



Investigating Speech Acts in *Barefoot* (by Zaharia Stancu)

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Abstract: The present study is an attempt to examine the various types of speech acts based on Searle's theory aiming at answering the two questions including: which speech acts are most applied according to the given theory, in the *Barefoot*, and whether the speech acts used in the story can best reflect the story's atmosphere considered by the author. The data of this analytical-descriptive research has been collected from the *Barefoot* novel, written by Zaharia Stancu. The findings indicate that the speech act theory enjoys a significant efficiency and can be utilized in recognizing and conveying the meaning dominating all over the story. Moreover, the findings illustrate that according to the categorization of the speech acts in the Searle's theory, 79.8% representatives, 12.6% directives, 4.4% expressives, 0.7% commissives and 2.5% declarations speech acts are used, among which the representatives and directives speech acts have the highest frequency and the declarations and commissives speech acts have the lowest frequency of application. The final result of the study is that the author of the story best portrays the story's atmosphere utilizing the representatives and directives speech acts, by which he has made an impressive work of art.

Keywords: Speech Acts Theory, Categorization of the Searle's Speech Acts, Fiction, *Barefoot*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Speech acts theory is one of the significant areas of the applied linguistics. In the theory, meaning is examined not only from the semantics features' perspective and the meaning of the truth conditions' points of view, but also it is considered as an action which induces a difference in the world outside. Speech act theory was developed by Oxford philosopher J. L. Austin whose 1995 lectures at Harvard University were published posthumously as *How to Do Things with Words* (1975). The approach has been greatly developed since so that there is a large literature. One of the most important writers on speech acts has been the philosopher John R. Searle and the theory has been of interest to many philosophers. Austin's theory, known as speech acts theory, has an outstanding position in the language understanding and the revolutionary evolution of twentieth century analyzing the deeper layers of texts in order to clarify the way audience understand the literary texts. One of the literary texts is fictional literature which is being studied in the present research. Therefore, this research has been conducted to explain and explore the various types of speech acts in fictional literature based on Searle's theory as the research problem. For this reason, the *Barefoot*, written by Zaharia Stancu will be examined in terms of the various types of speech acts.

Regarding the fact that the speech acts theory should be true in all languages and literary works as a general theory, the linguistic study of the Persian literary works based on the given theory is important. Such a study develop the knowledge and linguistic findings in the linguistics domain, especially applied linguistic area. So, this study and examining the fictional literary texts based on the speech acts theory is of great importance in order to analyze and evaluate the literary texts. Focusing on the abovementioned purposes, the questions of the present research are as follows that which speech acts are most applied according to the given theory, in the *Barefoot*, and whether the speech acts used in the story can best reflect the story's atmosphere considered by the author. In this way, library method was applied in order to obtain research data and to find the various types of speech acts in the text of in the *Barefoot*, based on Searle's theory. It is noteworthy that descriptive-analytical approach has been used in the research and the collected data will be studied based on Searle's theory. The research data are first gathered from the in the *Barefoot*'s Persian translation text, then entered in the computer to be analyzed based on Searle's theory.

2. REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT STUDIES

Sadeghi (1999) has studied the apologizing speech acts in contrastively in Persian and Kurdish learners in comparison with the English structures. Kazemi (2014), in an article entitled “a survey in Nahjul Balaghah in terms of speech act linguistic theory stated that whether one is able to utilize the speech act theory to better understand a sentences of a religious text such as Nahjul Balaghah or not, and how these speech acts are applied in Nahjul Balaghah as a proper example of this old religious texts. In some of the sermons, the implicational relationship between locutionary and illocutionary acts is not permanently expectable and the illocutionary act, containing the actual utterance’s implication, can just be approached by referring to the sermon context. Hence, it should be noted that speech act’s analyses can contribute to find the various sorts of text’s perusal in sermons as well as to open a new horizon in the interpretation of the text. Moreover, findings indicate that it has been attempted in Nahjul Balaghah to express religious beliefs through the application of representative, directive and expressive speech acts. Where necessary to introduce more religious beliefs to the audience, representative speech acts have been used widely, and when the need to invite believers to do religious affairs has been felt, directive speech acts have been further applied. Finally, expressive speech acts have been employed in the spiritual and emotional conditions.

Yule (1996) studies the speech acts and speech events. Regarding the speech act, he states that an act which is done as a result of the expression of an utterance is called speech act and within any situation, when one utters an utterance, three actions are done simultaneously as follows (pointing to Austin’s categorization): A- Locutionary act which is the fundamental act of any utterance, is the act of producing the very grammatical sentence in every specific language. B- By producing any utterance the speaker intends to do something in illocutionary act, which is not often correspond with the locutionary act and is beyond the linguistic form. C- In addition to the intention of the speaker or writer, there is a third speech act naming perlocutionary speech act. In this kind of speech act, the speech producer seeks some rhetorical, grammatical, psychological and the other strategies to be able to express the word in question in a way as to affect the audience in its most influential direction (ibid: 49). The study by Twitchell, Adkins and Burgoom (2004) about speech acts, under the title of using speech acts, was an attempt to propose a method to provide a profile of speech act for the vast simultaneous computer communications, which is based on speech act theory. These models can be employed as a template for categorizing conversations by creating some visual mapping of the conversations. The use of profiles in the data retrieval has been the subject of this study as well.

3. THREE FACETS OF A SPEECH ACT

Austin proposed that communicating a speech act consists of three elements: the speaker says something, the speaker signals an associated speech act, and the speech acts causes an effect on her listeners or the participants. The first element he called the locutionary act, by which he meant the act of saying something that makes sense in a language, that is, follows the rules of pronunciation and grammar. The second, the action intended by the speaker, he termed illocutionary act. This is what Austin and his successors have mainly been concerned with: the uses to which language can be put in society. In fact, the term speech acts, is often used with just this meaning of illocutionary acts. The third element, called the perlocutionary act, is concerned with what follows an utterance: the effect or “take-up” of an illocutionary act. Austin gave an example of sentence like shoot her! in appropriate circumstances this can have the illocutionary force of ordering, urging or advising the addressee to shoot her, but the perlocutionary force of persuading, forcing, frightening, and so on the addressee into shooting her. Perlocutionary effects are less conventionally tied to linguistic forms and so have been of less interests to linguists. We know for example that people can recognize orders without obeying them (Saeed, 1997: 237).

3.1. Categorizing Speech Acts

After Austin’s original explorations of speech act theory, there have been a number of works which attempt to systematize the approach. One important focus has been to categorize the types of speech acts possible in languages. J. R. Searle for example, while allowing that there is a myriad of language-particular speech acts, proposed that all acts fall into five main types as follows:

- Representatives, which commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition (paradigm cases: asserting, concluding);

- Directives, which are attempts by the speaker to get addressee to do something (paradigm cases: requesting, questioning);
- Commissives, which commit the speaker to some future course of action (paradigm cases: promising, threatening, offering);
- Expressives, which express a psychological state (paradigm cases: thanking, apologizing, welcoming, congratulating)
- Declarations, which effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra linguistic institutions (paradigm cases: excommunication, declaring war, christening, marrying, firing from the employment)

Searle uses a mix of criteria to establish these different types, including: the act's illocutionary point; its "fit" with the world; the psychological state of the speaker; and the content of the act. The illocutionary point is the purpose or the aim of the act thus the point of directives is to get the hearer to do something. The "fit" concerns direction of the relationship between language and the world: thus speakers using representatives, for example assertions, are seeking to get their words to match the world, while users of directives, for example, requests or orders, are seeking to change the world so that it matches their words. The criterion of psychological state relates to the speaker's state of mind: thus statements like "It's raining" reflect belief, while expressives like apologies and congratulations reveal the speaker's attitude to events. Finally, content relates to restrictions placed on speech acts by what they are about, their propositional content. Thus one cannot properly promise or predict things that have already happened. Or for another example: one way of viewing the difference between a promise and a threat is in terms of whether the future event is beneficial or harmful to the addressee. In distinguishing these acts, Searle further developed Austin's notion of felicity conditions into a classification of conditions that must hold for a successful speech act. Searle (1969) distinguishes between preparatory, propositional, sincerity and essential conditions for an act. These are necessary contextual conditions that license and distinguish different speech act (Saeed, 1997: 237-238).

3.2. Fiction

Fiction in its broad sense refers to any narrative whose fictitious and innovative character exceeds its actual and historical aspects. Therefore, apparently it must cover all creative types of literary works. Whether prose or verse. However, in the present critique the narrative works written in prose are commonly called Fiction literature (Mir Sadeghi, 110: 1979).

3.3. Barefoot navel

Barefoot is a novel of socialist realism type written by Zaharia Stancu, Romanian author, which was published in 1948. The brilliance of the novel is known to the extent that the poet Stancu became novelist Stancu just within a single night and the book was translated over thirty languages within two years. This novel, translated in Persian by Ahmad Shamlou, is the story of Dariah, a young farmer, who hears the life story of his parents and grandparents narrated by his aunt. The event occurs in a village in Ultanin before the popular uprising in 1907.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

In order to obtain the proper data for analysis, the whole chapter of furrow deep and narrow, from *Barefoot* novel, was examined. Its sentences were evaluated based on Searle's theory according to its five speech acts including representatives, directives, expressives, declarations and commissives acts, which are considered in the following examples:

Sample 1: I ordered that those who participated in the rebellion should step forward...what's the matter? Now, don't you hear anymore?

In this Sample which is expressed by Colonel Pienaro, the first sentence contains representative since in fact he describes what happen in the given scene, and directive speech acts. The latter one is due to the fact the he obliges his audiences and urges them to do something according his desire. In the second sentence also directive speech act has been applied. In the last sentences, Colonel Pienaru reflects his intention to his audience in the form of question, that is, the audience can conclude from the context of the sentence that the implied purpose of the Colonel Pienaru is to downgrade the audiences and express his frustration from them, and finally to threaten them. So, as it is observed, the expressive speech act has been also employed here.

Sample 2: Cantacuzene summoned the officers. Sergeant majors came out of the queue, the captain dismount the horse himself and all pointed to the men lined along the school's wall. Colonel command: Fire!

In the above instance, first of all, we are witness of representative speech act due to the colonel's invitation of audiences to declare the order of firing, then, summoning of officers indicates directive speech act. Subsequently, there are three representative speech act to describe the event. Finally, Colonel has induced a new condition for the world by his firing command and murder of men. In fact, since the Colonel has the power and authority to express the given command, the sentence contains two adaptive forms between language and the world, indicating its declarative speech act.

Sample 3: Latch father, it's not necessary to banter us! Alas, that day we didn't have muzzle to put on your nose!

As seen, beside the representative speech act, through the context, the indirect insult to the priest can be inferred, so regarding the fact that the first sentence is a replace for a sentence like "shut up", so, this sentence is an obvious sample of expressive speech act. The second sentence is a directive speech act case, and finally in the final sentence the old Fluorio illustrates his regret, while implicitly insult with anger and contempt.

Sample 4: I entrusted the steward's wife to my wife to carry her to a secure place.

In this case, representative speech act is observed due to the assertion of the respondent as well as the claim of securing the given person. In this statement, commissive speech act has been employed because as inferred from the sentence, the speaker makes this statement by guaranteeing his commitment to secure the steward's wife, along with adapting the world to the propositional content of future action. This means that action will take place in the future.

Sample 5: Howbeit, seeing them, the priest stands and say ridiculously: "my children! I had told you that one should not stand against the authorities, because God has determined that they will reach the high positions.

The first and the last sentences are the cases in which representative speech acts are applied. In the above statement, the priest speaks with the audience in a scoffing manner, so expressive speech act has been used in this section. In the sentence that priest warn about not standing against the authorities, directive speech act is used. Moreover, the next sentence contains bear representative again. At the end, God's will can be considered as a declaration speech act since from priest point of view, it is the power of God that leads to the promotion of authorities' position.

Sample 6: Taking a one-bullet shot at the sergeant's head, the Captain killed him. Then, shouted: -is there anyone who hankers after a hot bullet?

The above instance includes representative speech act since it bears the description of sergeant's murder. The next section bears expressives speech act due to the captain's anger. Finally, directive and expressives speech acts are employed in the last sentence through asking a question from audience in a threatening manner.

Sample 7: Indeed, we are not here to expect you bring something for receiving welcome service, we are here for revolution. Revolutionize, brothers, revolutionize! I agree with revolution: hell with all lords.

Regarding the abovementioned case, which is narrated from Ghioaca, two representative speech acts are applied. In the next part, he encourages the audiences for revolution so the sentence affects the reader via directive speech act. In the next sentence, announcement of his agreement with regard to the revolution indicates the commissives respect of the speech acts. At the end, as seen, the psychological state of Ghioaca's mind is revealed when he insults lords, so this utterance signifies an expressive speech act.

Sample 8: I can't. I'll not give a penny anymore on credit, unless, you will pay your previous debts.

In this instance three representative speech acts are employed through which the seller, Thomas, in fact poses his rejection regarding the buyer's request.

Table1: frequency distribution of speech acts in the barefoot novel based on Searle theory

Row	Types of speech acts	Number	Percentage
1	Representatives	435	79.8%
2	Directives	68	12.6%
3	Expressives	24	4.4%
4	Commissives	4	7%
5	Declarations	14	2.5%
	Sum	545	100%

5. CONCLUSION

In this article, the data obtained from the *barefoot* were analyzed and evaluated in terms of speech acts based on Searle theory. During the evaluation it was illustrated that in the sentences and paragraphs under the study, 435 representatives, 68 directives, 24 expressives, 14 commissives and 4 declarations types of speech acts are used, among which the representatives and directives speech acts have the highest frequency and the declarations and commissives speech acts have the lowest frequency of application. In order to convey the values and purposes considered by the authors, they use particular discourse, criteria and linguistic devices meanwhile they are also able to convey the concepts more effectively. Among these, speech acts are of special importance. Therefore, the application of these speech acts aiming at certain purposes wished by the author could have played an effective role in advancing the goals.

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