter is, obviously, a half
- The square root of a quarter is, I believe, a half
- May I tell you that, obviously, the square root of a quarter is a half?
- May I tell you that, I believe, the square root of a quarter is a half?
- Let me tell you that, obviously, the square root of a quarter is a half.

- Let me tell you that, I believe, the square root of a quarter is a half.

The   kinds   of   sentences   that   are employed are very   varied,   for   some empirical generalizations. We could construct an indefinitely long list of ways of indirect requesting an addressee to shut the door as in Searle (1975: 87).

- I want you to close the door
  I'd be much obliged if you'd close the door
- Can you close the door?
  Are you able by any chance to close the door?
- Would you close the door?
  Won't you close the door?
- Would you mind closing the door?
  Would you be willing to close the door?
- You ought to close the door
  It might help to close the door
  Hadn't you better close the door?
- May I ask you to close the door?
  Would you mind awfully if I was to ask you to close the door?
  I am sorry to have to tell you to please close the door
- Did you forget the door?
  Do ask a favor with the door, love
  How about a bit less breeze?
  Now Johnny, what do big people do when they come in?
  Okay, Johnny, what am I going to say next?

A different approach to distinguishing types of speech acts can be made on the basis of structure. Moreover, a   simple structural distinction between three general types of

speech acts is provided, in English, by the three basic sentence types. Thus as provided by Yule (1996: 35), the relationship between the three structural forms such as *declarative, interrogative, imperative*, and the three general communicative functions such as *statement, question, command/request*. Indirect speech acts are generally associated with greater politeness in English than direct speech acts.

Felicity Conditions

The term of felicity conditions was proposed by Austin who defines them as follows (Austin, 1962: 14 – 15):

1. There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances.

2. The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.

3. The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and completely.

Where, as often, the procedure is deigned for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must intend so to conduct themselves, and further must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.

For example, according to Searle's theory, a command or a request has the following felicity conditions:

- Asking or stating the preparatory condition: *Can you pass the salt? The hearer's ability to perform an action is being asked. It is a question; non-literally, it is a request.*
- Asking or stating the propositional content: *You're standing on my foot. Would you kindly get off my foot? It is a statement or a question; non-literally, it is a request.*
- Stating the sincerity condition: *I'd like you to do this for me. It is a statement; non-literally, it is a request.*
- Stating or asking the good/overriding reasons for doing an action: *You had better go now. Hadn't you better go now? Why not go now? It is a statement or a question; non- literally, it is a request.*
- Asking if a person wants/wishes to perform an action: *Would you mind helping me with this? Would you mind if I asked you if you could write me a reference? It is a question; non-literally, it is a request (in the last example*

an explicit directive verb is embedded).

All these indirect speech acts have several common features:

- Imperative force is not part of the literal meaning of these sentences.
- These sentences are not ambiguous.
- These sentences are conventionally used to make requests. They often have "please" at end or preceding the verb.
- These sentences are not idioms, but are idiomatically used as requests.
- These sentences can have literal interpretations.

In this research, the data which taken from a ChristenBerry's novel "The Cowboy's Secret Son" : A Pragmatic Analysis are analyzed based on the **Felicity conditions**, such as **Content Condition, Prepratory Condition** and **Sincerity Condition**.

Content Condition

A content condition concerns to t he future action that the hearer will perform the action. The example of content condition of hearer's Future action. such as;. for promises/warnings the content of the utterance must be about a future event (promise: the event will be an act by the speaker).

In most cases, *a 'request', is not made by means of a single speech act suddenly uttered.* Yule (1996: 57), example :

Him : Oh, Mary, I'm glad you're here.
Her : What's up?

Him : I can't get my computer to work.
Her : Is it broken?
Him : I don't think so.
Her : What's doing?
Him : I don't know, I'm useless with computers.

Her : What kind is it?
Him : It's a Mac. Do you use them?
Her : Yeah.
Him : Do you have a minute?
Her : Sure.
Him : Oh, great!

The extended interaction may be called a 'requesting' speech event without a central speech act of request. Notice, that there is no actual request from 'him' to 'her' to do anything. People might characterize the question. 'Do you have a minute?' as a 'pre request', allowing the receiver to say that she's busy or that she has to be somewhere else. In this context, the response 'sure' is taken to be an acknowledgement not only for having time available, but also a willingness to perform the unstated action. The analysis of speech event is clearly another way of studying how more gets communicated is said.

The following examples of novel analysis :

Robbie : Mommy, I'm sleepy!
Abby : I know, sweetie, but we're going, um, to visit a-a friend of Mommy. You'll sleep in the car during the way. When we get there, I'll let you watch TV as much as you want today.
Robbie : But, Mommy, you said I always have to go to school, 'Cept on Sunday and Saturday. Is it Sunday?

Abby : No!

Context :

Robbie complained early the next morning as Abby tried to juggle two suitcases to bring to her friend who lived far from her place, her car keys, a big and her son's tiny hand. This was no time for Robbie to chatter. It was already eight o'clock and she had to get out before Nick came back. She shuddered to think what would happen if he found them leaving. However, she couldn't lose her son, meant she really didn't let her son go away with Nick, as he told her before that he had plan to   take Robbie away to see his mother at the village just for a couple of days

Analysis :

The content condition of the dialogue concerns to the speaker's utterance to go to sleep because he is sleepy. Moreover, he requests her mother to stay at home because he is sleepy as in "**Mommy, I'm sleepy!**". Moreover, he also suggests that she goes to school with him, yet the hearer forces him to follow her to go to her friend's house by saying "**No!**", means that the hearer also requests his son not to refuse her intention to follow her to go to her friends house unless Robbie her son will go with Nick to his village.

In this case, the speaker requests her mother to stay at home or go to school because he does not want to follow her mother to her friend's house. Then his mother answers indirectly with the imperative form '**No!**', which means that she

requests him to go with her to her friend's house, because   she has to get out before Nick (her husband) comes back. She shuddered to think what would happen he found them leaving.

Preparatory Condition

An indirect request as said by Yule (1996:56-7) can be interpreted as a question whether the necessary conditions for a request are in place, i.e., a preparatory condition would be that the speaker assumes the hearer is able to perform the action. The proceeding discussion is essentially about person trying to get another person   to do something without risking refusal or causing offense. However, this type of situation does not consist of a single utterance. It is a social situation involving participants who necessarily have a social relationship of some kind, and who, on a specific occasion, may have particular goals.

Example :

Robbie : Mommy, is dinner ready yet?
Abby : come on, let's eat sweetheart.

Context :

In the kitchen, dinner was ready to be cooked, and in the living room Robbie watched TV impatiently. Abby (Robbie's mother) could hear his favorite show blaring as he sang along in a high-pitched, slightly off-key voice. Then   suddenly Robbie's voice startled her.

Analysis :

The speaker's utterance doesn't typically ask question to the hearer, but particularly

requests the hearer to prepare his dinner. So in *the preparatory condition* the hearer as in **"come on, let's eat sweetheart"** is able to perform the speaker's request to prepare dinner. In this case the hearer let the speaker have dinner has been prepared by her.

Moreover, the speaker's utterance in indirect speech act is to avoid the hearer's bad feeling because of the speaker's intention. Means that the speaker expects the hearer to prepare dinner requested by the speaker without any refusal politely. In this case the hearer is able to decode what the speaker intends to do that the hearer offers the speaker to eat dinner.

The Sincerity Condition

A sincerity condition is the psychological state of the speaker concerning the propositional content of an illocutionary act. The philosopher J.L. Austin (1911-1960) claims that many utterances (things people say) are equivalent to actions. When someone says: *"I name this ship"* or *"I now pronounce you man and wife"*, the utterance creates a new social or psychological reality. At a simple level the speaker must really intend what he or she says. In the case of apologizing or promising, it may be impossible for others to know how sincere the speaker is.

Moreover sincerity, as a genuine intention (now) is no assurance that the apologetic attitude will last, or that the promise will be kept. There are some speech acts - such as *plighting one's troth* or *taking an oath* - where this sincerity

is determined by the presence of witnesses. The one making the promise will not be able later to argue that he or she didn't really mean it.

Example:

Kate : Son, you're not thinking. If Abby wants to move to her own place, how can you stop her?
Nick : I can't, (he said in a booming voice). **But I can go to court and get custody of Robbie!**

Context :

Nick forced Abby the woman he'd loved very much and Robbie her little boy to live with his family. Yet, Kate his mother thought he didn't need to forbid them if Abby wanted to move to her own place. But Nick didn't agree with his mother's suggestion, until he really rejected his mother when she spoke to him.

Analysis :

The speaker's utterance indirectly asks the hearer to let and bring Abby and her son to leave Nick's house if she wants to move to her own place. So in this situation the speaker convey her suggestion indirectly that Nick can not forbid Abby and her son if she wants to move to her own place. In this case the speaker requests the hearer to let Abby and her son leave the house and find another own place. Based on the precondition of the hearer to agree with the speaker's request and suggestion is not in place

In this case the speaker's request as in

"Son, you're not thinking. If Abby wants to move to her own place, how can you stop her?" to let them move out from his house is refuced by the hearer with his unexpected response as in *"I can't,"*, then he says *"But I can go to court and get custody of Robbie!* Means he is able to custody Robbie. That's why he intends to go to court and get custody of Robbie.

So even though the speaker knows that her son would not agree with her suggestion, yet in *the sincerity condition* the speaker utters in indirectly request to suggest Nick to listen her propose. Thus, the speaker requests the hearer to let Abby and her son to live in their own place, because they do not want to accept the hearer's offer not to move out but they just live with Nick's family. Otherwise the hearer refuces the speaker's request nevertheless Abby does not accept the hearer's offer.

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