
Direct and Indirect Speech Acts in the Drama "A Streetcar named Desire" written by Tennessee William

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Abstract

A drama is a work filled with figurative languages that are full of implied meanings. The purpose of writing a drama, of course, is to entertain the reader. However, a drama text can also be a source of pragmatic learning that is rich in expression. This research is one of pragmatic research on drama texts. Using content analysis techniques, the researchers attempted to portray the use of speech acts, both direct and indirect, used by Tennessee William in her play "A Streetcar named Desire". There are at least ten data collected by the researchers and interpreted briefly based on the rules of speech acts in the pragmatic concept. The conclusion drawn from the interpretation of the data is that there are various uses of indirect speech acts in the drama and also changes in the types of speech acts that show how dynamic the language used in the drama is.

Keywords: *speech acts, direct speech acts, indirect speech acts, drama*

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1. Background

Communication is an action that is always done by humans to relate to other people in life. Communication is carried out to convey feelings or thoughts or for other purposes such as maintaining social relations between community members. The elements of communication as already known are the speaker, the message to be conveyed, and the speech partner with the medium of communication is language. The form of its use can also be done in writing, which is called written language, or orally or what is called spoken language.

In communicating, what is at the core is how one or the speech participants can convey messages that can be understood by one another. If one of the speech participants does not understand the meaning or intent of his interlocutor, then the communication will not go well, it may not even continue. Even more so if there is a misunderstanding between the speech participants. Therefore, everyone, as a speech participant, will always try to use language in their own way with the same expectations, making the interlocutor understand the meaning of each utterance.

To convey the meaning of the conversation that can be understood, each participant will choose the use of language that is considered appropriate. The accuracy of this language choice is also influenced by the background of the speech partner and the context. Such as age, social status or other relationships. The choice of appropriate language, in addition to the message being conveyed, the relationship between the participants is maintained. However, the use of proper language is also not enough. The way of communication must also be adapted to the social and cultural conditions of each. Sometimes a speech participant understands the meaning of each sentence spoken by his friend or partner, but the meaning conveyed by someone does not match the sentence. Things like this are very common in communication. Moreover, the speech participants from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, understanding the culture of the interlocutor, especially in communicating, is a crucial requirement in order to avoid pragmatic failure.

In conveying messages to speech partners, someone often uses sentences or types of speech that differ between meaning and intent. Meaning is obtained from the construction of sentence structures from a series of words. Sometimes the construction of the sentence spoken is in the form of a question, but the intended purpose of the speaker is to want his interlocutor to do something. For example, someone might say "Is the air conditioner in this room broken?" Although the form or construction of the sentence used is an interrogative sentence, the speaker's intention is to ask the interlocutor to turn on the AC. So, if the interlocutor has good communication skills, then he will understand and immediately turn on the AC. However, if the speech partner does not reach the speaker's intention, then it is possible that he will simply answer, "No. The AC is normal." The meaning of the speech is not conveyed.

Speeches of other types are often used in addition to asking questions. For example, with declarative sentences, even though the intention is imperative to ask or order the interlocutor to do something. This can be exemplified when a mother tells her child that "Son, it has started to rain." The mother's sentence is in declarative form but it means an order, namely an order to the younger brother to put the clothesline in, or tell him to stop playing outside, or something else. It depends on what context the speech event is in.

The use of different speech forms for this purpose is called indirect speech or indirect speech act. The use of speech like this is often used. Therefore, understanding and knowledge of this matter becomes very important. This form of indirect speech is not only used in everyday communication in the real world. However, this form of speech is also used by the author in the literary works created, especially those containing dialogue. For example drama, novel or short story.

Regarding this indirect speech, the writers tried to study the form of this indirect speech act in Tennessee Williams' literary drama. This work is one of the most famous of Williams' other works. The drama "A Streetcar named Desire" is the author's favorite drama because of the presentation of the story and the use of beautiful language by the author and of course easy to understand. Therefore, in this research, the writers examined the forms of indirect speech acts contained in this drama and describes them.



2. Theoretical Base

2.1. *Speech Acts*

In the world of language, we recognize various forms of sentences with all their respective functions. The function that the sentence has can be marked with certain morphological particles or signs. The marking of these sentences differs from one language to another. It depends on the typology of the language.

The sentences in question are in the form of declarative, interrogative and imperative sentences (Yule, 1996:54; Huang, 2007:109). These three basic forms of sentences can specifically be related to the illocutionary force contained in each of these sentences. The illocutionary force in question is to state or affirm something (declarative), to ask or ask (interrogative), and to order or request (imperative). In other words, declarative sentences are sentences that contain the illocutionary force of explaining or stating and providing information to the speech partner. Interrogative sentences are sentences that contain illocutionary force in the form of asking something to the speech partner, while imperative sentences are sentences that are spoken with the illocutionary force of giving orders or asking the speech partner to do something the speaker wants.

These three sentence forms are always actively used in communication in any language. However, sometimes certain sentence forms do not always have the appropriate illocutionary force with the form of the sentence being constructed. When the form of the sentence is used to express something (declarative) with the same form or according to the illocutionary force, then the speech is a direct speech act. Meanwhile, if an utterance is conveyed in a different way between the form of the sentence and its intended illocutionary force, then the speech act is an indirect speech act. For example, the form of the sentence is interrogative, but the illocutionary force is imperative or asking the speech partner to do something.

From this explanation, it can be emphasized that direct speech acts are speech acts that are the same between the form of speech and the intent of the speech. Because of the similarity between form and intent, this direct speech act is stated to further clarify the intent. The speaker tries to avoid misunderstanding the hearer about the meaning of his speech. For example by directly saying "open that window!" Usually direct speech is used because of the influence of social relations between the speaker and the addressee where the speaker is in a higher social position and has certain authority. For example, between superiors and subordinates. But the speech that will be delivered is different if the speaker is a guest, so to expect the window of the house to be opened, the speaker will tend to use another form of expression. For example, by saying "It's hot in here, there's no air" or "the window is broken, isn't it?" Speakers will use indirect speech acts because they avoid attitudes that seem impolite.



2.1.1. Indirect Speech Acts

As previously mentioned, indirect speech acts are still a concept that linguists continue to talk about. Many experts have explained the concept of indirect speech acts with various definitions.

Yule said that an utterance is said to be direct speech when there is a direct relationship between the form of the sentence structure and the communication function. The sentence structures meant are declarative, interrogative and imperative. While the communication function is like giving a statement, asking or ordering/asking (1996:54). Similarly, a speech called indirect speech is when there is an indirect relationship between the form of the sentence structure and its function in communication.

When an utterance is in the form of a declarative sentence with the same function, namely to give a statement, then the speech is direct speech. Likewise, if the form of the sentence used is interrogative and the purpose of its use is the same, namely to give a question to the speech partner, then such speech is still a direct speech. In contrast, when the form of the sentence used is declarative or interrogative, but to express an intention that is not to give a statement or question but an order or request, then the speech is indirect.

2.1.2. Factors Affecting Indirectness in Speech

There are several reasons why someone uses direct or indirect speech acts when communicating. These reasons are mainly shaped by the culture of the speaker or the culture of the speech partner. These reasons are such as power, social closeness and the weight of the burden (See Thomas, 2013:124-132; Djatmika, 2016:60-65).

The first is power. Power will affect the choice of speech, whether consciously or not by the speaker. The higher the power of a person, the more there is a tendency to speak with direct speech. Likewise, someone who does not have power over his interlocutor, the tendency to use direct speech is very low. Speech that is generally used in the context of this kind of relationship is an indirect speech act.

In general, the power in question can be divided into three forms in social life, namely legitimate power, referent power, and expertise power (Djatmika, 2016: 61).

Power due to legitimacy is a form of power possessed by a person because of his status and social role. For example, the relationship between lecturers and students, teachers and students, superiors and subordinates, a commander with a higher rank and members or soldiers with lower ranks, chaplain or teacher with students, parents with children, and so on. While a person's admiration for others, also unconsciously has given power to the person who is admired over the admirer. Finally, the admirer when speaking with the admired, he will tend to use indirect speech. And vice versa. People who are not very admired by someone, there will be a tendency to speak with the nature of direct speech.



Meanwhile, in certain social groups, when a person's expertise exceeds others in his group, then he also has power over other people in that group. With power because of this expertise someone will be more likely to use direct speech.

In addition to power, another thing that influences the tendency to use direct or indirect speech is social closeness. The closer the relationship between a speaker and his interlocutor, the more likely he is to behave or use direct speech rather than indirect speech. Meanwhile, when the relationship between the speaker and his speech partner is far away, there will be a tendency to use indirect speech. Distance or close social relations are influenced by several factors such as kinship, friendship, age, economy and so on (Djarmika, 2016:63).

In addition to power and social closeness, there are other factors that also influence the form of speech, namely the size of imposition. Someone will tend to use direct speech when it is more burdensome to the speech partner in an interaction. The term burden or weight in question is in the form of services or actions that will be desired to be carried out by the speech partner for the benefit of the speaker, or also in the form of goods desired for the speaker from the speech partner (see Djarmika, 2016: 64). The heavier the burden to be imposed on the speaker partner, the more the speaker or the first person tends to use indirect speech acts. Vice versa, the lower or smaller the burden given to the speech partner, the higher the tendency for speakers to use direct speech acts.

2.2. Characters and Summary of the Drama A Streetcar named Desire

The drama "A Streetcar Named Desire" is one of the main works of Tennessee Williams. This drama was launched in 1947. The dominant theme in this drama is violence. The description of the reality of life experienced by Williams and his brother in family life with the main characters and characterizations is as follows.

Characters	Characterizations
Blanche DuBois	She is Stella's older sister who experiences fragility in life due to the influence of her sad past. Her life is full of dreams that she will meet a good man in her life. Blanche is described as having serious psychological problems in her social environment after being raped by Stanley.
Stella DuBois	She is Stanley's pregnant wife. Stella is a woman who is very dependent on her husband, Stanley.
Stanley Kowalsky	Stanley is a former soldier, Stella's husband who is very arrogant. A figure who is selfish and becomes the executor of Blanche's life. Stanley is described as violent and committing various acts of violence in his family, from verbal abuse to the rape of Blanche.
Mitch	Mitch is Stanley's poker friend who was close to Blanche.
Eunice	Eunice is their neighbor in the apartment they live in.



The setting in this drama is New Orleans; picture of a city that is different from other cities in America. The story begins with Blanche's arrival from Mississippi to New Orleans, where her sister Stella is. Blanche's departure to her sister's place was a form of escape from the problems she faced in her previous residence. There was no other place for Blanche but where her sister was.

Blanche's arrival was an unexpected arrival for her sister and husband. After living with her sister and her sister's husband, Stanley, many new problems have colored Blanche's life. The apartment they live in is not a picture of an economically stable life. Only two rooms in their apartment. The rooms are only separated by curtains, not doors.

Stanley himself was really uncomfortable with Blanche. Plus, Stanley doesn't believe in Belle Reve, the residence left by Blanche and Stella's parents has been confiscated. Stanley couldn't believe that the loss of their house was not due to confiscation but to Blanche's sale. Stanley's distrust breeds his hatred for Blanche. Stanley feels that he also owns what his wife has with a legal basis called the Napoleonic code. This law views that what is owned by the wife, also belongs to the husband, and vice versa.

Their shaky relationship continued, until one day when Stella was in the hospital giving birth, only Blanche and Stanley were left at home. Stanley also vents his pent-up anger and hatred by raping Blanche, his wife's older sister. After the incident, Blanche really experienced a tremendous psychological shock. Plus, when she told Stella about what Stanley had done, Stella didn't believe it and even thought that Blanche had suffered from a mental disorder that was getting more serious and sent her to a mental hospital.

3. Methods

This research is a descriptive qualitative research. The data source is obtained from the play *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams. This research focuses on dialogues that contain elements of indirect speech by the characters in them. The data collection method used in this research is the literature study method and the technique of listening and taking notes. Meanwhile, to interpret the data, the researchers used content analysis techniques.

4. Discussion

4.1. Indirect Speech in the drama *A Streetcar Named Desire*

The data found and considered as indirect speech forms in Tennessee Williams' drama *A Streetcar Named Desire* amounted to ten utterances as data. Here are the data with the discussion.

Data (1)

Context of speech: this conversation took place sometime after Blanche came looking for her sister's address and met Eunice who both lived in the apartment. Her sister, Stella, was out with her husband at the bowling alley. There was no one in his sister's apartment.

EUNICE: Well, **why don't you just go in and make yourself at home till they get back?**



BLANCHE: How could I-do that?

EUNICE: We own this place so I can let you in..... (*SCENE ONE:13*)

During the conversation, Eunice asked Blanche to enter the apartment. However, the sentence that Eunice uses is an interrogative sentence, which is to ask why Blanche didn't just go into her sister's apartment. Even though the meaning of Eunice's speech is to tell her to come in or with an imperative intent. Blanche also understands that Eunice asked her to come in even though it is in the form of a question (interrogative). This can be seen from the response that says "How can that be?" This means that it is impossible for her to enter while the owner of the house is not at home. From this it is clear that the speech used by Eunice is an indirect speech act, namely the interrogative form of speech with an imperative function.

Data (2)

Context of speech: after a while the two of them entered the apartment and Blanche was very tired.

BLANCHE: If you will excuse me, **I'm just about to drop.**

EUNICE: Sure, honey. Why don't you set down?

BLANCHE: What I meant was **I'd like to be left alone.** (*SCENE ONE:15*)

In this conversation, Eunice did not understand whether Blanche wanted to be left alone or Eunice left their place. However, Eunice did not understand the meaning behind Blanche's speech. In this speech event, there has been a pragmatic failure. Finally, Blanche also reaffirmed with direct speech or directive from the beginning which is indirect speech. The indirect speech that Blanche uses is in the form of a declarative sentence, but it intends and contains an imperative function. This is because there is no social closeness between Blanche and Eunice, because they have just met.

Data (3)

Context of speech: This conversation took place after Blanche met her sister Stella who had returned from the bowling alley. After a few moments of conversing, Blanche wished Stella had something to say regarding her appearance.

BLANCHE: You haven't said a word about my appearance.

STELLA: You look just fine. (*SCENE ONE:18*)

The speech conveyed by Blanche is an indirect speech with a declarative form. However, the intention behind the utterance is to want Stella to convey something related to her arrival or presence at Stella's house. So the purpose of the speech is directive even though the form is declarative.

Data (4)

Context of speech: This speech event took place when Stanley told Stella about Blanche's life he had learned from his friends. The life in question is about the ugliness of Blanche's life. The story that Stanley told about Blanche really surprised Stella. Stella still couldn't believe what her husband Stanley was saying.

STELLA: **My head is swimming!**



STANLEY: All right. I'll wait till she gets through soaking in a hot tub and then I'll inquire if *she* is acquainted with the Napoleonic code. It looks to me like you have been swindled, baby, and when you're swindled under the Napoleonic code I'm swindled *too*. And I don't like to be *swindled*. (SCENE TWO:35)

At this conversation, Stella was very surprised by Stanley's story. Since Stella couldn't hear it anymore, Stella asked Stanley to stop the story by saying "My head is swimming." It wasn't that Stella had a real headache. The form of the sentence is declarative.

Data (5)

Context of speech: This conversation took place when Stanley and Stella told stories in the room while waiting for Blanche who was taking a shower. Stella wanted her husband to come out of the room too because Blanche would be changing in a room that was only separated by curtains.

STELLA:you come out with me while Blanche is getting dressed.

STANLEY: **Since when do you give me orders?**

STELLA: Are you going to stay here and insult her? (SCENE TWO:38)

Stanley said "since when do you give me orders?" is an expression or utterance with an interrogative form. Nevertheless, the utterance functions as an imperative form. This indirect speech is said with the intention that it should never rule itself.

Data (6)

Context of speech: There were only Mitch and Blanche in the apartment. Mitch hugged Blanche.

BLANCHE [*gaily*]: I said unhand me, sir. [*He fumblingly embraces her. Her voice sounds gently reproving*] Now, Mitch. Just because Stanley and Stella aren't at home is no reason why you shouldn't behave like a gentleman.

MITCH: **Just give me a slap whenever I step out of bounds.** (SCENE SIX:103)

Mitch's expression is basically a sentence with an imperative form or contains the meaning of commanding or ordering. However, what he wanted to convey was a statement or declarative with the intention that he would not do anything indecent to Blanche. This form is a form of indirect speech acts which is still rarely discussed in the concept of indirect speech. In speech act theory, all sentence forms that contain imperative intentions are conveyed in the form of declarative and interrogative sentences. However, in data (6), different things are found, where the speech act is in the form of an imperative with the intention to be conveyed is a form which is generally declarative. The utterance "Just give me a slap whenever I step out of bounds", judging from the meaning, can be changed into speech form with a declarative sentence, namely "I will not be perverted."

Data (7)

Context of speech: This conversation took place when Blanche and Stella returned home from a show. The poker game that took place in their house was not finished. Stella really hoped that the game was over. Stella also asked Stanley about the end time of the game.



Stanley also replied that the game would be over if they wanted to stop. After Stella introduced Blanche to two of Stanley's friends, Blanche tried to offer to join the poker game.

BLANCHE: Poker is so fascinating. Could I kibitz?

STANLEY: You could not. Why don't you women go up and sit with Eunice?

STELLA: Because it is nearly two-thirty (SCENE THREE 51)

Stanley uses indirect speech in the form of asking questions. However, what Stanley was trying to convey was to tell them to go to Eunice's place. This is because their presence, for Stanley, really interferes with the ongoing game.

Data (8)

Context of speech: Stanley got drunk after playing poker with his friend and had an argument with his wife. Here, Stanley commits acts of violence by hitting Stella. There was a verbal argument at first, then it developed into a form of physical violence. Blanche ran into the kitchen crying when she saw her sister being beaten by Stanley.

STELLA: You lay your hand on me and I'll...

BLANCHE [*shrilly*]: **My sister is going to have a baby!**

MITCH: This is terrible. (SCENE THREE:63)

The sentence spoken by Blanche is a sentence with a declarative form. Nevertheless, the utterance contains an imperative or prohibiting intent. Forbidding or asking in this case is that Stanley does not act violently or hit Stella who is pregnant. Blanche's utterance is also told to remind Stanley about Stella's pregnancy and Stanley should not act like that.

Data (9)

Context of speech: This conversation took place between Stella and Blanche. They talked about a rich man who had been with and helped Blanche. They had gone on vacation over Christmas and went shopping together in Miami. The man's name was Shep Huntleigh.

STELLA: He's married?

BLANCHE: Honey, **would I be here if the man weren't married?** [*Stella laughs a little. Blanche suddenly springs up and crosses to phone. She speaks shrilly*] How do I get Western Union Operator! Western Union! (SCENE FOUR:75)

Blanche, when asked by Stella about Shep being married or not, answered with interrogative or questioning sentences. However, the point of her speech is to answer that Shep is married. Blanche, did not answer it with direct speech but with indirect speech. Whereas in response to Stella's question, Blanche could have said "yes" or "he is married." The form of the sentence is interrogative but the meaning conveyed is declarative.

Data (10)

Context of speech: Blanche was in the bathroom. Stella and Stanley are talking about Blanche and Mitch, regarding their relationship. Stanley, who is a good friend of Mitch, does not want Blanche's relationship with Mitch to continue. This was because Blanche, in his eyes, was none other than a woman full of lies.

STELLA: Stanley, she thought Mitch was-going to-going to marry her. I was hoping so, too



STANLEY: Well, he's not going to marry her. Maybe he *was*, but he's not going to jump in a tank with a school of sharks now! [*He rises*] Blanche I Oh, Blanche! Can I please get in my bathroom? [*There is a pause.*] (SCENE SEVEN:119)

Stanley's utterance is an indirect speech with a metaphorical form. The goal is to describe the bad and dangerous side that is in Blanche. He uses the word "shark" as a representation of someone who is very dangerous and can make anyone a victim.

Based on the discussion, it can be seen that from 10 indirect speech data, it can be detailed that the change in function from declarative to imperative is found in data (2), (3), (4) and (8). While the change in function from interrogative to imperative there are three speech events, namely in data (1), (5) and (7). Then there is also a change from the imperative form to the declarative function in data (6). In addition, there is also a change in function from imperative to declarative form, namely in data (6). And the last is the form of indirect speech with the use of metaphors, namely the data (10).

5. Conclusion

Based on the discussion in the previous section, the researchers concluded several things related to changes in the function of indirect speech acts in the drama. The changes in the function that make the speech change function are as follows:

The first change in function is the use of declarative sentences, which basically function to provide information or provide statements, but are used for other functions. The other function in question is to express an order or request (imperative).

The second function change is the use of interrogative sentences. The basic function of interrogative sentences, as we all know, is to ask questions or ask something, but this form of interrogative sentences is used with the function of giving orders or requests (imperative functions).

Another change in function is the use of imperative sentences, which should be used as commands, but actually give statements or change their functions to declaratives. This form of change is very rare in speech events. In addition, there is an indirect speech used in the drama by using a metaphorical form.

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