ABSTRACT

The Proposal (2009), directed by Anne Fletcher, was selected as the object of this study because it portrays a distinctive power-imbalanced relationship between Margaret, an editor-in-chief, and Andrew, her assistant. This study aims (1) to analyze the types of directive speech acts used by Margaret and Andrew, and (2) to examine how these directives reflect power relations between the characters. This study utilizes the directive speech acts framework proposed by Searle (1979). A descriptive qualitative method was employed to analyze the directive utterances produced by both characters. The data were collected through non-participant observation (William, 2008) and analyzed using the distributional method proposed by Sudaryanto (2015). The results revealed that 59 directive speech acts were identified, classified into request (21), order (15), command (14), ask (6), advice (2), and invite (1). The dominance of requests reflects how the characters tend to soften their directives despite the existing power imbalance. Furthermore, as the relationship shifts from professional to personal, their use of directive speech acts also shifts from authority to solidarity. This study implies that directive speech acts can be used to reveal power dynamics and relational shifts between characters or the speakers.

Keywords: directive speech acts, felicity conditions, power & solidarity, pragmatics analysis, speech acts.

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