



# Directive Speech Acts and Its Response on Japanese Anime “Tensei Shitara Slime Datta Ken”

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## Abstract

*This study aims to classify the directive speech acts used by the character Rimuru Tempest in the anime Tensei Shitara Slime Datta Ken and analyze the responses of interlocutors to these directive speech acts. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected from character dialogues across episodes 1 to 15 of the anime. The data were analyzed and categorized based on Namatame's (1996) directive speech act theory. The findings indicate 24 instances of directive speech acts, categorized into five types: commands (meirei), with 11 occurrences; requests (irai), with 5; prohibitions (kinshi), with 3; permissions (kyoka), with 3; and suggestions (teian), with 2. Additionally, 18 responses to these directives were positive, while 6 were negative. Analysis suggests that the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor influenced response types. Results also show that the character Rimuru Tempest predominantly used requests (irai) in their directives.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Language is the most essential communication tool in human life, both individually and in society. (Suwarna 2002:4). Furthermore (Effendi 1995:15) stated that based on daily experience, the use of oral expression is more significant than written one. In addition, (Effendi 1995:78) mentioned that the verbal variety is different from the written variety because the participants pronounce their speech using certain pressure, tone, rhythm, pauses, or songs to clarify the meaning and purpose of the speech they want to convey. Moreover, the sentences used by the participants usually need to be completed. According to Yule (2006:3–5), pragmatics is the study of the meaning conveyed by the speaker and interpreted by the speaking partner. Pragmatics is the study of how context can affect the meaning behind a statement. In pragmatics, the study of language is communicated to reveal the speaker's goals and objectives to the speaking partner behind a speech. The speech delivery activity is called the act of speech or speech act (Rahardi 1999:31). The act of speech is intended to receive a response in the form of speech or actions from the speaking partner. Austin (1962) distinguishes three types of speech-related actions: locution, illocution, and perlocution. Searle (1986) developed Austin's theory (1962), which classified the act of illocution into five forms: assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. One of the speech acts that will be examined is directive speech. Directive speech is an action that aims to tell someone to do something. Directive speech conveys information or news, suggests, persuades, commands, etc. In this case, the speaker must be able to convince the opponent of the meaning of his speech. There are different types of directive speech in Japanese. According to Namatame he divides the different types of directive speech actions, into: meirei (command), irai (request), kinshi (prohibition), kyoka (permission), and teian (encouragement) (1996:102–124).

To show that speech is said to be a directive speech act, it can be known through the context of speech. Below is an example of a fragment of

speech that contains a directive speech act in the form of a request (irai) in Japanese:

**Context:** This conversation occurs in a monster settlement between Rimuru and the Goblin leader Rigurd. The Goblins were not experts in making houses and clothes. So Rimuru plans to go to Dwargon and meet the Dwargon (reliable craftsmen). Then Rimuru requested Rigurd.

Rimuru:  
Sono dowarugon no yara ittemiru.  
Rigurudo, rusu no aida wa **makasete ii ka?**  
(I am going to Dwargon. Rigurd, **can I leave it to you** while I am gone?)

Rigurd:  
Hai! Omakaseare!  
(Sure! Leave it to me!)  
(Slime Datta Ken Episode 3)

Directive speech means permission is found in the “makasete ii ka” speech, which consists of the verb makaseru, which means 'entrust,' 'to submit' (Matsuura 1994:602) and the lingual marker ~ii ka, which in this context means 'Can I.' So that it becomes makasete ii ka, which means 'Can I hand it over to you.' Rimuru's speech is a directive speech act means permission.

Based on the example dialogue above, it can be seen that the Japanese language has a directives speech, which depend on the background of the speaker and the interlocutor and can also vary depending on the situation.

Then, in general, every speech conveyed has a response that is given or shown through speech and actions from the opponent. Harvey and Smith in Ahmadi (1999:164) define "response" as determining a positive or negative attitude towards an object or situation. A positive response means accepting, agreeing, and doing something about a speech delivered by the speaker. On the other hand, a negative response means rejecting, opposing, and not doing something about a speech. On the above dialogue, it showed that interlocutor gave a positive

response mean doing something about a sopeech delivered by Rimuru

This study analyzed at anime films as an example of the application of daily communication in a literary work. Movies are a picture of social life with certain scenes and topics of conversation that can act as a medium for conveying messages effectively. The anime is an animation from Japan drawn by hand or computer technology. Through conversations between characters, the communicative messages conveyed in anime can be achieved through speech acts. Therefore, the researcher chose anime as the data source.

Previous research on the analysis of directive speech acts was carried out by Zahra (2021). The data collection technique used in Zahra's (2021) research is observation, to observed bargaining process conducted in . This study found 40 utterances from 10 respondent taken and 4 (four) types of directive speech acts occured, including directive speech acts suggesting, prohibiting, commanding, and criticizing. This research also confirms that in the bargaining process, it is necessary to pay attention to the applicable code of ethics so as not to cause an intersection between buyers and sellers. In the previous study, the analysis of directive speech actions focused only on the function of speech and its imperative meaning markers.

Meanwhile, the meaning of the directive speech act and the speech opponent's response to the directive speech act have yet to be analyzed in depth. This is important for further research because, in a pragmatic study, the conveyance of the speaker's intention to the interlocutor is one of the objects of study. Therefore, this study will further examine the meaning of directive speech used by one of the anime characters and the interlocutor's response to determine whether the speech's meaning is conveyed well to the interlocutor.

Based on the above background, this study aims to (1) describe the meaning of directive speech actions by the character Rimuru Tempest in the anime "Tensei Shitara Slime Datta Ken" and (2) describe the response of the speech opponent to the directive speech act spoken by

the character Rimuru Tempest in the anime "Tensei Shitara Slime Datta Ken."

### **Japanese Directive Speech Act**

Directive speech acts, which encompass a wide range of linguistic expressions used to direct or influence the actions of others, have long been a topic of interest in the field of pragmatics and discourse analysis. These speech acts, which can take the form of commands, requests, suggestions, and the like, play a vital role in academic writing, where researchers often need to guide their readers toward specific ideas, arguments, or conclusions (Juita & Ermanto, 2021).

One key aspect of directive speech acts in academic discourse is their ability to structure the flow of information and shape the reader's understanding of the material. Researchers may use directive language to explicitly highlight the significance of a particular finding, to guide the reader through a complex argument, or to orient the audience toward a specific line of reasoning. (Wang, 2013; Juita & Ermanto, 2021)

The use of directives in academic writing can also serve to establish the writer's authority and credibility, conveying a sense of confidence and expertise. Additionally, the strategic employment of directive speech acts can help to enhance the clarity and coherence of academic texts, ensuring that the reader remains engaged and focused throughout the discussion. (Tapper, 1994; Wang, 2013)

Directive speech act in japanese language also hold important cultural significance, often reflecting accepted norms and expectations around politeness, deference, and interpersonal dynamics (Kissine, 2016). Cultural significance in Japanese directive speech acts can be seen in the nuanced use of honorifics, the consideration of relative status, and the emphasis on indirectness and face-saving.

Analyzing the use of directive speech acts in academic writing can provide valuable insights into the rhetorical strategies employed by researchers, as well as the broader conventions and expectations that shape the production and reception of scholarly texts.

Directive speech acts and response types have been the focus of numerous studies in the field of pragmatics and discourse analysis (Wang, 2013; Kissine, 2016; Tapper, 1994; Juita & Ermanto, 2021). These studies have examined the ways in which academics, researchers, and other professionals use directive language to achieve various communicative goals, such as persuading, instructing, or guiding their audiences.

One study, for example, explored the use of directives in college laboratory oral discourse, analyzing the forms and functions of directive speech acts used by a non-native English-speaking demonstrator (Tapper, 1994). The findings of this study suggest that while the demonstrator employed a variety of directive forms, he relied heavily on a single form that was not always target-like, indicating the need for further training and support in the use of appropriate directive language in academic contexts (Tapper, 1994).

Another study examined the formulation of directives on signs in public spaces, highlighting the ways in which writers of these signs establish entitlement, provide accounts for the legitimacy of the directive, and seek to evoke positive attitudes in the address. The analysis of directive speech acts in academic discourse can also shed light on the ways in which cultural factors shape the production and interpretation of these linguistic forms. Directive speech acts research in Japanese anime series has highlighted the importance of cultural context and the ways in which directive language reflects societal norms and power dynamics (Apriyanti, 2018; Benning & Parwati, 2018; Citra et al, 2020; Winoto & Artanto, 2012). Most of the research result indicated that cultural context influenced the way interlocutor to response directive speeches used by speakers.

The response comes from the word response, which means answer, reply or reaction (Echols and Shadily 2003:481). In the great Indonesian dictionary, response means response, reaction and answer (Alwi 2005:952). Subandi (1982:50) stated that responses with the term feedback can have a big impact on the quality of

communication, and how it can be used to determine whether something is successful or not. The term response in communication is a communication activity expected to produce results, or after communication is called an effect. A communication activity has an effect in the form of a response from a communication to a message sent by a communicator (Soenarjo and Soenarjo 1983:25). According to Harvey and Smith (in Ahmadi 1999:164), the response is a form of preparedness in identifying a situation, either positively or negatively to a topic or situation.

Findings and perspectives from these studies can inform our understanding of the role of directive speech acts in academic writing, and how they contribute to the construction of persuasive, coherent, and engaging scholarly texts (Amin et al., 2017; Kissine, 2016; Juita & Ermanto, 2021).

## METHOD

The type of research is qualitative descriptive research. The data source used in this study is the anime "Tensei Shitara Slime Datta Ken" by Fuse. Of the total 25 anime episodes, this research is limited to only 15. The data from this study are in the form of directive speech classified based on various directive speech acts put forward by Namatame (1996:102–24), such as: *meirei* (command), *irai* (demand), *kinshi* (prohibited), *kyoka* (permission), and *dan teian* (recommendation).

Harvey and Smith (in Ahmadi and Supriyono (2008:166) divided responses into positive responses and negative responses. A positive response means accepting, agreeing, and doing something about a speech delivered by the speaker. On the other hand, a negative response means rejecting, opposing, and not doing something about a speech.

Previous research used the observation method at the technical stage of data collection. Once the data is collected, the next stage is to analyze the data.

The first step in data analysis is translating the dialogue containing directive speech actions. Then, describe the context in which the dialogue

occurs to facilitate the analysis process. After that, describe the dialogue and the meaning of the directive speech act based on the context. Finally, describe the response from the interlocutor. The data that has been analyzed is then presented using an informal presentation method. The informal method of presentation is an expression with simple words, even though the terminology is technical (Sudaryanto, 1993).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data collection from 15 anime episodes of Tensei Shitara Slime Datta Ken resulted in 24 data that were further classified based on various directive and theoretical speech actions by Namatame (1996:102–24). This will include details of the meaning of the order 11 data, the meaning of the request 5 data, the meaning of the prohibition 3 data, the meaning of permission 3 data, and the meaning of the recommendation 2 data, from utterances used by character Rimuru Tempest and its responses.

### A. Directive speech command form

Directive speech means that commands are used to state a situation where the speaker asks the speaker to do something he wants. The forms of speech that include the meaning of the command are: ~e / ~ro / ~yo, ~ou / ~you / ~saseru / ~seru, ~nasai, ~kudasai, ~naika, ~tamae, ~goran, ~youni, ~ mashou, ~ Vru youni, ~ Vnai youni, ~ Vru beshi (Namatame, 1996). The meaning of the order was found in as many as 11 data. An example of speech meaning a command is as follows:

#### Data 1

**Context:** This conversation takes place in the village of the Goblins. Four wanderers named Kaval, Gido, Eren, and Shizu are stopping by Goblin village to rest. However, the fire spirit suddenly took over Shizu's body. The fire spirit began attacking the village of Goblin and the other three wanderers. Rimuru told them to run away to avoid being attacked by the fire spirit.

Eren : Itta~i!

(Ouch!)

Rimuru: Omaetachi mo sassato **nigero!**

(You guys also **run** quickly!)

Kaval : Sonna wake ni wa ikanē yo. Ano hito ga nande satsui o mukidashi ni shi ten no ka shiranēga...

(We cannot do that. I do not know how he got to be like this, but...)

Gido : Oretachi no nakamadeyasu yo!

(He is our friend!)

Eren : Hottoke nai wa!

(It cannot be allowed!)

Directive speech means that the command is found in nigero speech with the intention of Rimuru telling Kaval, Gido, and Eren to flee. This command speech is evidenced by the lingual marker ~ro on nigero speech. The speech comes from the verb nigeru which means 'to run', 'to escape', 'to escape' (Matsuura 1994:717) which then conjugated into the form of the command ~ro. So, the speech became nigero, which means 'run'.

The response shown is negative. Kaval, Gido, and Eren refuse to run because they still want to fight for their friend whose body is taken over. The negative response shown by Kaval, Gido, and Eren is found in the speech sonna wake ni wa ikanē yo which means 'we cannot do that'. Rimuru was amazed by their unwilling nature to abandon their friends. Finally, Rimuru allowed them to join the fire spirit.

### B. Directive speech demand form

Directive speech means a request is used to ask the other person to do what they ask. The form of speech that includes the meaning of the request is: ~te kudasai, ~sasete kudasai, ~naide kudasai, ~te kure, ~naide kure, ~te kuretamae, ~te kudasaru, ~te moraeru ~te morau, ~te moraemasenka, ~te itadakenaideshouka, ~te itadakeru, ~te itadakitai, ~te hoshii, ~onegau, dan ~choudai (Namatame, 1996). The request form was found in as many as 5 data. Examples of speech meaning requests are as follows:

## Data 2

**Context:** This conversation occurs when Rimuru has defeated the Direwolf race, so they have submitted to Rimuru. Rimuru needed clarification about how to take care of them all. Finally, Rimuru gathers them all to make a rule.

Rimuru : (Dotchi mo onaji gurai ka... jā...)

Hi **kiite kudasai!**

((Both are the same amount... then...)) Well, **please listen!**

Goblin, Direwolf : Un?

(Hemm?)

The act of directive speech with the meaning of request is found in the speech of kiite kudasai with the intention of Rimuru asking the Goblins and Direwolves to listen to what Rimuru will say. Kiite kudasai consists of the verb kiku which means 'to hear', 'to hear' (Matsuura 1994:490) and the lingual marker ~te kudasai which means 'to ask', 'hope', 'please' (Matsuura 1994:560). The combination of the verbs kiku and ~te kudasai to form kiite kudasai which means 'please listen'. The response shown is positive. The Goblins and Direwolves were confused and looked at each other as they were gathered into one. When Rimuru asked them to listen to him, they spontaneously fell silent and started listening to Rimuru.

## C. Directive speech prohibition form

Directive speech means that a prohibition is used to show that the speaker is not acting according to what the speaker says. Forms of speech that include the meaning of prohibition are: ~Vru na, ~nai, ~te wa ikenai, ~te wa naranai, ~te wa dame, ~naikoto, ~bekarazu, ~naide hoshii, ~naide kudasai, ~naide itadakitai, and ~naiyouni shimashou (Namatame, 1996). The meaning of the ban was found in as many as 3 data. Examples of speech meaning prohibitions are as follows:

## Data 3

**Context:** This conversation occurs when Rimuru and Gobta are about to enter the Dwargon region. Two thugs stopped them. Rimuru, who

was about to attack the thug, told Gobta to close his eyes and ears so that he could not see and hear that Rimuru would attack the evil man.

Rimuru : Kesshite kocchi o **mite wa ikenai!**

**(Do not look here!)**

Gobta: Ryoukaissu!

(Understand!)

Directive speech means that the prohibition is contained in the speech of mite wa ikenai with the intention that Rimuru forbids Gobta from looking at Rimuru. Mite wa ikenai consists of the verb miru, which means 'to see,' 'to see,' 'to see,' 'to look,' 'to see,' 'to watch,' 'to watch' (Matsuura, 1994, p. 642) conjugated into the form ~te and the lingual marker ikenai which means 'not to,' 'not allowed' (Matsuura, 1994, p. 329). So if combined into mite wa ikenai, it means 'do not look.'

The response of the opponent is positive. The positive response was shown in the speech 'ryoukaissu!' which consisted of ryoukai and suru, which means 'to understand' (Matsuura 1994, p. 820). It can also understand when Gobta immediately closes his eyes and ears so he will not look at Rimuru.

## D. Directive speech permission form

Directive speech means that permission is used to declare permission when taking an action or grant permission from the speaker to the other person. Forms of speech that include the meaning of permission are: ~te mo ii, ~te mo yoroshii, ~te mo kamawanai, ~sasemashou, and sentences with the predicates yurusu and kyokasuru (Namatame, 1996). The meaning of the permit was found in as many as 3 data. Examples of speech meaning permissions are as follows:

## Data 4

**Context:** This conversation occurs between Rimuru and Benimaru, who discuss the alliance they will agree on. Rimuru grants Benimaru's request and frees them to do anything after the battle.

Benimaru : Keiyaku wa, ōku no shukai o uchihorobosu madede ii ka?

(Could this pact only be until we defeat the leader of the Orcs?)

Rimuru : Sono ato wa jiyū ni shite moratte kamawanai.

(After that, I allowed you to do whatever you wanted.)

Directive speech means permission is found in *jiyū ni shite matte kamawanai* with the intention that Rimuru allows Benimaru and his friends to be free to do anything after the end of the war. The speech consists of the adverb *jiyū ni*, which means 'with (in the way) freely,' 'with (in a way) freely' (Matsuura, 1994, p. 371) and the verb *suru* which means 'to do,' 'to do' (Matsuura 1994, p. 1015) then changed to the form *~te morau* and combined with the lingual marker of the form of permission, namely *~te kamawanai*. So it becomes *jiyū ni shite moratte kamawanai*, which means 'I allow you to do freely.'

The opponent's response to Rimuru was positive. Benimaru's positive response to Rimuru, showing that he respects Rimuru for granting his request.

#### E. Directive speech recommendation form

Directive speech means that recommendations are used to express suggestions, advice, and recommendations from the speaker to the opponent. The forms of speech that include the meaning of encouragement are: *~ta houga ii*, *~ru houga ii*, *~tara houga ii*, *~to ii*, *~te goran*, *~kotoda*, *~ba ii*, and *~tara ii* (Namatame, 1996). The meaning of the recommendation was found in as many as 2 data. Examples of meaningful speech are recommended as follows:

#### Data 5

**Context:** This conversation occurs when Rimuru and his bodyguard arrive in Dwargon. When he was about to enter the city area, Rimuru decided to go with Gobta alone to avoid attracting the crowd's attention.

Rigur : Hontōni rimuru-sama to gobuta dake de ikareru nodesu ka?

(Are you sure you're going to go with just Gobta?)

Rimuru : Aa, amari taisei de okonatte medatanai houga ii darou. Gobuta wa annaiyaku de tsureteiku.

(Yes, it's better for us not to be too flashy by going in groups, right? I took Gobta as my guide.)

Rigur : Shikashi...

(But...)

Directive speech means that the recommendation is shown in the speech of *medatanai houga ii* with the intention that Rimuru advises his bodyguards not to attract attention from a large group. *Medatanai houga ii* consists of the verb *medatsu*, which means 'striking' and 'prominent' (Matsuura 1994, p. 619), which is converted into the negative form *~nai*, which means 'not' (Matsuura 1994, p. 685) and conjugated into the form of the meaning of *~houga ii*. So if combined into *medatanai houga ii*, it means 'better not conspicuous.'

The response shown is negative. Rigur and Rimuru's loyal followers always wanted to accompany Rimuru wherever he went. However, Rimuru advised them to wait in the forest. The negative response that Rigur showed was in the words 'shikashi...' which means 'but...', who wanted to reject Rimuru's suggestion with a disappointed look on his face.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, 24 data on directive speech spoken by the figure Rimuru Tempest with theoretical classification by Namatame have been found as follows: 11 data on the meaning of commands (*meirei*) with lingual markers *~nai*, *~ro*, *~te kure*, *~ga ii*, *~you ni*, *~e*, *~meijiru*, *~saseyou*. Data means request (*irai*) with lingual markers *~te kudasai*, *~te hoshii*, *~te ii ka*, *~te kure* as many as 5 data. Data means prohibition (*kinshi*) with lingual markers *~nai*, *~te wa ikenai*, *~na* as many as 3 data. Data means permission (*kyoka*) with lingual markers *~yurusu*, *~nakute ii*, *~kamawanai* as many as 3

data. Finally, the data is meaningful (teian) with lingual markers ~hou ga ii, ~ga ii as many as 2 data. The response of the speech opponent to Rimuru was found to be 18 data with a positive response and 6 with a negative response.

Then, it was found that one of the directive speech acts meant that the order was not obeyed by the opponent but was reversed by the response given by the opponent. As explained above, the act of directive speech means that an order is a word or speech intended to tell the opponent to carry out something. However, it was found that the directive was not accepted by the opponent but was reversed, so the opponent directed the speaker as in data 1. Rimuru, who was amazed by the nature of his opponent, then received a negative response, namely the rejection of Rimuru's orders, which, in the end, Rimuru was asked to allow them to participate in the war. It is proven that a response can change the speaker's thinking of the opponent.

It was also found that the relationship between the speaker and the other person affected different responses. Therefore, every speaker and speaking partner must always be aware of the power and distance factors between them before performing a speech event.

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