

An analysis of extracts of *The Godfather* using speech act theory and its implications for the EFL classroom

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Abstract

This study examines the way in which speaker meaning is not always explicitly understood through the denotive meaning of linguistic items alone, but often relies on the context and shared knowledge of the speakers. This is important for learners of English who require communicative competence (Canale and Swain, 1980) rather than mere linguistic competence. A component of this is pragmatic competence, which is here discussed in relation to speech act theory, proposed and developed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969, 1976); Grice's Cooperative Principle and conversational maxims (1975), and politeness theory (Brown and Levinson 1987). Extracts from the movie, *The Godfather*, are analyzed to demonstrate how certain speech acts can be misinterpreted. Finally, a number of ways are proposed in which these extracts can be used in second language teaching to fill gaps in pedagogical materials that have been identified by other commentators (Tatsuki, 2016).

Keywords: pragmatics, speech acts, face, threats, compliments

1. Introduction

"Nice store you got there. Would be a real shame if something happened to it." (Pinker 2007: 374)

For most native speakers of English, the quoted cliché above would likely be easily interpretable as a thinly-veiled threat, despite the fact that none of the words or grammar of the individual sentences conventionally denote any threatening language; the first sentence, taken in isolation, appears to function as a compliment, while the second sentence could be an expression of concern. The quote therefore exemplifies one of the more difficult problems for language learners, as well as for linguists and philosophers of language, which is the discrepancy between sentence-meaning (form) and speaker-meaning (function). While much of the history of the study of language has been preoccupied with the formal properties of language such as semantics, syntax and phonology, researchers in recent years have found such a narrow focus to be inadequate for the task of understanding how speakers can nonetheless decode the meaning of utterances such as the above example.

This study aims to demonstrate how a study of discourse and an understanding of pragmatics can illuminate the ways in which speaker-meaning is often couched in indirect language and can often only be understood through context and shared knowledge between the speaker and hearer.

The next section briefly summarizes the progression in linguistics, the philosophy of language and English teaching from an overemphasis on form to an examination of context-situated discourse in which language usually takes place. This includes an exposition of speech acts (Austin 1962 and Searle 1969), conversational implicatures (Grice 1989), face-saving, politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987), and the importance of context and shared knowledge. Following that, is the speech-act analysis of extracts from the film *The Godfather* demonstrating the gap between the linguistic forms employed and the functions they are meant to realize. Finally, some suggestions are made regarding how to present these pragmatics theories to students using the extracts under analysis.

2. Background

The linguistic traditions of Bloomfieldian structuralism and Chomskyan nativism, according to Brown (2007: 33), “dealt specifically with the forms of language and not with the deeper functional levels of meaning constructed from social interaction”. Linguistic competence, which Canale and Swain (1980: 29) refer to as “knowledge of lexical items, and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics and phonology” is a necessary but not sufficient component of what Dell Hymes called “communicative competence” (Brown 2007: 218) which forms a basis for the communicative language teaching paradigm. Due to a growing awareness of the importance of communicative competence, things have improved since Thornbury (1999: 3) complained that most coursebooks were organized around teaching sentence-level grammar. Many textbooks such as the English Firsthand series at least implicitly require students to make inferences from context with the use of sarcasm, or hesitations such as when being invited on a date. Nevertheless, gaps in pedagogical materials have been noted by Tatsuki (2016). In English classrooms in Japan, decontextualized sentence-level grammar still appears to be the basis of instruction whereas pragmatic discourse of the type students will face in real life is “language longer than a sentence” (Swan 1995: 159) and highly context-based (Jaworski and Coupland 1999: 2-3). Canale and Swain assert that “the relationship between a proposition (or the literal meaning of an utterance) and its social meaning is variable across

different sociocultural and discourse contexts, and that communication involves the continuous evaluation and negotiation of social meaning on the part of the participants.” (1980: 29)

One aspect of social meaning will be explored in Section 2.2, namely that of politeness strategies and face. Following that will be an explanation of the importance of context and shared knowledge. However, before that it will be necessary to elucidate a concept from the philosophy of language called speech acts, which was itself a departure from prevailing traditions of philosophical linguistic analysis.

2.1 Speech Acts and Conversational Implicatures

J. L. Austin (1962) noted that while speakers can use language to describe matters of fact admitting of truth and falsity, which he referred to as “constatives”, there was another class of utterances which involve *performing* acts, which he called “performatives”. Such utterances are better judged not on their truth value, as the constative “it is raining” would be, but on what Austin refers to as their “felicity conditions”. By this term, Austin meant that the utterance in question will only produce a desired effect if made by particular speakers in an appropriate setting. For example, a speaker uttering, “I do” at a wedding is not describing a situation which is either true or false, but *participating* in the wedding if the speaker has a recognized authority (for example, the performative would be successful if in such a place as a registry office, or a church where the celebrant had legal powers of conducting weddings, and defective if the speaker was already married or the celebrant was an actor or a moonlighting English teacher, etc..).

However, while such an example could be considered to have a conventionalized form, according to tradition, other performatives have functions for which specific forms are not required. If a speaker were to utter, “There’s a bull in that field”, the function of the utterance could be as a statement of fact, or it could be a warning. As Coulthard says, “Austin comes up against the central problem of discourse analysis, the interface between form and function.” (Coulthard 1977: 14). The words uttered are what Austin referred to as the locutionary act, the function of the utterance is the illocutionary act, and the effect upon the hearer is the perlocutionary act. Searle (1969), following Austin, analyzes these utterances in terms of propositional acts (linguistic content) and also their illocutionary force – or the function of the speech act.

Searle (1976) furthermore devised a classification of speech acts, in which he divided them according to the following categories; *representatives* (or *assertives*), *directives*, *commissives*, *expressives*, and *declarations*. Representatives could simply be expressions of belief about the world including reporting or disagreeing; directives are attempts by the speaker to have the hearer do something, such as when advising, warning or requesting; commissives involve a commitment by the speaker to do some future action such as with a promise, an offer, or a threat; expressives involve the speaker telling the hearer their feelings about a particular state of affairs such as when complimenting or thanking, and declarations involve altering the world through their mere utterance such as in the above example of agreeing to a marriage, providing that the felicity conditions are present.

In terms of language instruction, the importance of illocutionary force has been recognized by functional syllabuses which often include a number of speech acts such as inviting, making compliments and agreeing. However, as Koester (2002) points out there has been “an overly simplistic tendency to equate speech acts with certain linguistic formulae” (Koester 2002: 168). Hence, coursebooks often give forms such as “Can you...”, or “Could I...” for making requests distinguishing only between register, while some Japanese students appear to have been taught “You had better...” for giving advice despite the fact that native English speakers often interpret that form as conveying a threat. Thus, it should not be assumed that form is sufficient for predicting function. Furthermore, as Tatsuki (2016: 4-5) points out, textbooks often teach various functions such as disagreements by providing language which is too direct. Indeed, speakers are far more often indirect in expressing themselves than some textbooks suggest.

One concept which deals with this gap between form and function is what Grice (1975, 1989) called a conversational implicature, where the speaker’s meaning cannot be understood, purely from a conventional analysis of the speaker’s words. Grice asserts that conversation participants will generally abide by what he calls the Cooperative Principle. This principle is divided into four categories and associated maxims summarized as follows:

Quantity – be informative, but not more than is necessary

Quality – say what you believe to be true or do not lack evidence for

Relation – be relevant

Manner – be concise and unambiguous rather than obscure

While few people are adept at scrupulously abiding by such a stern guide to conversation, it is intuitively noticeable that strong deviations from these maxims on the part of the speaker would be irritating to the hearer. When such maxims are flouted, Grice contends, it is usually because something other than what is being directly said, is being implied. In order for this to be the case, if the hearer assumes that the speaker is still following the Cooperative Principle, and has no need to violate one of the maxims, then the speaker's doing so gives rise to a *conversational implicature*. An example that Grice himself used to illustrate this point is if someone asked his friend how John was getting on at his new job at the bank and she replied, "Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet," the first speaker is likely to wonder what his friend was trying to imply because the information about going to prison ordinarily flouts the maxim of being relevant.

However, Grice's maxims have been challenged. For example, Wilson and Sperber (2002), have argued that Grice's Co-operative Principle, including the central claims that meaning is understood through a flouting of various maxims, is unnecessary, claiming instead that speakers' expectations of relevance are sufficient. Others, such as Pinker (2007) point to situations in which speakers are engaging in language exchanges, such as offering veiled bribes, that do not appear to be "co-operative" in the normally understood sense of mutual assistance, but instead are manipulative. Some cognitive theorists, while not directly addressing Grice, have demonstrated that in hostile situations such as police interrogations the hearer may misunderstand the speaker to make the speaker's utterances conform to the hearer's biases (Tavris and Aronson, 2012). Tannen (1990) has described examples of miscommunication – particularly between men and women – that occur through a clash of expectations in conversation with the result being a lack of co-operation.

Grice was not unaware that speakers may not conform to the Co-operative Principle at all times, and included observations that some speakers will simply opt out of co-operating. He may have underplayed unconscious opt-outs which would be worth further study, and a clash of expectations may be at the heart of a number of misunderstandings as will be explored in section 2.3. Yet, Grice tentatively put forward other possible maxims such as "Be polite" (Grice, 1989: 28), and it is the subject of politeness strategies by two theorists following up on Grice's work which is examined in the next section.

2.2 Face and Politeness

Brown and Levinson (1987: 94) assert that when someone speaks in complete conformity to Grice's maxims he has *baldly gone on-record*. This approach is useful for someone who wants to get his message across with maximum efficiency, which is what some textbooks often assume all learners will want to do. However, one complication with this assumption is that speaking directly at all times can cause a number of social problems. One important idea that Brown and Levinson use is the sociological concept of 'face' which, while perhaps not having a rigorous scientific definition, has proven to be useful for elucidating certain discourse strategies particularly relating to direct and indirect speech acts. Erving Goffman (1967: 4) defines face as:

the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself.

This definition of Goffman's is adopted by Brown and Levinson who subdivided it into two categories, negative-face - or a person's desire to be unimpeded, and positive-face - a person's desire to have their wants valued by others. And they further explain that in social interaction, rational face-bearing people will inevitably run up against conflicts in which one person's positive face wants will compete with another person's negative face wants ultimately leading to face-threatening acts. Included in their taxonomy of negative-face-threatening acts are requests and threats which, to varying degrees, are an imposition or impediment to the hearer. In the case of offers, the face-threatening act comes from the pressure of the hearer to either accept the offer, and thereby potentially incur a debt to the speaker, or else to refuse and potentially threaten the speaker's positive face. Further speech acts which are relevant to this study are those which threaten the positive-face value of a participant such as expressions of disapproval, criticism, contempt and ridicule (Brown and Levinson 1987: 66), expressions of violent (out-of-control) behaviour and those of irreverence. Whenever someone performs a speech act of the type mentioned, his face and that of the hearer is at stake. Brown and Levinson (1987: 57) remark:

it is observable that in many languages...when formulating a small request one will tend

to use language that stresses in-group membership...when making a request that is somewhat bigger, one uses the language of formal politeness...And finally, when making the sort of request that it is doubtful one should make at all, one tends to use indirect expressions (implicatures).

However, the picture is complicated by the fact that “it is often in the speaker’s interest, and in the interests of politeness, to allow the speaker’s precise force of a speech act to remain unclear.” (Leech 1977, cited in Thomas 1983: 93) In order to make a particular speech act clear without having to go *on-record* with an unambiguous linguistic form, the speaker may want to rely on the context or shared knowledge between the speaker and hearer.

2.3 Context and shared knowledge

In order for discourse to be coherent, it is not sufficient for speakers to simply produce strings of grammatically correct sentences (Everett 2012: 60). An awareness of what has gone before in the conversation is also necessary and in many cases a shared knowledge will enable a lot to be left unsaid. In an example from Coulthard (1977: 65), the speakers in the exchange presumably understand what the second speaker’s reply entails from a knowledge about how the world works.

A: Are you going to work tomorrow?

B: I’m on jury duty.

Exploiting Grice’s maxim of relevance allows the first speaker to understand that being on jury duty has a meaningful implication, namely that it is incompatible with going to work. Shared knowledge is of crucial importance in conversation, “not simply shared rules for the interpretation of linguistic items, but shared knowledge of the world.” (Coulthard 1977: p.65). Similarly, context is necessary for understanding irony, as the situation involved will often reveal that the speaker is flouting the maxim of Quality – to say what one believes to be true – such as in a song by the country singer Kenny Rogers, in which a man intones, “You picked a fine time to leave me, Lucille / with four hungry kids and a crop in the field.” The listener, knowing that having to provide for four hungry children and having to harvest the season’s crop will realize that it is, contrary to the speaker’s words, not a fine time to leave. Shared knowledge can work at a number of levels. In the above case, common knowledge allows the speaker to assume his implicature is obvious. However, in other cases, shared knowledge may

take the form of in-jokes, shop-talk, slang or trade secrets, in which language derived from shared knowledge is sometimes deliberately used to exclude. It is clear that some of the differences in politeness strategies across cultures could lead to potential misunderstandings, which Thomas (1983: 94) calls pragmatic failure which occurs with the inability of the hearer to understand the function of the speech act. For Thomas, pragmatic failure differs from the breaking of linguistic norms such as in grammatical error, because pragmatic competence “entails probable rather than categorical rules” (Candlin 1976, cited in Thomas 1983: 94), hence pragmatic understanding can be seen in terms of predictability. Pragmatic failure can arise when the speaker expects the hearer to infer the force of the utterance based on a system of knowledge that they do not in fact share.

To return to the quote that began this paper, a case of pragmatic failure could occur if the hearer were unaware of the assumptions that the speaker was making, namely that the hearer would understand she is being threatened and that protection money is being demanded. Mario Puzo, the author of *The Godfather* makes a similar point, albeit anecdotally, about a case of pragmatic failure, when an Englishman in Sicily received a ransom note: “the Sicilian mafia wrote this Englishman such a flowery note, that he really didn’t understand what they were saying...he thought they were paying him some kind of compliment. He didn’t realize they wanted fifty grand off him *before* they kidnapped him.” The discrepancy here between form and function and how an inability to predict the latter from a consideration of the former, is a phenomenon which Puzo uses to good effect in his movie, which is the subject of this paper’s analysis.

3. Analysis of extracts from the Godfather

The Godfather is a film adaptation of Puzo’s novel of the same name and co-written by the movie’s director, Francis Ford Coppola. It’s the story of a Sicilian crime family, the Corleones, centring specifically on the family patriarch, Don Vito Corleone, the eponymous godfather. Although the film is scripted, rather than a recording of spontaneous speech, it is an authentic text in the sense that it was not produced for pedagogical purposes (Richards and Schmidt 2010: 43), it is a cultural artifact of the English-speaking world and has even left a legacy on the English language. According to Puzo, the term “godfather” only became used to mean the head of a criminal organization following the novel and the movie. Similarly, the expression “to make someone an offer he can’t refuse” has become a cliché in the English-speaking world,

but whose meaning was invented by Puzo.

3.2 Analysis of Section One

The first selection, the entirety of which can be found in Appendix A, comes from the opening act, in which the Godfather is receiving well-wishers at his daughter's wedding where it is customary for him to grant favours and requests. The first extract is between Don Corleone and his godson, Johnny Fontane, a singer and actor who approaches the Godfather to request assistance with an uncooperative film producer called Woltz.

Johnny's 'request' is, as Brown and Levinson would have predicted, couched in the form of an implicature rather than in the typical language expected for making requests. In fact, no explicit request is made. Instead Johnny hesitates and tells the background to his problems and then weeps in front of the Don:

Johnny: I don't know what to do. My voice is...is weak. It's weak. Anyway, if I had this part in the picture, you know? It puts me right back up on top again. But this – this man out there, he – he won't give it to me, the head of the studio.

...But, oh, Godfather, I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do.

Johnny's words here are violations of Grice's maxim of manner according to which the speaker is to be orderly, and brief. By providing the context to his misfortune and telling the Godfather, "I don't know what do to", it is unlikely that Johnny is simply stating information about his life. Rather, he is assuming the Godfather will understand a request is being made and will know what to do, which is to intervene on his behalf. He has good reason for thinking this, as will later be shown. However, Johnny fails to predict how the Godfather will respond to his whimpering.

Don Corleone: *You can act like a man!* What's the matter with you?! Is this how you turned out? A Hollywood finocchio that cries like a woman? (IMITATES CRYING) What can I do, what can I do? What is this nonsense? Ridiculous.

This exchange exemplifies the asymmetric power relationship between Johnny and the Godfather. Johnny's requests are couched in terms that Brown and Levinson call negative polite-

ness, that is “characterized by self-effacement, formality and restraint” (Brown and Levinson: 70). The Godfather, on the other hand, is less concerned with protecting Johnny’s face although his referring to Johnny as a *finocchio* (a derogatory Italian term for homosexual (Jones 2007:50)) is unlikely to be meant literally but rather to emphasize his own shame at Johnny’s demeanour and perhaps to devalue Johnny’s chosen career as an actor and singer which in the macho world of Sicilian organized crime may not be as highly regarded as Corleone’s role as godfather – this underlines Goffman’s point about the relationship between an individual’s face and the group to which an individual belongs.

What follows next may appear to be irrelevant to the exchange. It is known in conversation analysis as an insertion sequence.

Don Corleone: You spend time with your family?

Johnny: Sure, I do.

Don Corleone: Good. Because a man who doesn’t spend time with his family can never be a real man. C’mere. You look terrible. I want you to eat, I want you to rest and in a month from now this Hollywood big shot’s gonna give you what you want.

It appears that the Godfather’s digression into Johnny’s family life and whether he is a good family man is flouting Grice’s maxim of relevance. Why is he changing the subject? Asking Johnny about his family in this context could be interpreted as a face-preservation act. Brown and Levinson assign the term ‘positive politeness’ to acts acknowledging a person’s “desire to be ratified, understood, approved of, liked or admired,” (1987: 62) making the Don’s approving remarks about Johnny’s attention to his family coherent. It also reasserts the Don’s face as he can accede to Johnny’s request on his own terms rather than appearing to indulge Johnny’s previous groveling request.

Yet, Johnny still fishes for a reassurance that the Don has not missed the seriousness and urgency of his request.

Johnny: It’s too late; they start shooting in a week.

Don Corleone: I’m gonna make him an offer he can’t refuse.

The final line of the exchange has become a cliché in the English language, making it easily

interpretable to modern viewers. However, no linguistic analysis suggests its meaning. It was explained earlier in the movie by Michael, the Don's son, to his girlfriend Kay that the phrase is a piece of family terminology for threatening a person's life; he retells the story of how Johnny Fontane came to be released from an unhappy singing contract by the Don, who threatened the bandleader's life. Hence it is clear to Johnny, and the audience, that the Don has signaled he will do the same to the film producer, Woltz.

3.2 Analysis of the Second Section

The second segment (Appendix B) commences with Tom Hagen, the Don's lawyer, meeting Woltz at the latter's studios and making a request in formal language, which Brown and Levinson predict would be used when the request is a large one.

Hagen: I was sent by a friend of Johnny Fontane to ask a small favour...

While Hagen refers to the favour as a small one, it is clear from the backstory that it is large and, as Brown and Levinson observed, large requests are usually couched in formal language, often with hesitations, especially when there is a large social distance. In this case, Hagen refers to his addressee in the third person, as Mr. Woltz, "he would give his undying friendship if Mr. Woltz would grant us a small...favour." It could be explained that "a small favour" is discrepant from the large request being asked, or a violation of Grice's maxim of Quality which is to say what you believe to be true, the implicature being that this is not a mere small request.

Woltz mimics Hagen's formal tone belying a hint of suspicion.

Woltz: Huh! And what favour would your friend grant Mr. Woltz?

Hagen: You're gonna have some union problems: my client and I could make them disappear. Also one o' yer top stars has just moved from marijuana to heroin.

This is a classic off-record indirect speech act, which could be either interpreted as a warning and an offer or as a threat; a speaker may use such a strategy of ambiguous speech acts when he does not want to be held to have used a particular illocutionary force, or where such force can be plausibly denied. As with Pinker's observation that some speech exchanges appear to involve manipulation rather it could be asked whether the Co-operative Principle is in

operation at all here. In this case, either the Don (who the audience knows to wield a lot of influence with politicians and law enforcement) is intending to instigate the particular trouble if he does not get his way, or else he is offering to intervene in some actually existing troubles and can therefore be of genuine assistance to Woltz. One of the difficulties in recognizing actual threats is that, according to Limberg, “threats do not come in a standardized linguistic format.” (2009: 1378). Even Woltz cannot be entirely sure of the actual illocutionary force of the implicature and resorts to demanding clarification:

Woltz: Are you trying to muscle me?

Hagen: Absolutely not. I’ve come here to ask a favour for a friend.

However, Woltz is unconvinced and resorts to open hostility. As Limberg points out, “threats frequently elicit highly offensive and aggravated response types from the target person and sometimes lead to an exacerbation of the confrontation.” (2009: 1381), thus Woltz’s reaction is not predictable purely on the strength of the “semantic properties of certain strings of words” (2009: 1378):

Woltz: Well, let me tell ya something, my Kraut-Mick friend. I’m gonna make so much trouble for you, you won’t know what hit you.

Hagen: I’m a lawyer. I have not threatened you.

Following this exchange, Woltz contacts Hagen again and now appears more contrite. It appears that Woltz’s initial anger at Hagen resulted from pragmatic failure: “If the addressee believes the speaker to be bluffing, then the threat is likely to fail.” (Limberg 2009: 1379)

Woltz: Why didn’t you say you work for Corleone, Tom? I thought you were just some cheap, two-bit hustler Johnny was running in tryin’ to bluff me.

Woltz and Hagen spend a convivial time together in which Woltz shows Hagen his estate and his prize stallion. The exchanges are good-natured in which both participants positively reinforce each other’s face.

The final extract takes place in Woltz’s dining room

Hagen: ...Corleone is Johnny's godfather. To the Italian people that's a very religious, sacred, close relationship.

Woltz: I respect it. Just tell him that he should ask me anything else. But this is one favour I can't give him.

Woltz's counter-offer is rebuffed, and this time the implied threat will be more obvious to those who have shared knowledge of the Godfather's behaviour.

Hagen: He never makes a second offer when he's been refused the first. Understood?

Woltz reveals that he has a grudge against Johnny Fontane because of a humiliation he holds Johnny responsible for and returns to open hostility to show he has no intention of letting his face be so clearly lost. He even explicitly invokes his face-concerns: "a man in my position can't afford to look ridiculous." He also counter-threatens and mentions that "I aint no band-leader" letting on that he already knows the story of what happens when some people in the past have refused the Don's requests:

Hagen: Thank you for the dinner and a very pleasant evening.

[Hagen stands up]

Hagen: Maybe your car could take me to the airport. Mr. Corleone is a man who insists on hearing bad news immediately.

By thanking Woltz for a pleasant evening in the context of Woltz's outburst, Hagen is flouting Grice's maxim of quantity – both speakers know full well that the evening has become unpleasant. To paraphrase Grice, "unless [Hagen's] utterance is entirely pointless, [he] must be trying to get across some other proposition that the one he purports to be putting forward." (Grice 1975: 85). Hagen's ironic pleasantries in isolation could be seen as expressions of genuine gratitude, yet Hagen is letting Woltz know that the effect of Woltz's violent refusal will itself be met with a retaliatory violent act, which he discovers the next morning when he finds the severed head of his stallion in his bed; a graphic illustration of the discrepancy that can exist between form and function.

4. Speech Acts in the Classroom

It would be irresponsible to imply that students whose misunderstanding of speech acts will end up with horse's heads in their beds and to avoid confusion it should be emphasized that such occurrences are extremely rare. Nevertheless, the reliance on particular language forms alone for providing illocutionary force, such as are sometimes found in functional-syllabus coursebooks is clearly inadequate for understanding how people make certain requests, offers and even threats. Although threats may seem to be an unusual topic for teaching in the classroom, some commentators have made a case for doing so. Siegel et. al (2016) have argued that with greater interaction among people of different backgrounds such as through travel or on-line communication, there is a greater possibility for students to come up against less friendly speech acts than they may be used to studying in their textbooks. A few ways in which the Godfather extracts can be used now follows.

1. Students can be asked in pairs, or in groups, to write some examples of the following speech acts: *compliments, promises, offers, threats, warnings, giving advice, predicting, informing, instructing, ordering.*
2. Students can then be encouraged to group them according to what the speaker is trying to do. The teacher should elicit groupings that are consistent with the categories of speech acts – constatives, directives and commissives.
3. Students can then be introduced to the following lines from the Godfather and asked which speech acts they exemplify:

“Thank you for the dinner and a very pleasant evening.”

“Just tell him that he should ask me anything else.”

“I'm gonna make so much trouble for you, you won't know what hit you.”

“You're gonna have some union problems.”

“You can act like a man!”

“My client and I could make them disappear.”

“Maybe your car could take me to the airport.”

“I'm gonna make him an offer he can't refuse.”

There is not a one-to-one match between lines and speech-acts, and there may be some disagreement among students which can allow the students to discuss the topic in depth.

4. Students can watch extracts of the movie showing the lines. In context, do the speech acts appear differently?

5. Students can then be shown the quote from the beginning of this paper. What do they think is being said here?
6. Follow up activities can involve making role-plays in which indirect speech acts are necessary because of politeness concerns.

5. Conclusion

As the excerpts from *The Godfather* demonstrate, the failure to understand that discourse takes place in a context-laden social world in which speech acts are expected to pay lip-service to conversational norms, an appreciation of face and politeness, may lead to certain misunderstandings. Teaching methods relying excessively on sentence-level grammar and even some attempts to incorporate speech acts, such as the functional-syllabus, usually fail to take into account social settings or actual conversational norms. By having students activate schemata about social relationships when approaching texts, speaker interaction can be better predicted. Moreover, an attention to the usefulness of speech acts in a classroom setting can assist students in realizing that language has a functional use beyond mere description of reality. By increasing students' awareness of these things, teachers can show students how to *do* things with words.

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Appendix A: Johnny Fontane and Don Corleone

The following dialogue takes place during a scene in Don Corleone's office. The script, including stage directions (in italics), is taken from *The Annotated Godfather* by Jenny Jones (2007).

Johnny: I don't know what to do. My voice is...is weak. It's weak. Anyway, if I had this part in the picture, you know? It puts me right back on top again. But this – this man out there, he – he won't give it to me, the head of the studio.

Don Corleone: What's his name?

Johnny: Woltz. Woltz, he – he won't give it to me, and he says there's no chance. No chance.

[...]

Johnny: A month ago, he bought the movie rights to this book, the bestseller. And the main character is a guy just like me. Why, y'know, I wouldn't even have to act – just be myself.

[Johnny buries his head in his hands]

Johnny: But, oh, Godfather, I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do.

[The Don erupts from his chair, grabs Johnny's hands, and slaps his face.]

Don Corleone: You can act like a man! What's the matter with you?! Is this how you turned out? A Hollywood finocchio that cries like a woman? [imitates crying] What can I do? What can I do? What is this nonsense? Ridiculous.

[Both Hagen and Johnny can't refrain from laughing. The Don smiles. Sonny enters as noiselessly as possible, still adjusting his clothes. The Don glances at Sonny who makes himself as inconspicuous as possible. The Don is stern.]

Don Corleone: You spend time with your family?

Johnny: Sure I do.

Don Corleone: Good. Because a man who doesn't spend time with his family can never be a real man. C'mere. You look terrible. I want you to eat, I want you to rest well and a month from now this Hollywood big shot's gonna give you what you want.

Johnny: It's too late; they start shooting in a week.

Don Corleone: I'm gonna make him an offer he can't refuse.

Appendix B: Tom Hagen and Jack Woltz

The following dialogue is condensed from scenes featuring Hagen and Woltz. The script, including stage directions (in italics), is taken from *The Annotated Godfather* (Jones 2007). The first part takes place at Woltz's studios, while the latter part is on Woltz's estate.

Woltz: All right, start talking.

Hagen: I was sent by a friend of Johnny Fontane. This friend is my client – he would give his undying friendship to Mr. Woltz if Mr. Woltz would grant us a small ... favour.

Woltz: Woltz is listening.

Hagen: Give Johnny the part in that new war film you're starting next week.

Woltz: Huh! And what favour would your friend grant Mr. Woltz?

Hagen: You're gonna have some union problems; my client could make them disappear. Also one o' your top stars has just moved from marijuana to heroin.

Woltz: Are you trying to muscle me?

Hagen: Absolutely not. I've come to ask a service for a friend.

Woltz: Now you listen to me, you smooth-talkin' son of a bitch! Let me lay it on the line for you and your boss, whoever he is. Jonny Fontane will never get that movie! I don't care how many dago, guinea, wop, grease-ball goombahs come out of the woodwork.*

Hagen: I'm German-Irish.

Woltz: Well, let me tell ya something, my Kraut-Mick friend. I'm gonna make so much trouble for you, you won't know what hit you.

Hagen: Mr. Woltz, I'm a lawyer. I have not threatened you.

Woltz: I know almost every lawyer in New York; who the hell are you?

Hagen: I have a special practice. I handle one client. Now you have my number; I'll wait for your call.

...By the way, I admire your pictures very much.

The second part takes place after Woltz has his assistants find out more about Hagen. Woltz discovers Hagen works for Don Corleone and invites Hagen back to his house on a large estate. Woltz takes Hagen on a guided tour including to his stables where he shows Hagen his prize stallion which he explains cost him 600,000 dollars. They talk congenially.

[Hagen and Woltz sit at an enormous dining room table, attended by several servants. Great paintings hang on the walls. The meal is elaborate and sumptuous. A bowl of oranges is the centerpiece.]

Hagen: ...Corleone is Johnny's godfather. To the Italian people, that's a very religious, sacred, close relationship.

Woltz: I respect it. Just tell him he should ask me anything else. But this is one favour I can't give 'im.

Hagen: He never asks a second favour when he's been refused the first. Understand?

Woltz: You don't understand. Johnny Fontane never gets that movie. That part is perfect for 'im. It'll make him a big star. I'm gonna run him outta the business! And let me tell you why.

Johnny Fontane ruined one of Woltz International's most valuable protégées. For five years we had her under training – singing lessons, acting lessons, dancing lessons; I spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on 're –

I was gonna make 'er a big star. And let me be even more frank – just to show you that I'm not a hard-hearted man, that it's not all dollars and cents. She was beautiful! She was young; she was innocent! She was the greatest piece of ass I ever had, and I've had 'em

all over the world! And then Johnny Fontane comes along with his olive-oil voice and his guinea charm, and she runs off. She threw it all away just to make me look ridiculous! AND A MAN IN MY POSITION CAN'T AFFORD TO LOOK RIDICULOUS!! Now you get the hell outta here! And if that goombah tries any rough stuff, you tell him I ain't no bandleader.

[Hagen reacts to the mention of bandleader]

Woltz: Yeah, I heard that story.

Hagen: Thank you for the dinner and a very pleasant evening.

[Hagen stands up]

Hagen: Maybe your car could take me to the airport. Mr. Corleone is a man who insists on hearing bad news immediately.

言語行為論を使用した『ゴッドファーザー』の 引用分析と EFL クラスにおける含意

アンドリュース ロバート

要 旨

本研究は、話者の意図が文脈や話者間の共有知識を頼って理解され、いかに言語単体の外延の意味が聞き手にはっきりと理解されないのかについて考察する。これは、言語能力単体ではなく、コミュニケーション能力を要する英語学習者にとっては重要である (Canale and Swain 1980)。その一部は、本稿で議論する Austin (1962) と Searle (1969, 1976) によって提唱および開発された言語行為論である、『グライスの協調の原理と会話の公理 (1975)』と『ポライトネスストラテジー (Brown and Levinson 1987)』の語用論的能力にある。どのように特定のスピーチアクトが誤って解釈されてしまうのかを明らかにするために、映画『ゴッドファーザー』からの引用文を分析した。そして、定評のある教材における欠陥を補填するためには、この引用文が第二言語教育現場でどのように使用可能か、その方法を提言する (Tatsuki, 2016)。

キーワード：語用論, スピーチアクト, フェイス, 侵害, お世辞