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## OBSERVATIONS OF THE TYPES OF DIRECTIVES

Being concerned with getting someone to do something directives express what the speaker wants: orders, commands, requests, suggestions, etc. The use of the term “directive” to designate the conative category of projecting one’s will on another person is originated in the speech act theory of authors such as Searle /Searle, 1979/. It was subsequently picked up and used by those working on pragmatics /Blakemore, 1992/, modality /Palmer, 1986/ and discourse analysis /Yule, 1996/.

It is common knowledge that there are various ways of getting someone to do something, but in this paper we deal with the following types of directives: request, question, order/command.

**1. Request:** Let us now consider a subtype of directives which Edda Weigand /Weigand, 2010: 188/ called **requests** for which the latinized term “monitives” can be used. The characteristic feature of requests is that they propose some course of action and indicate that it should be carried out by the addressee.

Requests are often expressed as indirect speech acts which, at least formally, show expression of politeness:

*“Could you ring her back when you’ve got a moment?”* (Falk, p. 257).

*“Could you please at least tell them it’s quite urgent?”* (Falk, p. 107).

It’s worth mentioning that the notion of “indirect speech acts” makes sense only if one takes into consideration also the notion of a “literal force” as the indirect (or illocutionary) force is implied only on the basis of the literal force. Putting it another way, the utterance, in fact, has the rule – associated form as its literal form and at the same time may have, in addition, an inferred form. This can be illustrated by the following example:

*“And, oh, Mr. Winterborune, will you get us some iced lemonade, please?”*

*Mr. Winterborune brought the drinks* (Aldington, p. 147).

Here, the speaker’s statement has the literal force of a question, it also has the indirect force of a polite request and this interpretation is strongly reinforced by the presence of the word “please”. With utterances of this type it becomes evident that requests and pleas are mostly not distinguished by specific devices. The difference is a functional one, “having or not having a reasonable claim to fulfillment”.

Why do we prefer the indirectness of e.g. *“Could I ask you to credit my account?”* to the simplicity and directness of *“Credit my account, please”*. The main reason (although not the only one) for using these indirect forms is politeness as W. Labov and D. Fonshel point out, “the indirect forms are the same direct forms only with a bundle of “mitigators” or politeness markers tacked on in front / Levinson, 1983: 274/.

Requests can be made by interrogative sentences, having various structures and, therefore, can be classified into the following groups (in addition to others):

- Requests introduced by *can/could you V (verb)?*

*“You wouldn’t be going, would you?”*

*“I might – Can you pass me a cigarette? - and then again I might not, it all depends”* (Aldington, p. 284).

Here the speaker believes that the addressee has the ability to perform the action requested, namely to pass a cigarette.

- Requests expressed by the following pattern: *can/could I+have +noun.*

*“Can I have the other key to the flat?”*

*“I’m afraid it’s lost”* (Aldington, p. 370).

Here the hearer rejects the speaker’s request by means of producing the reason why she cannot give him (the speaker) the other key (because it’s lost).

- Request with *will/would/won’t you...*

*“Will you kindly send one of your policemen for two buckets of water?”* (Conan Doyle, p. 86).

*“All right”, said Jones with a smile, “Well, would you, please, go upstairs...? (Conan Doyle, p.33).*

*“Won’t you give her these poems? (Saroyan, p. 54).*

The interrogative sentences, that are used to make requests, may have other structures as well.

It is worth mentioning that the perspective of requests can be emphasized, either projecting toward the speaker (*Can I borrow your notes?*) or the hearer (*Can you loan me your notes?*). Since we must take into account many factors when we make requests (for example, the age, social distance, gender and level of imposition), speakers often employ different strategies (linguistic and non-linguistic) to minimize the effects of their request on the other person.

Social constraints suggest that when we make a request, we expect that request to be complied with. Some researchers believe that the greater the risk of refusal, the more indirect the directive will be.

Let’s consider some examples of requests:

*“Not all that, sir; I ask only this: don’t send for jewels, and don’t crown me with roses: you might as well put border of gold lace round that plain pocket handkerchief you have there” (Bronte, p. 28).*

Here, Jane believes that Mr. Rochester can do what she requests him to do, but it is not obvious for her whether he will do that without being requested. In the above mentioned example Jane really wants him not to dress her like a doll with jewels and rose crown.

*“I hope you did not take up any space with unnecessary items.”*

*“Like what?”*

*“Like ... I don’t know ... pajamas” (Sparks, p. 266).*

Here indirectly Garrett requests Theresa not to take unnecessary items with her, as far as they had to come back a few days later.

***“Do you mind if I look around?”***

*“No, go ahead (Sparks, p. 167).*

*“Can I give you a hand with something?”*

*“There’s not much to do,” he answered (Sparks, p. 171).*

By her request Theresa asks for permission to look around and in the next example she politely offers Garrett to cook dinner together. In these examples Theresa attempts to get Garrett to answer, i. e., to perform a directive function.

So, a *request* is a directive speech act whose illocutionary purpose is to get the hearer to do something in circumstances in which it is not obvious that he/she will perform the action in the normal course of events /Searle, 1969/. By initiating a request, the speaker believes that the hearer is able to perform an action.

**2. Question:** Question is another type of directive. Questions imply a direct address to the reader - they require someone to answer.

*"Whose house is that, constable?" asked the elder of the two gentlemen.*

*"Mr. Dorain Gray's, sir" murmured the policeman (Wilde, p. 264).*

In this example it is obvious to the speaker that the house belongs to somebody but he does not know who that "somebody" is and he asks the hearer for this information.

While talking about speech functions and the subtype of directives i.e. questions, the following joke is worth attention. In the joke attorney's initial *wh* question is followed by two *yes-no* questions and a final alternative question.

A woman went to an attorney to ask about a divorce:

*"What grounds do you have, madam?"*

*"About six acres."*

*"No, I don't think you quite understand. Let me rephrase the question. Do you have a grudge?"*

*"No, just a parking space."*

*"I'll try again. Does your husband beat you up?"*

*"No, I always get up at least an hour before he does."*

*"The attorney could see he was fighting a losing battle. 'Madam, do you want a divorce or not?'"*

*"I'm not the one who wants a divorce," she said. 'My husband does. He claims we don't communicate.'"*

(adapted from *The Mammoth Book of Humor*, by Geoff Tibballs. Carroll & Graf, 2000)

Here attorney asks questions to get some information because of the woman's presupposition it becomes impossible.

The following two subsequent examples of Jane's questions show her unburdened mind facing the new boss:

*“How’s your memory when you were eighteen, sir?” “How do you know — how can you guess all this, sir?” (Bronte, p. 173-174).*

Let’s bring another examples.

*“Shall I travel?—and with you, sir?”*

*“Yet, are not capricious, sir?”*

*“Had you ever experienced of such a character, sir?”*

*“But before me: if I indeed, in any respect come up to that difficult standard?” (Bronte, p. 26-27).*

*“Why did you take such pains to make me believe you wished to marry Miss Ingram?” “Of course, I did. But, to the point, if you please, sir,—Miss. Ingram?”*

*“Did you think nothing of Miss Ingram’s feelings, sir?”*

*“Do you think Miss Ingram will not suffer from your dishonest coquetry? Won’t she feel forshaken and deserted?”*

*“Once again, seriously, may I enjoy the great good that has been vouched saved to me, without fearing that anyone else is suffering the bitter pain I myself felt a while ago” (Bronte, p. 29-30).*

In the sentences cited above Jane’s act of asking questions rebounds her critical thinking, respect, consideration, and concern over Miss Ingram who, to her mind, might suffer from Mr. Rochester’s desertion.

Let’s analyse the following conversation:

*“Who are you in love with?” asked Lord Henry, after a pause.*

*“With an actress”, said Dorian Gray blushing.*

*“Who is she?”*

*“Her name is Siby Vane” (Wilde, p. 71).*

Henry asks Dorian Gray question in the interrogative sentence *“Who are you in love with?”*. Not contented with Dorian’s answer, Lord Henry asks the second question to get more information, i. e., to know the name of the actress who Dorian is in love with.

After having had a walk together the following conversation takes place between Theresa and Garrett:

*“How do you like it?”*

*“It’s beautiful.”*

*“Is it like the beaches up north?”*

*“Some of them, but the water is a lot warmer here. Haven’t you ever been to the coast up north?”*

*“I’ve never been outside North Carolina. So, how long are you staying in Wilmington?”*

*“Until Sunday. I have to go back to work on Monday.”*

*“Do you know anyone else in town?”*

*“No. I came down here on my own.”*

*“Why?”*

*“I just wanted to visit.”*

*“Do you usually take vacations alone?”*

*“Actually this is my first time.”*

*“Can I ask you a personal question?”*

*“It depends on the question.”*

*“Are you seeing anyone up in Boston?”*

*“No.” (Sparks, pp. 155-156)*

In the above mentioned conversation the questions asked by Garrett are not merely questions. Due to those questions Garrett tried to get some additional information about Theresa, about her life and intentions.

As we have already mentioned, the speaker asks questions to get information from the hearer that he (the speaker) does not hold.

*“Now, John, if a farmer has seven apples and he gives away three apples, how many apples remain?” (Saroyan, p. 146).*

Asking this question the teacher wants John to display his knowledge. In other words, the speaker holds the information himself and his intention is to find out whether the hearer knows as much.

The same can be observed in the following example:

*“Do you know what that star is, my boy?”*

*“No, sir.”*

*“That is Sirius, a gigantic sun, many millions of miles distant from us” (Aldington, p. 101).*

Here, by asking the question, the speaker finds out that the boy does not know what star is and he himself provides the information.

So, questions imply a direct address to the reader and require an answer.

**3. Order/Command:** The other subtype of directives is *order* suggested by Edda Weigand /Weigand, 2010: 186/. Orders rely on sanctions or means of exerting pressure.

Adults do not usually give each other orders, unless they are in a position of authority. However, adults can give orders to children and to animals.

Where status differences are clearly marked and accepted, superiors tend to use imperatives to subordinates: doctors to patients, teachers to pupils, etc.

*“Write that down!”*, Deanna said (Sparks, p. 80).

*“Don’t make a big deal out of this”*, Deanna said (Sparks, p. 113).

*“Go ahead and take a seat”* (Sparks, p. 110).

*“Don’t hold your breath, don’t breathe too quickly or slowly”*, explained Garrett (Sparks, p. 241).

*“Wait a minute”*, she finally said (Sparks, p. 307).

*“Call me with the details, please!”*, she read (Sparks, p. 210).

In the above mentioned examples status differences are marked, and superiors use imperatives while talking to subordinates.

Undoubtedly, there is a difference in the way we speak to our friends and the way we speak to our relatives, teachers, or others of professional status. There are many ways of expressing this directive. We can say in general the interrogatives and declaratives are more polite than the imperatives.

So, people who are close friends or intimates use more imperatives, for instance. The examples below were all produced within a family and said without rancour, causing no offence:

*“Roll over.”*

*“Shut up you fool.”*

*“Set the table, Robbie.”*

*“Wash your hands for tea, children.”*

*“Turn that blessed radio down.”*

Being concerned with getting people to do things, directives vary in strength, i.e., we can attempt to get people to sit down, for instance, by suggesting or inviting them to do so or by ordering or commanding them to sit down. Orders and commands are generally expressed in imperative form. Polite attempts to get people to do something tend to use interrogatives and declaratives, as the following examples illustrate:

*“Sit down!”*

*Imperative*

*“You sit down!”*

*You Imperative*

<i>“Could you sit down?”</i>	<i>Interrogative with Modal Verb</i>
<i>“Sit down, will you?”</i>	<i>Interrogative with Tag</i>
<i>“Won’t you sit down?”</i>	<i>Interrogative with Negative Modal</i>
<i>“I want you to sit down.”</i>	<i>Declarative</i>
<i>“I’d like you to sit down.”</i>	<i>Declarative</i>
<i>“You’d be more comfortable sitting down.”</i>	<i>Declarative</i>

This list could go on and on. There are many ways of expressing this directive. Although as we have already mentioned that the interrogatives and declaratives are more polite than the imperatives, a great deal depends on intonation, tone of voice and context. A gentle *sit down*, for example, may be far more polite than thundered *I want you all sitting down now!* /Holmes, 1996/. The intonation of an order is an important factor: each word is stressed, and the tone falls at the end of the sentence:

*“Sit down now!”*

“Sit”, “down” and “now” are all stressed, and the tone falls on “now.”

When we give advice using the imperative, all the words are stressed normally.

*“Don’t tell him you’re resigning now! Wait until Monday when he’s in a better mood.”*

*“Don’t eat heavy meals.”*

*“Distrust it, sir; it is not a true angel”* (Bronte, p. 175).

Normally, as we have already mentioned, giving order can be done by those who are of higher status than or, at least, of the same status as the listener.

The conversation below between Theresa and her son Kevin is a vivid example of an order, where she has a higher status than her son:

*Theresa: “Then read something.”*

*Kevin: “I didn’t bring anything.”*

*Theresa: “Then sit quietly.”*

*Kevin: “I am.”*

*Theresa: “No, you are not. You are standing over my shoulder.”*

*Kevin: “I’m just trying to help you.”*

*Theresa: “You are talking right now.”*

*Kevin: “That’s because you are talking to me.”*



*Theresa: "Can't you let me take the test in peace."*

*Kevin: "Okay. I won't say another word. I'll be as quiet as a mouse."*

*Theresa: "Why are you whistling?"*

*Kevin: "I am bored."*

*Theresa: "Then turn on the TV."*

*Kevin: "There is nothing on ..."* (Sparks, p. 239).

Theresa ordered her son Kevin to sit calm and not to talk, as she was busy; she was taking the test. As far as she is of a higher status than her son, she freely makes orders.

While talking about orders and **commands**, it is worth mentioning that there is a sharp distinction between an order and a command, although both are used somewhat indiscriminately in referring to either. An order leaves the manner of execution in general up to the recipient of the order. An order does not always specify just when it shall be executed, but frequently fixes a certain time by which it must be executed. A command leaves nothing to the discretion of the recipient. It usually is peremptory, arbitrary, and implies execution at the time of its receipt unless otherwise specified. So, an order is a direction to do something with an implied threat attached to it. A command is a direction to do something with no threats attached.

People do not mind being directed to do something. They are usually happy to carry out a command.

What people do not like are threats. They will get upset and will put up a lot of resistance when someone threatens them.

Thus, all languages have different types of directives, but the variation in directive forms within a language must be sensitive to social constraints. When we do not pay attention to these constraints, people may feel offended or think there is something wrong with the communication.

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**Լ. ԱՎԵՏԻՍՅԱՆ** – *Հորդոր արտահայտող ակտերի առանձնահատկությունները.* – Հորդոր արտահայտող ակտերի հիմնական առանձնահատկությունը դիմացինին որևէ գործողություն կատարելուն դրդելն է: Տվյալ հոդվածում փորձ է արվում ուսումնասիրել հորդոր արտահայտող ակտերի հետևյալ տեսակները՝ խնդրանք, հարց և հրաման: Հոդվածում մանրամասն նկարագրվում է վերը նշված ակտերից յուրաքանչյուրը՝ բերելով համապատասխան օրինակներ, որոնք բացահայտում են տվյալ ակտի բուն էությունը:

**Լ. АВЕТИСЯН** – *О некоторых особенностях директивных речевых актов.* – В статье делается попытка изучения следующих видов директивов: просьба, вопрос, приказ. Подробно описывается каждый из вышеуказанных речевых актов, приводятся соответствующие примеры, которые выявляют их сущность и прагмалингвистические особенности.