

FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR– CHAPTER FOUR

INTERACTION BETWEEN SPEAKER AND HEARER

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CHAPTER FOUR OUTLINE

- Speech acts and clause types
- The declarative and interrogative clause types
- The exclamative and imperative clause types
- Indirect speech acts, clause types, and discourse functions
- Questions, clause types and discourse functions
- Directives

SPEECH ACTS AND CLAUSE TYPES

Speech acts are the acts we perform through words. Certain general types of speech acts are basic to everyday interaction: statements, questions, exclamations, and

Clause type	Basic speech act	Example
Declarative	making a statement	You are careful.
Interrogative (<i>yes/no</i>)	asking a question	Are you careful?
Interrogative (<i>wh-</i>)	asking a question	How careful are you?
Exclamative	making an exclamation	How careful you are!
Imperative	issuing a directive	Be careful!

Figure 4.2 Correspondence between clause types and speech acts.

THE DECLARATIVE AND INTERROGATIVE CLAUSE TYPES

SUBJECT-FINITE VARIATION

Clause type	Order	Example
Declarative	Subject-Finite	Jane sings.
Interrogative (yes/no)	Finite + Subject	Does Jane sing?
Interrogative (wh-)	wh + Finite + Subject	What does Jane sing?
Exclamative	wh + Subject + Finite	How well Jane sings!
Imperative	no subject, base form of verb	Sing!

Figure 4.3 Clause types and the ordering of the subject and finite.

THE EXCLAMATIVE AND IMPERATIVE CLAUSE TYPES

The exclamative

***Wh-* element**

What a shock they'll have!
What a mess we have made.
How dark it is!
How it snowed!

The imperative

Imperative	Declarative
Everybody sit down, please!	Everybody sits down.
No-one say a word!	No-one says a word.

Figure 4.4 Imperative and declarative.

INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS, CLAUSE TYPES AND DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS

Performatives

- Explicit performatives

I promise I'll be careful.

We advise you to book early to avoid disappointment.

- Less explicit performatives with modalisation

I can offer you beer, whisky, gin, cola...

Let me thank you once more for your collaboration.

I am afraid I have to request you to move to another seat.

- Negative declaratives

I don't need any more calendars, thank you.

I don't promise you that I'll convince him.

Smoking is not allowed here.

QUESTIONS, CLAUSE TYPES AND DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS

- **Rhetorical questions:**

Do you expect me to wait here all day?

What could I say?

- **Questions as preliminaries:**

Are you going to the hospital this morning?

No.

Well if you do it'll give us a chance to find out whether he's coming home.

- **SOME, ANY, and NEGATIVES forms in biased questions:**

Do you know anyone in Westminster? Vs Do you know someone in Westminster?

Is there no butter? (There should be some butter, but it seems there isn't.)

Isn't there some butter somewhere? (It seems there isn't, but I expect there is.)

Would you like some more coffee?

Do you want something, a soft drink before you go?

DIRECTIVES

- 1 Peel those potatoes
- 2 Pick up those papers
- 3 Sit down
- 4 Listen to this
- 5 Enjoy your holiday
- 6 Have another sandwich

more cost to addressee

less polite



more benefit to addressee

more polite

(Adapted from Leech 1983)

DIRECTIVES

Get out of here!	command
Keep off the grass.	prohibition
Please close the window!	request
Don't tell me you've passed your driving test!	disbelief
Do that again and you'll be sorry.	condition of threat
Pass your exams and we'll buy you a bike.	condition of promise
Don't forget your umbrella!	reminder
Mind the step!/ Be careful with that hot plate!	warning
Feel free to take as many leaflets as you like.	permission
Just listen to this!	showing interest/involvement
Try one of these!	offer
Let's go jogging!	suggestion
Come on now, don't cry!/ Go on, have a go!	encouragement
Sleep well! Have a safe journey!	good wishes
Suppose he doesn't answer.	considering a possible happening
Think nothing of it.	rejecting thanks
[Some people make easy profit.] <i>Take</i> drug handlers.	illustrative example of a claim