

A Pragmatic study of Warning in some selected political Tweets

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دراسة تداولية لفعل الكلام التحذيري في عينة مختارة من التغريدات السياسية

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Abstract

Political speeches play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing social and political behavior. Among the various pragmatic strategies employed by politicians, warning is considered as an important communicative act used to alert audiences about potential dangers, threats, or undesirable consequences. This study aims to investigate the pragmatic features depending on Searle's modification of speech act 'warning' in some selected American political tweets. It focuses on how politicians use warning as a speech act to persuade, influence, and guide the audience's perception of political issues. The study adopts a pragmatic framework based on speech act theory and contextual analysis to examine the linguistic forms and strategies used to express warning. The analysis identifies the types of warning expressions, their pragmatic functions, and the contextual factors that shape their interpretation. The findings reveal that warning in the American political tweets is frequently used by those who have the strength or the authority to implement an issue via using the power. Moreover, politicians tend to employ both direct and indirect warning strategies depending on the communicative context and the intended audience. The study highlights the importance of pragmatic analysis in understanding how political language functions beyond its literal meaning.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Speech acts Theory, Explicit and Implicit of Performatives, Felicity Conditions, Warning, Twitter.

المخلص

تلعب الخطابات السياسية دورًا محوريًا في تشكيل الرأي العام والتأثير في السلوك الاجتماعي والسياسي. ومن بين الاستراتيجيات التداولية المتعددة التي يوظفها السياسيون في خطابهم، يُعد فعل التحذير من الأفعال التواصلية البارزة التي تهدف إلى تنبيه الجمهور إلى المخاطر أو التهديدات المحتملة أو العواقب غير المرغوب فيها. ويُعد هذا الفعل أحد الأدوات الخطابية التي تُستخدم لتوجيه إدراك المتلقين والتأثير في مواقفهم إزاء القضايا السياسية المختلفة. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل السمات التداولية لفعل الكلام التحذيري بالاعتماد على تعديل سيرل لنظرية أفعال الكلام، وذلك من خلال دراسة عينة مختارة من التغريدات السياسية الأمريكية. وتركز الدراسة على الكيفية التي يوظف بها السياسيون فعل التحذير بوصفه استراتيجية تداولية للإقناع والتأثير في الجمهور، فضلًا عن دوره في توجيه تفسير المتلقين للأحداث والقضايا السياسية المطروحة. وتعتمد الدراسة إطارًا تداوليًا يستند إلى نظرية أفعال الكلام والتحليل السياقي، بهدف فحص الصيغ اللغوية والاستراتيجيات الخطابية المستخدمة في التعبير عن التحذير. كما يسعى التحليل إلى تحديد أنماط تعبيرات التحذير ووظائفها التداولية، فضلًا عن الكشف عن العوامل السياقية التي تسهم في تشكيل دلالاتها وتفسيرها في الخطاب السياسي. وتشير نتائج الدراسة إلى أن فعل التحذير في التغريدات السياسية الأمريكية يُوظف غالبًا من قبل الفاعلين السياسيين الذين يمتلكون قدرًا من السلطة أو النفوذ، الأمر الذي يمنح خطابهم قوة تداولية تمكنهم من التأثير في القضايا المطروحة وتوجيه الرأي العام. كما تكشف النتائج أن السياسيين يميلون إلى استخدام استراتيجيات تحذيرية مباشرة وأخرى غير مباشرة تبعًا لطبيعة السياق التواصلية وخصائص الجمهور المستهدف. وتؤكد الدراسة، في ضوء هذه النتائج، أهمية التحليل التداولي في الكشف عن آليات اشتغال اللغة في الخطاب السياسي، وفهم وظائفها التي تتجاوز المعنى الحرفي إلى أبعاد تداولية أعمق تتعلق بالتأثير والإقناع وبناء المواقف.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التداولية، نظرية أفعال الكلام، الأفعال الإنجازية الصريحة والضمنية، شروط الملاءمة (Felicity Conditions)، التحذير، تويتر.

SECTION ONE: *PRELIMINARIES* □

1.1 The Statement of the Problem

Warning plays an essential role in educating people and reducing injuries and fatalities, and they, therefore, worth better production and recognition. Warning is telling someone to do or not to do something for his benefit. In other words, the speaker informs the hearer that something dangerous or unpleasant may happen in the future so that they can try to avoid it. Then, the problem of the current study is that some students and learners may face lots of difficulties in distinguishing the types of speech act theory, and how to understand the classification of each type of them. Additionally, it can figure out a problematic topic for students of university levels.

1.2 Aims of the Study

This paper aims at:

1. Showing the concept of warning in terms of pragmatics.
2. Analyzing some selected political tweets of American president Donald Trump.

1.3 Limits of the Study

The current research paper is limited to the analysis of warning in some selected American political tweets depending on Searle's modification of speech act since warning is classified under the umbrella of this theory.

1.4 Hypothesis of the Study

It is hypothesized that the American political speeches include a directive speech act rather than the other types of illocutionary forces.

1.5 Value and Significance of the Study

It is hopeful that this study has many significance and values for the whole learners and students of English department in general but for the special interest in semantics and pragmatics.

SECTION TWO: *THEORETICAL BACKGROUND*

2.1 Introduction

A speaker must learn not only language knowledge (rules of grammar and word imagery) but also knowledge of the world in order to communicate effectively because it is crucial for the creation and understanding of a particular utterance. Since any statement is meaningful only if it is in the right context, a statement should include all conditions necessary for a successful issuing of this statement. Pragmatics is concerned with the use of languages, the communicative competence of a speaker and his selection between language forms, whether agreed or generative, as well as how a listener elucidates meaning in speech and how both parties build an equation to understand one another. The quote from Akmajian et al. (2001: 361). He described it as "the relation of signs to their users". A year later Carnap 1939:4, as referenced in Akmajian et al ibid. The second tried to turn Morris's definition into practical language. He defined investigations that account for "the action, the state and the environment of man who speaks or hears a linguistic sign" as pragmatics. According to Levinson (1983: 21), Pragmatics is a new field of linguistics studies those aspects of meaning that cannot be grasped and explained by the semantic theory alone. Pragmatics is the study of the relationship between language and the context of utterance or situation. It also examines 'contextual meaning' — how the person listening or reading recognises the speaker/writer's meaning even though it is not literally said (or written) In fact, the study of pragmatics has now popularised and extended to factors determining a speaker's language choice in social interaction and how the selection influences others.

2.2 Warning and Speech Act Theory

Warning is the process of preventing someone from doing something. It is a sort of an alarm or caution. As long as warning represents directing the others, thus, it is classified as a directive illocution force of the utterance. Taking a cue from the work of philosopher J. L. Austin, speech act is now found in more specialized discourse usage and includes an examination of the role of utterance concerning speaker behavior and hearer behavior during interpersonal communication. This will be a communicative activity and defined with expresses the purpose of speakers during speaking and results they acquire from listeners. (Crystal, 2003: 427). Austin is a linguist who genuinely understood this feature of language. As he describes in his classic how to do things with words (1962), the types of acts that people can accomplish with their language are called speech acts. He further claims that there is no meaningful distinction between physical acts and speech acts. Words, he claims, are in themselves actions (Austin 1962: 113). For example, if X refocuses Y with a manual gesture, he

may have performed a speech act in the classic Austinian sense. It is true that Austin elaborated his theory of speech-acts with language in view primarily; and he would have accepted the principle of the primacy of the phonic medium. Neither he nor his disciples, however, would appear to be dedicated to the idea that gestures and other types of signals can be explained in terms of the theory of speech-acts just in case they are equivalent to, or parasitic upon language-utterances (Lyons 1977: 726). The reason to focus on speech acts is that all language communication requires speech acts. The unit of linguistic communication is not the symbols, word, or phrase, as was usually assumed, but the symbol, word, sentence, in speech actions. Speech therefore operates as the fundamental or simplest components of linguistic transmission (Searle, 1969: 16).

2.3 Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Quite frequently, the contrast between the direct act of speaking and the indirect act of speaking is founded on the fact that there is a large difference between what a statement says and what it implies. A direct speech act or the literal meaning of a phrase can be described as that semantic interpretation in which the context plays an integral part or rather as the meaning of the phrase expressed in a minimal context generated by the sentence itself. This minimum setting always includes a speaker, a listener, occasionally and somewhere (Geuken, 1978: 261-262). The literal meaning of a sentence is defined as far as possible by the language units and interactions inside the phrase. On the other hand, the meaning of a statement is the outcome of the interplay between the meaning of the phrase and the information indicators from a mostly not minimal environment (ibid). If the act is stated directly through the most evident, linguistic methods, then it is a direct act of speech according to Aitchison (1987: 98). However, many speech acts are more typically associated with the grammatical structure of some other act. Indirect Speech Actions (ISAs), according to Searle (1975: 60): "are cases in which an illocutionary act is performed indirectly by the way of performing another". He does this by relying on linguistic and extra-linguistic common ground, as well as a general ability to reason and draw inferences by the addressee that what he or she says only indirectly represents, in particular when it comes to indirect, illocutionary acts. And as such, indirect speech acts refer to the structure-function relation that is needed by the direct speech act (Black 2006:20) — in this sense they are a way to relate some sort of indirectness with sentence structures. Indirect speech acts is a term used in linguistics for politeness. In this case, the speaker has evidently employed a certain type of speech act and not the other one he/she was able to, although it is left for him/her (the addressor) to figure out what meaning made by the speaker. In addition, Yule (1996:133) states that people sometimes use certain syntactic structures with different functions:

Table (1) Direct and Indirect Speech Act

Examples	Structures	Functions
Did you eat the pizza?	Interrogative	Question
Eat the pizza (please)!	Imperative	Command (Request)
You ate the pizza.	Declarative	Statement

If question as function is used in interrogative structure, this status is direct speech act. Or, when someone is not yet aware of this and they know it;

-Can you ride a bicycle?

There are primary and secondary illocutionary acts (Malmkjaer, 2002: 493). The indirect one which is not directly performed while the direct one that is preformed by literal utterance of the sentence:

- Would you like to come to the party? (secondary illocutionary)

- I have an exam. (primary illocutionary).

2.4 Searle's Classification of Speech Act

Searle (1979: 12-17) divides five types of the speech act into:

1- Declarations: are those types of things that once successfully played, assures the match between its propositional content and reality or they change the world just by being uttered.

Examples include declare, appoint, christen and marry — verbs that confer such class.

2- Expressives: are Speech Act that "Express what the Speaker feels" and Attitude verbs Such as Apologize Welcome, Thank, Congratulate etc.

For instance, "Thank you for coming and XYZ.

3- Assertives: Yes, it is that type of speech acts in which the speaker states what he or she think how things are. Some examples of class two verb types are: state, affirm, describe, deduce etc.

For example, "I assert that Ali is a doctor"

4- Commissives: are classes of speech acts wherein the speakers commits themselves to some future action. For instance, promise, swear, commit, threaten and many more verbs indicate members of the class.

E.g., "I promise you to bring the book tomorrow".

2.5 Explicit and Implicit of Performatives

Austin focuses on a group of sentences by him. Performances, "in which the saying of the words constitutes the performing of an action". He claims that there are no broad distinctions in meaning between explicit performative and implicit performative.

Explicit performative: when the utterances contain a performative verb such as: e.g. "I warn you, that there is a black dog behind you".

Implicit performative: when the utterances do not contain explicit performative verb, such as:

e.g. "There is a black dog behind you".

2.6 Felicity Conditions

A type of act can be successfully executed only if certain conditions are satisfied, a non-exhaustive list of which is provided by Searle (1969: 57-61). These are brought forth when reading Passage under the umbrella of Towards "speech act" Promising. The conditions are as follows:

1- Pre-conditions: these pertain more to pretext and overall contextual needs. A speaker who vows future action presupposes his proposed future act to ultimately be in the hearer's best interest and that the speaker possesses capable faculties to perform the act. Preparatory conditions are those real world (non-linguistic) conditions in which the speech act could only have taken place. For a promise, the addressee wants the action mentioned in the promise to be performed by the speaker and also knows that it will not happen for both of them (Huang, 2007: 105).

2- Propositional content conditions: the propositional requirement of a promise, for instance, is that the speaker is predicating some future act. The propositional content condition is a very general principle about what the speech act is about. It is precisely the question of what, if any restrictions there are on the content – i.e. upon what survives as the 'core' of the utterance (Searle's propositional act in terms of content) when one abstracts from its illocutionary aspect; In the case of a promise, we can say that it ascribes to speaker some future action, while in case of request it ascribes to interlocutor some future action (ibid).

3- Sincerity conditions: the intention beliefs and desires are those that the speaker must have when it is manifested in its performance of an illocutionary act. This is because the speaker has this doing intentions in his/her promise, for example.

4- Propositional conditions: they deal with what kind of obligation to a certain belief it is that the speaker incurs in performing a speech act. An act is performed as an obligation when a speaker says that he will do something. So to put it in a nutshell, 'felicity conditions' are a notion in speech act theory, which I see as the requirements for these conditions to be satisfied if the speech act is satisfactory (Crystal, 2003: 178).

2.7 Warning as a directive speech act

The illocutionary point of this class of acts is to get the interlocutor to do (or not do) something. Directives would include verbs like: 'ask', 'order', 'request', 'demand', 'advise', 'warn', ('insist') 'instruct' 'forbid' etc. As in example below:

- 'Open the door' [Grocery]

- could you lend me some money, Request h h h h

Such actions cannot be true or false, they can only be obeyed or disobeyed. A directive is a speech act that aims at getting the hearer to do something "I want you to (sort of) get out", verbs denoting this class are: ask, order, request, invite... etc. (Searle, 1979:13).

3.1 Twitter: An Overview

Twitter is one of the social media programs used by many public figures to post and share stuff on for celebrities and politicians. This special usage of Twitter has become a significant element for Twitter and celebrities alike. Like many other WWW websites in social networking, the use of Twitter by famous personalities draws more individuals. Twitter has covered it for its high-profile users with a pair of features. The first is the accounts that are verified. Second, Twitter works together with public relations professionals and the media to do just that in their advertising and promotional campaigns, even on how they use Twitter promotional campaigns, support and analytical services to find out what worked what buzz was created and about did not work (Rosman 2012: 29).

3.2 The Model and data selection

This study adopts Searle's (1979) "Expression and Meaning" because Searle's model is clear and comprehensive. It has a complete modification of speech act theory. However, the data are restricted to the American president, Donald Trump regarding the political conflict in the middle east.

3.3 American Political Tweets: An Analysis

The following section deals with some selected political tweets that carry. All of the selected Tweets are said by the same speaker who is the President of the United States Donald Trump:

3.3.1 Tweet 1

"President Trump threatened Iran late Sunday, warning of severe "consequences", As rhetoric between the two countries' presidents escalated dramatically"Mr. Trump, in an all-caps message on twitter addressed to president Hassan Rouhani, who was the president of Iran, wrote that the country would face "consequences the likes of which few throughout history have ever suffered" if he continued to threaten the United States. And last month the United States said it would sanction all exporters of Iranian oil after Mr. Trump announced in May that the United States was exiting from a 2015 deal to contain Iran's nuclear program. American officials have since toned down the sanctions demand, which had roiled oil markets. This tweet is an example of speech act; the tweet analyzed shows one type of speech act and that is directive as it assumes a warning to the addressed country.

3.3.2 Tweet 2

'all over the world the coronavirus the very bad gift from China marches on. Not good '

This tweet is said by Donald Trump. It is related to the pandemic disease of Covid 19 which has been spreading all over the world. This utterance implies an indirect act of warning since the prudent tries to deliver an idea that the disease is dangerous and everyone must be warned about it. The verb 'marches' suggests a militaristic image of a rhythmic walk in step; it therefore implies some sort of groups or 'army' in action. The action is continuous, ominous of a takeover that cannot be halted. Instead of being a biological virus which has no politics, borders or motive, the virus is transformed into a premeditated assault on America and the planet.

3.3.3 Tweet 3

"The WHO failed to adequately obtain, vet and share information in a timely and transparent fashion."

As it is known, The USA present used to criticize the WHO for different reasons during Coronavirus pandemic in 2020. One of the reasons because his policies were against China. Thus, This utterance includes indirect act of warning the other countries to take attention against both China and WHO. This is a statement that echoes an ongoing theme to be found in Mr Trump's attacks on the WHO, and when he wrote to its director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on 18 May he yet again made the same attack, claiming that the Organisation had 'repeatedly ignored credible reports of the virus circulating in Wuhan as early as December 2019 or even earlier, including reports from The Lancet medical journal.

3.3.4 Tweet No.4

I cannot stand by & watch this happen to a good American City Minneapolis. A total lack of leadership. Either the very weak Radical Left Mayor, Jacob Frey, get his act together and bring the City under control, or I will send in the National Guard & get the job done right. Embarrassing these THUGS are dishonoring the memory of George Floyd and I am not going to let that happen. Just had a very good conversation with Governor Tim Walz and told him that the military is with him all the way. If there is any difficulty, we will assume control but when the looting starts, the shooting starts. Thank you!

Analysis

This present tweet represents Trump's role during the incidents that happened in the United States during the demonstration in 2020. This tweet includes an intended meaning and it also reflects one type of speech act which is called directive speech act of warning that is used to clarify a type of warning given by Trump concerning the general conditions that take place in Minneapolis.

3.3.5 Tweet 5

"A fire after an explosion at a chemical plant in the United States"

The current twitter shows one kind of speech act that presents expressive and also another kind which is called representative, it talks about dangerous case happened in USA and how it would be affected the environment and many other things such as the economic state of USA.

3.3.6 Tweet 6

"Any attack by Iran, in any form, against the United States will be met with an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude!"

This tweet is said by Trump. He threatens to respond with the full force of America should Iran attack American targets. In his tweet, Trump again defended his decision to order the killing, saying it was executed "for his planning a future attack, murdering U.S. Troops and the death & suffering caused over so many years.

3.3.7 Tweet 7

"NEVER, EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE."

President Trump responded angrily to a message from Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, who attacked Trump and warned the American president not to "play with the lion's tail" and that "war with Iran is the mother of all wars. The capital letters indicate an emphasis on his idea. The speech utterance contains an imperative-based directed speech act where Trump is referring to warn Iran not to threaten Iran.

3.3.8 Tweet 8

'If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran'

Donald Trump says this tweet. He has made one of his most direct threats yet to Tehran, vowing "if Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran". The US president waddled out of his golf club in Sterling, Virginia, on Sunday to tweet provocatively just after 4.30 pm thus inviting an escalation of tension already on the rise. This does also have a speech act of directive(saying Iran, "Just don't fight America"), the underlying meaning of "I will fight you if we this", it's also threatening, so that can actually be an illocutionary force as commissive act.

SECTION THREE: CONCLUSIONS

1. In the political register, warning is used to tell someone about something bad, dangerous or unpleasant that is likely to occur in the future.

2. Trump preferred "to dictate and dominate the news cycle"; his communications emphasized his political grievances, promoted conspiracy theories, and attacked those he regarded as enemies.

3. Warning in politics, is used by those who have the strength or the authority to implement an issue via using the power.

4. In the American political tweets, warning is a sort of speech act. Presidents use the style of warning or threatening while tweeting in the twitter.

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