



## **The Comparison of the Use of Directive Speech Acts in *Bad Boys Ride Or Die* and *Sri Asih* Movies**

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**Abstract.** This research explores the differences in the use of directive speech acts between American and Indonesian cultures as represented in two culturally distinct films: *Bad Boys: Ride or Die* (2024) from the United States and *Sri Asih* (2022) from Indonesia. The study is focusing specifically comparison on the directive speech acts performed by the main characters in each movie. Using John Searle's (1979) classification of directive speech acts; such as commanding, ordering, requesting, advising, suggesting, challenging, begging, and inviting, the research identifies and categorizes the types of directive speech acts, then compares how they are culturally expressed in the respective films. This research uses the qualitative method. The data were collected from both movie transcripts, where only the utterances performed by the main characters, which is Mike and Marcus in *Bad Boys: Ride or Die*, and Alana in *Sri Asih* were analyzed. The findings reveal that the American main characters tend to perform directives in a more direct, and assertive, reflecting the individualism, openness, and low-context communication. In contrast, the Indonesian main character often perform directives in a more indirect, polite, and hierarchical way, highlighting collectivist values and high-context communication norms. This study provides insights into how culture influences language use, particularly in directive speech acts. It emphasizes the comparison of two different cultures that can affect how American and Indonesian perform directive speech acts through the movie context. The findings not only contribute to the field of pragmatics but also offer practical implications for intercultural communication.

**Keywords:** *American culture, comparison, directive speech act, Indonesian culture, qualitative method*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Language plays a vital role in human interaction. It is not just a tool for communication, but also a way to express thoughts, intentions, and cultural values. In everyday conversations, people do not only share information, they also perform actions through their words. This is what we call speech acts. One common and important type of speech act is the directive, which includes actions like commanding, requesting, advising, suggesting, and inviting. These speech acts are used when the speaker wants to get the listener to do something.

The way people perform directive speech acts can be influenced by their culture. For example, American culture, which values individualism and directness, may express directives more openly and assertively. On the other hand, Indonesian culture, which values harmony and respect, often expresses directives in a softer and more polite way. These cultural differences can be seen clearly in movies, where characters use language that reflects their background and values.

This study compares the use of directive speech acts in two culturally different movies: *Bad Boys: Ride or Die* (2024), an American action film, and *Sri Asih* (2022), an Indonesian superhero movie. The focus is on how the main characters, which are Mike and Marcus in *Bad Boys*, and Alana in *Sri Asih* who perform directive speech acts in different situations. By analyzing their dialogues, we can see how culture affects the way they give commands, make requests, offer advice, or invite others. The theory used in this study is John Searle's (1979) classification of speech acts, especially directive types. This theory helps identify different forms of directives, such as commanding, ordering, advising, and more. The study also uses a qualitative method by analyzing the movie scripts to find and categorize directive speech acts.

This research aims to achieve two main goals: first, to identify the types of directive speech acts used by the main characters in both movies, and second, to compare how these directives are performed differently based on American and Indonesian cultural backgrounds. Through this study, we hope to understand more about how language and culture are connected, and how people from different backgrounds may use the same speech act in very different ways.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is grounded in the field of pragmatics, a branch of linguistics that focuses on how people use language in real-life situations. In communication, people do more than just exchange information—they also perform actions through their words. These actions are called speech acts. One important type is the directive speech act, which is when the speaker tries to get the listener to do something, such as giving commands, making requests, offering suggestions, or giving advice.

The concept of speech acts was first introduced by J.L. Austin (1962), who explained that when people speak, they are not only saying something, they are also doing something. For example, saying "I promise" is not just words; it is an act of making a promise. Later, John Searle (1979) developed this idea further and categorized speech acts into five types: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. Among them, directives are especially interesting because they show how speakers try to influence others' actions through language. Directive speech acts are not just about grammar or sentence structure, they are also shaped by culture. The way people give commands or make requests can be very different depending on their cultural background. For example, in American culture, which tends to value individualism, directness, and low-context communication, people often speak in a straightforward and assertive way. On the other hand, in Indonesian culture, which values politeness, harmony, and high-context communication, people tend to be more indirect and considerate when giving directives.

This research uses Searle's (1979) theory to identify and categorize the types of directive speech acts in two culturally different films: *Bad Boys: Ride or Die* from the United States and *Sri Asih* from Indonesia. Searle's classification includes various forms of directives, such as commanding, ordering, requesting, advising, suggesting, inviting, begging, and challenging. Each of these forms has different levels of politeness and force, and how they are used can reflect the speaker's cultural norms and values.

To better understand how culture influences language, this research also draws from cross-cultural communication theories. American culture is considered low-context, meaning messages are often explicit, and clarity is important. In contrast, Indonesian culture is high-context, where messages are more implicit and depend heavily on shared understanding and social relationships. This difference plays a big role in how directives are delivered in each culture. Previous studies have explored directive speech acts in movies, but most of them focus on just one film or one cultural setting. For example, Silaen et al. (2022) analyzed directive speech acts in *Dunkirk*, while Yudha (2022) studied them in *I Still Believe*. These studies show that directive speech acts appear frequently in movie dialogues, but they did not explore cultural comparisons. This is where the current study finds its significance: by comparing American and Indonesian films, we can see how cultural values shape the way people express directives.

## METHOD

This research uses a pragmatic approach, with a focus on speech act theory, especially directive speech acts as introduced by John Searle (1979). Since the study compares how directive speech acts are performed in two different cultures, which is American and Indonesian. The research also includes a cross-cultural communication perspective. This combined approach helps the researcher understand how language functions in specific cultural contexts and how characters use language to influence others in different ways.

The design of this study is descriptive qualitative. According to Creswell (2018:46), qualitative research is useful when the goal is to describe real-life situations and explore how meaning is created through language. In this study, the researcher focuses on how the main characters in two films use directive speech acts and how their expressions reflect cultural values. The method involves identifying, classifying, and interpreting dialogue, not using statistics or numbers.

The primary data sources are the movie transcripts from *Bad Boys: Ride or Die* (2024), an American action film, and *Sri Asih* (2022), an Indonesian superhero movie. The data are in the form of utterances or dialogues spoken by the main characters—Mike and Marcus in *Bad Boys*, and Alana in *Sri Asih*. These utterances are selected because they contain directive speech acts like commanding, advising, requesting, suggesting, and others, based on Searle's classification.

The data collection process includes several steps; (1) watching both movies multiple times to understand the context and characters, (2) finding and reviewing the transcripts of both films to ensure accuracy, (3) identifying and selecting utterances that contain directive speech acts. (4) categorizing these utterances according to Searle's types of directives. (5) labeling the data using codes.

After collecting the data, the analysis is done by comparing how directive speech acts are performed in each movie. The researcher looks at how direct or indirect the speech is, how polite or assertive it sounds, and how these patterns reflect cultural norms—such as individualism and low-context communication in American culture, and collectivism and high-context communication in Indonesian culture.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzes the use of directive speech acts in two culturally different movies *Bad Boys: Ride or Die* (an American film) and *Sri Asih* (an Indonesian film) to explore how culture influences the way people give commands, make requests, offer advice, and express suggestions or challenges. The theory used is John Searle's classification of speech acts, specifically directive speech acts, which are utterances intended to make the listener do something. The analysis compares how these speech acts are performed in American and Indonesian contexts through the dialogues of the main characters.

### 1. Commanding

#### a. American movie

*Mike: "Don't let go!" (00:47:17)*

#### b. Indonesian movie

*Alana: "Cepat! Semua keluar dari sini!"  
(Hurry! Everyone get out of here!) (01:57:13)*

From the data above, it reflects that American culture, as reflected in *Bad Boys: Ride or Die*, commands are often expressed using imperative forms, but these are usually placed in a context of justification or emotional urgency. For instance, the utterance "Don't let go!" that said by Mike during a crisis, he is performing a command, but it is framed by the life-threatening context, making the command feel urgent and necessary. This reflects a cultural norm in which implicate directness with considering the situational awareness. American speakers may perform a command while simultaneously signaling why it is being given, maintaining clarity without disregarding politeness.

In contrast, the Indonesian culture, as shown in *Sri Asih* movie, tends to deliver commands more directly and firmly, without additional contextual explanation. Characters like Alana often use clear imperative forms such as the utterance "Cepat! Semua keluar dari sini!" (Hurry! Everyone get out of here!). These commands are

straightforward and authoritative, which aligns with Indonesia's high-context and hierarchical cultural norms. In these situations, the speaker's role or social position justifies the directness, and there is less expectation to soften the command.

## 2. Advising

### a. American movie

*Mike: "You're not supposed to be eating that shit." (00:03:52)*

### b. Indonesian movie

*Alana: "Kalau ada orang yang menindas kamu, lawan. Kamu harus tangguh seperti nama kamu."*

(If someone bullies you, fight back. You must be strong like your name.) (00:08:58)

From the data above, it describes that if the advising in American culture tends to be more assertive and straightforward. Americans often use phrases like "You need to..." or "You're not supposed to..." to give advice. For example, Mike tells Marcus, "You're not supposed to eating that shit.". This reflects a cultural inclination toward individualism and directness, where speakers expect listeners to consider it.

On the other hand, Indonesians offer advice more gently and indirectly. In Sri Asih movie, Alana advises Tangguh using conditional forms like, "Kalau ada orang yang menindas kamu, lawan." (If someone abuses you, fight back). This utterance respects the listener's to avoid face-threatening acts. The advice is not imposed but suggested, which fits with the Indonesian value of maintaining harmony and politeness. Therefore, Indonesian advice tends to sound more like guidance than instruction.

## 3. Challenging

### a. American movie

*Mike: "Call him dirty one more time. I dare you." (00:22:45)*

### b. Indonesian movie

*Alana: "Silakan coba lagi."*

(Go ahead, try again.) (01:08:26)

From the data above, American challenges are typically bold, direct, and emotionally charged. In *Bad Boys: Ride or Die*, Mike uses phrases such as "I dare you". These expressions are confrontational and reflect an American communication style that values assertiveness, especially in defending personal values, asserting dominance, or showing loyalty. Open verbal confrontation is culturally acceptable and often expected in certain situations.

In contrast, Indonesian challenges, as shown in *Sri Asih*, are more subtle, sarcastic, or even humorous. When Alana says “*Silakan coba lagi*” (Try again) to her enemy, the challenge is issued through irony and implication rather than direct threat. Indonesian speakers use sarcasm to express a challenge, which allows them to remain respectful on the surface while still asserting strength. This indirectness minimizes potential conflict, reflecting Indonesia’s cultural values and preference for implicit communication.

#### 4. Inviting

##### a. American movie

Marcus: “*Come on, bring it in.*” (00:51:01)

##### b. Indonesian movie

Alana: “*Sudah, kita cheers buat Ibu!*”  
(Alright, let’s raise a toast for Mom!) (00:12:00)

From the data above, it describes that in American, invitations are often expressed in a friendly, casual, and energetic manner. Phrases like “*Come on.*” are used to initiate social bonding action. These invitations reflect an informal tone typical, especially in emotionally warm or celebratory situations.

Meanwhile, in Indonesian invitations tend to emphasize togetherness and formality. In *Sri Asih*, Alana says, “*Sudah, kita cheers buat Ibu!*” (Alright, let’s toast for Mom), using the inclusive pronoun “*kita*” (we) to invite her friends. The structure focused on the group participation rather than the speaker’s directive. Invitations like this emphasize the values of togetherness and caring for others, and are usually delivered at formal or informal moments, such as in a victory celebration like in the movie *Sri Asih*.

From the differences when performing directive speech acts, it turns out that they are different at some point. American is more direct, straightforward, and assertive. When the speaker is giving a command or advice, making a challenge, or inviting someone, the speaker tends to get straight to the point and use clear and concise language without any preamble. Americans are more straightforward in giving advice; they will not hesitate to give it without ignoring the facts as long as the advice is for the good. They are more transparent when there are disagreements or differences in opinion. Not only that, when inviting someone to do something, Americans are more open to each other without looking at the hierarchy of the person. To conclude, all of those are related to the American personality in that they tend to be more individualized. Assertiveness, straightforwardness, and openness are the essential parts of American.

On the other hand, Indonesian emphasizes indirectness, politeness, and collectivism (caring for others). When Indonesians give commands, advice, or make a challenge and invite someone to do something, it is different from Americans. Indonesians will use

polite language and indirect utterances when giving a command or advice. Indonesians also care about or notice who they talk to. It means Indonesians pay attention to how old the person is and the position or hierarchical aspect. Usually, they use polite addresses such as 'pak' 'bu,' or etc ('sir', 'madam,' etc. in English) at the end of their utterance. When inviting someone to do something, Indonesians tend to use small talk first, or 'chit-chat,' and not get straight to the point. All of those are related to the personality of Indonesians, who tend to be reluctant, not individualistic, and prioritize politeness and ethics in communication, either in daily life or in a professional context.

Related to the findings, American culture is more direct, individual-focused, and values clear, efficient communication, while Indonesian culture is also direct, sarcastic, more polite, and assertive. It is contradictive with the Indonesian culture that familiar to indirect communication and upholds politeness. This is because the movie *Sri Asih* is a heroic genre that describes its main character, Alana, who is required to be assertive. Therefore, in this film, Alana more often uses directive speech acts which is tend to be direct and straightforward.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *Bad Boys: Ride or Die* and *Sri Asih* reflect clear differences in how directive speech acts are performed, shaped by American and Indonesian cultural values. Using Searle's classification of directive speech acts, the findings show that American characters tend to use more direct, assertive, and emotionally expressive language. This is seen in how Mike and Marcus give orders, advice, or challenges with a strong and urgent tone, which fits the American communication style that values clarity, efficiency, and individualism.

On the other hand, Indonesian characters in *Sri Asih*, like Alana, express directive speech acts more politely, indirectly, and respectfully. Even in critical or confrontational moments, Alana maintains a calm and controlled tone, reflecting Indonesian cultural values such as collectivism, high-context communication, and respect for hierarchy. Commands are often softened, advice is given with empathy, and challenges are delivered subtly rather than aggressively.

These differences highlight that language use is deeply influenced by culture. The way people give directions or ask others to do something is not only a matter of grammar or vocabulary, but also about how they view relationships, power, and social harmony. Through the comparison of these two films, this study shows that directive speech acts can serve as a window into understanding deeper cultural norms and values.

Overall, this research shows that movies are not just entertainment, they are also cultural texts that reflect how people from different backgrounds use language. By analyzing directive speech acts in these films, we gain better insight into how Americans and Indonesians communicate differently, and how speech acts reveal what each culture values in interaction: either straightforward action or social harmony. This kind of

understanding is important for fostering cross-cultural communication and appreciation in a globalized world.

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