

Need Statements as Directives

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Introduction

Giving orders is generally associated with power differentials: bosses, teachers, military officers and the police routinely use imperatives to tell others what to do. A boss may say, "Get this done as soon as possible." A teacher tells her class, "Open your books to page 22." A General orders his subordinates to "Move out!" A police officer might direct the driver of a car she has pulled over to "Get out of the car" or "Show me your vehicle registration." In all of these cases, the party with greater power gives no thought to politeness, but carries out what Brown & Levinson (1987) call a Face-Threatening Act—in this case, an order—"baldly" or "without redressive action" (p. 60).

Certainly, there is nothing unusual about such uses of the imperative: this grammatical construction is often used for routine orders given by those in positions of authority. However, there are many other syntactic forms used to give orders in a more polite or less direct manner.

While watching the movie *Up in the Air*, I was struck by the use of one such construction, "I need you to ...", which was employed as a directive in a very unusual setting, seen in Example 1 below.

Example 1: *Up in the Air*, 4:05 ~ 5:50

Ryan Bingham's job is to go to companies that are downsizing and fire their unneeded employees for them. In this scene, he is firing a worker called Steve. Steve angrily asks Ryan who he is. In a voice-over, Ryan makes it clear that he has never met Steve before, and at the end of the scene, he makes it clear that he will never see him again. Although it is not shown in the movie, it is clear that just before the scene begins, Ryan has told Steve that he is being "let go". The interaction then proceeds as follows. (The non-

imperative syntactic constructions that Ryan uses in giving directives are highlighted in bold and with underlining.)

Steve: *(Angry and in tears)* Who the *(expletive)* are you? *(cut)*

Did ... did I do something wrong? I mean, is there something I could do differently here?

Ryan: This is not an assessment of your productivity. You gotta try not to take this personally.

Steve: *(Facing to one side, almost as if highlighting the absurdity of Ryan's statement to someone else)* "Don't take it personally."

Ryan: Steven, **I want you to** review this packet. Take it seriously. I think that you're going to find a lot of good answers in here.

Steve: *(Sarcastically, obviously still quite agitated)* I'm sure it's going to be very helpful. A packet. Thank you. A packet.

Ryan: *(After a little more persuasion, when he sees Steve has calmed down.)*

I'm gonna need your key card.

(Steve hands him his key card.)

Great. OK. Now, **I want you to** take the day, go get together your personal things, and then tomorrow, get yourself some exercise: go out for a jog, give yourself some routines and pretty soon you'll find your legs.

(Steve pauses for a minute, and then leaves. He has accepted Ryan's demands.)

What seemed unusual about this scene was that Ryan Bingham was giving orders to someone whom he had never met, and over whom his authority was not clearly established. As noted, as the interaction begins, Steve asks Ryan who he is, challenging his authority. And yet, within a few minutes, Ryan says, "I'm gonna need your key card." This sentence comes across as an order, even though on the surface it expresses the speaker's need. The way it is

voiced in the movie, it seems rather firm and insistent, although the wording is indirect, and therefore, rather polite. It struck me as odd both because of the wording, which seemed unusual in this setting, and because it was an order coming from a stranger who has no established authority. Nevertheless, Steve accepts the demand, gives Ryan his key card and in the end, quietly leaves the office.

Almost identical interactions occurred in two other scenes in the movie. The portions of the script for these scenes are shown in Examples 2 and 3 below.

Example 2: *Up in the Air*, 21:32 ~ 22:30

Natalie Keener is making a presentation to employees at the company where Ryan works, showing how an employee can be fired using an internet connection. In this demonstration, she gives the person she is "firing" several directives. The non-imperative syntactic constructions she uses in giving directives are highlighted in bold and with underlining.

Natalie: **I want you to** take the packet in front of you. Review it. All the answers you're looking for are inside. Start filling out the necessary information, and before you know it, you'll be on your way to new opportunities.

Now Ned, **I need you to** go back to your desk and start putting together your things. As a favor to me, I'd appreciate it if you didn't spread the news just yet. Panic doesn't help anybody.

Example 3: *Up in the Air*, 1:04:30 ~

Natalie is firing someone in Detroit via computer.

Natalie: There's a packet in front of you. **I want you** to take some time and review it. All the answers you're looking for are inside those pages. The sooner you trust the process, the sooner your next step in life will unveil itself. *(Pause while the man she is talking to leafs through the packet, then puts it down, crying*

softly.) **I need you** to return to your office now and begin to put together your personal things.

In each of these examples, one person is brought into another company to fire complete strangers (or in Example 2, is showing people how to do this). Among the most important elements of this job, other than informing employees that they are being let go, is getting their keys to the office and getting them to remove their personal belongings and leave the building so that they cannot cause any trouble—something people who have lost their jobs have been known to do. In each of these examples, the speaker makes the directives that might benefit the employee using "I want you to", but uses "need" when stating the directive that will achieve one of the most important goals of the job.

Now of course, this is a movie, not real life, and the situation it involves is highly unusual. Nonetheless, since the wording in movies is often intended to reflect that used in real life, I began to wonder about how "need" constructions are used in directives: Are they more polite than imperatives? Are they considered "mitigated directives"? How forceful are they? In what kinds of situations are they used?

This paper will try to answer these questions by looking into previous research on pragmatics, and in particular, directives, and also examining the use of "need" constructions in movies and television dramas.

Literature Review

I will begin my thesis by defining the terminology I will be using, in particular, the word "directive". I will then summarize previous research on categories of directives and their relative illocutionary force.

Definition of *Directive*

J.L. Austin (1962) argued against the conventional notion that words are essentially different from actions; instead, he reasoned that many utterances are in and of themselves actions. For example, when a bride or groom utters

the words "I do" in a wedding ceremony, they are, in fact, marrying (p. 5). He coined the term "illocutionary acts" to refer to actions carried out by speaking alone, and claimed that there were one thousand or more verbs in English that could be used to carry out speech acts (Austin, 1962, p. 150). He attempted to classify such verbs into "families of related speech acts" (p. 150) and listed five main types: 1) verdictives, 2) exercitives, 3) commissives, 4) behabitives and 5) expositives (p. 151). This paper will be concerned with the second family of Austin's speech act classifications, which he stated

are the exercising of power, rights, or influence. Examples are appointing, voting, ordering, urging, advising, warning, &c.

(Austin, 1962, p. 151)

"Order", "command" and "direct" are among the verbs used in what Austin (1962) admits is the "very wide class" he called exercitives (pp. 155- 156).

Austin (1962) also noted that in analyzing speech acts, their impact on other people can be important. He called the effects of speech acts "perlocutions" or "perlocutionary acts", which he explained are "certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts or actions of the audience" (p. 101). Although the consequences of speech acts are not always clear, hearers' reactions to need statements will be considered in this paper as one way to determine whether they were accepted as orders. For instance, in Example 1, the fact that Steve gave his key card to Ryan after Ryan said "I'm gonna need your key card" shows that he accepted Ryan's utterance as an order.

Searle (1969) endeavored to refine and build on Austin's theory. He noted that the grammatical form of a speech act does not always reflect the intended meaning of the utterance, which can be understood in terms of the context. For example, "Could you do this for me?" is superficially asking if the hearer has the ability to do something, but is normally intended to serve as a request (p. 68). To create a more practical taxonomy of speech acts, Searle (1969) proposed a number of rules that govern different types of speech acts. Among those types, he grouped requests, orders and commands together because for all of them, what Searle calls "the essential condition" is

the same: they are attempts to get the hearer to do something (p. 69). However, he points out that for orders and commands to have the desired effect on the hearer, the speaker "must be in a position of authority over" the hearer, since they are attempts to get the hearer to do something "*in virtue of the authority*" of the speaker over the hearer (Searle, 1969, p. 65).

In a later work, Searle (1976), offers a further critique of Austin's theory (1962) and in particular, his classification of speech acts, which he states is quite unsystematic. He points out that there is a great deal of overlap in Austin's categories. In order to develop a more rigorous taxonomy, he presents a list of twelve important differences between various types of illocutionary acts. Three of them are particularly relevant to the theme of this paper. One is the differences in the purpose or intention of the act (that is, the desired result). Another is variations in the force or strength with which the utterance is made. The last involves differences in the relative status or position of the speaker and hearer. Based on these differences, but mainly on the first, Searle (1976) presents his own taxonomy of illocutionary acts, dividing them into five main types: 1) representatives (or assertives), 2) directives, 3) commissives, 4) expressives and 5) declarations.

In defining the second category, directives, Searle (1976) states that

they are attempts ... by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. They may be very modest 'attempts' as when I invite you to do it or suggest that you do it, or they may be very fierce attempts as when I insist you do it....

... Verbs denoting members of this class are ask, order, command, request, beg, plead, pray, entreat, and also invite, permit, and advise.

(Searle, 1976, p. 11)

In this paper, I will be using Searle's (1976) term, "directive" to refer to orders, commands and requests, but I will be focusing mainly on the first two of these types of speech acts.

The wording of directives is often indirect, so according to Goodwin (1990), superficially, there may be no content that signals that they are actually trying to

get someone to do something. For example, a person can get another to open a window by saying "It's hot in here" (Goodwin, 1990, p. 65). In her 1964 study, Ervin-Tripp points out that there is a great deal of variation in structures used to make requests in English, from declarative sentences that hint at the request ("It's cold today" or "That looks like a warm coat you're wearing") to interrogative structures ("Would you mind lending me your coat?") and imperatives ("Lend me your coat", p. 91).

The syntactic structures used for orders and demands are also complex. Counter-intuitively, they often do not involve the use of imperatives, which are normally associated with directives. Jary & Kissine (2014) "defined the imperative mood as a sentence type prototypically associated with the performance of directive speech acts" (p. 168), the function of which "is to signal the performance of directive speech acts such as commands, orders, requests and pleas" (p. 9). However, they go on to point out that this linguistic form is used for other functions, including hortative sentences ("Let it rain tonight", p. 38), threats and dares ("Go on. Throw it. Just you dare", p. 59), advertising imperatives ("Speak a new language in as little as eight weeks" (p. 61), good wishes (Have a nice day" (p. 66), and conditionals ("Finish this by noon and I'll pay you double", p. 147). Furthermore, a number of forms other than imperatives are used for directives, including the interrogative ("Could you please sit down?"), indicative plus modal ("You must go now"), performative prefix ("I order you to leave") and noun phrases ("Feet off the chair") (Jary & Kissine, p. 15). They therefore conclude that "the imperative mood should not be thought of as encoding directive force" (Jary & Kissine, 2014, p. 292).

Similarly, Aikhenvald (2010) reasons that while "an imperative ... is the most prototypical directive", "Almost any speech act can be understood as a hidden or not-so-hidden instruction, command or entreaty" (p. 408). For example, the declarative sentence "The fridge is empty", accompanied by "a reproachful eye-gaze" could be interpreted as asking the hearer to go food shopping right away (p. 408).

In addition, Leech (2014) argues that there is no clear line that divides orders from requests. He explains that there is a continuum between the two based on the degree of "optionality" given to the hearer, ranging from orders

which the hearer absolutely cannot refuse, to directives which the hearer has the right to refuse, and on to requests which the hearer has every right not to comply with (pp. 134 - 135).

Therefore, syntactic structure alone may not be enough to determine whether or not an utterance is a directive, much less, whether it is a request or an order. Using conversation analysis techniques, Schegloff (1984) argued that the positioning of an imperative within a conversational exchange will determine whether or not it is perceived as a directive (p. 34, cited in Goodwin, 1990, p. 66).

Categories of Directives

Despite such difficulty in basing the definition of directives on the syntactic structures they employ, grammatical constructions have continued to be a focus of research in this field. Following up on her 1964 study, Ervin-Tripp (1976) conducted a more thorough analysis of the different syntactic forms in which directives can be made. The data she used were collected by her students in a variety of natural settings, including the family, workplace, service facilities such as fast-food restaurants and cafeterias, and adult education classes. She argued that the choice of these forms was systematic and determined by social distance, relative power, the physical distance between the speaker and the hearer, the relative imposition of the task, the routineness of the task, and whether the hearer was likely to obey it or not (Ervin-Tripp, 1976).

Ervin-Tripp (1976) then divided up the directives found in the collected data into the following six syntactic categories, starting with the most forceful and moving down to the least demanding:

Need statements, such as "I need a match."

Imperatives, such as "Gimme a match" and elliptical forms like "a match."

Imbedded imperatives, such as "Could you gimme a match?"

Permission directives, such as "May I have a match?" Bringing about the condition stated requires an action by the hearer other than merely granting permission.

Question directives, like "Gotta match?" which do not specify the desired act.

Hints, such as "The matches are all gone."

(Ervin-Tripp, 1976, p. 29)

The "need statements" in the collected data (Ervin-Tripp, 1976) included directives using "I'll need a (noun phrase)" and "I want you to ...". It was found that they had the most illocutionary force of the six types of directives. This type of directive was used in two types of settings. The first occurred in the workplace and were made by a superior to a subordinate in settings in which "who is to do what is very clear" (p. 29). The second type were used by children in families where they could assume that their needs will be cared for. For example, a 4 year-old said, "I need a spoon, Mommy, I need a spoon." (Ervin-Tripp, 1976, p. 30).

Ervin-Tripp (1976) mentioned a few of this type of directives that were spoken towards superiors, but they were either softened by the use of a conditional ("I could use some ...") or ostensibly said to someone of equal rank but within earshot of the superior. The data also suggested that directives from persons of lower rank to their superiors "never took the need or imperative form" (Ervin-Tripp, 1976, p. 35).

In her analysis of the various types of directives, Ervin-Tripp (1976) determined that for both need statements and imperatives, the content of the directive is "obvious"; that is, there is no need for hearers to guess what is being asked of them. Thus, they are easily understood if hearers are able to do what the speaker wants them to do and/or it is part of their normal role (Ervin-Tripp, 1976, p. 51).

Leech (2014) offered a different taxonomy of directives. In analyzing semantic strategies used to perform directives, he divided them into three main categories: 1) direct strategies, 2) use of conventionally indirect wording, and 3) hints, or off-record strategies (p. 147). The first category covers both imperatives and performatives such as "I'm asking you to ..." and "I'm begging you to ..." (p. 147). He divides on-record indirect strategies into five sub-categories: 1) prediction statements (e.g., "Insolence will not be tolerated"); 2)

strong obligation statements (e.g., "You must record testing times for all three tests" and "You've got to learn to do that or I'm not going to let you use the microwave"); 3) weaker obligation statements (e.g., "You should give me all of your old clothes"); 4) volitional statements (e.g., "I want you to bend your knees"); and 5) ability/possibility statements (e.g., "You can put your coat over there" and "You might want to call ahead of time to make sure that the guy's there.") (pp. 148 - 149). Leech (2014) goes on to explain that he has listed these categories in order of politeness, from the least polite (sub-category 1) to the most polite (sub-category 5) (p. 149).

Grammatical structures using "need", including "You need to" and "I need you to" are included in Leech's "weaker obligation statements" category (2014, p. 148). He explains that "need" is "more diplomatic than *must* and *have to* because it generally implies that the listener will benefit from the action. This makes it less like an order and more like advice, as in the example "You need to bring insect repellent" (p. 149). Thus, his analysis of the illocutionary force of directives using "need" constructions differs from Ervin-Tripp's (1976). The difference may lie in whether the subject is the speaker ("I") or the hearer ("You"), as well as whether the speaker or hearer will benefit from the requested/ordered action.

Yet another method of categorizing directives has been popularized in works by Marjorie Harness Goodwin (1980a, 1980b, 1985, 1987, cited in Goodwin, 1998). Goodwin (1998) states that orders and commands can be categorized into two types, first noted by Labov & Fanshel (1977). One was labeled "aggravated" by Labov & Fanshel, who used this term to refer to the use of simple imperatives. According to them, "in most adult situations, the use of an unmodified imperative 'Stop that!' is an aggravated form of command, not a neutral expression" (Labov & Fanshel, 1977, p. 77). A second type of order or command includes some kind of softening device or is stated more as a suggestion or proposal than a command. This type of directive is called a "mitigated directive". Goodwin provided clear definitions of these terms and used them in reporting on her observations of African American children playing on the street in West Philadelphia (Goodwin 1980a, 1980b, 1985, 1987, cited in Goodwin, 1998), so many researchers since then have referred to her

definitions of aggravated and mitigated directives (e.g., Coates, 2004; Maltz & Borker, 1982; West, 1998a, 1998b).

Goodwin (1990) points out that the syntactic form of a directive alone does not make it aggravated or mitigated. Although Labov & Fanshel (1977) cited imperatives as an obvious form of "aggravated directive," Goodwin (1990) pointed out that imperatives can be used in many situations without indicating power over the hearer. For example, warning another child to get out of the way of an oncoming car by saying "Watch out" or inviting another child to take a turn by saying "Go ahead" should not be considered aggravated directives. On the other hand, extremely polite forms can be used sarcastically to try to get another person to carry out the speaker's wish, as in "Could I trouble you to take out the garbage?" (Ervin-Tripp, 1976, p. 61, cited in Goodwin, 1990, p. 66). Goodwin (1990) therefore used the terms "aggravated" and "mitigated" to refer to social imposition as judged by the context rather than the syntactic form of the utterance (p. 66). Moreover, in another paper (Goodwin, 1983) spoke of a "continuum of mitigated and aggravated language forms", suggesting that some forms lie in between the two extremes. According to Garvey (1975, pp. 52 – 60) and Ervin-Tripp (1976, p. 29), the most aggravated forms of directives are "need statements", "desire statements" and "explicit statements" (cited in Goodwin, 1998, pp. 125 - 126).

In contrast, Trosborg's (1995:205) taxonomy of request strategies situates expressions of needs and desires (as in "I want/need to borrow your car") under the category of conventionally indirect (speaker-based) strategies. Trosborg (1995) also notes that hearer-based requests (e.g., "Can/Could you lend me your car?" are generally considered more polite than speaker-based conventionally indirect requests because they imply that the hearer is in a position of control in terms of deciding whether or not to comply with the request (cited in Uso-Juan, 2010, p. 239).

Vine (2004) suggests a way to resolve questions about the directness of "aggravated" and "mitigated" forms of directives and their relative politeness and illocutionary force. She points out that the forcefulness of different forms is generally referred to as "directness," but that control acts that are not imperatives are often labeled "indirect" (Vine, 2004, p. 66). Moreover, she

notes that Leech (1983) and Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) view directness in relation to politeness, with the least direct expressions being considered the most polite (cited in Vine, 2004, p. 66). However, Vine (2004) argues that in some cases, wording can be indirect but still be explicit, as in "Can you close the window?" (p. 69). In other cases, the directive can be implicit in that what the speaker wants the hearer to do is not stated, but it can still be worded in a relatively forceful way to indicate that the speaker wants the hearer to do something. The example Vine (2004) gives from her workplace data is "I need a um master sheet er what do you call them [laughs] you know a template" (p. 69). This is an order to get a template, and, although it is indirect, it is relatively forceful.

Vine (2004) therefore categorizes directives as "explicit" or "implicit" rather than "direct" or "indirect", since "conventionally indirect" wording such as "Can you do ...?" is quite explicit in terms of what the speaker wants the hearer to do (p. 70). Vine (2004) argues that explicit directives have more force than implicit ones, even when the form of a directive is similar. Thus, for example, "now I need to get that up to them today," when uttered after giving some documents to a subordinate to check, implies that the speaker is in a hurry and is asking the subordinate to check them in a hurry, but does not directly state that. In contrast, "you need to just check the travel booking" explicitly says what needs to be done, and is therefore more forceful, even though both are "need statements" according to Ervin-Tripp's (1976) taxonomy). Vine (2004) states that this is true whether or not the same pronoun (e.g., "we" or "you") is used (p. 71).

Vine (2004) concludes that if you look at the beginning of the directive ("the head act") and determine whether or not the action the speaker wants the hearer to take is explicitly stated, then among explicit head acts, imperatives generally are the most forceful. Interrogatives, especially modal interrogatives such as "Can you ...?", are the least forceful forms of expression (p. 90). On the other hand, implicit directives that focus on the speaker's needs, although they make hearers figure out what is being asked of them, are quite forceful, but because they avoid direct reference to what needs to be done, also minimize

the threat to the hearer's face and are therefore more "polite" (Vine, 2004, p. 86).

Thus, it appears that directives incorporating "need" structures are sometimes implicit and therefore relatively polite, but nonetheless quite forceful.

Next, I'd like to consider the question of authority, or power, which, as mentioned above, was listed by Searle (1969, p. 65) as a requirement for issuing directives.

Directives and Power

According to Goodwin (1998:123), directives have been viewed as both "social control acts" (Ervin-Tripp, 1982, p. 29) and "persuasive talk" (Cook-Gumperz, 1981). Goodwin (1990) notes that there is a large body of research that shows a relationship between the type of directive used and the amount of social control that can be exerted by the speaker. Several studies have shown that children use aggravated forms of directives to display control and assert the relative position of the speaker over the hearer (Goodwin, 1990).

In analyzing power and politeness in workplace interactions, Holmes & Stubbe (2015) defined power as follows:

From a sociological or psychological perspective, power is treated as a relative concept which includes both the ability to control others and the ability to accomplish one's goals. This is manifest in the degree to which one person or group can impose their plans and evaluations at the expense of others.

(Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 3)

They explicitly tied directives to the performance of power, stating that "doing power" in the workplace may involve use of an "uncompromising, explicit and repeated directive" that "reflects [one's] status in the organizational hierarchy" (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 2).

Moreover, they pointed out the importance of the language used in directives, stating, "Language is clearly a crucial means of enacting power" (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 3). Thus, in the "social constructionist framework"

Holmes & Stubbe (2015) employed, workplace relationships and social identities can be "negotiated and maintained through talk" (p. viii).

Holmes & Stubbe (2015) employed this framework to analyze the types and wording of directives used in various workplaces in terms of relative power structures. They found that in both factories and white-collar workplaces, imperatives are frequently used to issue directives to subordinates about routine tasks (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 33). They differed from Vine (2004) in that they classified declaratives containing "want" and "need" constructions as well as imperatives as "direct and explicit" forms of directives (p. 34). They include "I need", "you need" and "that needs to be" directives in this category, which they say is frequently used when 1) someone higher in the institutional hierarchy is speaking to someone lower than them, and 2) the thing they want the other person to do is the hearer's responsibility—often a routine part of the job, or the imposition is small (p. 34). They argue that directives can be made stronger by using "must", addressing the hearer as "you", repeating the directive, and, in some cases, adding swear words (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 35).

In contrast, mitigating devices include modal verbs and particles, tag questions, hedges and rising intonation (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 36). In addition, the position of an imperative within an interaction in terms of previous or following supporting moves can mitigate the force of explicit directives (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 37).

When interactions are taking place between colleagues of equal status, Holmes & Stubbe (2015) found that imperatives are not used frequently. In addition, attention to politeness increases as the right to give directives decreases (p. 41). Finally, they found that in giving directives to do non-routine or special tasks, more mitigating devices and indirect forms are usually used (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015, p. 43).

Research Questions

I'd now like to apply the knowledge gained from my reading to try to answer my initial questions about the three examples of need constructions from *Up in the Air* mentioned in the introduction. My questions were: How are "need"

constructions used in directives? Are they more polite than imperatives? Are they considered "mitigated directives"? How forceful are they? In what kinds of situations are they used?

The research summarized above suggests that "need" constructions used as directives are often seen to be conventionally indirect modes of expressing directives (Trosborg, 1995, cited in Uso-Juan, 2010), and thus, may be considered more polite than imperatives (Leech, 2014). Leech (2014) included "You need to" and "I need you to" in his "weaker obligation statements" category (2014, p. 148), explaining that it generally implies that the listener will benefit from the action.

As to whether the three examples from *Up in the Air* are mitigated or aggravated directives, Goodwin (1990) argued that these terms should be used to refer to social imposition as judged by the context rather than the syntactic form of the utterance. In all three of the examples from *Up in the Air*, the social imposition is quite large, as the hearers are being asked to acquiesce to being fired. Moreover, although Holmes & Stubbe (2015) argue that directives to do non-routine or special tasks usually incorporate mitigating devices and indirect forms, no mitigators are used to soften the "need" directives given in the three examples quoted from *Up in the Air*.

As was explained above, Vine (2004) argued that "need" statements are not necessarily indirect (as Trosborg, 1995 and Leech, 2014 seemed to assume). In fact, in some cases, the action sought is quite explicit. This is true of the three examples from *Up in the Air*. This seems to confirm Garvey's (1975) and Ervin-Tripp's (1976) claim that "need statements" are among the most aggravated forms of directives.

Thus, the first three of my questions seem to have been answered by the findings of the studies covered in my literature review. However, these earlier studies also outlined the kinds of situations in which directives using need constructions are normally used, and they do not match the situation in these examples from *Up in the Air*. The speakers in *Up in the Air* were not in a position of authority over the hearer (Searle, 1969), nor were these need statements made by a superior to a subordinate in a workplace (Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Holmes & Stubbe, 2015). This setting was not one in which "who is to do

what is very clear", nor was the content of the directive part of their normal role (Ervin-Tripp, 1976). The actions the speakers wanted the other person to do were not part of the hearer's responsibility or a routine part of their job; neither was the imposition small (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015). Thus, these examples did not fit any of the conditions suggested in the literature review.

In my study, I would therefore like to look at other examples of directives using "need" constructions that I found in movies and television dramas to see whether they conform to the findings of previous research and also to see if they can be used to better understand the use of "need" in the three examples from *Up in the Air*.

Study

Methodology

After noticing the wording in the above three examples in *Up in the Air*, I began actively looking for the use of "need" constructions in movies and television dramas, for the most part, those that I own. I limited the data I collected to examples taken from realistic dramas set in the present time, including more scenes from *Up in the Air*, as well as scenes from the movie *The American President* and serial television dramas *The West Wing*, *The Closer* and *Major Crimes*.

I found a total of 15 new scenes that contain the use of "need" constructions in directives in a variety of situations: orders and commands to subordinates in the same workplace, requests/orders to subordinates in the workplace, request/orders to family members, orders and commands to strangers where there is a power differential, emotionally charged demands based on a sense of justice, and advice to equals or one's superior. In some cases, more than one example occurs in the same scene, so I found a total of 26 examples in all.

This is obviously a convenience study and is not based on real-life situations, but it is hoped that these examples will illustrate the variety of ways "need" can be used in directives, and also shed some light on the use of "need" in the scenes that originally caught my attention.

Examples

The examples have been grouped according to the relationship of the speaker and hearer and the presumed function that the directive fulfills (order/request), and are presented below in those groups. Each example has been numbered and the movie or TV series from which it was taken, along with an approximate time in the movie or episode in which it occurs, is given. Then, in italics, background information about the scene is provided, followed by the portion of the script containing the example of one or more directives containing a "need" construction. Where a single scene contains more than one example of this type of construction, it is presented in the group to which the first "need" statement belongs and the "need" statements are numbered for reference in other groups.

1. Orders to Subordinates in the Same Workplace

Example 4: *Up in the Air 2*, 10:41 ~

Ryan's boss, Craig Gregory, is in his office in Omaha and is talking to Ryan, who's in a hotel room in Los Vegas.

Craig: How's the road warrior?

Ryan: Twenty minutes from boarding into a world of bliss.

Craig: Great numbers out of Phoenix. You know Big Auto is going to drop another 10K this month.

Ryan: No kidding?

Craig: Yeah, Christmas came early. Wish I could have you in five places at once. I need you back in Omaha by the end of the week.

Ryan: I thought you needed me everywhere.

In this scene, the company boss is giving an order to one of his employees. From other scenes in the movie, it can be surmised that Ryan is a trusted employee who is given a great deal of freedom and is normally out of

the office (at one point, he says that he was away from home over 320 days in the past year). Thus, this request to come back to the main office may be a bit unusual. This may account for the use of "need" in the directive—to make it a bit more forceful. However, it basically conforms to the findings of Ervin-Tripp (1976) and Holmes & Stubbe (2015) in that it is used by someone with superior status in giving an order to a subordinate.

Example 5: *Up in the Air* 6, 1:39:38 ~

At Natalie Keener's suggestion, the company has tried to reduce costs by having its employees do their firing using internet connections rather than flying all over the country to meet employees face to face. However, this strategy did not work well. Natalie ended up quitting and the company is in disarray. In the meantime, Ryan has slipped away on personal business. He gets a call from his boss, Craig Gregory. After explaining to Ryan what happened, Craig suddenly says:

Craig: **I need you** back in the air.

By this, Craig means that he wants Ryan to resume his previous modis operandi and start flying to clients' offices again. This is a sudden change of plans, but as Ryan's boss, he is in a position to order Ryan to do this, and since Ryan has been traveling for the company for many years, it is not too big of an imposition. Thus, like Example 4, it conforms to the findings of Ervin-Tripp (1976) and Holmes & Stubbe (2015).

It should also be pointed out, however, that this directive is made when Craig is emotionally upset. Some of the later examples suggest that "need" directives may be used more frequently when the speaker is not emotionally composed.

Example 6: *The American President*, ~ 2:00 ~

This scene takes place very early in the movie, and shows the President of the United States as he is starting his day at the White House. As he

moves from the residence into the West Wing, he gives directives to three people whom he sees on his way, starting with a young woman who is walking with him out of the residence.

Janie: The 10:15 event has been moved to the Indian Treaty Room.

President: 10:15 is American Fisheries?

Janie: Yes, sir. They're giving you a 200-pound halibut.

President: Janie, **make a note.** We need to schedule more events where somebody gives me a really big fish.

Jane: Yes, sir.

President: Janie, I'm kidding.

Janie: Of course, sir.

(As they walk out of the residence elevator, they are met by Lewis Rothschild, the President's speechwriter. Lewis expresses concern because the President skipped an important section of the speech Lewis wrote when the President delivered it the night before. He goes into a long-winded explanation of the problem. In the meantime, the President greets several other members of the staff as he walks.)

President: Maria.

Maria: Good morning, sir.

President: Good morning. Did they tell you **I'm gonna need** the consumer

Maria: ... overall consumer spending and not just first homes. We'll have it for you in 15 minutes.

President: Thanks.

Lewis: Mr. President. I really feel we need to focus on ...

President: Lewis, however much coffee you drink in the morning, **I want you to** reduce it by half.

Lewis: I don't drink coffee, sir.

The President is obviously in a position of greater power than the people he is talking to in this light-hearted scene; moreover, the directives he is giving are taking place in the workplace. He uses a combination of imperatives, "want" and "need" statements to issue his directives. However, only one of them is ordering the subordinates to do something that is a normal part of their job: the one asking for the overall consumer spending figures. The first one, addressed to a young aide in charge of his schedule, takes the form of an imperative but is intended as a joke. In effect, he displays his power by teasing this very sincere young staff member. The second directive is the most serious, and employs "need". The young woman he addresses accepts it as an order and makes it clear that she is already prepared to fulfill it. The final directive, which uses "want", is also meant as a joke: the President is trying to get Lewis to calm down. While two of these directives are made as jokes, the "real directive" is made using a need construction. This is similar to the original examples from *Up in the Air*, where "need" was used in the most important directive in each scene.

Example 7: *The Closer*, Season 6, Episode 6, 13:57 ~

The police have identified a suspect in an important murder case: a man who is in prison for hiring someone to murder his wife. This time, they think he might have hired someone to kill the Commissioner of the Parole Board, who recently denied him parole. Because this case involves the murder of a very important official, the Assistant Chief of Police, William Pope, has taken over the investigation from Chief Brenda Lee Johnson of the Major Crimes Division. However, Chief Pope knows Brenda is good at getting suspects to confess to crimes, so he directs her to interview the prisoner, Mr. Medina, who he has ordered to be flown to the police station.

Chief Pope: I've ordered air support to fly Medina down from Folsom. He should be here by 2:00 PM today.

Brenda: What? You can't do that. I know next to nothing about him.

Chief Pope: Well then, educate yourself. Because with state police, and sheriff's deputies and state prison officials helping with Operation Swift Justice, we need equal emphasis on "swift".

Brenda: This is not the way to handle this, Will. It just isn't.

Chief Pope: All right. Can you say for sure ... that Commissioner's Ross' murder was an attack against her and her alone? And that the rest of the State Parole Board is in no danger whatsoever? Because unless you can state that with absolute certainty, time may not be on our side. Now Medina is coming, and ready or not, I need you to talk to him.

Chief Pope uses "need" constructions twice in this scene. He and Chief Brenda Lee Johnson work closely together all the time, and previously were lovers, so they are very close. Considered in terms of the institutional hierarchy, however, Chief Pope is a superior ordering a subordinate to do something. Nonetheless, Brenda has expressed a reluctance to do the interview, so the directive cannot be considered a routine one, or one that is a small imposition as indicated by Ervin-Tripp (1976) and Holmes & Stubbe (2015). However, it is within the normal scope of her work—and something that she is known to do very well. It should also be noted that there is a great deal of tension in this scene, with Chief Pope showing a lot of anger over Brenda's handling of the case so far and her reluctance to follow his orders.

Thus, while some aspects of this use of "need" constructions support the findings presented in the literature review, it would seem that in this case, the directives incorporating "need" constructions take on a great deal of force and also express emotional stress, much like the use in Example 5.

Example 8: *The Closer*, Season 7, Episode 19, ~11:25

A priest has been murdered and Chief Brenda Lee Johnson has gone to his room in the rectory to get information. The Assistant Chief of Police, William Pope, is worried that if she investigates inside church property without the permission of the Church, there will be serious problems that may result in a lawsuit. He therefore asks her to leave the rectory during a telephone call. When she continues to investigate, he rushes to the scene to order her to leave.

Chief Pope: Chief Johnson, you are undermining my negotiations with the Church. I need you out of this rectory. Now.
(*She immediately leaves.*)

The interlocutors are the same as those in Example 7. They are close, and Brenda is Chief Pope's subordinate. Chief Pope's order is within his purview as her superior, so this use of "need" agrees with the findings in the literature review. However, as in Example 7, there is a strong emotional element involved: Brenda has disobeyed Chief Pope's orders. Thus, this emotionally charged atmosphere may also play a part in his choice of a "need" construction.

2. Order / Request to Subordinate in the Same Workplace

Example 9: *The West Wing*, Season 5, Episode 4, 35:05 ~ 35:24

Jed Bartlett is the President of the United States. One day, he realizes that he doesn't know how much milk costs anymore. Moreover, none of his main staff members know the price either. In America, this is seen as an indication that they are not aware of the problems faced by ordinary people, so this is a political problem for him and his staff. He therefore decides to have his personal assistant, Charlie, find out how much milk costs. Charlie is a young man who is with the President almost all of the time and handles his personal needs.

President: Listen. **I need you to** research something for me. ... **Could you** find out the price of a gallon of milk.

The President has much more power than Charlie, but there is very little social distance between them. Therefore, while he is issuing a directive to a subordinate, he also seems to feel the need to consider Charlie's face needs—to be polite. He starts out making it clear that he will be issuing an order ("I need you to research something for me", using the "need" construction to indicate a level of insistence appropriate for a somewhat unusual order), but then he switches to conventionally indirect wording ("Could you ...?")—a negative politeness strategy—to make the actual order, making it sound more like a request. The combination suggests both the power differential between them and their close relationship.

The use of the "need" construction in this example conforms to the findings in the literature review about the use of this kind of syntactic form to give directives to subordinates in the workplace (Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Holmes & Stubbe, 2015).

3. Order / Request to a Close Relative

Example 10: *Up in the Air* 5, 1:19:50 ~

Ryan Bingham is back in his hometown in northern Wisconsin for his sister's wedding. On the wedding day, he gets a call from his other sister, Kara.

Kara: Ryan, where are you? We're having a meltdown here.

Ryan: What's wrong? What happened?

Kara: It's Jim (*the younger sister's fiancé*). Can you get back here? **We need** your help.

Ryan: Yeah, of course

Although Ryan has not seen his sisters for a long time before the wedding, in an emergency situation, Kara seems to feel able to use a "need" structure to ask for help. It has a strong level of insistence, but in the end, since Ryan could refuse, this should probably be classified as a request according to Leech's (2014) definition of requests as directives which the hearer has every right not to comply with. It should also be noted that, as in Examples 5, 7 and 8, there is a strong emotional element in this directive.

Example 10: *Major Crimes, Season 3, Episode 9*, 30:00 ~ 30:58

Captain Sharon Raydor of the LAPD is planning on adopting a young man named Rusty whom she has taken in after he ran into trouble with the police. She has told her son and daughter, who are grown and no longer live with her, about her plan. In this scene, her son Richard has come home and is raising objections to her plan. She is very angry about his reasons and the way he is presenting them to her.

Sharon: Richard William Raydor. You listen to me and you listen to me good. You've got one chance to get this right. **You need to** turn * your * attitude around—right this minute! Because if you make Rusty feel unwelcome in this family after all his ... and my hard work. I'll be just so ... disappointed. Oh my God! I'm so disappointed in you right now, I don't know what to say. (*She leaves*)

Although Richard is an adult, his mother is still in a position of authority in the family because she is his parent and is not dependent upon him in any way. She is clearly asserting her authority over him in this outburst. Suzuki (1973) notes that American parents often call their children by their full name when they are very angry with them. This is what Sharon does in this scene. Her tone of voice also displays her extreme anger at her son's attitude. Thus, her use of the "need" construction in this directive probably stems not only from her superior status in the family, but may also be influenced

by her emotional state: she chooses a very forceful construction to get her point across.

4. Order to a Stranger

Example 11: *The Closer*, Season 6, Episode 6, ~2:16 ~

The Los Angeles Police Department's Major Crimes Division has received a call from a woman who says there is someone in her house and she fears for her safety. She asks for a detective by name, and the person who has answered the phone thinks she is asking for "Detective Erico". The phone call is cut off and no one knows who Detective Erico is. Finally, Commander Taylor, who works in a different division, comes in and says that there's a Detective Verico in Threat Management, the division that deals with stalkers. One of the officers calls Threat Management and asks for Detective Verico, but he's off duty this week. Also, they say they cannot send up his files for another hour or so. Commander Taylor takes over the phone call and says:

Comander: This is Commander Taylor. I want Verico's cases. And I need lights and sirens headed to every female on his list of stalking victims. Ah-ah. Ah-ah. (*Intonation suggests that this means "No. No."*) Right now.

In this scene, Commander Taylor does not know who he is talking to, other than that it is someone in the Threat Management Division. He may presume that the person on the other end of the line may have heard of him, but he does not confirm this. He simply insists in very strong terms that the other person send police cars with their lights flashing and their sirens on to everyone on Detective Verico's list of women who are being stalked.

It may be assumed that Commander Taylor is in a position of power in the police department and that the person whom he is talking to is in a lower position, but this is not absolutely clear. They obviously do not work together regularly. Nor is the demand routine. Hence, the situation does not conform to the usual type of situation in which "need" statements are used as described by

Ervin-Tripp (1976) and Holmes & Stubbe (2015). Instead, it takes place in an emotionally charged atmosphere. Thus, although his superior position may allow Commander Taylor to use "need" to add a level of insistence to his directive, it would seem that, as in Examples 5, 7, 8 and 10, high levels of emotions also contribute to this word choice.

Example 12: *The Closer*, Season 6, Episode 7, 14:15

There has been a series of bank robberies in Los Angeles, and in investigating them, the LAPD discovers that a car owned by a police officer involved in negotiating with the robbers was at the scene of the latest bank robbery. Suspecting that this officer may be involved in the bank robberies, officers of the Major Crimes Division and the FBI Liaison to the LAPD are interviewing him. The FBI Liaison says:

FBI Liaison: This is what we need. Confirm exactly where you were during the robbery and your wife's cellphone number.

In this scene, the word "need" is used before issuing an order made with an imperative. The use of "need" here appears to raise the level of insistence. Although the suspect and the FBI Liaison are strangers, in this situation, when the suspect is under interrogation, the FBI Liaison is in a position of greater power. This conforms to the idea of issuing directives from a position of authority (Searle, 1969), and also, the concept of "doing power" through the use of language proposed by Holmes & Stubbe (2015).

Example 13: *Major Crimes*, Season 2, Episode 13, 3:30 ~

The LAPD Major Crimes Division is searching the house of a young man who is out of prison on probation, and there is concern that he may be psychologically unable to control his urges to commit a crime again. The young man is not at home and members of his family, Dr. Riley, his wife and daughter, are not telling the police much of anything that will help them figure out where he has gone. Finally, in exasperation, the ranking

police office, Lieutenant Provenza, makes a demand, followed by another by Detective Sykes, a female officer who is also on the scene:

Provenza: Now, where did Eric go? If you know anything that will help us find him, (1) you need to tell us now.

Daughter: He took Mom's old car.

Sykes: What's the license plate?
(no answer)

Dr. Riley, (2) I need you to work with me.

In this scene, two directives in the form of "need statements" are issued. In both cases, the use of "need" raises the level of insistence. Again, the speakers are strangers to the hearers, but as police officers, they can assume positions of greater authority and power, much as the FBI Liaison did in Example 12. Also, as in Examples 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11, the highly emotional atmosphere, with the urgent need to locate the young man before he assaults and kills another young woman, may also contribute to this word choice.

Example 14: *Major Crimes, Season 3, Episode 8* 24:30 ~ 24:35

The police are interrogating a movie star in whose storage container a dead body has been found. It has been discovered that his personal assistant, Kiki, had a fight with the woman whose body it is. In the meantime, the actor has sent Kiki off to Mexico on an errand. The police captain, Sharon Raydor, therefore demands that the actor get her back to Los Angeles as soon as possible.

Captain Raydor: You need to call Kiki and get her back here on the very next plane.

As in Examples 12 and 13, the speaker is meeting the hearer for the first time, but as a police officer, she feels she has the authority to demand obedience from the person she is interrogating.

The same concept probably lies behind the use of a "need" directive by Chief Johnson in the following example (directive number 2), which also includes a new context for the use of a "need" statement (directive number 1).

5. Emotionally Charged Demands Based on a Sense of Justice

Example 15: *The Closer*, Season 7, Episode 11, 25:05 ~

The principal of a high school, Mr. Reed, has been killed, and the main suspect is the coach of the football team at the school, because he and the principal had had a strong disagreement about the principal's new rule that all team members had to get their grades up or stop playing for the team. During the argument, the principal mentioned "knowing what is going on at your house" to the coach, so the police have gone to the coach's house. There, they found several boys living. Chief Johnson is now interviewing the coach, who was arrested before the police raid on his house and did not know about it. Later on, it comes out that he was truly trying to help boys whose families had basically abandoned them, but at this point, the police think he might be a pedophile who is taking advantage of the boys living at his house.

Coach: This is what I get? Because I put the kids first? Above everything else? I put them first. And Reed put himself first, and his career?

Chief Johnson: You put the kids first?

Coach: Always.

Chief Johnson: Did you also put 'em in your house?

Coach: My house?

Chief Johnson: My detectives just found three underage boys living at your house—half naked. ...

(Pause: Coach looks upset.)

Principal Reed knew about them, didn't he? That's what he threatened to tell the school district last night, when you two argued.

- Coach: All right, listen. First, okay. (1) You need ... You need to get those detectives out of my house right now, and then
- Chief Johnson: I'll tell you what I need to do. (2) I need to question those boys.

In this scene, the coach is shocked at what he considers an invasion of his home and the probable emotional distress this will have caused the boys he has been trying to help. He feels justifiably outraged and demands that the police detectives be withdrawn from his home. He is speaking to a stranger and has no authority other than the right to privacy in his own home. I therefore feel that this use of a "need" construction is different from those that have been presented so far. I call this type of directive an emotionally charged demand based on a sense of justice. Obviously, it is different from the categories presented by previous researchers. However, it is similar to Examples 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 13 in that the emotionally fraught atmosphere may be a contributing factor in the choice of wording.

As pointed out above, the second use of a "need" statement in this example is similar to those in Examples 12 through 14 in that a police officer or other government official is speaking to someone they are meeting for the first time and thinks that their job gives them the power to speak from a position of authority. The same thing is true of the first "need" directive in the following example.

Example 16: *The Closer*, Season 7, Episode 20, ~ 21:43

On several occasions, information from the Major Crimes Division of the LAPD has been leaked to a hostile lawyer named Peter Goldman, who is using this information to bring lawsuits against the police department. Captain Sharon Raydor of Major Crimes has just discovered that the lawyer has been getting this information from the fiancée of one of the Major Crimes detectives, David Gabriel. Apparently, this young woman, Anne, was hired by Peter Goldman to meet David at his church, get close to him and then pass on

information she learned from him to Mr. Goldman. Detective Gabriel was totally unaware of this and is stunned when Captain Raydor explains what has happened at a meeting with Assistant Chief of Police William Pope, Commander Taylor (both of them his superiors) and his fiancée present.

- Detective Gabriel: Do I at least get a chance to explain myself to Chief Johnson and my division?
- Captain Raydor: (1) **I'll need to** get your complete statement first.
- Detective Gabriel: Fine, whatever. Just get me out of here.
- Anne: Just wait a second. ... Please.
- Detective Gabriel: (2) **You need to** get your stuff out of my house.
(3) **She needs to** get her stuff out of my house.
- Commander Taylor: David, we'll take care of that.
- Anne: Wait a second.
- Captain Raydor: This way, David.
- Anne: Wait a second.
- Detective Gabriel: You know what? *(Sighs)* (4) **You need to** get out of my house. (5) **You need to** get out of my church. And (6) **you need to** get out of my life, Anne.
- Anne: David, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.
- Detective Gabriel: I mean it.

In some ways, this example is similar to the one that preceded it, in that the speaker feels that his privacy has been invaded and he has a right to demand that the "invader" leaves. However, in this case, the person is not a stranger, but the woman he was intending to marry. He is not only outraged, he is hurt. He uses "need" directives five times—four times addressed to his fiancée, and once to his superiors who have confronted him with this horrendous fact. The use of the "need" constructions to voice his demands not only reflects the level of his insistence but also the intensity of the emotions he is feeling.

6. Advice

Example 17: *The Closer*, Season 7, Episode 19, 17:48

There is a conflict between Assistant Chief of Police William Pope and Chief Brenda Lee Johnson during the investigation of the murder of a Catholic priest. (See Example 8 above.) Chief Johnson is demanding that she be allowed to see the priest's journals (diary-like daily writings), but the Catholic Church has rules that forbid this. Her superior, Chief Pope, is trying to make sure that the investigation does not anger the Catholic church, but Chief Johnson has publicly defied him. Another woman on the police force, Captain Sharon Raydor, advises Brenda to back down from this confrontation.

Captain Raydor: If you can't keep relations friendly, **you need to** keep them smart.

The use of "need" in this scene is the kind of directive that Leech (2014) labeled "advice". Captain Raydor is trying to get Chief Johnson to do something that will be for her own good. Although Captain Raydor's rank places her somewhat below Chief Johnson in the hierarchy of the police department, they are both powerful women of high rank, so this utterance comes across as advice from someone of basically equal status. Contrast it with the next example.

Example 18: *The Closer*, Season 7, Episode 15, 18:05 ~

Chief Johnson is being sued by the mother of a young suspect who was murdered almost immediately after the police took him home after interrogating him at the police department. As indicated in Example 16, the mother's lawyer, Mr. Peter Goldman, seems to be finding out about highly confidential matters occurring within the Major Crimes Division of the Los Angeles Police Department, but the source of the leak has not yet been discovered. In this scene, the Major Crimes detectives are in a print shed investigating a related shooting. One of the lower ranking detectives, Julio Sanchez, asks Chief Johnson to move away from the

other detectives and sit inside the car in which the shooting took place with him as he explains this shooting. While inside the car, outside of the hearing of the other detectives, the two discuss possible ways to investigate the murders.

Detective Sanchez: Looking at that store, that's a good idea. It was protected. There's gotta be a reason for that.

Chief Johnson: Then maybe we should also find out who paid for the funerals of that poor old man and the little boy.

Detective Sanchez: Not we. You.

Chief Johnson: What do you mean?

Detective Sanchez: Chief, Goldman's here, in this print shed, right now. Everything that you say and everything that you do will get back to him. **You need to** follow up without us.

Unlike in Example 17, in this scene advice is being offered by a subordinate, and yet it is worded in very insistent terms using a "need" construction. The reason for the insistency seems to be the urgency of the situation. No one knows who is leaking information to Mr. Goldman, so Detective Sanchez seems to be warning Chief Johnson that it would be dangerous to work with others in the Division.

Discussion / Conclusion

For this study, I was able to find 15 new scenes and 23 examples of "need" directives in a small selection of movies and television dramas and to categorize them into six types: 1) orders and commands to subordinates in the same workplace, 2) requests/orders to subordinates in the workplace, 3) requests/orders to family members, 4) orders and commands to strangers where there is a power differential, 5) emotionally charged orders based on a sense of justice, and 6) advice to equals or one's superior. The examples in the first two groups conformed fairly closely to the findings of Ervin-Tripp (1976), Holmes & Stubbe (2015) and Vine (2004), with "need" used in relatively strong

directives to subordinates in the workplace. The examples in the fourth group, while not directives given to known subordinates, suggested that "need" directives were a way of "doing power" through the use of language in the manner described by Holmes & Stubbe (2015), where power was derived from the speaker's role as a police officer or government official.

However, the examples in the third and fifth groups, and the second example in the sixth group, suggest that a strong emotional element in the context could justify the level of insistence created by the use of a "need" construction directive. This is something that was not reported in previous research. This may be due to the fact that my examples were drawn from fiction, and that they were focused on highly dramatic scenes. In particular, my love of police procedurals may have led to a skewed sample. However, based on my own experience and directives I have issued to my children, I suspect that anger and emotional upset may lead to a greater use of "need" constructions.

Returning to my original questions about the three examples of "need" statement directives in the firing scenes in *Up in the Air*, I realize that neither previous research nor any of the other examples I found could shed light on the word choice used in these orders. As explained above, the speakers were not in a position of authority over the hearer, nor were these need statements made by a superior to a subordinate in a workplace. This setting was not one in which "who is to do what is very clear". The content of the directive was not part of their normal role, nor was the thing they wanted the other person to do part of the hearer's responsibility or a routine part of their job; neither was the imposition small. Thus, these examples did not fit any of the conditions suggested in the literature review.

Furthermore, they did not really seem similar to any of the other examples I found in movies and television dramas. Although the situations in these three examples were emotionally charged for the people the main characters were speaking to—who were very upset at the knowledge that they were being fired—neither Ryan nor Natalie was particularly upset. In fact, they seemed to view it as an important part of their job to remain calm so that their words would minimize the trauma to their listeners, allowing them to smoothly get the people

they were firing to turn in their keys, gather their belongings and leave their workplace.

The only explanation that I can think of is that, given that they have no connection to the people they are talking to and no real authority over them, and that what they are telling their listeners to do is anything but routine, Ryan and Natalie's use of "need" directives is a way of "doing power" through the use of language (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015). The "script" they used was almost exactly the same in all three scenes, so conceivably, it was contrived to give the speakers an aura of authority that would allow them to carry out their job. This may have been why I thought it was so unusual.

Since this is a very limited sample of directives, none of which was taken from real life, this may be no more than speculation. However, it is hoped that this small study provides food for thought and ideas on other areas to explore relating to the use of directives and their pragmatic impact.

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