

Strategy of Information Exchange Found in *Bird Box* (2018)

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Abstract

Communication involves strategy of information exchange. There are many strategies. In this paper, it will be discussed types of strategy used by speaker and hearer in order to exchange information in Bird Box . Theory used as basics for analyzing data is speech act. Data were collected by observation. The steps were watching movie and reading the scripts, identifying the data, and classifying the data. Researcher also applies the procedure to analyze data; displaying, selecting, explaining, interpreting data and making conclusion. The results show that there are four strategies of information exchange that used by the main character when they do communication: direct speech act provoked by direct speech act, indirect speech act provoked by direct speech act, direct speech act provoked by indirect speech act, and indirect speech act provoked by indirect speech act.

Keywords: *Speech Act, Indirect Speech Act, Direct Speech Act, Strategy of Information Exchange.*

Introduction

Communication is one of the important parts in human's activities. It plays an important role in information dissemination related to any form of human activity. Communication can be said as a process of exchanging messages, ideas, facts, opinions, or feelings. Ccommunication has functions to inform, persuade, and motivate There are many ways to do communications, one of them is by language.

Communication by language consists of many rules of language and many various strategies. It means the speaker has to choose the good strategy to deliver the messages to the hearer or he can choose the ways he expresses. All depend on the goal that the speaker want to get. In specific situations people use language to express their feelings, to give information or to make other people do something and it is therefore important for the speaker to be understood correctly by the hearer. With the statement that "people use language to perform actions", John

Austin presented language as a form of acting. By making an utterance, the speaker expects that his intention will be recognized by the hearer. The circumstances surrounding the utterances help the hearer to identify the speaker's intention.

In many cases when asking someone to do something, the speaker does not explicitly state the intended meaning behind the utterance. It is the hearer's task to analyze the utterance to understand its meaning. It is called indirect speech act.

As the imitation of life, movies also show many conversation consisting of indirect act. One of them is *Bird Box*. In this paper, it will be explained kinds of strategies are used by speaker and hearer in order to exchange information in *Bird Box* (2018).

Literary Review

A. Speech Act

Speech act is one of the branches of linguistic theory that related to communication. Speech act does not only regulate how information from the speaker is conveyed to the recipient but also directly followed with actions. Speeches do not always concentrate on the statement taken of context, but in some cases speech is to perform an action (Austin, 1975: 375). Speech act also provides the speaker to do impartial communication so that both of the speaker and recipient can connect each other.

Speech act affects people to do something by the words as Richard Briggs said "an act performed in (or by) speech" (Briggs, 2003: 25). So it can be said that related action taken by the recipient is considered as speech act. It also becomes evidence that the recipient understands what is meant by the speaker, because in speech act the important thing is to do action based on the word or sentence spoken by the speaker.

According to Austin's "the issuing of [an] utterance is the performing of an action—it is not normally thought of as just saying something" (Austin, 1962: 7). Speech act also can describe what speaker's point and hearer's response in the communication especially in a direct conversation. Hearer will give some actions

to the speaker's point, whether it's a statement, clue, information, or an order for them. It will be represented by doing something that they understand from the speech said by the speaker.

The response or action will be immediately carried out by the recipient after the speaker has finished with his speech. Here, speech act can contain just one word, several words or sentences. Speech act is not only used when the speaker want to command something but also in greeting, request, compliment, apology, etc.

Furthermore, Schiffrin (1994: 49) also stated that speech act its fundamental insights focus on how meaning and action are related to language, because language is also property to perform action. Yule (1996: 47) also has same view that speech acts are same actions performed through utterances.

Austin (1962: 108) stated that in issuing an utterance, a speaker can perform three acts simultaneously, they are a locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act.

a. Locutionary act

Locutionary act is an act taken by the recipient based on literal meaning from the speaker. Here the recipient does exactly what the speaker says. According to Yule (1996: 48), locutionary act is the basic act of utterance; it means locutionary is the actual words used by the speaker. This locutionary act is considered not so influential in understanding speech act because it is relatively easier to identify. Here the speaker only wants to inform something without give tendency to hearer or recipient to do something except the literal meaning.

For example: "*close the book!*" and "*I have just closed the window*" (Sholawat, 2017: 18).

The locutionary act in the first example "*close the book!*" is the speaker wants the hearer or recipient to close the book intended by the speaker, and in the second example "*I have just closed the window*" even though it was made in a good structure but the speaker did not have specific goals to the hearer. This kind of locutionary act is performed in uttering declarative sentence.

b. Illocutionary act

Illocutionary act is an utterance which has social function in mind. Illocutionary act are also considered as the core of speech act theory, which means illocutionary acts are the actions obtained by the speaker using the given utterances. Illocutionary act are closely related to the speaker's intention, such as stating, promising, giving orders, questioning, asking, threatening, and many others.

As Yule (1996: 48) says, the act of illocution is thus carried out through the communicative power of speech which is also commonly known as the power of speech illocution. In fact, the illocutionary act shows how all utterances must be taken in conversation. In this case both the speaker and hearer should pay attention to the context and also consider what should be done. Sometimes it is difficult to determine what illocutionary act used by the speaker to the hearer. Here Yule (1996: 49) gave hints called IFID (Illocutionary Forces Indicating Devices), there are clear performative verbs, especially using various paralinguistic features (stress, timbre, and intonation), and word order must be mentioned.

For example: "*your nails are long*"

From the example above, the related act that will do here by the hearer depends on the situation and who is the speaker. It means when the speaker is a man to his girlfriend it might be considered as admiration or praise to the girlfriend and the act related to this situation is saying thank you or praising back. It is different when the speaker is the mother to his son, that statement could mean order to his son to cut off his nails because men are not suitable with long nails different from women. That also the reason why in previous paragraph illocutionary considered as the core of speech act theory.

c. Perlocutionary act

According to Austin (1962: 108), perlocutionary act is the achieving of certain effects by saying something. So it can be said that the goal of perlocutionary act is when the hearer can feel the effect of the speech given by the speaker. This effect can be intentionally or unintentionally given by the speaker. The perlocutionary act is also often referred to as *The Act of Affecting Someone*.

B. Indirect Speech Act

Indirect speech is one of the variations in conveying some message from the speaker to hearer by hiding it, or can also be categorized as one of the strategies in communication. According to Leech (1983: 108) people tend to use indirect speech acts mainly connected with politeness, because by using indirect speech act, the resulting word is more polite. Many people also think that by using direct speech act it will reduce the politeness of the word.

In addition to politeness, there are also several factors that influence people in using the indirect speech act, which are they want to make their words more interesting and heeded by the hearer, so that the hearer is expected to understand better the contents or messages delivered by the speaker. Cole and Morgan (1975: 59-82) stated when using indirect speech acts the speaker communicates to the hearer more than s/he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, together with the general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer.

For example: "*X: Let's play football.*

Y: I just got a stomach ache"

However indirect speech act also has several information exchange strategies and is divided into four common types of exchanges so as to make communication easier. Those types of exchange was based on Veronica Justova's (2006) thesis, in her thesis she classified the strategies into four different types of exchange as it mentioned before. The four types of information exchange are direct speech acts provoked by direct speech acts, indirect speech acts provoked by direct speech acts, direct speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts and last indirect speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts.

1. Direct speech acts provoked by direct speech acts

Direct-direct exchanges are fairly short, without involvement, with no additional level of meaning. The hearer or recipient does not have to look for what the speaker might mean by saying this or that sentence, everything in their conversation or interactions is expressed explicitly. Here misunderstanding almost did not occur.

For example: *Henry: Should I peel it?*

Sonia: Yes. (Justova, 2006: 22)

In the example question and answer are very clearly. Here the speaker uses direct questions with the intention of getting answers that are related and decisive. The hearer also understands what information the speaker is asking for and gives the expected response (information).

a. Indirect speech acts provoked by direct speech acts

Direct-indirect exchanges are the most common. This strategy shows that their use is preferred. The hearer or recipient often responds indirectly in an effort to make the answer more gentle and polite, so that it complies with established social rules, to sound more interesting or to increase the strength of his messages.

For example: *Hubert: Check before you get in a state about it.*

Henri: I left my laptop at the Institute. (Justova, 2006: 26)

In the example above Hubert or the speaker uttered a clear command sentence directly about what Henri (hearer) had to do. Henri responded indirectly by explaining why he could not do what Hubert told him to. Henri's words do not appear to be related to Hubert's words, but both of them can understand what the main of the conversation is, because "indirect speech acts the speaker communicates with the hearer more than he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information" (Searle, 1979: 31). That's why they can understand, because they have the same background.

2. Direct speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts

Indirect-direct exchanges are rarely done, because from the existing strategies the indirect-direct making the direct speech that is used can provoke a fight. This might be the main reason why people usually avoid using this conversational strategy.

For example: *Hubert: See, and she knows what she's talking about!*

Ines: I'm not offended, you know.

(Justova, 2006: 28)

The situation in the example above is when Hubert indirectly gives an insinuation to Ines, but he relates it to others. Ines who already understands what Hubert's words give a direct response by saying she is not offended by what Hubert said firmly.

3. Indirect speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts

This type of exchange is very similar to the previous one. But indirect-indirect speech acts are even stronger here because they (speaker and hearer) provide detailed explanations in the conversation. The speaker and hearer successfully encode and decode their message. This exchange can be recognized and understood well.

For example: *Henry: He wants a biscuits.*

Sonia: He's just cleaned his teeth. (Justova, 2006: 30)

From the example Henri utters an indirect speech act in form of request to Sonia to go and give "he" the biscuit. Sonia also use indirect speech act to refuse Henri's request, because everyone knows that is not recommended to eat anything after cleaning teeth. Sonia can also use the direct speech act to provide power in her rejection, but in this example even though the speaker and hearer both use the indirect speech act, they successfully encode and elaborate their intentions.

Research Method

The researcher used qualitative design because he wanted to explore and explain social phenomena. The data were in form of utterances spoken by the characters in the movie *Bird Box* (2018). Data were collected by observation. The steps are watching movie and reading the scripts, underlying the potential data, and grouping. Then data were analyzed by content analysis.

Discussion and Findings

A. Research Finding

There are four strategies of information exchange that used by the main character in *Bird Box* (2018) when they do communication:

1. Direct speech act provoked by direct speech act,

2. Indirect speech act provoked by direct speech act,
3. Direct speech act provoked by indirect speech act,
4. Indirect speech act provoked by indirect speech act.

B. Discussion

1. Direct speech act provoked by direct speech act.

In this information exchange strategy the characters express their messages directly. The hearer don't have any difficulties in capturing the contents or messages from the speaker. Hearer also gives a direct response whether in the form of words or utterances that followed by action.

1) Data I/A

Malorie: What's channel, dumb-dumb?

Jessica: Any one of them.

(Bird Box, 00:04:23 – 00:04:24)

In that dialogue, Malorie asked to Jessica about where she could watch the news about the strange phenomenon. Malorie spontaneously asked where or what channel provided that information. “*What's channel, dumb-dumb?*”. Here she clearly stated a direct question followed by direct action. She picked up the remote control and stands in front of the TV. There was an unusual word that used in the question, “*dumb-dumb*”. The word “*dumb-dumb*” here has no meaning.

From the direct question by Malorie, Jessica also gave direct answer. She showed where or on what channel Malorie could watch the news. She said “*Any one of them*”, maybe this answer could be confusing but the actual meaning was immediately known. Why did she say that, instead of mentioning one of the TV channels? That's because all the media or TV preach the same thing. So, it can be said both Malorie and Jessica used direct speech act to react direct speech act, and this act also considered as locutionary act because the act given was based on the literal meaning from the speaker.

2) Data II/A

Jessica: You wanna come?

Malorie: I can't. I've got my OB with Dr. Lapham.

(Bird Box, 00:05:22 – 00:05:26)

This dialogue is a direct conversation, because both of them use direct speech act. Here Jessica offered Malorie to go with her to meet Arabian students at Sausalito. She invited Malorie to go with her so that Malorie could socialize with people around her. As depicted in the film, Malorie was pregnant and she always locked herself in her studio and rarely went out. Therefore, Jessica immediately offered Malorie to go with her. She directly said “*You wanna come?*” without implying any message. She directly asked Malorie.

Here Malorie also gave rejection directly to Jessica. She apparently already has an appointment with someone else namely Dr. Lapham or her obstetrician. She said “*I can't. I've got my OB with Dr. Lapham*” to reject Jessica’s invitation. She said it directly what she wanted to convey. To express her refusal, Malorie also added the reason. That way, Jessica also didn’t wonder why Malorie declined her invitation. She would straightly knew what Malorie would do. Both of them used direct speech act to react direct speech act. This act is also considered as commissives illocutionary act because the act given is kind of offering and refusing.

2. Indirect speech act provoked by direct speech act.

This strategy is used by speaker and hearer with the same background. The hearer usually uses indirect speech act to make the answer more gentle and polite, or to sound more interesting, and increase the strength of his/her messages.

1) Data I/B

Malorie: Uh asshole, I was listening to that.

Jessica: Yeah, so were the people down the street. The store was packed. This thing seems serious.

(Bird Box, 00:04:08 – 00:04:13)

Here Malorie complained to Jessica because she turned off the music. After Jessica turned off the music she was listening to, Malorie immediately protested against Jessica. “*Uh asshole, I was listening to that*” she directly and reflexively expressed what she felt by talking like that. And for a word “*asshole*” it just a call to Malorie or Jessica, since they were sibling so no one was offended by such a call and also it didn’t changed the goal of the complaint. Malorie used the direct speech act because she straight to the point of her utterance and without hiding a message to Jessica.

The speech act used by Jessica here is indirect speech act. She responded to the Malorie’s complaint by saying “*Yeah, so were the people down the street. The store was packed. This thing seems serious.*”. She did not explain why she turned off the music Malorie was listening . She said that everyone listened, but the difference was the people listened to the phenomenon that was happening in the area. She also added information that some shops in the area had closed and the situation became more serious. Jessica actually hid her message, here Jessica wanted to make Malorie aware and to be sensitive to the life around her and not to focus too much on the routine she was living now. Malorie and Jessica use indirect speech act to reacts direct speech act and based on Searle (1977) this act is considered as expressive illocutionary act.

2) Data II/B

Jessica: Lapham, when?

Malorie: Oh, my God. Why does your voice get high when it gets excited?

(Bird Box, 00:05:26 – 00:05:29)

The speakers discussed Malorie’s pregnancy check. Malorie told Jessica that she would check her pregnancy with Dr. Lapham. Then Jessica directly asked to Malorie when she would go to see Dr. Lapham by saying “*Lapham, when?*”. From Malorie’s answer, Jessica looked very excited

because Malorie paid attention to her pregnancy. So, it made Jessica spontaneously ask Malorie when she would meet the doctor. She used the direct speech act because it's straight to the point about what she wanted to convey.

Malorie used the indirect speech act to answer a question from Jessica. She actually didn't answer it with the answer desired by Jessica, but instead she asked Jessica. She asked "*Oh, my God. Why does your voice get high when it gets excited?*" to Jessica. Here Malorie clearly hides the original intent in her question. One of them was that she was reluctant to answer Jessica's question related to her pregnancy. In addition, she wanted Jessica not to overreact to something. Malorie and Jessica use indirect speech acts to react to direct speech acts and illocutionary acts.

3. Direct speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts

This type of exchange is rarely done by the speaker and hearer here, because the direct speech given by the hearer sometime can provoke a fight. This might be the reason why just only eight examples were found by the researcher.

1) Data I/C

Malorie: Thought about stitching that on, like, a little lavender sachet? Could sell them in the gift shop.

Dr. Lapham: You're having a baby, Malorie. Pretty soon, you and I, Jessica, and some hard-ass labor and delivery nurse will be in the third floor making the same wise cracks. Only this time, you won't be going home by yourself.

(Bird Box, 00:08:31 – 00:08:49)

The situation happened in this conversation when Malorie was checking her pregnancy. She said "*Thought about stitching that on, like, a little lavender sachet? Could sell them in the gift shop*" to Dr. Lapham. From Malorie's statement, she imagined her baby to be a souvenir that would be sold in stores. But it was not exactly what Malorie wanted to say. She just wasn't ready to have a baby, because she was used to living alone.

She also separated from her husband when she was pregnant, maybe that was also became one of the factors that made her not ready to have a baby. And to make it not so obvious in front of the doctor, she used indirect speech act and hides the message.

The response given by Dr. Lapham here is the direct speech act. She explained quite detail about what would happened to Malorie (her childbirth). She said *“You’re having a baby, Malorie. Pretty soon, you and I, Jessica, and some hard-ass labor and delivery nurse will be in the third floor making the same wise cracks. Only this time, you won’t be going home by yourself.”* to Malorie. Dr. Lapham seemed rather upset, but she understood Malorie’s anxiety about childbirth and her baby, and the baby still will be born and Malorie will have to take responsibility for it.

2) Data II/C

Cheryl: Whatever it is, I’m sure they’ll send someone soon.

Douglas: No, the only thing that will happen soon is we’re all gonna die soon. This has a classic bio-warfare signature. North Korea or Iran.

(Bird Box, 00:15:51 – 00:16:05)

The situation in this dialogue is confusing. The people at Greg’s house were panicked and shocked by what had just happened. A strange phenomenon that could triggered people to commit suicide has occurred in their city. To calm the situation Cheryl said *“Whatever it is, I’m sure they’ll send someone soon.”* to people in Greg’s house. She was actually not sure whether there would help for them or not. She uses indirect speech act. The original purpose of such talk is that she might be able to comfort and calm these people and reduce the tension.

But the response from Douglas was different. He immediately revealed what would happen next. Maybe it seemed that Douglas was a pessimist. He directly gave the worst effect of this phenomenon. He said *“No, the only thing that will happen soon is we’re all gonna die soon. This has a classic bio-warfare signature. North Korea or Iran.”* By using the direct speech act, he showed what will happen to them. Even here Douglas

gave an example of a country that has been hit by this phenomenon. Although it was actually not certain what will happen to them after this phenomenon. Cheryl and Douglas use direct speech act to reacts indirect speech act, and this act also considered as locutionary act.

4. Indirect speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts

This indirect-indirect speech acts is even stronger because they (speaker and hearer) provide detailed explanations in the conversation. The speaker and hearer successfully encode and decode their message. This exchange could be recognized and understood well.

1) Data I/D

Jessica: Anyway, can't raise a kid here. Where would you even put her?

Malorie: How do you know it's a she?

Jessica: Wishful thinking, I guess.

(Bird Box, 00:06:44 - 00:06:53)

This dialogue was discussion between Malorie and Jessica. Jessica said “*Anyway, can't raise a kid here. Where would you even put her?*”. The actual point here was Jessica wanted to talk about Malorie's place now. Described on film, after Malorie divorced then she lived in her painting studio. Her studio was not that big and there were already enough items there. Jessica was worried about how Malorie would place her baby later if she still lived in the studio. The message of Jessica's statement was she wanted Malorie to find a decent home to live with her baby and immediately moved from the studio.

Here Malorie also used indirect speech act to answer Jessica. From the look on her face, she already knew where the conversation would go. Jessica will ask Malorie to find new place for baby and herself. Therefore, she only responded trivially by saying “*How do you know it's a she?*”. She just wanted to change the topic of the conversation and it seemed like she was success. Jessica hasn't discussed it anymore (new house). Malorie and Jessica use indirect speech act to reacts indirect speech act

Data II/D

Dr. Lapham: I know it's hard to love someone you haven't met yet.

Malorie: Oh, that's beautiful.

(Bird Box, 00:08:25 – 00:08:30)

This conversation occurred when Malorie was checking her pregnancy. Dr. Lapham knew if Malorie was not ready to have a baby because she used to live alone all this time. And here Dr. Lapham said “*I know it's hard to love someone you haven't met yet.*” What meant by Dr. Lapham in her words was to show Malorie that having children was not a terrible thing. Maybe for the first time, Malorie will felt awkward facing her baby. But as time goes by Malorie will get used to, it like what Dr. Lapham say.

In this case Malorie seemed agreed to what was said by Dr. Lapham. She said it figuratively (used indirect speech act), not directly affirming the words of Dr. Lapham. Malorie said “*Oh, that's beautiful.*”, maybe Malorie's words did not connect with Dr. Lapham said. But the responded given by Malorie suggests agreeing with Dr. Lapham. It's not easy to feel love or affection for things that we haven't met before. Malorie and Dr. Lapham used indirect speech act to reacts indirect speech act .This act is considered as perlocutionary act that give the effect to the hearer to think of something.

Conclusion

There are four exchange strategies in this research namely; direct speech acts provoked by direct speech acts, indirect speech acts provoked by direct speech acts, direct speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts, and last indirect speech acts provoked by indirect speech acts.

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