

Directive Speech Acts Reflecting Political Power in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (2022)

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Abstract

This study investigates directive speech acts in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* by examining their linguistic realization, degrees of directness, and representation of political authority. The study aims to explain how directive speech acts function not only to direct actions but also to construct political authority within cinematic discourse. This research employed a qualitative descriptive design using Searle's (1979) speech act theory and Weber's (1947) theory of authority. Although Weber distinguishes traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational authority, this study focuses only on legal-rational and charismatic authority because these were the only authority types identified in the selected data. The data consisted of 24 directive utterances produced by the main characters, namely Shuri, Queen Ramonda, and Namor, which were collected through observation and document analysis. The findings reveal that commands are the most dominant directive speech act, followed by warnings, requests, suggestions, and advice. In terms of linguistic realization, directive speech acts are linguistically realized through declarative (16), imperative (7), and interrogative (1) forms, with declarative forms occurring most frequently. In terms of degree of directness, indirect directives (14) occur more frequently than direct directives (10). Furthermore, the analysis shows that directive speech acts represent both legal-rational and charismatic authority. Legal-rational authority is reflected through institutional legitimacy and hierarchical control, whereas charismatic authority is constructed through persuasion, cooperation, and interpersonal influence. These findings indicate that political authority in cinematic discourse is dynamically constructed through linguistic form, communicative intention, context, and social relations rather than being determined solely by grammatical structure. This study contributes to pragmatic studies by demonstrating the relationship between directive speech acts, linguistic realization, directness, and political authority in cinematic discourse.

Keywords: *directive speech acts, political authority, pragmatic analysis, cinematic discourse, Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*

Introduction

Language in film plays a significant role in representing and constructing political authority through interactions among characters, who use utterances to establish power, negotiate relationships, and influence others within specific social and institutional contexts. In contemporary society, language functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a strategic tool for shaping social relations, influencing public perception (Laoli et al., 2026), and exercising authority through interaction. Through commands, requests, warnings, and suggestions, speakers are able to direct actions,

manage interpersonal relationships, and reinforce social hierarchy in communication (Satya et al., 2023). This performative function of language becomes particularly significant in political and leadership contexts, where authority is frequently exercised through verbal interaction.

This phenomenon is closely related to pragmatics, particularly speech act theory. Austin (1962) introduced the concept that utterances can function as actions, which was later developed by Searle (1979), who classified speech acts into several categories, including directives. Directive speech acts are utterances intended to make the hearer perform a particular action, such as commanding, requesting, suggesting, or warning (Satya et al., 2023; Yule, 1996; Rizki et al., 2023). As a result, directives are not only linguistic expressions but also strategic tools used to influence behavior, negotiate relationships, and establish authority within interaction.

The use of directive speech acts is strongly connected to political authority because directives often reflect power relations between interlocutors. According to Weber (1947), authority refers to socially recognized and accepted power, which he classifies into traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational authority. Although Weber's typology includes all three forms of authority, this study focuses specifically on legal-rational and charismatic authority because these were the only authority types identified in the selected data. Furthermore, Halliday (1989) argues that social roles and power relations influence linguistic choices in interaction, including the realization of directive speech acts. Therefore, directive speech acts become important linguistic instruments for representing political authority and leadership within discourse.

Previous studies on directive speech acts in films have mainly focused on their classification, linguistic realization, and communicative functions. Trihanto et al., (2022) examined directive speech acts in movies and found that directives were commonly used to express commands and requests within character interactions. Similar studies in cinematic discourse were also conducted by Rizki et al., (2023) and Pramudita et al., (2025), who identified commands and requests as the dominant directive types used to control interaction and convey speaker intention. Likewise, Nataliya and Marmanto (2020) found that directive expressions in *Mary Queen of Scots* reflected social hierarchy and interpersonal negotiation within cinematic discourse. Overall, these studies demonstrate that directive speech acts in films have primarily been analyzed in terms of their classification, linguistic realization, and communicative functions.

Other studies have investigated directive speech acts in political and persuasive communication. Dylgjeri (2017) highlighted persuasive function of directive speech acts in political speeches for constructing leadership images and influencing public responses. Similarly, Permana and Mauriyat (2021) analyzed speech acts in Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's political speech and demonstrated that political language strategically shapes public perception and ideological meaning. Laoli et al., (2026) also found that speech acts in President Prabowo's UNGA address were employed to project diplomatic authority, while Chaerunnisah (2023) reported that command directives dominated Megawati Sukarnoputri's political speeches in expressing instructions, warnings, and political persuasion. Beyond face-to-face political communication, directive speech acts have also been examined in digital communication contexts. More recently, Majeed et al., (2024) demonstrated that directive and persuasive speech acts were strategically employed in political communication on X/Twitter to construct legitimacy and political identity. These studies indicate that directive speech acts play an important role in political communication by constructing leadership, persuasion, and authority.

Several studies have also examined directive speech acts in relation to power relations and interpersonal interaction. Nisa and Abduh (2022) found that directive speech acts played an important role in regulating teacher-student interactions during thematic learning in elementary schools, while Bahing and Meilantina (2021) emphasized that directive speech acts reflected hierarchical relations between lecturers and students. From a theoretical perspective, Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) explained directive speech acts through the concepts of politeness and indirectness, particularly through declarative and interrogative forms. These studies demonstrate that directive speech acts are closely related to social hierarchy, institutional authority, and interpersonal power relations.

Although previous studies provide valuable insights into directive speech acts in films, political discourse, and interpersonal power relations, they primarily focus on directive classification, persuasive communication, politeness strategies, or political rhetoric separately. Only limited attention has been paid to integrating linguistic realization, degree of directness, and Weber's (1947) theory of authority within a single analytical framework. Consequently, the relationship between directive categories, linguistic realization, degrees of directness, and political authority remains underexplored in cinematic discourse.

This gap becomes particularly relevant in films portraying political conflict and leadership, where cinematic dialogue frequently represents institutional power, persuasion, and negotiation through language. Movie dialogue is often regarded as a representation of social interaction and communicative strategies because films portray various forms of interpersonal communication and pragmatic behavior (Rizki et al., 2023). In *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, political conflict, leadership transition, and intergovernmental relations are represented through the interactions of the main characters particularly through the interactions of the main characters, namely Shuri, Queen Ramonda, and Namor. Their utterances provide a suitable context for examining how directive speech acts, linguistic realization, degree of directness, and political authority interact within cinematic discourse. Therefore, this study offers a more comprehensive analytical framework for understanding how directive speech acts function not only to influence actions but also to construct political authority in film.

Based on these gaps, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) What types of directive speech acts are employed in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*? (2) How are directive speech acts linguistically realized, and how do they reflect different degrees of directness? (3) How do directive speech acts represent political authority within cinematic discourse? Accordingly, this study aims to identify the types of directive speech acts, examine their linguistic realization and degrees of directness, and analyze how they represent political authority in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*. Unlike previous studies, which primarily examine directive speech acts from the perspectives of classification, persuasive communication, or interpersonal power relations separately, this study integrates Searle's (1979) directive speech act theory with Weber's (1947) theory of authority to explain how linguistic realization, degree of directness, and political authority interact within cinematic discourse.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design following Creswell (2009) to analyze directive speech acts in cinematic discourse. Qualitative research is appropriate for examining language phenomena contextually and interpretatively because it focuses on meaning, interaction, and social processes rather than statistical measurement. The

data source of this study was the 2022 film *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, directed by Ryan Coogler, with a running time of approximately 161 minutes. The data consisted of dialogues produced by the three main characters, namely Shuri, Queen Ramonda, and Namor. The dialogue data were obtained from the publicly available movie script provided by Script Slug, which served as the primary transcript for this study. The script was subsequently verified against the film to ensure the accuracy of the dialogues and their contextual interpretation. The movie was selected because it portrays political conflict, leadership transition, and diplomatic negotiation in which directive speech acts play a significant role in representing political authority and hierarchical relations. Therefore, it provides relevant linguistic data for examining how directive speech acts construct political authority within cinematic discourse.

The data were collected through observation and document analysis. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents, including audiovisual materials and transcripts. In this study, the researcher repeatedly watched the film, transcribed relevant dialogues, and identified utterances containing directive speech acts. Observation was conducted by carefully examining the interactional context, speaker-hearer relationships, and communicative situations in which the directive utterances occurred. To ensure the credibility of the data, the transcriptions were repeatedly compared with the original movie dialogues and verified based on the theoretical characteristics of directive speech acts.

The data were analyzed qualitatively in several stages. First, the selected utterances were classified according to Searle's (1979) taxonomy of directive speech acts. Although Searle's taxonomy encompasses a broader range of directive function, this study focused on five categories (command, request, suggestion, warning, and advice) because only these categories were identified in the data. Second, the linguistic realizations of the directives were identified based on imperative, declarative, and interrogative forms. Third, each directive was analyzed according to its degree of directness by distinguishing between direct and indirect directives. Finally, the findings were interpreted using Weber's (1947) theory of authority to examine how directive speech acts represent political authority in cinematic discourse. When a directive potentially reflected more than one type of authority, the classification was based on the dominant source of legitimacy exercised in the interaction, as indicated by the speaker's primary basis for issuing the directive. Although Weber (1947) distinguishes traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational authority, each utterance in this study was classified according to the dominant source of legitimacy reflected in the interaction. Consequently, although Queen Ramonda and Namor possess hereditary legitimacy as rulers, their directive speech acts predominantly represent legal-rational authority through institutional power or charismatic authority through personal leadership and influence.

The findings are presented descriptively and supported by frequency tables illustrating the distribution of directive speech acts, linguistic realization, degrees of directness, and political authority. Although numerical frequencies are provided to summarize the findings, the analysis remains qualitative by emphasizing contextual interpretation rather than statistical generalization. Accordingly, this study seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of how directive speech acts function in representing political authority within cinematic discourse.

Results

Linguistic Realization and Degree of Directness of Directive Speech Acts

This study identified 24 directive speech acts produced by the main characters, namely Shuri, Queen Ramonda, and Namor, in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*. The findings are organized into two main aspects: (1) linguistic realization and degree of directness of directive speech acts and (2) representation of political authority. The overall distribution of directive types, linguistic realization, and degrees of directness is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Linguistic Realization and Degree of Directness of Directive Speech Acts

Directive Type	Imperative	Declarative	Interrogative	Direct	Indirect	Total
Command	7	4	0	9	2	11
Request	0	4	0	0	4	4
Suggestion	0	2	1	0	3	3
Warning	0	5	0	1	4	5
Advice	0	1	0	0	1	1
Total	7	16	1	10	14	24

Table 1 shows that commands are the most frequent directive type (11 occurrences), followed by warnings (5), requests (4), suggestions (3), and advice (1). Declarative forms occur most frequently (16 occurrences), followed by imperative forms (7), while interrogative forms appear only once. Regarding the degree of directness, indirect directives (14 occurrences) are more frequent than direct directives (10 occurrences). The findings show that indirect directives occur more frequently than direct directives, indicating that many directive speech acts are expressed through indirect linguistic realizations. The predominance of declarative forms further suggests that directive speech acts in the film are not always expressed through explicit commands but are often realized indirectly according to the political context and communicative intention.

Table 2. Distribution of Directive Speech Acts by Main Character

Character	Command	Request	Suggestion	Warning	Advice	Total
Shuri	5	1	1	1	0	8
Queen Ramonda	4	2	0	1	0	7
Namor	2	1	2	3	1	9
Total	11	4	3	5	1	24

Table 2 shows the distribution of directive speech acts produced by each main character. Namor produces the highest number of directive speech acts (9 occurrences), followed by Shuri (8) and Queen Ramonda (7). Commands are the dominant directive type for both Namor and Queen Ramonda, reflecting their roles as political leaders who frequently exercise authority in decision-making and conflict situations. In contrast, Shuri employs a more balanced distribution of directive types, suggesting that her leadership is frequently expressed through negotiation and collaborative persuasion rather than through direct control.

Data 1 (00:29:59 – 00:30:17)

Ramonda: *"Show some respect you two."*

This utterance occurs during a tribal council meeting after M'Baku and Okoye become involved in a personal argument that interrupts an official discussion concerning Wakanda's security following the border breach. As Queen of Wakanda and chair of the council, Ramonda intervenes to stop the conflict and restore order so that the political meeting can proceed appropriately. The directive is addressed to both M'Baku and Okoye, who occupy important political and military positions within Wakanda.

This utterance is categorized as a *command* directive speech act because the speaker explicitly instructs the hearers to perform a particular action and expects immediate compliance (Searle, 1979). Linguistically, the utterance is realized through an *imperative form*, indicated by the use of the base verb "show" without mitigation or modal expression. The absence of politeness markers indicates a high degree of directness and reinforces the authoritative force of the directive. The utterance positions the speaker in a superior hierarchical role within the interaction. In terms of directness, the utterance functions as a *direct directive strategy* because the command is delivered explicitly without negotiation or indirect phrasing. In terms of political authority, the utterance reflects *legal-rational authority* (Weber, 1947) because Queen Ramonda exercises her institutional authority as the ruler of Wakanda to maintain order during an official tribal council meeting.

Data 2 (00:54:12 – 00:55:45)

Ramonda: *"You are dismissed."*

This utterance occurs during a tribal council meeting after Shuri has been captured by Talokan. Okoye pleads for forgiveness after failing to protect Princess Shuri during the mission. In response, Queen Ramonda publicly removes Okoye from her position as General of the Dora Milaje before the members of the council. The utterance represents an official political decision delivered within a formal institutional setting.

This utterance is categorized as a *command* directive speech act because the speaker imposes an immediate and non-negotiable action on the hearer by terminating her official position and expecting immediate compliance (Searle, 1979). Linguistically, the utterance is realized through a *declarative form*, indicated by the statement structure "You are dismissed" rather than an imperative command. Although grammatically declarative, the utterance functions because it carries institutional force and requires the hearer to accept the decision without negotiation. The explicit and authoritative nature of the statement indicates a *direct directive strategy* because the intended action is conveyed clearly without mitigation or indirect expression. In terms of political authority, the utterance reflects *legal-rational authority* (Weber, 1947) because Queen Ramonda exercises her institutional authority as the ruler of Wakanda to officially dismiss Okoye from her military position during a formal political proceeding.

Data 3 (01:00:39 – 01:00:58)

Ramonda: *"I need someone who can find where she's being held and rescue her without being seen."*

This utterance occurs when Queen Ramonda visits Nakia in Haiti to seek her assistance in rescuing Shuri, who has been captured by Talokan. Although Nakia has withdrawn from her duties as a Wakandan spy, Ramonda appeals to her unique skills and personal relationship with the royal family in order to persuade her to undertake the rescue mission. The interaction takes place in a private setting, where Ramonda seeks cooperation through personal trust rather than formal authority.

This utterance is categorized as a *request* directive speech act because the speaker seeks the hearer's voluntary cooperation rather than explicitly imposing an obligation (Searle, 1979). The request is directed specifically to Nakia, whom Queen Ramonda expects to rescue Shuri because of her experience and capabilities as a former War Dog. Linguistically, the utterance is realized through a *declarative form*, indicated by the statement structure "*I need someone...*" rather than an imperative instruction. The declarative structure and absence of direct command markers indicate an *indirect directive strategy* because the intended action is conveyed through implied necessity rather than explicit instruction. By expressing her need rather than issuing a direct order, Ramonda encourages Nakia to voluntarily accept the mission. In terms of political authority, the utterance reflects charismatic authority (Weber, 1947) because Queen Ramonda influences Nakia through personal trust, emotional appeal, and relational closeness rather than exercising formal institutional power.

Data 4 (01:17:03 – 01:18:35)

Shuri: "*Together, we must find a way of moving forward without taking her life.*"

This utterance occurs during Shuri's diplomatic conversation with Namor in Talokan after he reveals his civilization and proposes an alliance against the surface world. As Namor insists on killing Riri Williams to protect Talokan's secrecy, Shuri rejects the proposal and attempts to persuade him to seek an alternative solution. The directive is addressed to Namor during a political negotiation between the representatives of Wakanda and Talokan, where both leaders defend their national interests while attempting to avoid further conflict.

This utterance is categorized as a *suggestion* directive speech act because the speaker proposes a cooperative course of action without imposing a unilateral command (Searle, 1979). Linguistically, the utterance is realized through a *declarative form*, indicated by the collaborative structure "*Together, we must find a way*" rather than an imperative command. The inclusive pronoun "*together*" indicates an *indirect directive strategy* because the speaker invites the hearer to participate in a shared decision-making process instead of issuing an explicit order. Although the modal "*must*" expresses necessity and strengthens the directive force of the utterance by emphasizing obligation, it is framed within collaborative language that distributes responsibility equally between the speaker and the hearer rather than imposing unilateral authority. Therefore, the directive remains indirect despite expressing a strong sense of obligation. In terms of political authority, the utterance reflects *charismatic authority* (Weber, 1947) because Shuri influences Namor through moral persuasion, shared values, and interpersonal cooperation rather than formal institutional power.

Data 5 (01:22:50 – 01:23:08)

Namor: "*Do you understand? You have two days, Queen.*"

This scene takes place during a secret diplomatic meeting between Namor and Queen Ramonda on Nosy Nato Beach. Namor confronts Ramonda after revealing the existence of Talokan and warns her not to disclose its location or interfere with his plans. The directive is addressed directly to Queen Ramonda within a high-stakes political negotiation, where Namor attempts to compel Wakanda to comply with his demands by emphasizing the consequences of resistance.

This utterance is categorized as a *warning* directive speech act because the speaker explicitly threatens the hearer with negative consequences in order to influence future actions and secure compliance (Searle, 1979). Linguistically, the directive is primarily

realized through a *declarative form*, represented by the statement “*You have two days, Queen.*” Although it is preceded by the interrogative expression “Do you understand?”, this interrogative functions only to reinforce the warning rather than serving as the primary linguistic realization of the directive. The explicit threat and the imposed deadline indicate a high degree of directness because the intended action is communicated clearly without mitigation, negotiation, or implicit wording. The utterance therefore functions as a direct directive strategy by placing immediate pressure on the hearer to comply with the speaker's demand. In terms of political authority, the utterance is classified as *charismatic authority* (Weber, 1947) because the dominant source of authority exercised by Namor in this interaction derives from his personal leadership, symbolic status, and political influence as the ruler of Talokan rather than formal institutional authority over Wakanda. Although the utterance employs intimidation and coercive pressure, these are interpreted as communicative strategies through which Namor reinforces his personal authority rather than exercising legal-rational authority over the hearer.

Data 6 (02:24:20 – 02:25:05)

Namor: “*Why do you think she didn't go through with it?*”

This scene takes place in Namor's private chamber in Talokan after the battle between Wakanda and Talokan. Namora questions Namor's decision to spare Wakanda and expresses concern that Talokan may eventually fall under Wakanda's influence. In response, Namor explains the strategic purpose of forming an alliance with Wakanda and seeks to convince Namora that his decision will strengthen Talokan in the future. The utterance is addressed to Namora, who questions Namor's political judgment and leadership following the conflict.

This utterance is categorized as a *suggestion* directive speech act because the speaker encourages the hearer to reconsider her interpretation of the situation rather than explicitly instructing her to perform a physical action (Searle, 1979). Linguistically, the utterance is realized through an *interrogative form*, indicated by the question structure “*Why do you think she didn't go through with it?*” Although grammatically realized as an interrogative, the utterance does not genuinely seek new information because Namor already knows the reason behind the Black Panther's decision. Instead, the question functions as an indirect suggestion that guides Namora to reflect on the situation and adopt the speaker's interpretation of Wakanda's decision. Consequently, the utterance functions as an *indirect directive strategy* because the intended influence is conveyed through reflective questioning rather than explicit instruction. In terms of political authority, the utterance reflects *charismatic authority* (Weber, 1947) because Namor influences Namora through strategic reasoning, personal leadership, and his ability to shape Namora's interpretation of the political situation rather than through formal institutional authority. By encouraging Namora to accept his interpretation of the alliance with Wakanda, Namor reinforces his authority as a political leader whose influence is grounded in vision and personal credibility.

Representation of Political Authority in Directive Speech Acts

Based on Weber's (1947) classification, authority consists of traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational authority. However, only charismatic and legal-rational authority were identified in the selected data; therefore, only these two authority types are presented in Table 3. The representation of political authority identified in the directive speech acts is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Representation of Political Authority in Directive Speech Acts

Directive Type	Legal-Rational Authority	Charismatic Authority	Total
Command	5	6	11
Request	1	3	4
Suggestion	0	3	3
Warning	1	4	5
Advice	0	1	1
Total	7	17	24

Table 3 shows that charismatic authority appears in 17 directive speech acts, whereas legal-rational authority appears in 7 directive speech acts. Although Weber (1947) distinguished traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational authority, only charismatic and legal-rational authority were identified in the present data. Charismatic authority is dominant because most directives are performed through personal influence, strategic reasoning, persuasion, and leadership rather than solely through institutional power. By contrast, legal-rational authority primarily appears when speakers exercise authority based on their formal political positions, institutional roles, or decision-making power. The classification of authority was based on the dominant source of legitimacy underlying each directive rather than on the communicative strategy employed. Consequently, utterances containing threats or intimidation were classified as charismatic authority only when the speaker's influence primarily derived from personal leadership and symbolic legitimacy rather than formal institutional authority.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that directive speech acts in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* function not only as linguistic devices for directing behavior but also as mechanisms for constructing political authority within cinematic discourse. The predominance of commands reflects the political and institutional nature of the film, in which the main characters frequently occupy leadership positions that require them to make decisions, issue instructions, and regulate the actions of others during situations of conflict, diplomacy, and national security. As Queen of Wakanda, Ramonda often employs commands to maintain institutional order and exercise formal authority, while Shuri and Namor also use commands when negotiating political decisions or asserting leadership within their respective nations. These findings indicate that commands function not merely to direct actions but also to reinforce hierarchical relationships and political legitimacy throughout the narrative. These findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by Trihanto et al., (2021), Rizki et al. (2023), and Pramudita et al. (2025), which also identified commands as the most dominant directive type in cinematic discourse. Similarly, Bahing and Meilantina (2021) argued that directive speech acts frequently function to regulate interaction and reinforce hierarchical relations. However, unlike those studies, the present study extends the analysis beyond directive classification by examining how directive speech acts simultaneously construct political authority through linguistic realization, degree of directness, and contextual interpretation.

The findings also reveal that declarative forms occur more frequently than imperative forms, indicating that directive speech acts are not always realized through explicit commands. This finding supports Searle's (1979) argument that directives may

be expressed through different linguistic realizations depending on communicative intention and pragmatic context. In the present study, the predominance of declarative forms reflects the political interactions portrayed in the film, where leaders frequently exercise authority through statements rather than overt commands. Within institutional settings such as council meetings, diplomatic negotiations, and leadership discussions, declarative utterances function pragmatically as directives because the speakers possess recognized political authority and their statements are interpreted as requiring compliance. Consequently, the directive force of these utterances is derived not only from their grammatical form but also from the speaker's institutional role and the surrounding interactional context. Furthermore, the limited occurrence of interrogative forms indicates that questions may also function pragmatically as directives rather than merely requesting information. These findings demonstrate that linguistic realization, pragmatic context, and speaker authority jointly determine the degree of directness and the illocutionary force of directive speech acts.

Regarding political authority, the findings indicate that directive speech acts predominantly represent charismatic authority, followed by legal-rational authority. This finding is consistent with Weber's (1947) concept that authority is exercised through different sources of legitimacy rather than through linguistic form alone. Direct directives, particularly imperative commands, frequently reflect legal-rational authority because they emphasize institutional legitimacy, hierarchical control, and immediate compliance. Conversely, many indirect directives are associated with charismatic authority because they rely primarily on the speaker's personal leadership, persuasive reasoning, and symbolic legitimacy rather than solely in institutional power. This does not imply that every threatening or intimidating directive reflects charismatic authority. Instead, each directive was classified according to the dominant source of legitimacy exercised by the speaker, following Weber's (1947) framework. These findings support previous studies conducted by Dylgjeri (2017), Permana and Mauriyat (2021), Chaerunnisah (2023), and Laoli et al., (2026), which emphasize that speech acts play an important role in constructing leadership, influencing audiences, and projecting political authority. However, while those studies primarily examine political speeches and public discourse, the present study demonstrates that political authority can also be constructed through cinematic dialogue, where leadership is represented through interaction among fictional characters within political contexts.

Nevertheless, the relationship between linguistic directness and political authority is not absolute. Several direct directives in this study reflect charismatic authority because the speakers rely primarily on symbolic leadership, personal influence, and moral persuasion rather than institutional legitimacy. Likewise, several indirect directives represent legal-rational authority when they are produced by speakers who possess formal institutional power. This finding also supports Searle's (1979) view that the illocutionary force of a directive depends not only on its grammatical realization but also on the speaker's communicative intention and the context in which the utterance is produced. Therefore, political authority is constructed dynamically through contextual factors, speaker intention, interpersonal relationships, and institutional hierarchy rather than being determined solely by linguistic structure.

Overall, this study extends previous research by integrating Searle's (1979) speech act theory with Weber's (1947) theory of authority within the analysis of cinematic discourse. Unlike previous studies that mainly focus on directive classification or persuasive functions, the present study demonstrates that linguistic realization, degree of directness, and political authority are interconnected dimensions in the interpretation of

directive speech acts. By combining Searle's explanation of directive speech acts with Weber's framework of political legitimacy, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how language functions simultaneously as a communicative act and a representation of political authority in cinematic discourse. Consequently, the findings contribute to pragmatic studies by showing that similar directive forms may represent different types of political authority depending on contextual, relational, and communicative factors.

Conclusion

This study concludes that directive speech acts in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* function not only to direct actions but also to construct political authority within cinematic discourse. The findings reveal that commands are the most dominant directive type, indicating that language in the film is frequently employed to exercise control and reinforce hierarchical relations in political and conflict-driven situations. In addition, directive speech acts are realized through imperative, declarative, and interrogative forms with varying degrees of directness. The predominance of declarative and indirect forms demonstrates that political influence is often exercised through persuasion, cooperation, and interpersonal strategies rather than through direct imposition alone.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that directive speech acts primarily represent legal-rational and charismatic authority. Legal-rational authority is reflected through institutional legitimacy and hierarchical control, whereas charismatic authority is constructed through persuasion, strategic reasoning, and interpersonal influence. Although Weber's (1947) typology also includes traditional authority, this type was not identified as the dominant source of legitimacy in the analyzed directive speech acts. Although Queen Ramonda and Namor possess hereditary legitimacy as rulers, their directives were predominantly exercised through institutional authority or personal leadership within the political interactions portrayed in the film. More importantly, this study demonstrates that the relationship between linguistic realization and political authority is not absolute. The same directive form may represent different types of authority depending on the speaker's dominant source of legitimacy, the interactional context, and the political relationship between the participants.

This study is limited to the analysis of directive speech acts in a single film, *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalized to other genres, media, or communicative contexts. In addition, the analysis focuses exclusively on directive speech acts and does not examine other speech act categories that may also contribute to the construction of political authority. Another limitation concerns the application of Weber's (1947) authority framework, as only legal-rational and charismatic authority were identified in the selected data.

Future studies are encouraged to investigate a wider range of cinematic and non-cinematic data, examine other categories of speech acts, and integrate additional pragmatic or discourse analytical approaches. They may also explore how traditional authority is linguistically represented in cinematic discourse or other political communication contexts to provide a more comprehensive application of Weber's authority typology. Such studies are expected to provide a broader understanding of how language constructs authority, leadership, and power across different communicative settings.

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