



A Pragmatic Analysis of Indirect Speech Act in *The Way We Speak* Movie

Arifiani Safitri¹, Fitri Rakhmawati², Sulasih Nurhayati³, Ambar Pujiyatno⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto, Purwokerto, 53182, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: fitri_rakhmawati@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze the indirect speech acts in *The Way We Speak* (2024) using Yule (1996) theory. This study analyses the structure of indirect speech acts and the communicative functions performed by the speakers through indirect speech acts. Indirect speech acts occur because the structural forms of an utterance do not coincide with the function that is supposed to be performed by the speaker, thus making the listener understand the utterance depending on the context. For this study, a descriptive qualitative design was adopted from the pragmatic perspective. The data for this study were obtained from the dialogues of the characters in *The Way We Speak* (2024). According to the results of this study, there are 66 indirect speech acts that have been found and consist of 40 declaratives (61%), 12 interrogatives (18%), and 14 imperatives (21%). There are several functions performed by the indirect speech acts, namely, reassurance, advice, request, encouragement, suggestion, and apology. Reassurance is the most frequent function that occurs in 17 data (26%), while advice and request are the next two functions that occur in 16 data (24%) each. The findings demonstrate that the communicative meaning of indirect speech acts cannot always be predicted based on their structural forms, as their interpretation requires consideration of the context of communication.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Indirect Speech CTS, Communicative Functions, *The Way We Speak*.



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1. Introduction

Language is not only used in communication and sharing of information among people, but language can also be viewed as a tool for making sense in terms of emotional, experiential, and interpersonal meanings. In communication, meanings are not shared in literal ways because at times speakers convey their intended meanings indirectly through utterances that do not convey literal meanings. It is therefore necessary to look at pragmatics as the study of meaning conveyed by speakers and interpreted by the audience in the context in which the utterance occurs. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is defined as the study of speaker meaning, contextual meaning, and interpretation of what is said. This approach is significant in the case of indirect

communication, where at times, speakers do not share their intended meanings through literal utterances and at times the audience needs to decipher the meaning of what has been intended based on the context in which the utterance occurs (Ruytenbeek, 2024).

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics focused on the meaning and usage of language in communication. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics involves speaker meaning, contextual meaning, and the interpretation of the meaning of utterances other than their literal meaning. While semantics deals with the meaning of words and sentences, pragmatics studies meaning in terms of situational context, common ground between the interlocutors, and speaker-hearer relationships. From the pragmatic point of view, it means that communication is not only studied for its linguistic structure but also for the meaning intended by the speaker and interpreted by the hearer. In this way, pragmatic inferences allow hearers to go beyond what is said through the communicative intention of the speaker and the context of the speaker's utterance (Bohn & Frank, 2025).

Indirect speech acts are parts of communication discussed in pragmatics since sometimes people do not use direct speech to convey their messages. As defined by Yule (1996), an indirect speech act arises when there is an indirect relationship between the structure of the utterance and its communicative function. In cases where the meaning of the message conveyed cannot be known from the structural form of the utterance alone, then the interpretation of its meaning should be done based on the context of the utterance. This means that the hearer has to infer the intention of the speaker based on his/her pragmatic knowledge, contextual knowledge, and communicative intention (Bohn & Frank, 2025). Yule (1996) further explains that usually indirect speech acts carry more politeness than direct speech acts. Using indirect speech acts, the speakers are able to accomplish different communicative functions such as making requests, offering suggestions, giving warnings, and refusing something without explicitly mentioning the intended function.

According to Yule (1996), the connection between the structure of an utterance and its communicative purpose is crucial for communication. There are three fundamental structural types of an utterance: *declarative*, *interrogative*, and *imperative*. In most cases, as direct speech acts, declarative structures are used to state something; interrogative to ask something; and imperative to instruct or command something. Nevertheless, the speaker does not always use utterances for their general communicative purposes. In the case of indirect speech acts, a declarative may perform another communicative function indirectly, an interrogative may be used to request or suggest rather than to question, and an imperative sentence is commonly used to advise, encourage, or reassure depending on the context. Hence, an utterance includes much more than its literal meaning since it is generated in some communicative context. Therefore, the interpretation of an utterance implies taking into consideration both linguistic structure and speaker's intention together with the communicative context (Ruytenbeek, 2024).

Indirect speech acts involve a situation where there is an indirect link between the structural form of an utterance and the communicative function intended by the speaker (Yule, 1996). This means that it is not always possible to understand the intended meaning of a speaker based on the literal meaning or the structure form of an utterance. Rather, hearers need to make deductions concerning the intention of the speaker through the use of the context within which the conversation is taking place. In this way, declarative sentences may become forms of advice or reassurance, interrogative sentences become requests, and imperative sentences become encouragement rather than commands. These instances show that there is a separation between the structural form of an utterance and the intended meaning of the speaker (Ruytenbeek, 2024). Indirect speech acts, therefore, require hearers to consider not only the structure form of an utterance but also the communicative intention in the context.

For Example, the declarative utterance "*The room is very hot*" can perform a function of making a request to turn on the fan or open the window. In this situation, the speaker does not explicitly make the request but expects the listener to comprehend the implied meaning of the utterance in the particular context of the communication. Also, the interrogative sentence "*Can you help me take these books?*" can perform the function of making a request. It is implied that the speaker is not asking whether the addressee can help him/her because, in that case, he/she would ask a different question like "*Are you free to help me take these books?*". Finally, the imperative utterance "*Take your time*" can imply giving the listener some reassurance. In this way, the

speaker uses the form of an order in order to provide support to the listener and let him/her know that he/she can take his/her time.

This example shows how an utterance form and its function may differ. In the example provided, the imperative form shows the supportive intention of the speaker. This allows the listener to realize that there is no rush for him/her to complete the action indicated. As one may see from the provided examples, the structural form of an utterance may be unrelated to its function. The same structural form may be used for different communicative functions due to the speaker's intention and the context of the use of the utterance. Thus, it becomes clear that in order to understand the meaning of indirect speech acts, one needs not only to analyze the linguistic construction of the utterance, but also the context, the relationship between the interlocutors and the intention of the speaker. It means that the listener must interpret the utterance in terms of the additional information provided by the context and pragmatics.

Movies provide a good source of information for pragmatic analysis, as they present various social contexts and processes of communication through the interactions of the characters. Dialogue is a means that allows movie characters to show their intentions, emotions, attitudes, and relations with others. The dialogue in a movie is a representation of the spoken language in interaction, which means that it is rich in data to analyze pragmatically and consider pragmatic categories and contextual meanings (Galiano & Semeraro, 2023). Unlike the written sources where only the linguistic aspect of communication is presented, movies have both verbal dialogue and visual elements of communication like body language and expressions (Situmorang & Meisuri, 2025). Sometimes, in the process of communication, speakers do not indicate their intentions explicitly. Indirect speech acts occur when the linguistic structure of the utterance is different from the actual intention of the speaker (Yule, 1996). The movies are full of examples of indirect speech acts as proved by Rahayu et al. (2024) who found examples of both direct and indirect speech acts in movie dialogue and stressed the role of context and intention in the interpretation of characters' utterances.

An example of a movie containing indirect speech acts is *The Way We Speak* (2024). This movie presents different kinds of communicative situations such as debates, academic discussions, intimate conversations, and conflict situations among the characters. In all these communicative situations, the speakers tend to use indirect speech acts in order to offer advice, encourage the listener, make a request, suggest something, and express one's opinion or feelings indirectly. Moreover, the reason why the movie is chosen for analysis in the current study is that it has already received awards in different film festivals. For example, *The Way We Speak* got an Outstanding Writer of a Narrative Feature award at the Anchorage International Film Festival in 2024 and a Best Director award at the Albuquerque Film & Music Experience in 2024. Therefore, communicative strategies of people show how the communicators try to avoid directness to reach their communicative goals and maintain good relations among each other. That is why the above-mentioned movie can be regarded as an appropriate example of pragmatic analysis due to indirect speech acts contained in it.

Indirect speech acts have been analyzed in several other studies in movies. For instance, (Sari, 2021) in his study titled *Indirect Speech Act of SpongeBob SquarePants The Movie*, explored the use of indirect speech acts in the dialogue of movies and discovered that most of the time, the speakers in the movies would use indirect language to perform certain communicative acts. Similarly, (Meisuri et al., 2019) in the study of *Indirect Speech Acts in Toba Dream Movie* analyzed the use of indirect speech acts performed by the speakers and found that speakers used indirect language to communicate. Likewise, (Kurniawan, 2025) in their study *An Analysis of Indirect Speech Act in Black Panther: Wakanda Forever Movie*, explored the use of indirect speech acts in conversation.

The other study on this topic was carried out by (Abdjul, 2026) with the title *Interrogative Form of Indirect Speech Act in Brave (2012) Movie Script*. This study was dedicated to investigating interrogative forms of indirect speech acts and found that there are many communicative functions performed by interrogative forms besides asking questions. In addition to that, (Rahayu et al., 2024) studied both direct and indirect speech acts and explored the connection between the structural form and communicative function in cinematic dialogue in the study titled *Exploring Speech Acts in Heidi: An Analysis of Direct and Indirect Communication in Cinematic Dialogue*. Even though some researches have been done on indirect speech acts in Movies, the research on the forms and the communicative functions of indirect speech act in *The Way We Speak* is still

limited. That is why the aim of this study is to investigate the forms of indirect speech act and its communicative functions according to Yule's pragmatic approach (1996).

The aim of this study is to address two research questions. Firstly, what kinds of indirect speech acts are used in *The Way We Speak* according to the theory by (Yule, 1996). Secondly, how the communicative functions are performed through the indirect speech acts in *The Way We Speak*. This study aims to analyze the literal meanings and communicative functions of indirect speech acts in *The Way We Speak* (2024). This study contributes to understanding how the structural forms and the communicative functions of the utterances are related to each other in terms of using the indirect speech acts for meaning transmission and communicative functions in *The Way We Speak* (2024).

2. Method

A descriptive qualitative method was used to analyze the indirect speech acts found in *The Way We Speak* (2024). Qualitative research methodology was selected since the research involved the interpretation of the meaning and use of utterances in communication rather than collecting numbers. As Creswell (2014) indicates, the essence of qualitative research is the interpretation of the meanings attached to social phenomena by the people. The source of data used was the utterances made by the characters in *The Way We Speak* (2024), whereby the utterances with indirect speech acts were collected into the data set. The process of data collection was done using a documentation method whereby multiple viewing of the movie and a transcript of the movie was conducted. Initially, 66 utterances with possible indirect speech acts were collected. However, after review and selecting utterances for relevance, only six were selected for further analysis.

The data analysis process followed the Interactive Data Analysis Model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). This model entails four major steps: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion making. In the data collection step, the researcher watched *The Way We Speak* (2024) several times in order to get a general impression about the story and the conversational situations. Then, *The Way We Speak* (2024) was watched once more in order to pick up all possible utterances of indirect speech acts. In the process of data reduction, all data irrelevant to the research were discarded, while only those data related to the research focus were kept. In addition, all the data were classified according to their structures and communicative functions. The last step included the interpretation of data, taking into account the context of conversation and the connection between the utterance structure and its communicative function in terms of Yule's (1996) theory of indirect speech acts.

3. Result and Discussion.

3.1. Result

There were some indirect speech acts identified in *The Way We Speak* (2024). According to the theory by Yule (1996), the findings are classified according to the forms of the utterances: declarative, interrogative, and imperative, and then according to the interpretations based on the roles performed by the utterances. One can see that the speakers often use indirect speech acts to express their meanings, which are more than the literal meaning of the utterances. In addition, the above findings are also explained using Austin's theory (1962). According to the author, language can be used for doing things through speaking. Moreover, Searle (1975) emphasizes that the function of the utterance may differ from its literal meaning. Consequently, each finding is complemented by the interpretations of the contexts.

According to the Indirect Speech Act Theory by Yule (1996), there are three basic types of sentences: declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences. Declarative sentences serve to make statements, while interrogatives are mostly used for posing questions. Imperatives are usually used to give commands. However, despite these main purposes, these types of sentences might be used for communication purposes that differ from their primary functions. According to Searle (1975), the actual purpose of making an utterance is not related to its grammatical construction. Additionally, it should be noted that using indirect speech acts gives the speaker an opportunity to state the intention in a polite way, especially in the case of advice-giving,

requesting, assurance, and encouragement. The table below presents some examples of indirect speech acts from *The Way We Speak* (2024).

Table 1. Indirect Speech Act in *The Way We Speak*

No	Indirect Speech Act Form	Quantity	Percentage
1.	Declarative	40	61%
2.	Interrogative	12	18%
3.	Imperative	14	21%
Total		66	100%

Table 2. Communicative Function in *The Way We Speak*

No	Communication Function	Quantity	Percentage
1.	Reassurance	17	26%
2.	Advice	16	24%
3.	Requests	16	24%
4.	Encouragement	11	17%
5.	Suggestion	5	8%
6.	Apology	1	1%
Total		66	100%

Table 1 below presents the findings related to the forms of indirect speech acts observed in *The Way We Speak* (2024). There is a total of 66 data points gathered, and they were analyzed using three indirect speech forms by Yule (1996): declarative, interrogative, and imperative. The data in the declarative form were more numerous since there were 40 (61%) of the total data. This is followed by the use of interrogative forms, wherein there are 12 (18%), and imperative forms, 14 (21%). It can be concluded from the findings that declarative sentences were predominantly used in expressing indirect meanings in the movie. In connection with this, the frequent use of declarative forms implies that the intentions of the characters are conveyed using statements rather than explicitly stating what they want to say. However, the communicative functions of several interrogative and imperative utterances differed from their literal meanings.

In terms of communicative functions, the data were put under several categories depending on the context and the intention of the speaker. The highest number of functions observed was reassurance, which occurred in 17 data (26%), and then advice, 16 data (24%), and requests, 16 data (24%). Encouragement was noted in 11 data (17%), while suggestion was noted in 5 data (8%). The other functions were apology, which were each seen in 1 data (1%). From this, it is clear that indirect speech acts in *The Way We Speak* are used for a variety of communicative purposes, including reassuring, advising, and requesting. The findings indicate that utterances with similar literal meanings can perform different communicative functions depending on the context.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Example of Declarative form

Data 10:

Context : Claire receives a phone call about a clinical trial while accompanying Simon at his debate event. Before making a decision, she asks for time to discuss the opportunity with Simon.

Claire : *"Do I, uh, do I have time to talk to Simon about it?"*

Doctor : *"Um, I mean, sure, if I can know by the end of the week."*

Doctor : ***"I mean, I don't really think that a delay is to your benefit."***

(The Way We Speak, 00:09:08)

The **declarative** utterance *"I don't really think that a delay is to your benefit"* appears to be an expression of the doctor's personal opinion. However, the speaker does not offer only his personal opinion to Claire. When Claire is given a chance to talk with Simon about the clinical trial, the doctor indirectly advises her not to spend much time making the decision since any delay may influence the advantages Claire can gain from the medicine. The doctor's utterance implies that Claire has to think carefully about the decision, but she cannot delay the decision too much. The utterance includes a deeper meaning than the one stated directly. The speaker expresses his concern regarding the decision Claire has to make using a declarative utterance form.

Instead of using an imperative sentence like "Don't delay your decision" or *"You should make the decision soon,"* the doctor provides his advice using a declarative sentence. The utterance, *"I don't really think that a delay is to your benefit,"* does not instruct Claire what she should do. Rather, the speaker gives his opinion on the possible adverse effects of delaying her decision. This means that there is a distinction between the indirect way of giving **advice** and its alternative forms. It can be assumed that the speaker provides his advice in the form of a declarative sentence without stating the communicative function. Hence, the sentence can be considered an example of an indirect speech act performed in the declarative form.

It can be said that the doctor gives his advice through the use of a declarative sentence without indicating the communicative function of the sentence. Thus, the sentence might be viewed as an example of an indirect speech act performed in the declarative form. It should be noted that the usage of the declarative form makes the speaker's advice more polite as he does not tell Claire about her actions in terms of should or should not. Rather, he shares his thoughts about the negative results of delaying the decision. In this way, Claire can understand the message conveyed by the doctor without feeling that she is under pressure to take some action immediately. At the same time, the doctor gives Claire time to reflect on the information she has been provided with.

Data 3:

Context : In this scene, one of Simon's fans asks for his autograph, but Simon needs to get a pen inside. The fan worries about missing the opening remarks, so Simon reassures them.

Simon fans : *"I'd hate to miss the opening remarks."*

Simon : *"Well, you won't. I'm giving them."*

Simon : *"I-- I promise."*

Simon : ***"I'll have you back before anything interesting happens."***

(The Way We Speak, 00:02:43)

The **declarative** sentence, *"I'll have you back before anything interesting happens,"* is not only informative about Simon's intention to come back. In this context, Simon is asked by his fan to sign a brochure, but he doesn't have a pen, and he needs to go to his room to take one. At the same time, the fan worries about missing the opening remarks. In reply to the fan's worries, Simon reassures her that he will come back before anything interesting happens. Therefore, the sentence informs about Simon's intention to come back and about

the fan's concern to miss the opening remarks at the same time. This sentence is declarative as Simon tries to reassure the fan, and he uses the declarative form to achieve this goal.

Instead of directly saying, *"Don't worry, you won't miss anything,"* Simon gives the reassurance to the fan using a declarative sentence. The sentence is also reinforced by the previously uttered "I promise," which reinforces the interpretation of Simon's intentions to give assurance to the fan regarding the situation. While the sentence has the grammatical structure of being a declarative sentence, it has more than just the intention of stating something about Simon's coming back to the fan. This is because Simon is answering the fan who was worried that she might miss the opening words. Therefore, the difference between the two demonstrates that the utterance is actually an indirect speech act. This means that *"I'll have you back before anything interesting happens"* can be regarded as an example of a declarative indirect speech act, with the real communicative function of giving **reassurance**.

In other words, it can be said that *"I'll have you back before anything interesting happens"* is an example of a declarative indirect speech act since the actual communicative purpose of the speech act is reassurance. What is more important is the use of declarative forms of speech acts to make the process of assurance even more polite and respectful as the speaker does not address the fan and assure her in a direct way but instead tries to reassure her using the declaration of his future actions. The use of this strategy allows the speaker to avoid telling the fan that she should not be worried. In such a way, the speech act communicates the intended message in a respectful and polite way.

Example of Interrogative form

Data 9

Context : Claire receives a phone call about a clinical trial while accompanying Simon, who is preparing for an important debate. Before making a decision, she wants to discuss the opportunity with him.

Claire : ***"Do I, uh, do I have time to talk to Simon about it?"***

Doctor : *"Um, I mean, sure, if I can know by the end of the week."*

(The Way We Speak, 00:09:02)

"Do I, uh, do I have time to talk to Simon about it?" said by Claire follows the moment Claire gains information regarding a clinical trial. While the sentence *"Do I, uh, do I have time to talk to Simon about it?"* is an interrogative sentence, the speaker, Claire, is not just trying to ask some questions related to how much time she has available. Rather, she is politely asking permission to speak with Simon before making up her mind on the clinical trial. The hesitant nature of Claire in asking such a question is clear from the use of *"Do I"* twice together with the filler *"uh,"* showing her careful consideration of how to react to the received information.

Rather than simply asking the question, *"I need talk to Simon about it."* Claire makes an indirect request by using interrogative form. The literal meaning of the utterance seems to be a question about whether she has sufficient time to discuss it with Simon. However, taking into consideration the context, the communicative function of the speaker is actually to ask for permission to discuss the clinical trial with Simon. The discrepancy between the structural form and the intended communicative function reveals an example of indirect speech act. Thus, the utterance *"Do I, uh, do I have time to talk to Simon about it?"* can be considered an example of an interrogative indirect speech act whose communicative function is to make a **request**.

Therefore, the utterance *"Do I, uh, do I have time to talk to Simon about it?"* can be seen as an instance of an interrogative indirect speech act whose purpose is to make a request. First of all, such use of the

interrogative form helps Claire to make a request more politely because she does not tell explicitly that she wants to speak to Simon but asks whether she has time to do it. Thus, the use of the interrogative form in this situation makes the request less direct and imposing. At the same time, such a form of speech helps Claire to convey her intention in a way that the other person could reply to it. The use of hesitations in this utterance makes the request less direct as well. Therefore, the use of the indirect form of speech helps Claire to ask for permission politely.

Data 26

Context : In this scene, Sarah and Claire meet for the first time, and Sarah knows that Claire is suffering from cancer. Sarah then asks Claire for permission to pray for her health.

Simon : *"Is it okay if I pray for your health, Claire?"*

Claire : *"What-- Whatever you'd like, yeah."*

(The Way We Speak, 00:28:13)

The utterance, *"Is it okay if I pray for your health, Claire?"* by Sarah is an **interrogative** sentence. However, Sarah is not asking whether it is okay to pray for Claire's health in this context. Instead, she is making an indirect request to pray for her health at the same time as showing concern about her health. As Sarah and Claire are meeting each other for the first time, Sarah uses *"Is it okay if"* as a way to ask for permission politely without sounding too direct while showing consideration regarding the beliefs and feelings of Claire. This point becomes quite important since the act of praying is related to one's beliefs, and Sarah is not sure whether Claire will accept her offer to pray for her health.

Instead of using a direct utterance such as *"I pray for your health, Claire,"* Sarah employs an interrogative structure for conveying her request indirectly. In this regard, the phrase *"Is it okay if"* helps Sarah ask for permission politely and considerately without saying explicitly what she intends to do. Claire's answer, *"Whatever you'd like, yeah,"* suggests that she not only accepts Sarah's **request** but also gives her permission to pray for her health. This answer clearly shows that Sarah's utterance of Sarah was not just a question, but rather it was a request that had to be performed. This is how the difference between structure and communicative intention reveals the application of indirect speech acts. Consequently, the utterance can be classified as an interrogative form of indirect speech act.

Thus, this utterance is a case of an indirect speech act of an interrogative type with the communicative function of a request. The usage of the interrogative structure helps make the request softer and more polite since Sarah does not explicitly say that she will pray for Claire's health. In her utterance, she uses the phrase *"is it okay if"* to ask for permission to do something. Such an indirect expression of the request is relevant in this case since praying is a matter related to one's personal beliefs and values. Thus, the indirect request shows respect towards Claire's feelings and personal boundaries since Sarah asks for permission first. The answer given by Claire, *"whatever you'd like, yeah,"* shows that she agrees with Sarah's intentions and gives her permission to pray.

3.2.3 Example of Imperative form

Data 30

Context : After having a meal together, Sarah and Claire talk about their personal lives and relationships. Sarah shares her frustrations about her marriage, and Claire advises her to express her true feelings instead of hiding them.

Claire : *"I can tell you what I strive for."*

Claire : *"Go first."*

Claire : "So instead of signaling that you're frustrated, **say how you really feel.**"

(The Way We Speak, 00:32:20)

"So instead of signaling that you're frustrated, say how you really feel." An utterance made by Claire is an example of the use of an **imperative** sentence. It is in this context that Claire offers Sarah advice regarding her personal issues with her relationship with her husband. According to Sarah, she is constantly away from home because of her work, whereas her husband wants to have children and hates the fact that she is always away. Taking into account this situation, Claire advises Sarah to speak up and express her true feelings, as opposed to just showing frustration towards her husband. Claire's utterance does not serve as mere orders. Rather, it shows Claire's opinion of Claire concerning communication in Sarah's relationship.

Rather than telling Sarah directly that "You should be honest with your husband that you are frustrated," Claire suggests it to Sarah using an imperative sentence. While "say how you really feel" is the imperative form of advising Sarah to be sincere in communicating her emotions, the phrase "instead of signaling that you're frustrated" shows the contrast between being sincere in communication and simply being frustrated. Before the utterance, there is also Claire's sentence "I can tell you what I strive for," indicating that Claire shares her own perspective about relationships rather than giving orders to Sarah. In the present case, the purpose of Claire's words is to assist Sarah in assessing how she talks to her husband. Hence, the utterance may be considered the imperative type of indirect speech act, whose actual function is giving **advice**.

Therefore, the utterance can be defined as an example of an imperative indirect speech act, which performs the role of giving advice. While the imperative form is usually structured as a command, the utterance "say how you really feel" cannot be defined as such within the context provided. The utterance is intended to motivate Sarah to express her true emotions to her husband. The advice is delivered in quite a polite manner, as Claire does not explicitly tell Sarah what she should do or demand that she follow her advice. In addition, the previous statement "*I can tell you what I strive for*" shows that the advice is just a point of view of the speaker. The use of the imperative form allows Claire to deliver her advice in a straightforward manner but gives Sarah the option of accepting it or not.

Data 11

Context : Before the keynote debate, Simon doubts whether the debate with Sarah is still relevant. Annette encourages him to trust her plan and reminds him that she has also supported his plans before.

Annette : "Okay. **Bet on my plan like I bet on yours.**"

Simon : "Oh, I don't know."

Annette : "Think determined."

Annette : "Dogged, I believe the word was."

(The Way We Speak, 00:11:16)

Taking into account the above context, the sentence "*Bet on my plan like I bet on yours*" is a **imperative** sentence. However, Annette's request is not an actual request to bet on her plan. Having heard that Simon doubts the outcome of the future debate, Annette urges him to trust her plan and be confident in it. The phrase "bet on my plan" is used as a figure of speech and means supporting and trusting her plan. This interpretation is confirmed by the phrase "*like I bet on yours*," which tells us that before that, Annette had trusted and supported Simon's plans.

Instead of saying "*You must trust my plan as I have trust yours*" Annette uses the imperative in order to make Simon trust her plan and accept her decision. Saying "Bet on my plan like I bet on yours," Annette does not mean that Simon should bet something on her plan. In other words, the phrase "bet on my plan" is used figuratively in order to **request** Simon to trust Annette and believe in her plan, the same way he trusted her when she asked him about his plans. The sentences that follow "*Think determined*" and "*Dogged, I believe*

the word was," prove the fact that Annette succeeds in motivating Simon to start debating with determination and perseverance. Therefore, it is obvious that the utterance "*Bet on my plan like I bet on yours*" cannot be regarded as a direct command in the analyzed context. It is an indirect speech act which encourages Simon to trust her plan and actively take part in the debate.

That is why the phrase *key*. "*Bet on my plan like I bet on yours.*" can be interpreted as an example of encouragement performed through an indirect speech act rather than as a command. Despite the fact that this phrase is uttered in an imperative form, the goal of this utterance is not to order Simon to follow Annette's plan or to make him immediately agree with her. The imperative form is utilized to inspire Simon and increase his confidence in the plan. The phrase "*like I bet on yours*" contributes to the impression of consideration because Annette presents her wish as a part of their friendly relations based on mutual trust and support. Therefore, she does not impose her decision upon Simon but inspires him with reference to her previous trust to him. As a result, this utterance is perceived as encouraging and not forcing, so that Simon is able to react to encouragement without feeling any obligation to follow Annette's words.

As the discussion above illustrates, indirect speech acts in *The Way We Speak* (2024) are performed by declarative, interrogative, and imperative utterances, but their real speech functions vary according to the context in which the utterance is performed. In the case of declarative speech acts, it becomes clear that one's statement can be used indirectly as advice, reassurance, or any other function. For example the doctor gives some advice to Claire not to delay her decision, and Simon reassures his fan that she will not miss the opening remarks. As for the interrogative speech act, it turns out that one's question can be used indirectly to perform a request, since Claire uses an indirect question to ask for permission to talk about the clinical trial with Simon, and Sarah asks for permission to pray for Claire's health.

The results support the theory developed by (Yule, 1996), who stated that the form of the utterance is not always equal to the communicative purpose of the utterance. It is evident from the observations made in the movie that indirectness is used by the speakers to achieve communicative purposes through the use of indirect speech acts, which fit the circumstances and the relation between the speakers. It can be concluded from the analysis of these speech acts that indirectness in language cannot be understood without considering the context, conversational response, and the intention of the speaker, but only the form of speech. This means that indirect speech acts allow the speaker to give advice, reassure, make requests, and encourage without saying these communicative purposes.

4. Conclusion

The indirect speech acts found in *The Way We Speak* (2024) were analyzed following the theory by Yule (1996). This analysis was performed through investigating the link between the structural form of an utterance and its communicative function. Based on the outcomes of the study, there are three sentence forms that can be used in indirect speech acts in the movie. These are declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentence forms. Declarative sentences account for the largest part of the sentences in the movie (61%), which equals 40 sentences. Furthermore, 12 interrogative sentences (18%) and 14 imperative sentences (21%) were found in the movie. It is evident that declarative sentences are mostly used to carry a message beyond the literal one of an utterance. Nevertheless, interrogative and imperative sentence forms can also be used for different communicative purposes.

Moreover, the study results show that the indirect speech acts used in *The Way We Speak* perform various functions in communication such as reassurance, advice, request, encouragement, suggestion, and apology. Reassurance and giving advice were identified as the most common functions with 17 data (26%) whereas advice and request were found to have 16 (24%), and Encouragement was noted in 11 data (17%), while suggestion was noted in 5 data (8%). The other functions were apology, which were each seen in 1 data (1%). This clearly indicates that characters in *The Way We Speak* use indirect speech acts to convey the message in varying interpersonal situations. It means that in order to understand the meaning of indirect speech acts, it is necessary to take into account the context.

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6. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the research, authorship, and publication of this paper. This research has been carried out independently, and there are no personal, financial, or professional relationships that may have affected the conduct of this research and its results.

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