

DIRECTIVES IN IBAN DURING FAMILY DINNERS

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**DIRECTIVES IN IBAN DURING FAMILY DINNERS**

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## **DIRECTIVES IN IBAN DURING FAMILY DINNERS**

### **ABSTRACT**

Studies regarding Iban community and their language have been focusing on documentation of the language but studies on pragmatic field are scarce. This study aims to examine the manner realization of directives among Undup Iban in Kampung Rajau Ensika within family domain. This research looks into naturally occurring conversations which take place during family dinner. A qualitative analysis of data collected through video recordings is employed and pattern of occurrences of directives are identified based on Ervin-Tripp's (1976) structure of American English directives. Findings of the study suggest that the Ibans used five types of directives namely, imperatives, elliptical imperatives, hints, want statements, and questions directives. It is also found that parental directives occur the most within the data. Directives used by the parents are considered as a form of 'dining area management' where the purpose is to ensure quality of the mealtime process. Meanwhile children's directives are seen to frequently ask for a favour where they are used briefly and directly without any form of pleasantries. The study ultimately reveals the manner in which directives are managed by multi-generational family member and the practice which contribute to a harmonious family institution.

Keywords: directives, speech acts, pragmatics, family, dinner

## **ARAHAN DALAM BAHASA IBAN SEMASA MAKAN MALAM**

### **ABSTRAK**

Kajian mengenai komuniti Iban dan bahasa mereka banyak tertumpu kepada pendokumentasian bahasa, namun kajian dalam bidang pragmatik masih lagi terhad. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji cara Undup Iban di Kampung Rajau Ensika merealisasikan arahan di dalam keluarga. Kajian ini melihat perbualan yang berlaku secara semula jadi ketika waktu makan malam keluarga. Penganalisan data kualitatif yang dikumpul melalui rakaman video diguna pakai dan corak kekerapan arahan dikenal pasti berdasarkan struktur arahan Bahasa Inggeris Amerika Ervin-Tripp (1976). Penemuan kajian menunjukkan bahawa suku Iban menggunakan lima jenis arahan iaitu, imperatif, imperatif elips, petunjuk, kenyataan mahu, dan arahan soalan. Hasil kajian juga mendapati bahawa arahan ibu bapa adalah paling kerap berlaku di dalam data. Arahan yang digunakan oleh ibu bapa dianggap sebagai satu bentuk 'pengurusan kawasan makan' dimana tujuannya adalah untuk memastikan kualiti proses waktu makan. Sementara itu, arahan kanak-kanak dilihat sering meminta bantuan dimana mereka menggunakannya secara ringkas dan langsung tiada apa-apa bentuk keramah-tamahan. Kajian ini mendedahkan kaedah dimana penggunaan arahan yang dikendalikan oleh keluarga yang berbilang generasi serta amalannya boleh menyumbang kearah keharmonian institusi keluarga.

**Keywords:** kata arahan, lakuan bahasa, pragmatik, keluarga, makan malam

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Speech acts have been given considerable attention by scholars across various languages. Searle (1969) argues that it is important to study speech acts because all linguistic communication involves linguistic acts. He believes that an utterance is a result of intentional behaviour and the intentions are very peculiar to a particular speech act. In this sense, a directive is a result of the speaker's intention to ask work from the hearer (Ervin-Tripp, 1976).

Family mealtimes, either breakfast, lunch, tea, or dinner, are times where every member can get together and interact with each other. They play a central role in constructing family unit and provide a place for members to socialize (Ogiermann, 2015). Studies that regard mealtimes are particularly intriguing in recent years (Aronsson & Thorell, 1999; Brumark, 2003a; Brumark, 2003b; Brumark 2006a; Brumark 2006b; Tryggvason, 2006; Hepburn & Potter, 2011; Ogiermann, 2015) in a way that they observed the time where all members of the family gather around a table and consume food. Although making time for meals together as a family can be difficult, mealtimes have been observed as a platform for children to practice their social skills with other family members. Despite the fact that children spend a lot of their time within the family domain, family discourse remains relatively unexplored (Brumark, 2003a).

### **1.2 Problem Statement**

Mealtime interaction has been studied extensively across various fields and is believed to be able to enhance relationship among family members despite its social dynamic. However, Pew Research Centre in 2015 found that family members are more attached to their smartphone than they are interacting with one another (Luckerson, 2015). A total of

88 percent of respondents perceived using smartphone during dinner is rude because conversation during mealtime tends to be minimized with increased use of smartphone. As a result of that, parents often resort to using threat to instruct their children to be well-behaved during mealtime which may result in negative psychological effect on children (Hepburn & Potter, 2011). Therefore, research during mealtime is worth looking at as it may provide a model of effective communication skills among family member.

### **1.3 Significance of Study**

Studies regarding the Iban community have highlighted profoundly on their way of life (Freeman, 1995; Jensen, 1965; Rousseau, 1980; Patterson & Chiswick, 1981; Barret & Lucas, 1994). They address issues such as Iban's agriculture, kinship, social behaviour, and medicinal practices.

Freeman studies the Iban people as an agriculture society and he suggests that the Iban is an egalitarian society. However, Rousseau rebuts Freeman's claim by arguing the presence of slavery in the society. He compares this practice to another ethnic in Borneo, the Kayan people where slavery was embraced. Rousseau then deduces that the Iban may embody egalitarian in most of their way of life but not fully.

Freeman, in his study also highlights the types of plant the Iban grows. Jensen further explores the agriculture practices among Iban specifically pertaining to the way hill rice are being cultivated. He compares this practice to the cultivation of hill rice in China where they use terrace to make sure the paddy gets sufficient water. In the Iban community, the cultivation is peculiar where there is no terrace is built along the hill.

Meanwhile, Patterson & Chiswick studies how privacy is maintained in the communal Iban's longhouse. In a longhouse, physical privacy is hard to obtain. However, Patterson

& Chiswick found that the social mechanism plays a role in privacy maintenance among the Iban community. This means that, despite the lack of physical privacy, members of the longhouse have some kind of mutual understanding where they know when and where someone needs privacy.

Another example of account on the Iban people is by Barret & Lucas where they study the effect of Iban's perception of hot and cold on their medicinal practice. Barret & Lucas develop an ethnographically grounded definition of humoralism and how it alters Iban's experience of body and illness.

Studies which particularly regard the language are available but scarce. One of the earliest studies in regard to Iban language is by Asmah Haji Omar (1981). The goal of the study is to document the language where she aims to describe its syntactic structure. As a result, she establishes the grammatical aspect of the language which offers insight and encourages further research into the language.

Meanwhile, Chachil et. al. (2015) focuses on the pedagogical method of learning the language. They set to test the applicability of an app namely I-MMAPPS to learn the language. They found that the app is beneficial in learning pronunciation of Iban's words and respondents are generally satisfied with the performance of the app.

However, previous accounts of the Iban people lack relation to the pragmatic elements of the language. None of the studies have discussed extensively on the way social features influence one's speech. Therefore, this study explores the pragmatics side of the language to contribute to the existing body of literature regarding the community. This study also seeks to understand how social distance influences realization of directives among Ibans. In addition, the premise of this study may assist effective communication with the target community in the future.

#### 1.4 Research Objectives and Questions

The objective of this study is to establish the types of directives used by the Iban during family dinner. It also attempts to understand how these directives are being realized in relation to social distance.

The first question this research aims to answer is what are the types of directives occurring during dinner of an Iban family. This question intends to provide an insight into the type of directives performed during dinner. In order to answer this question, verbs in relation to directives are identified and the frequency of each directive is calculated.

The second research question attempts to identify the relationship between ones' social role and his realization of directives. The question also looks into the social distance between interactors and how it influences directives. This question attempts to understand the manner in which directives are being realized among Iban. The methods carried out to answer this question consist of analyzing the participants' profile in accordance to the realization of directives and social distance.

Table 1.1: Research questions, purpose, and method

No.	Research Questions	Purpose	Methods
1.	What types of directives occur during dinner of an Iban family?	To identify the type of directives performed during dinner	Analysis of frequency of directives and verbs used at Iban's dinner
2.	How does one's role and social distance influence his realization of directives?	To understand the manner in which directives are realized among Iban.	Analysis of one's role and the social distance from one's profile.



## **1.5 Contextual Information: The Ibans of Sarawak**

Iban is the subcategory of the tribe Dayak in the island of Borneo with the total population of more than a million. Ibans predominantly live in the Sarawak division of the island. In Sarawak, there are seven major sub-groups of Iban which are referred by their localities. They are usually situated along the river banks. These major sub-groups live around Sebuyau, Serian, Sri Aman, Betong, Batang Undup, Lubuk Antu, and Batang Rajang. Additionally, there are also other Ibanic groups living outside the state of Sarawak throughout the island of Borneo.

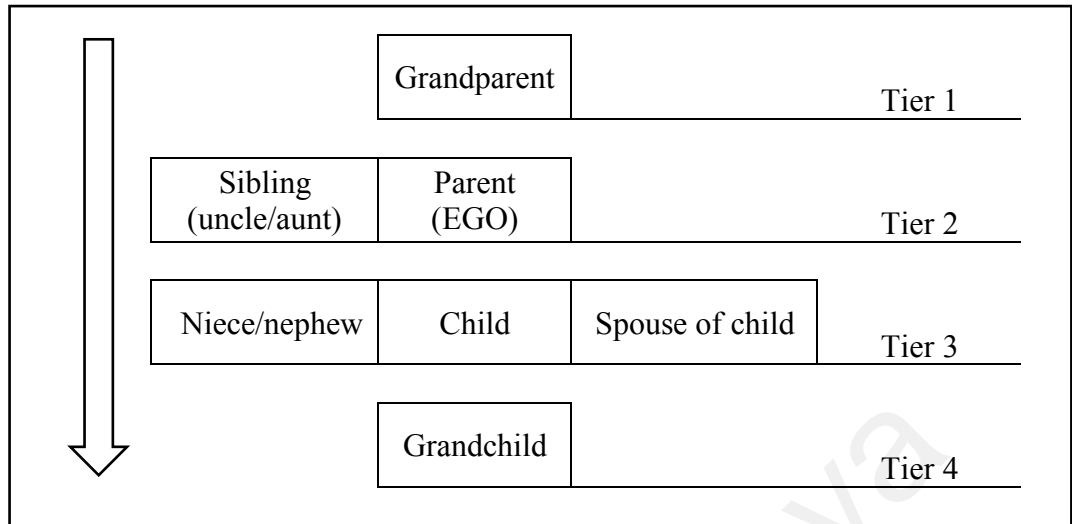
### **1.5.1 The Iban Community**

The Iban community lives in a longhouse which consists of family units. An Iban family unit is known as *pintu* 'door' (Asmah Haji Omar, 2013). A unit of family is called *sepintu* which means one door. A longhouse consists of approximately 200 people, sometimes more. The head of a longhouse is known as *tuai* which is literally translated as elderly or leader. The Ibans used to practice their traditional religion. Nowadays, the majority of Ibans are commonly known to have assumed Christianity.

### **1.5.2 Iban Kinship System**

The Ibans practice ranking system by breadwinning system, where the ones who provide for the family is the default head of the family. It is expected for other members in the family to pay more respects towards the breadwinners. Those in this rank are called the *EGO* which refers to the head of the family (Jariah Mohd Jan, 2014). Figure 1.1 shows the hierarchy of Iban kinship system within their family unit.

Figure 1.1: Iban Kinship System



There are traditionally two breadwinners in an Iban family which are the parents. The parents assume the role of labour, childcare, and economic provision of the family. In an Iban community, the parents would work on a farm or paddy field together, sometimes with the help of the children. In the modern society, dual breadwinner system was not a norm until the 1990s where the proportion of two-earners household increase to 60 percent (Wang, Parker, & Taylor, 2013).

Manchester, Leslie, & Dahm (2019) differentiate between the sole breadwinner and secondary breadwinner. The sole breadwinner who is usually the father, is the one with higher wages and is expected to work more. Meanwhile the secondary breadwinner earns less and is expected to be responsible of household chores like cooking and taking care of the family. A mother is usually the secondary breadwinner in the family. This is similar to Iban's kinship among the EGO where the father is considered as the main breadwinner and responsible with the heavy labour in the field. On the other hand, the mother is expected to assist minor labour in the field then expected to return home and prepare meal for the family.

### 1.5.3 Jako Iban

The Iban's mother tongue is called Jako Iban which is literally translated as the Iban language. The language is an isolect of Austronesian language family and shares approximately 63% cognates with Malay but not mutually intelligible (Asmah Haji Omar, 1993). Jako Iban does not possess a writing system thus Latin alphabet is adopted for the language. According to SIL International (2003), there are 1 484 300 users of Jako Iban with 784 300 using it as first language and 700 000 using it as second language.

### 1.6 Family Mealtime

Dinner is the time where everybody gathers around to catch up with each other. According to Brumark (2003), dinner is historically embedded in cultural and political traditions and leave it governed by explicit and implicit conventions. These conventions govern the nonverbal and verbal interactions among dinner participants.

Dinner among the Iban community is participated by members of a family from different hierarchy, hence varying social role. For example, an EGO can be a mother to her child or a daughter to her mother (who is the grandparent in the family). This aspect of Iban family dinner is particularly interesting because previous accounts on family dinner usually study the family with EGO who only carries the role as a parent (Brumark, 2003a; Tryggvason, 2006; Hepburn & Potter, 2011).

In the Iban community, dinner is known as *makai lemai* and is usually eaten in the evening after they got back home from work around six o'clock until 9 o'clock. A dinner usually lasts about 10 to 30 minutes at a time. An Iban family would sit in a circle where all dishes are served within that circle. During the course of the dinner, each family member is an active participant of dinner interaction making it rare to see anyone doing any unrelated activity such as watching television and playing with their smartphones. In

fact, throughout this research, none of the participants can be observed doing dinner-unrelated activity.

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## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, relevant literature pertaining to the research questions is reviewed. This review is divided into three main sections namely speech act of directives, family mealtime and discourse, and social distance. The aforementioned key topics are set to establish relevant understanding of the terminology used in this study and providing previous studies to illustrate the use of the theoretical framework.

The first section of this chapter operationalizes the definition of speech act of directives and its use during mealtime. The discussion is draws from various studies that specifically investigated the use of directives during mealtime both from the Western and Asian cultures, and the studies that compare between the two cultures.

The second section reviews literature related to family mealtime particularly dinner in the field of sociology as well as linguistics. The discussion on family mealtime is integral for this thesis as mealtime is believed to be a socio-cultural event where participants socialize with one another and such socialization usually requires the production of language. This part also reviews literature related to family discourse and family interaction centred around dinner table.

The final section of this chapter discusses on the social distance and previous attempts to devise a metric to measure it. It is ultimately found that social distance is difficult to measure, hence in this study looks into social distance as normative distance (Karakayali, 2009) which regards the kinship system.

## 2.2 Speech Acts of Directives

Numerous studies have been conducted in the area of directives as a speech act since its introduction by Searle (1979). Searle suggests that like other speech acts, directives are motivated by the relationship between the words, the world, and the person who is responsible for making the relationship happen. Directive is an act where the world fit the words hearer which attempts to invite or suggest to the hearer what to do. There can be degrees to the attempts to direct hearer and these attempts are influenced by familiarity, rank, territorial location, difficulty of task, the normality of the task, and the likeliness of compliance (Ervin-Tripp, 1976).

Directives are being used for a specific purpose in which it aims to ask work from the hearer. Austin (1962) called this act as ‘exercitives’ to denote that directives are realized to exercise power, rights, and influences on the hearer. However, Searle is more concerned with the effect which the speaker wishes to achieve with the utterance that is the reaction of the hearer towards the directives.

The examples of verbs which denote directives are ask, order, command, request, plead, pray, and beg. Such sentence as “I ask for you to stand” and “I command for you to sit” are instances of directives. On the other hand, some directives in Iban can be observed in the form of verbs such as *asuh* (ask), *padah* (tell), *pinta’* (request), *sampi* (pray), *rangai* (beg), and *nesau* (invite) (Sutlive & Sutlive, 1994).

### 2.2.1 Previous Account on Speech Acts of Directives

Takano (2005) studies the use of directives among nine Japanese women who are in the position of authority and leadership. Takano analyze the use of directives to examine how these women prescribed to the feminine way of speaking and at the same time

catering to the need to talk according to their occupational power. He utilized classification of directives by Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper (1989) to conduct an analysis of surface morphosyntactic where he studies the degree of forcefulness and directness of the utterances. It was discovered that the women speak more “politely” and more “indirectly” as compared to men when issuing directive. The realization of directives among these women empowers the gender-preferred politeness. Nevertheless, this present study is not fixating its entire focus on the differentiation of realization of directives across genders. However, relevant observation especially among the breadwinners in the family is to be included and findings of this study are taken into consideration as it contributes to the body of literature for this dissertation.

In 1997, Bilbow studied cross-cultural spoken discourse between the Chinese and the Western members of staff in a workplace located in Hong Kong. In this study, Bilbow defines ‘directing’ as an utterance in which the speaker commands the hearer to act. This relates to the speaker putting together a course of action which the hearer may or may not comply to. He found that directives occurred less among Chinese participants as compared to the Western participants. In addition, he found that direct strategies are used significantly higher by the Westerners than the Chinese. This cross-cultural study is not immediately relevant to this thesis, although the features of Asian directives are worth noting since this thesis also looks into an Asian culture.

In Malaysia, study specifically on directives is present but scarce. Nor Zaimiyah Norita Mokhtar (2003) studies the role of power and status in the realization of directives among teacher and students in a pre-university class. She also discusses politeness and its effect on the realization of directives by adopting the types of directives in Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper (1989). There are few areas in which this study is different from this thesis. The first distinction would be the mean of data collection. The methodology used

to obtain the data in the study is the Discourse Completion Test whereas this current study employed a video-recording methodology to document the natural occurring conversation of the selected participants. Further distinction can be seen from the type of discourse being analyzed, where Nor Zaimiyah Norita Mokhtar focuses her study on the teacher-student discourse while this thesis explores the parent-child discourse. Besides that, this study examines directives in the participants' second language while this thesis examines participants' mother tongue.

Govindasamy (1994) is another regional study which examines teacher-student's discourse. He studies the use of apology, compliment, and request among teacher and students in a secondary school in Singapore. He found that teacher employs two strategies in uttering request which are deference and solidarity. The deference strategy is employed by using grounders, words of appreciation, preparators, sarcasm, warning, and apologies. Meanwhile solidarity strategy is employed by expressing concern and giving compliments.

### **2.3 Family Mealtime and Discourse**

Family mealtime, either breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner, or supper is a social event where every member of a family gets together to consume food (Hepburn & Potter, 2011). Mealtime is considered as a social event because it involves adults and children gathered in a specific time and space, with limited participants, and interaction is governed by its own rule (Blum-Kulka, 1997). Mealtime is perceived a social platform where participants with more knowledge of norms and routine socialize the younger and less experience member of a family into the setting (Pauletto, Aronsson, & Galeano, 2017). The simultaneous participation of multiple generation, that is the children and the parents during the meal implies a more asymmetrical power relationship between participants



than generally in meals with adults only (Brumark, 2003a). Blum-Kulka also noted that dinner conversation is deeply impacted by contextual factors. However, there have been relatively low attention being paid to language use during dinner in regard to the different functions exerted on dinner conversation which influenced by such contextual factors that is different age and numbers of participants.

### **2.3.1 Family Dinner Conversation**

According to Brumark (2003a), dinner table conversation is situated, culturally conditioned social activities, deeply embedded in historical, cultural, and political traditions. It is a well-defined socio-cultural activity where it is governed by norms and rules. Brumark notes that talking while eating is not acceptable everywhere. However, conversation during dinner is performed to regulate the activity in its surrounding (Goffman, 1981) with mutual understanding among participants about what is appropriate to say, at which moment, and to whom.

Certain elements in family dinner are common in other types of social encounters (Brumark, 2003a). The most instrumental communicative function of dinner talk is to regulate the activity of having dinner such as laying the table, serving, passing dishes and spices, and eating. This kind of talk is routinized and portrays norm. It may arise in the middle of other kind of talk. Besides regulating the dinner routines, family dinner conversations also serve two other main functions (Blum-Kulka, 1977, p. 34), which are creating an atmosphere of social ambience (sociability) and serving socialization purposes (socialization).

There are certain cultures which limit verbal activities during dinner to a necessary minimum (Blum-Kulka). Meanwhile in other cultures, specifically in urban well-

educated western, dinner talk and conversation are expected but with unequal right to talk among participants and restrain in some topics. This means that topic such as money, politic, and sex are perceived as less proper themes for a conversation during dinner.

### **2.3.2 Previous Account on Family Dinner Conversation**

Ervin-Tripp (1976) sought to distribute formal variation of directives across social roles and contexts. It also examines the function of directives in politeness among American family. The data was obtained by selecting all instances of directives from tape-recorded naturally occurring dinner table conversation. Based on the findings, six types of directives were discovered, and they consist of need statement, imperatives, imbedded imperatives, permission directives, questions directives, and hints (see Table 3.1). Due to the similarity in methodology, this research adopts the coding system performed by Ervin-Tripp to analyze the documented, natural-occurring conversation of the Iban families.

One of the most prominent work in which examines the use of directives in a family context is Blum-Kulka (1990). Blum-Kulka studies parents' speech acts of control and comments during dinner in middle-class Israeli, American, and American immigrant families. The result indicated that the type of speech enacted by the parents were highly direct and mitigated. Based on this, Blum-Kulka suggested three factors influencing politeness within family domain and they are power, informality, and affect. Power distribution between parents and children are bound to be asymmetrical where parents are inherently assumed to be more powerful than the children. Meanwhile intimacy among family members allows informality which resulted in directness in the realization of speech acts within the domain.

Regardless, Blum-Kulka main objective is to establish the politeness of the family discourse which is contrary to the objective of this current study. This thesis aims to establish the types of directives being realized during Iban family dinner as well as the manner in which they are realized according to social status. On top of that, Blum-Kulka focuses on parents' control acts while this thesis explores the realization of speech acts of all family members participating in dinner.

Goodwin & Cekaite (2013) is another study which provides an insight into children's perception of parent's realization of speech acts. The study explores the use of directives and responses in goal-oriented routine activity which is a temporally anchored activity which involves the movement and transition of bodies. It was ultimately found that in such routine activity, directive is performed through alternative format such as noun phrase. It was also found that the directives are uttered with rising intonation suggesting urgency in response from the hearer and power of the speaker.

There is a significant number of researches surrounding family dinner conducted on Northern European family. De Geer et al. (2002) studied the linguistic tools of socialization in family discourse which is the realization of comments during family dinner. Comment in the study is defined as an utterance with explicit or implicit aim to influence the conversational partner to behave or speak in a certain way. De Geer et al. compare the Estonians, the Finns, and the Swedes and found that the Swedes converse the most during dinner but made the least comment as compared to the other two groups. Swedes made comments on moral and ethical behavior whereas Estonian and Finns commented on table manners and focused more on here-and-now situation.

Besides De Geer et al., Brumark (2006a) has also pay attention to Swedish family dinner interactions. Brumark studies the non-observance of Gricean maxims during family dinner conversations. The data in this study is collected through video recording

which proves it to be an efficient instrument of data collection. The study addresses how gender and age influence the use of indirect speech and its implication in family dinner conversations. It was found that the father use more hints for the purpose of socialization and the older children break the maxim for the purpose of joking.

Tryggvason (2006) subjects three Nordic groups namely Finnish, Swedish, and SwedishFinnish to compare the amount of talk during family dinner. She studies this by examining on pause where it is suggested to indicate how talkative or quiet a family is. She found that Swedish talks the most whereby pauses were found to be shorter and less frequent as compared to the other two groups. Tryggvason also found that mothers dominate talks during family dinner across the three Nordic groups.

Ogiermann (2015) studies the indirectness or directness of children's request at dinner table of Polish family. Ogiermann had also employed video recording as the instrument of data collection of this study. Based on the data, Ogiermann examines how Polish children request for objects during dinner. This highlights the central role of an adult in children's socialization in the way that parents positioned children as equal at dinner table. As a result, children adopt a more formal language style that is by using conventionally direct request.

The aforementioned studies (De Geer et al., 2002; Brumark, 2006a; Tryggvason, 2006; Ogiermann, 2015) pose a significant number of similarities to this thesis in the way that they examine family dinner. These studies collected their data through video recording which provide fundamental guidance to this thesis as it also employs video recording as its mean of data collection. In addition, the aspect of analysis illustrated in these studies which analyzed the interactions during the dinner conversation provides a clarity in terms of the analytical procedure. Nevertheless, the lack of focus and emphasis on any Asian related mealtime conversation indicates a notable gap that is worth to be researched on.

Thus, this study engaged in a similar topic but with a localized focus on the Iban community.

## 2.4 Social Distance

Bogardus (1933) devised a scale, namely the Bogardus Social Distance Scale following his 1925's study of willingness of people in the United State of America to participate in social contacts of different degrees of closeness with members of diverse social groups. The scale was devised on the rationale that with little sympathetic understanding, social farness exists and with great sympathetic understanding, nearness exists (Bogardus, 1941). The study is replicated a few years later in 1946, 1956, and 1966 by Bogardus himself and in 2005 by Parillo & Donoghue. The results show that the social distancing in USA is slightly declining and lesser distinction is made among groups (Bogardus, 1967; Parillo & Donoghue, 2015). It was found that gender, place of birth, race, and external event such as 9/11 influence a group's social acceptance.

Table 2.1: Representations of Social Distance and Their Concerns (Karakayali, 2009)

No.	Representation	Concern
1.	Affective distance	- A feeling reaction of a person towards other person or group of people similar to Bogardus (1947).
2.	Normative distance	- A set of collectively recognized norm about membership status in a group. - Kinship systems is an example of normative distance.
3.	Interactive distance	- Frequency of interaction among two social groups.
4.	Cultural and habitual distance	- Distance between two groups (usually two classes). - Derived from the degree of imitation that exists between the groups and - The concern also includes cultural similarities or "psychocultural distance".

Social distance may be measured by spatial or biologic distance as proposed by Bogardus but Karakayali (2009) argues that the two are just some of possible representations of social distance. Karakayali further suggests that social distance may represent affective, normative, interactive, and cultural and habitual distance (see Table 2.1).

Karakayali defines affective distance as a feeling reaction of a person towards other person or a group of people. He then defines normative distance as a set of collectively recognized norm about membership status in a group. Karakayali noted that kinship system is an example of normative distance. Interactive distance is shown by the frequency of interaction among two social groups, while cultural and habitual distance portrays the distance between two group which usually from two different classes. This distance is derived from the degree of imitation which exists between the groups and the concern also included cultural similarity or also known as psychocultural distance.

However, Karakayali highlights that it is almost impossible to measure one's actual perceived relatedness with another individual. Therefore, social distance in this study will be simplified to the kinship system (normative distance) of Iban society and affective distance is assumed from the proximity of the kinship scale.

Trope & Liberman (2010) suggest social distance as one of psychological distances along with temporal distance, spatial distance, and hypotheticality. It is a perceived or a desired degree of intimacy or remoteness within a social group or with members of other social groups. Magee & Smith (2013) believe that many factors influence social distance. Meanwhile, Hodgetts & Stolte (2014) define social distance as the extent people experience a sense of familiarity or unfamiliarity among themselves and other people from different social groups from their own. Mutual sympathy and affectivity are the

fundamental elements of the concept of social distance; which means it regards the way we *feel* about someone and vice versa.

Social distance is one of the important determinants which influence the way interlocutors interact by determining the degree of comfort in linguistic exchange (Boxer, 1993). It affects one's realization of a speech act. When perceived social distance increases, the degree of differences in judgement and perception about self and other increase and this decreases with decreasing social distance (So & Nabi, 2013). Therefore, interactions between persons on the same social status (see Figure 1.1 in 1.4) are perceived as close in social distance. Meanwhile, interactions between interlocutors from different social status are considered as far in social distance; where it can either be (1) speaker is superior to hearer, hence hearer is a subordinate to speaker or (2) speaker is subordinate to hearer, hence speaker is a superior to hearer (ibid).

#### **2.4.1 Previous Account on Social Distance in Family**

Aronsson & Thorell (1999) studies family politics in children's play directives. The study shows how politeness is displayed in regard to gender and hierarchy. It looks into the aggravation end of politeness continuum focusing on the way children formulate and escalate everyday directives according to their different positions in the family hierarchy. However, it does not record naturally occurring parent-child interactions. The children were asked to conduct a role play based on family conflict scenario by playing both children and parent roles. The method and methodology employed by Aronsson & Thorell is not immediately relevant to how data in this thesis is collected but the result gives insight on children's perception of parents' directives.

#### **2.4.2 Social Distance and Power**

Power is a prevalent feature in social relationships. According to van Dijk (1989), power is a relationship between people in social formations such as groups and classes or between people as social members. He further explains that power in society is mainly exercised through directive pragmatic function such as commands and threats. Person who has more power has more access to the control of speech acts, turn allocation, self-presentation strategies, and discourse type.

Magee & Smith (2013) suggest that social distance affects power in which a low-power person is more dependent on a high-power person for a desired outcome and vice versa. This is evident in Ervin-Tripp's 1976 study where she found that different types of directives are used differently by people of different social status. Moreover, she also notes that power difference between parents and children is one of the obvious indicators. Ervin-Tripp & Strage (1985) suggest that children are considered to possess lower social status than their parents hence the society have the power to keep them silent, as a result, preventing them to initiate a discourse.



## CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the method employed in this study which is a qualitative analysis of Iban's directives. The instrument of data collection is described which is video recording of Iban family dinner. The instrument used aims to understand the realization of directives of Iban during family dinner. Then, the theoretical framework of types of directives as suggested by Ervin-Tripp (1976) is discussed in relation to the way it is used to guide the categorization of the occurrences of directives in the data. Finally, data collection and procedure are being discussed in this chapter

### 3.2 Theoretical Framework

This study utilizes the framework of directives by Ervin-Tripp (1976) where she describes six types of directives occurring in American English. The types of directives are also used distinctively according to social distance (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Types of directives and examples (Ervin-Tripp, 1976)

No.	Type of directives	Descriptions	English Example	Iban translation
1.	Need statements	Occurs with the use of verb <i>need</i> .	"I need a match."	"Aku nguna machis."
2.	Imperatives	Includes a verb and if it is transitive, an object, and sometimes a beneficiary.	"Gimme a match."	"Meri aku machis."
3.	Imbedded imperatives	Occurs when agent and object are explicit	"Could you gimme a match?"	"Ulih nuan meri aku machis."
4.	Permission directives	Occurs in the form of modal+beneficiary+ have/verb?	"May I have a match?"	"Ulih aku ngulihka machis?"
5.	Questions directives	Looks like an information question,	"Got a match?"	"Bisi machis?"

		thus determines by H's response that follow		
6.	Hints	Looks like a general statement, H needs to have considerable knowledge of the situation	"The matches are all gone."	"Abis magang machis nya."

The first type is a *need statement* where a speaker commonly uses the verb *need* to give directive to hearer. There are some other syntactic structures for a speaker to perform need statement as a directive which Ervin-Tripp later extends to the use of verbs *want* and *have*. For example, a speaker can say 'I want you to check the necessities for the baby' to ask the hearer to check on the necessities for the baby and 'I'll have a burger' to ask the hearer to get a burger for him.

An *imperative* normally includes a verb. If it is a transitive verb, an imperative may also include an object and sometimes a beneficiary. Imperative tends to occur when the speaker is subordinate to the hearer or if the speaker and the hearer are familiar equals. There are few variants of imperatives as according to Ervin-Tripp (1976, p. 30). They are (i) *you+imperative*, (ii) *attention-getter*, (iii) *post-posed tags*, and (iv) *rising pitch*. The first variant is when the speaker addressed the hearer directly. For example, when a passenger directs the driver, he would say 'You should turn right here.' In this example, *you* is the driver and *turn* is the verb the passenger uses to direct him.

The second variant is a *pre-posed greeting* with the intention of getting attention from the hearer. For instance, a speaker may say 'Hey' or 'Excuse me'. It may be also in the form of names or honorific address terms. Post-posed tag is used in question intonation like an 'Okay?'. For example, when a student asks another student for a copy of a note, he would say, 'Give me a copy?' Meanwhile, the rising intonation variant is specifically used according to physical distance between the speaker and the hearer.

Aside from the aforementioned variants, Ervin-Tripp also noted that an imperative may also be realized in elliptical form when necessary action is obvious. This is considered as other variants of imperative, namely the *deletion variant*. In this case, only new information such as the direct or indirect object is added. For example, when a customer makes an order for coffee in a café, he would say to the waitress, ‘Coffee, black’ rather than a complete imperative with a verb, an object, and a subject.

*Imbedded imperative* is used to describe all instances in which the agent and the object are explicit. For example, a speaker may say ‘Why don’t you open the door?’ or ‘Would you mind opening the door?’ to ask the hearer to open a door. This type of directive tends to occur when the speaker and the hearer are unfamiliar with one another or when they are socially ranked differently.

A *permission directive* is usually used when a speaker is superior to the hearer. It may also occur when the speaker is unfamiliar with the hearer. A permission directive usually occurs in the form of modal + beneficiary + have/verb + ?. The modals consist of *can*, *could*, *may*, and their negatives. For example, when a brother asks a sister to get his records which she borrows, he would say ‘Can I have my records back?’

A *question directive* is a non-explicit request question that seeks action from its hearer although allowing an escape route if the hearer treats it as an information question. The question counteracts the contrast in intent between getting information and directing. This means non-compliance to the directive is possible. For example, in the situation of office workers at lunch break, one worker asks the other, ‘Are we out of coffee?’ This question can be interpreted as ‘Give me some coffee’ which means it requires an action from the hearer or the hearer can treat the question as a yes/no question. If the hearer interprets it as a directive, he possibly will answer ‘No. Pass your cup’ and goes on pouring some coffee for the speaker.

*Hints* look like a general statement and may not look like a directive on the surface level. Therefore, it requires familiarity of the subject matter in order for both the speaker and the hearer to understand. Hints can be very subtle to be interpreted. It requires a considerable amount of knowledge on the situation in order for it to be comprehended by interactors. Table 3.2 shows three social circumstances described by Ervin-Tripp where hints are used as directives.

Table 3.2: Circumstances where hints are realized as directives (Ervin-Tripp, 1976)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Circumstances</i>	<i>Example of hints used as directives</i>	<i>Iban translation</i>
1.	Small children asking for food from their caretakers.	“I hungry.”	“Aku lapar.”
2.	Speaker is reluctant to be direct.	“Mother, you know I don’t have pyjamas.”	“Indai, nuan nemu aku nadai baju tinduk.”
3.	Necessary acts and information of time and condition is sufficient.	“Sir, it’s quite noisy in here.”	“Tuan, chukup inggar ba ditu.”

The first circumstance described by Ervin-Tripp where hint is interpreted as a directive is when small children asking for food from their caretakers. For example, when a child says, “I hungry” and his caretaker then feed him then such speech act is realized as a directive instead of mere statement. This form of directive could easily be interpreted as an information statement but if interpreted as a directive, it means to ask the hearer to feed the child.

The second circumstance where hint is understood as a hint is when the speaker is reluctant to be direct. This means that interpretation is left solely to hearer’s solicitude. To illustrate, when a daughter says to her mother, “Mother, you know I don’t have pyjamas” and the mother interpret it by buying his daughter a pyjama, the utterance serves as a hint. Again, the utterance may be interpreted as information question but with the

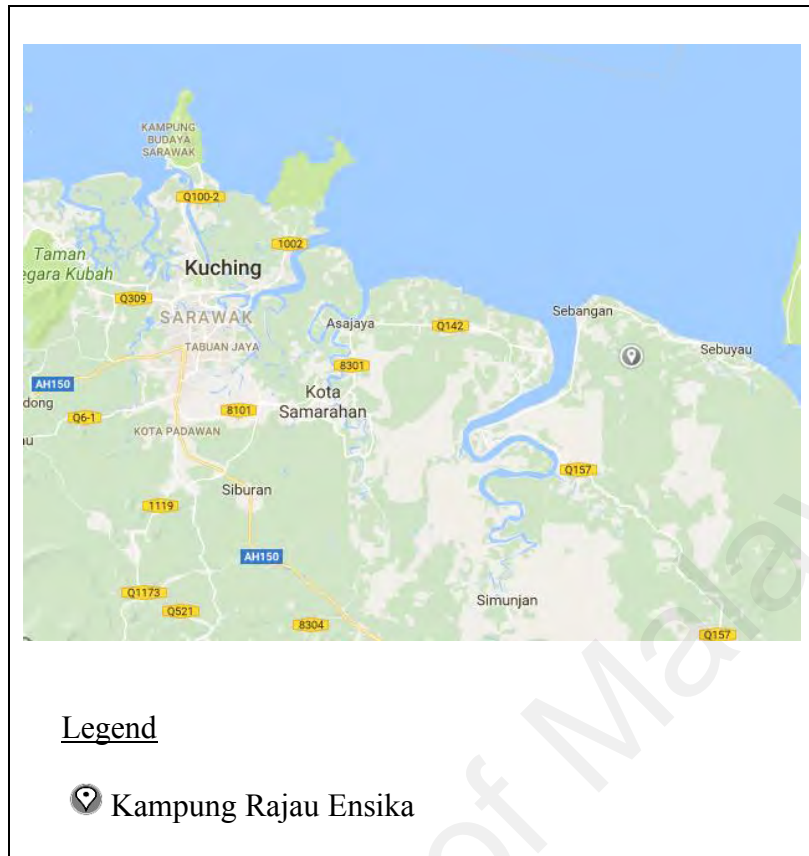
knowledge of the speaker's situation, the mother would know that the utterance is intended to direct her to get pyjamas for the speaker.

The last circumstance described by Ervin-Tripp as a hint acting as a directive is when necessary acts and information of time and condition is sufficient. For example, in a library when silence is expected. When a librarian uttered a statement like "Sir, it's quite noisy in here", it actually meant to asks the library users to be silent.

### **3.3 Research Site**

This research is conducted in a longhouse named Kampung Rajau Ensika which is situated by the bank of one of Batang Sadong tributaries called Sungai Sebangan. It is located approximately 110 kilometres away from Kuching. Ibans living in the longhouse are the descendent of Undup Iban as the elder generation migrated from Batang Undup towards Batang Sadong region before they settled by the bank of one of its tributaries, Sungai Sebangan. There are in total of 23 *pintu*-family in the longhouse which consist of 156 people. The village is chosen as the research site because it is still secluded from Sarawak's urbanisation despite being reachable by land transportation. Figure 3.1 shows the location of the research site.

Figure 3.1: Location of Research Site



### 3.4 Research Sample and Sampling

A member of the community was contacted and through him, five families were identified to participate in this study. Despite being a purposive sampling, a set of criteria was put in place. These criteria are set to ensure the participants are reflective of the population of Undup Iban and the outcome of this study can be extended to the larger population of Undup Iban. Approximately five percent of the total population (N=156) are not descendent of Undup Iban as a result of inter-marriage, hence do not speak the dialect.

Several criteria were taken into consideration in order to ensure the validity of the findings. To ensure the validity of the result, only descendent of Undup Iban who speaks the dialect were selected to participate in this study. The participants had never lived elsewhere and were living in the longhouse at the time of data collection. Such criteria

are to ensure that the participants have not adapted to other culture which might influence their realization of directives. As stated by Bilbow (1997), culture does play a role in realization of speech acts. The degree of linguistic knowledge is also set as a criterion in this study. The selected participants have no prior linguistic knowledge at any level of education at to ensure that their realization of directives is not affected by their knowledge and awareness of subject matter.

The nucleus unit of the participating families usually consists of two to four generations living together as a *pintu-family* (see Figure 1.1 in 1.5.2). There are five families participated in this study and each family consists of four to eleven members. There are in total of 40 participants, consist of 22 males and 18 females. Participants' age range is between 3 to 76 years old. Table 3.3 shows the profile of the sample.

The families are noted as A, B, C, D, and E and each member are given pseudonyms based on the family follow by a number. The odd number indicates that the participant is a male and even number indicate female. The first number indicate the main breadwinner and second number usually is the wife of the breadwinner. After that, the numbering follows participants' familial role. This means, grandparents will be numbered first then followed by children.

In family A, A1 is the main breadwinner and is married to A2. By the time of data collection, she recently retired from her job as a cook in a school due to illness. As such, she is considered as the secondary breadwinner of the family. The couple has four children who are A6, A8, and A11 and another who were not participating in this study. A6 is married to A5 and has a son, A13. Meanwhile A8 is married to A7. In two evenings, A1's brother and his wife participated in Family A's dinners and they are considered as participants of this study as well. A1's brother is named as A3 and his wife A4.

Table 3.3: Profile of Participants

Family	Males			Females		
	Age	Occupation	Pseudonym	Age	Occupation	Pseudonym
A	48	Technician	A1	45	Housewife	A2
	36	Guard	A3	31	Farmer	A4
	36	Fisherman	A5	26	Housewife	A6
	29	Fisherman	A7	24	Housewife	A8
	18	Mechanic	A9			
	8	Student	A11			
	3	-	A13			
B	54	Farmer	B1	72	Retiree	B3
	17	Student	B4	50	Cleaner	B2
	16	Student	B5	17	Student	B6
	15	Student	B7			
C	76	Retiree	C3	74	Retiree	C4
	57	Farmer	C1	61	Farmer	C2
	48	Farmer	C5			
	18	Student	C6			
D	70	Retiree	D3	69	Retiree	D4
	68	Retiree	D5	68	Retiree	D6
	42	Teacher	D1	43	Teacher	D2
	16	Student	D7	19	Student	D8
	10	Student	D9	12	Student	D10
				7	Student	D12
E	52	Retiree	E1	47	Cook	E2
	19	Student	E3	18	Student	E4
				14	Student	E6

In Family B, B1, the main breadwinner is married to the secondary breadwinner, B2. B1's mother, B4 is living with them and does not work. B4 assumes the role of helping B2 with house chore such as cooking, cleaning, and taking care of her grandchildren. B1 and B2 has two sons, B3 and B5. They also assume the role of guardianship to the two children of B1's brother, B6 and B7.

In Family C, C1 is the main breadwinner and is married to C2. C1's parents, C3 and C4 are living with them. C1 and C2 has in total of three children but only C7 is living with them. Besides that, C1's brother, C5 also lives with them.



Family D has an interesting dynamic as both paternal and maternal grandparents are living with the family. D1, the main breadwinner is married to D2, the secondary breadwinner. D3 and D4 are D1's parents and D5 and D6 are D2's parents. D1 and D2 have five children, D7, D8, D9, D10, and D12.

There are only two generations living together as Family E. Unlike other participating families, the mother of Family E, E2 is the main breadwinner. She is married to E1 who by then recently retired as an army officer, hence noted as secondary breadwinner. Interestingly, he also assumes the usual role of secondary breadwinners in an Iban family. He helps with house chores like cooking, cleaning, and taking care of children. The couple has four children in total but only three are still living with them since the eldest has moved out. The three children are A3, E4, and E6.

### **3.5 Ethics**

Efforts were taken to inform all of the participants regarding this study. It is important for the participants be aware of the manner in which the elicited data being treated and the extent of its use throughout this study. Participants then signed the consent form (see Appendix A) to indicate their agreement to participate. To protect the participants' anonymity, pseudonyms are used in the analysis. However, their social backgrounds may be referred to examine their social status pertaining to their realization of directives.

### **3.6 Instruments**

To answer the research questions, an instrument of data collection was employed, and it was video recording of Undup Iban family dinner. Data obtained from video recording is argued to be more representative of the language and its natural setting (Ervin-Tripp,

1976). Studies of language in the field of pragmatic which studied socialization and communicative behavior of family members such as De Geer et al. (2002), De Geer (2004), Brumark (2006a), and Tryggvason (2006) had successfully employed video recording of family mealtime as a mean of data collection.

Apart from that, Abu-Akel (2002) also employed video-recoding as his instrument of data collection to study the social dynamics of topic performance during family mealtime. As a result, he collected two hours of video recording of a Caucasian-American family. Abu-Akel shows that a small data from a naturally-occurring conversation contains abundant data for qualitative analysis.

Table 3.4: Total Video-recorded Data

<b>Family</b>	<b>Duration of video-recorded data</b>	<b>Total utterances</b>	<b>Total directives</b>	<b>Percentage of occurrence of directives (%)</b>
<b>A</b>	128 minutes 12 seconds	1381	141	10.2
<b>B</b>	58 minutes 5 seconds	443	65	14.7
<b>C</b>	82 minutes 23 seconds	542	43	7.9
<b>D</b>	77 minutes 46 seconds	814	59	7.2
<b>E</b>	69 minutes 5 seconds	419	43	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>415 minutes 31 seconds</b>	<b>3599</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>9.8</b>

Table 3.4 shows the amount of data collected from video-recording between January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The recordings were collected during dinners which happened between 1800 hours to 2100 hours. There are in total of 415 minutes and 31 seconds of data collected, consist of 3599 utterances where 9.8 percent of the utterances are directives. The percentage of directives utterances vary according to each family.

Family B has the highest percentage of occurrence of directives against total utterances whereas Family D has the lowest percentage occurrence of directives. Family C and D have almost similar percentage of directives occurrences. It was observed that the varying number of occurrences of directives among the five families may be influenced by the social status of the speaker and the hearer and this will be discussed in the next chapters.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability**

To ensure the validity of the transcriptions and their translation, an inter-rater who is an Iban language teacher in University of Malaya had checked the accuracy of the spelling in the transcriptions. She also made sure that the translation between Iban and English is as accurate as possible. Besides that, she checked the accuracy of the categorization of the coding of the directives to ensure the reliability of the theoretical framework.

### **3.8 Data Collection and Procedure**

The data in this study were collected in the following procedure. Firstly, five families were identified to participate in the study. The participating families were given a digital video camera and asked to record their dinner. Each family was encouraged to conduct the recording at their own leisure. Therefore, at least one member of the family was briefed on how to operate the camera and to set up for the recording. No researcher was presence during the recordings. It is believed that this approach allows the participants to become very used to the presence of the camera hence mitigating any chance of paradox (Hepburn & Potter, 2011). Each time the recording was done, the family would notify the researcher to check on the quality of the recording.

A total of 30 videos were obtained and each video were transcribed according to the transcription convention by Jefferson's (2004) (see Appendix B). The transcriptions were translated into English. However, only data in Iban is treated as the translation might not be the exact representation of the intended meaning. The English translation is used only as a reference in categorizing the type of strategy.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The transcriptions of the video-recordings were analysed by using the conversational analysis, CA (Sacks, 1992). The turn-taking system as in the utterances which invites next kinds of actions (Wooffitt, 2005) was noted and then coded per theoretical framework by Ervin-Tripp as shown in Table 3.6. The analysis focuses on the commonalities which exist across relatively small number of cases. CA is an inductive approach where data is first collected and then analyzed to establish the prominent feature in the talk. This is in line with the aim of this current study, that is to establish the pattern of realization of directives among Iban during family dinner. Studying a naturally occurring data using CA allows the researcher to delve deeper into the intricacies of speech as each utterance or sequence of utterances can be examined as a specific instance in its own context.

Conversation recorded in the collected videos were segmented into turns and utterances. A turn is defined as the verbal utterances and non-verbal expressions by which one participant holds the floor in a conversation (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson., 1974). Meanwhile, an utterance is defined as a "prosodic unit" marked by an "enveloping prosodic contour" and delimited by "a terminal intonation contour" (Hellspang, 1988) as well as by syntactical, semantic, and functional uniting components (Garvey, 1984).

Then, the speech acts (Austin 1962; Searle, 1979) realized in the utterances were coded per theoretical framework (see Table 3.5). Speech act in this sense corresponds to utterance within a turn which serves one specific communicative function. It may extend over several utterances but seldom over more than one turn. Frequency of each type of directives was calculated to see the recurring pattern.

Table 3.5: Coding of the Type of Directives

<i>No.</i>	<i>Type of directives</i>	<i>Code</i>
1.	Need statement	<b>NS</b>
2.	Imperatives	<b>IM</b>
3.	Imbedded imperatives	<b>II</b>
4.	Permission directives	<b>PD</b>
5.	Question directives	<b>QD</b>
6.	Hints	<b>HI</b>

The directives were identified based on the use of performative verbs in an utterance. Ervin-Tripp (1976) lines up several verbs which indicate directives during American English family dinner. They are *need*, *want*, *have*, and *give* which are translated to *nguna*, *ka*, *empu*, and *meri* respectively.

However, the identification of performative verbs is not sufficient at identifying directives. In identifying hint as a directive, Ervin-Tripp looks into hearer's response after speaker utters what could have been a mere statement. For example, saying "The matches are all gone" does not have any performative verb which could indicate directive, but if the hearer reacted to the utterance by giving matches to the speaker, it is counted as a directive. Furthermore, there are occurrences of elliptical imperatives where speaker omit saying any performative verb, but it is understood by the hearer. For instance, by just saying "Spoon" during dinner is understood as "Give me a spoon" hence inviting hearer to give a spoon to the speaker. In this sense, the setting in which speech occurs is important for the realization of directive for the interlocutors. The setting provides

context. Saying “Spoon” while walking in a park for example, will not invite the same response from the hearer as it is during dinner.

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## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the research based on the two research questions. The data used for the analysis in this chapter is taken from the transcript of 30 video recordings obtained from the participating families.

In section 4.2, the first research question is answered by establishing the types of directives in Iban during family dinner. Meanwhile section 4.3 illustrated the answers for the second research question. In the sub-chapter, the occurrences of directives are analysed as according to the social distance between the speaker and the hearer. The participants' profiles are being taken into account in this part of analysis. Other unique feature of directives in Iban, such as the influence of physical proximity is being noted in section 4.4.

### 4.2 Types of Directives Used by Iban at Family Dinner

There are five types of directives found in the collected data. They are (1) imperatives, (2) elliptical imperatives, (3) hints, (4) want statements, and (5) question directives. There are also occurrences of two types of directives combined in one utterance hence to give one instruction. Table 4.1 shows the number of occurrences of each type of the directives.

Table 4.1: Types of directives used by Iban

No.	Type of directives	A	B	C	D	E	Total	(%)
1.	Imperatives	99	40	37	44	33	253	72.08
2.	Elliptical imperatives	19	15	3	10	4	51	14.53
3.	Hints	9	5	0	0	3	17	4.84
4.	Want statements	10	0	0	4	0	14	3.99
5.	Question directives	2	5	3	1	2	13	3.70
6.	Combination of imperative & question directive	1	0	0	0	1	2	0.57

7.	Combination of imperative & elliptical imperative	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.29
<b>Total</b>		<b>141</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>100</b>

The most frequently realized type of directives in Iban during family dinner is imperatives. An utterance of imperative is a short and concise instruction consist of subject, verb, indirect object, and object. For example, the sentence “Dad, give me the soup” is a form imperative. Meanwhile the second most realized directives, the elliptical imperatives need more detail of the context to be understood. This variant of imperatives usually omits the subject and the verb. Sometimes, the object may be omitted too. For example, the utterance of a single word “Soup” in a dining context is understood as a directive where a speaker asks for the hearer to hand over the soup. If it is taken out of the context of dinner table, the utterance appears as a mere action of naming the object. Another example of elliptical imperative is “The soup, dad” where the speaker asks for the soup from his dad (as a hearer). In this form, the speaker omitted the verb and indirect object but with the awareness that the utterance is realized in dining context, the hearer reacts by passing the soup to the speaker. The verb in the elliptical form is understood by the hearer and usually the omitted verb is “give (to me)”.

The third most realized directives in Iban is hint in which without the next action from the hearer, would appear as a statement. For example, a mother said to her daughter “There’s some rice on the kitchen counter.” With no action from the daughter, this is only the matter of stating that there is rice on the kitchen counter hence it is not treated as directives in this study. However, if the daughter reacts with getting up from her place, taking the rice, and bringing it to the dining table, then utterance is realized as a directive. There is no verb in the utterance, but it is well-understood by the daughter since they are in dining context.



The fourth most realized directive is the want statement which is usually used by toddlers. This directive is realized in similar form of an imperative, but the verb is limited to only “want”. It is realized with the combination of an indirect object, the verb “want”, an object, and a subject: *indirect object + want + subject*. An example of this directive is “I want that, dad”.

The least realized type of directives during Iban family dinner is question directives. For instance, when a speaker says, “Where is my plate?”, it does not merely ask about the location of the plate but is actually asking the hearer to hand him a plate. This type of directive is not normally used because it can be misinterpreted and be treated as a question by the hearer. There are only 3.7 percent time directives is realized by using a question.

There are also instances where two directives are realized in one utterance. In the data, there are only three times where the speaker gives directives by using a combination of two different types of directives. The speaker usually uses imperative first and then reinforces the directives with either question directive or elliptical imperative.

#### 4.2.1 Imperatives

Imperatives are realized 72.08 percent of total directives which makes it the most frequently realized directives. An imperative in Iban typically consists of verb and object. Sometimes, it also includes a subject and an indirect object: *verb + object* or *subject + verb + indirect object + object*.

Figure 4.1 shows a structure of an imperative of an utterance extracted from the data. It is straightforward and easily understood but requires an understanding from the hearer that he is the subject of the instruction. This gives room to other participants of the dinner to mistaken that the directive is intended to them.

Figure 4.1 Imperative with verb and object

Verb	object
Pakai	asi nya
<i>Eat</i>	<i>that rice</i>

Meanwhile, imperative in Figure 4.2 includes all the necessary information for a directive to be understood well and it is made up of a verb, an object, and a subject. When the directives intend to help other family members rather than the speaker himself, an indirect object is often included (Figure 4.3). It is observed that this structure of directives is only used by the parents. This indicates that they are exerting power onto other family members with lower social status in order help another member of lower social status.

Figure 4.2 Imperative with verb, object, and subject

verb	object	subject
Minta	kuah nya	ba
<i>Requesting for</i>	<i>that gravy</i>	<i>dad</i>

Figure 4.3 Imperatives with verb, indirect object, object, and subject

Verb	indirect object	object	subject
Beri gai	ia	sup nya	Wan
<i>Give to</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>the soup</i>	<i>Wan</i>

Imperative in Extract 1 consists of a type of action which a speaker would expect a hearer to do to the object. The action refers to the verb which is *mint*a (give [to me])', and the object in which the speaker (A11) expects the hearer (A1) to comply is the gravy (*kuah nya*). In other words, the speaker elicits response from the hearer, his Dad (A1) to dish out some of the gravy not just for himself but for him as well.

Extract 1

A11: **Minta kuah nya ba.**  
*'Dad, give me the gravy.'*  
A1: ((spooning the gravy for himself then for A7))

Extract 2

A1: **Lenny nya bai makai.**  
*'Invite Lenny to have dinner.'*  
A2: Ni! Oh Ni!

Extract 3

B2: **Ambi jang, ke aba nuan.**  
*'Take it, boy, for your dad.'*  
B3: Dini?  
*'Where?'*  
B2: Kicap din.  
*'The soy sauce there.'*

Extract 4

D8: **Ba, beri ke ini.** ((hands over the basket to D3))  
*'Dad, give this to grandma.'*  
D1: ((takes the basket from D8 then gives it to D2))

Extract 5

E3: ((about to scoop from a bowl))  
E2: **Nuan anang makai paku.**  
*'You don't eat the fern.'*

Extract 6

A11: Enggai agi.  
*'I don't want anymore.'*  
**Anang guai badu, Ben. Awakka dulu, Ben.**  
A6: **Nibuh makai. Duduk aja, Ben.**  
*'Don't stop first, Ben. Let it be there first, Ben.  
You don't have to eat. Just sit there, Ben.'*

There are several verbs, all of which are transitive verbs consistently used to give imperatives in the data. Among the most frequently used ones are *mintu* (give [to me]) (see Extract 1), *bai* (bring), *ambi* (take), and *beri* (give). The prohibitive verb *anang* (do not), is also frequently realized in the data. However, it is to be noted that the phrase *anang guai* is not prohibitive. It is literally translated as ‘do not rush’ but it is actually meant to ask someone to wait or to hold on.

There are also occurrences of verbs which also carry distance such as *kin* (move there [far]) (see Extract 7), *kia* (move there [near]) (see Extract 8), and *kitu* (move here) (see Extract 9). All of these verbs are directly translated as “move” in English but unlike “move”, it tells how far the hearer should perform the verb on the object from the speaker, either slightly away, farther away, or close.

#### Extract 7

C4: <b>Nuan kilah kin.</b> <i>‘You, (move) to the other side.’</i>
C3: <b>Anang guai, masu’ jari aku.</b> <i>‘Hold on, I’m washing my hand.’</i>

#### Extract 8

D9: <b>Nyah ((giving something to D11))</b> <i>‘Here.’</i>
<b>Keli nya. Palak buai kia ((points to an empty plate))</b>
D11: <b>plate))</b> <i>‘That’s a catfish. Throw the head there.’</i>

#### Extract 9

B1: <b>Asi nda ditanggung. Bai kitu periuk nya.</b> <i>‘The rice is not brought here. Bring the pot here.’</i>
B2: <b>((Getting up to take the rice pot))</b>

#### 4.2.2 Elliptical Imperatives

The number of occurrences of deletion variant of imperatives in the data are quite significant (14.53 percent). It is also structured differently as the utterances contain object and subject only but do not contain verb. The hearer, as the subject is expected to understand that he supposes to hand the object to the speaker. Therefore, elliptical imperatives deserve a separate discussion from the overall imperatives. Elliptical imperative is not to be mistaken as a hint because it is still quite direct in nature. It does not connote something else.

Without a mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer, an elliptical imperative can be easily mistaken as a declarative, that is to name the object. For example, in Extract 10, B1 reacts to B3's utterance by handing over the soy sauce while the utterance, without the context can be interpreted as B3 naming the bottle. The directives in Extract 10 is understood by B1 as "Hand to me the soy sauce, dad." B3 omit the action verb perhaps because the action is well-understood between him and B1.

Extract 10

B3: **Kicap ba.**

*'The soy sauce, dad.'*

B1: Nyah... ((hands over soy sauce))

*'Here...'*

Meanwhile, in Extract 11 and Extract 12 as shown below, the speakers, A13 and D9 omit the subject too. This looks like the directives are not subjected to anyone. It is observed in the recordings that each time an imperative is being uttered in such manner, it is subjected to anyone who is seated the nearest to the object at the time. The hearers seem to be aware of the fact that the objects are closed to them and hand it over when a member in the family asks for it. The instance in Extract 13 shows the hearer, B7 is not aware that the water bottle is near to him. He did not react immediately upon the utterance

but asks the speaker where the water bottle is. With the help of the speaker, B5, B7 is being made aware of the location of the water bottle then react by giving it to B7.

#### Extract 11

A13: <b>Sudu</b> ↑ <i>'Spoon!!!'</i>
A1: Aaa... nya ya Chen, agi Chen. <i>'Aaa... that's it Chen, more Chen.'</i>

#### Extract 12

D9: <b>Asi, asi.</b> <i>'Rice, rice.'</i>
D6: ((hands over a bowl of rice))

#### Extract 13

B5: <b>Ai, jang.</b> ((points to water bottle near B4)) <i>'The water, boy.'</i>
Ni? ((upon seeing the water bottle, hands it over to B5))
B7: <i>Where?</i>

The use of elliptical imperative during dinner is economical since it consists of only one to two words at a time hence saving time on a comprehensive utterance. It gives more time for the family members to do the actual intention of dinner and that is to eat. However, elliptical imperatives can only be effective given the hearer understands the action verb which he must perform. Despite being economical, elliptical imperatives can be misinterpreted when the action verb is not understood by the hearer.

#### 4.2.3 Hints

Even though most of Iban's directives are straightforward in nature, there are still some use of hints. An utterance of hint connotes an underlying meaning from the literal meaning, and it cannot be considered as a directive without a reaction from the hearer.

The example in Extract 14 shows that the speaker, E1 only suggests to the hearer, E3 that E3 should sit on one particular chair. It sounds like a mere statement. Similarly, in Extract 15, E6 asks E3 to “try” to use a spoon when dishing out a food instead of using hand. The use of the verbs *uji* and *cuba*, which are directly translated as *try* tones the directive down. Since trial is not necessarily a success, the hearer could choose not to comply with the directive because the speaker only asks the hearer to “try”. However, it is understood between the speaker and the hearer that when a person asks you to try to do something, it is expected that thing to actually be done.

Extract 14

E1: <b>Uji dia nuan tadi ((points to a chair))</b> <i>'You should have tried sat there just now.'</i>
E3: ((sits down on the chair))

Extract 15

E6: <b>Cuba la ngena susu kita ngambi lauk, tu ngena jari.</b> <i>'Try to use spoon when you scoop the scoop, you've been using your hands.'</i>
E3: ((takes a spoon and dishes a bowl))

Meanwhile, in Extract 16, A6 is dishing from a bowl when A9 expresses that he has been waiting for a while. A9 does not directly suggest that he wants the food that A6 is currently dishing. So, without the context, the utterance can be interpreted as A9 only stating he has been waiting for too long for something. Given the context, the utterance is understood by A6 as a signal that she should hand over the dish to A9 and this reaction completes the directive.

#### Extract 16

<p><b>Lama aku nganti</b> ((when A4 takes a long time to spoon food)) A9: to spoon food)) <i>'I waited for a long time.'</i> Nyah... ((handing the food to A9)) A6: <i>'Here...'</i></p>
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#### 4.2.4 Want Statements

Overall analysis of the data indicates that there are no instances of need statement or have statement and as such, the occurrences of want statement will be categorised under *Want Statement*. Occurrences of want statements can only be found in Family A and Family D where want statements are found to be used only by children age 10 and below. This is not unusual. Ervin-Tripp (1976) suggests that *Want Statement* is one of the earliest directives realized by children.

Extract 17 below shows a young child asking something from his grandmother. It contains the verb *ka* (want) but does not specify the kind of action the speaker expects the hearer to do. However, the hearer (A2) understands that when the speaker (A13) *wants* something, it is expected from the hearer to comply by giving to him the thing which was requested.

#### Extract 17

<p>A13: <b>Ka nya nek.</b> <i>'Want that, grandma.'</i> A2: Nama pinta nuan? <i>'What are you asking for?' ((handing over a plate to A5))</i></p>
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The most basic structure of want statement is realized in the structure of the verb “want” followed by an object: *want* + *object* (see Figure 4.4). An indirect subject is



unnecessary because this type of directive asks the hearer to do something specifically for the speaker, unlike other directives which may be used to help other family members besides the speaker. Sometimes, the speaker realized himself as the indirect object and the hearer as the subject: *want + object + subject* (see figure 4.5). There are also times when the speaker realized the directives with an indirect object, verb, and object: *indirect object + want + object* (see Figure 4.6). However, there is no utterance of want statement which includes all elements of a complete sentence.

Figure 4.4 Basic structure of want statement (verb + object)

<b>verb</b>	<b>object</b>
Ka	asi
<i>Want</i>	<i>rice</i>

Figure 4.5 Want statement with subject

<b>verb</b>	<b>object</b>	<b>subject</b>
Ka	nya	nek
<i>Want</i>	<i>that</i>	<i>grandma</i>

Figure 4.6 Want statement with indirect object

<b>indirect object</b>	<b>verb</b>	<b>object</b>
Ku	ka	nya
<i>I</i>	<i>want</i>	<i>That</i>

On the surface level, the want statement looks like the child is merely stating his desire. During Iban family dinner, it is understood that when a child stating that he desires for something, it is actually a request. With the knowledge of this context, the adults around the children react in the way they comply to the directives.

#### 4.2.5 Question Directives

The least realized type of directives during Iban family dinner is question directives. For example, in Extract 18, when B5 asks where the water is, the speaker does not only inquire for the location of the water bottle but is actually asking for the hearer to hand it to him. This type of directive is only realized 3.7 percent among Iban during family dinner. It is not normally used because it can be misinterpreted and be treated as a question by the hearer.

Extract 18

B5:	<b>Ni ai tadi?</b> <i>'Where is the water just now?'</i>
B1:	Tu? ((hands B5 a glass of water)) <i>This?</i>

Question directive as exemplified in Extract 18 lacks the use of verb. It could easily be interpreted as question which seeks information by the hearer. However, the familiarity of the context allows the hearer to comprehend the question as a directive, hence responding to the question by handing over the water bottle instead of reiterating the information to B5.

#### 4.2.6 Combinations of Different Types of Directives

Combinations of directives are not usually realized. They are usually imperatives which are followed by other types of directives such as question directive and elliptical imperatives. The occurrences of combination of directives in the data suggest that they happen with a sense of urgency from the speaker. This suggests that the second directive acts as a reinforcement to the first directive in the utterance.

#### Extract 19

A5: **Meri ku kuyung mak. Kuyung.** Laju.  
*'Give me the snail, mom. Snail, snail. Quick.'*  
A4: Kejap.  
*'A moment.'*

Extract 19 is an example where A5 realizes an imperative by uttering the action verb *meri* 'give' (to me) and rushes A4 to comply by dropping the verb and name the thing he wants, the snail (*kuyung*). A5 is impatient and realizes another directive before A4 could react to the first one. The second directive shows urgency and that A5 wants the object he requested immediately.

#### Extract 20

E1: **Meri ku asi agi. Mbih asi pia?**  
*'Give me more rice. Is it finished?'*  
E2: ((gets up for rice pot. Scoops some rice to E1's plate))  
E1: Agi ah.  
*'More.'*

Extract 20 shows a combination of an imperative and a question as a directive. E1 asked for more rice by uttering the performative verb *meri* 'give' (to me) and proceed to ask a question which seems to be asking for more information of the availability of the rice. In this context, it was immediately understood by E2 that the question do not just seek an information but also seek action for E2 to provide more rice to E1.

### 4.3 Realization of Directives According to Social Distance

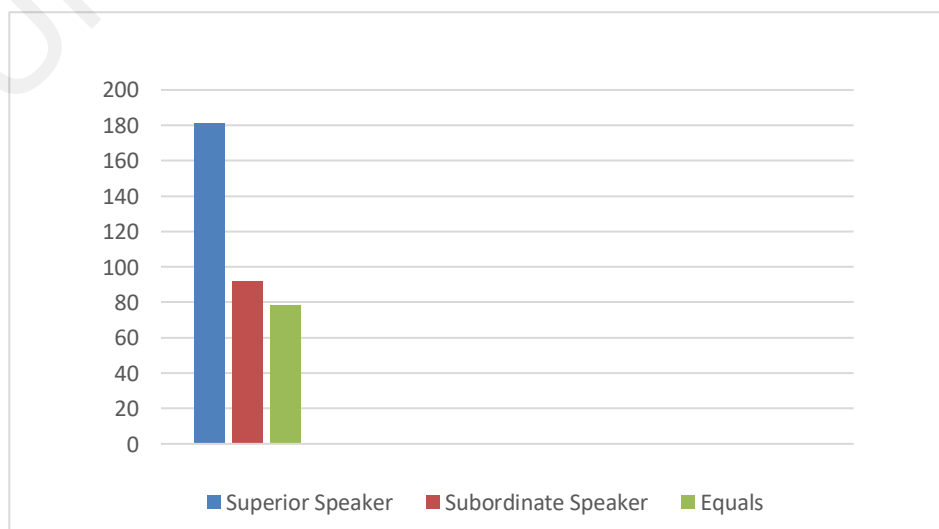
The realization of directives among the participants are largely influence by the social distance between the speaker and the hearer. This akin to Karakayali's (2009) notion of normative distance which regards kinship system. It is a set of collectively recognized

norm about membership status in a kinship group. Among Ibans, age plays a role in their kinship hierarchy after breadwinning system. The line of hierarchy seems to be in the form of breadwinners, elderly, and children. This status is collectively understood by the members in the group and the data suggests that their directives are realized according to this distance.

The first aspect which was noted after reviewing the video recordings is the diversity of dinner setting as according to housing conditions, different dinner routines, and varying numbers and ages of participants. An in-depth examination of the video recordings reveals a recurring pattern of behaviours and activities among the participants which possibly be culturally conditioned. There tend to be more directives in the form of dining management where younger children are involved. It is often formulated as direct requests where some of them are mitigated to soften the impact of coerciveness. Some which are not mitigated sounds like an act of reprimanding.

There are also some differences between maternal directives and paternal ones; in term of the frequency as well as the structure. Although it must be noted that the number of participating parents were too small for far-reaching conclusions.

Figure 4.7: Frequency of Directives Used According to Social Distance



More than half (51.57 percent) of directives in the data is realized by superior speakers to address subordinate hearers. This implies that the persons with more power tend to direct other persons with less power to do something for them. Most of the directives uttered by superior speaker are meant to command the hearer. For example, in Extract 21, a mother is asking her daughter to stop playing around the dining area.

Extract 21

A8:	((dancing))
A2:	<b>Anang sangat betanda bakanya.</b> <i>'Don't dance (too much) like that.'</i>
A8:	((stop dancing))

Meanwhile, 26.21 percent of directives are used by subordinate speakers to address superior hearers. The frequency of which this happened is less than half of the time where the speaker is superior to the hearer. Utterances by subordinate speaker are usually a request for something like pouring water and handing a bowl of food as seen in Extract 22.

Extract 22

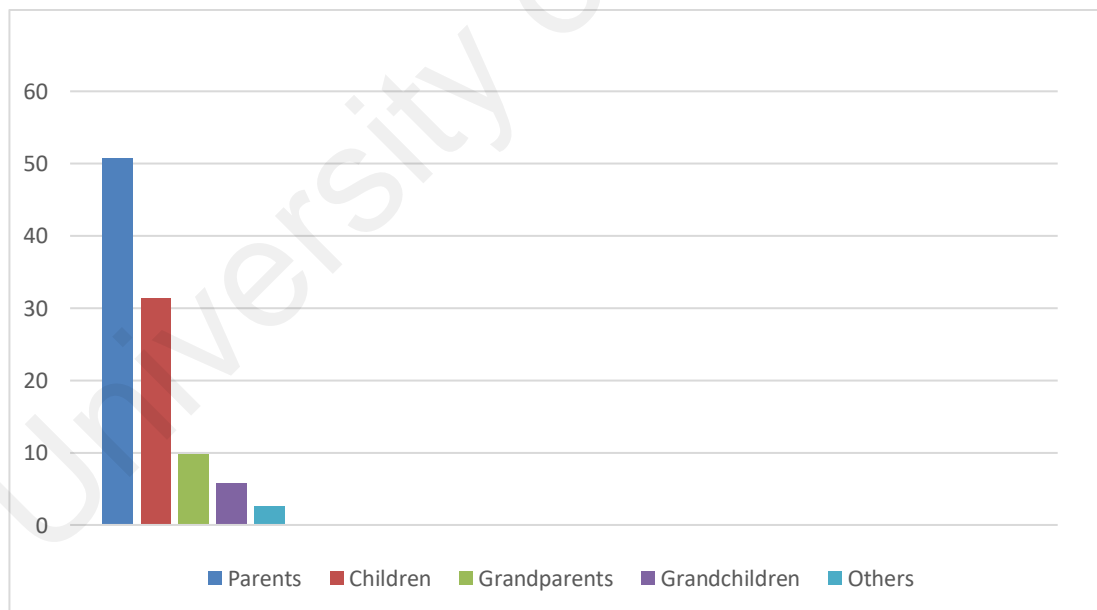
A13:	<b>Mi, minta ai, mi.</b> <i>'Mom, give me water, mom.'</i>
A4:	Minta ai? ((pours water into glass, then hands it over to A5)) <i>'You were asking for water?'</i>

Among equals, there are 22.22 percent of directives are realized. This shows that equals do not usually direct one another but when they do, the directives are realized similar to how subordinate speaker realized directives. Among equals, directives are realized to ask for favour as shown in Extract 23.

B2: **Nya asi ia nya tanggung, asi mang.**  
 ‘That, pick her rice, the girl’s rice.’  
 B6: ((hands rice pot to B7 which B7 then hands to B5))

Figure 4.8 shows the percentage of directives according to different social group. Parents uttered the most directives which made up more than 50 percent of directives throughout the collected data. The second group who uttered more than 30 percent of directives is the children, followed by the grandparents and the grandchildren. There are other instances where guests joined the dinner and their directives made up of less than 3 percent of directives in the data.

Figure 4.8: Frequency of Directives Used by Social Group (%)



#### 4.3.1 The Breadwinners’ Directives

The breadwinners dominate interaction during dinner where they address their subordinates more frequently than they address their equals and superiors. Mother, either

being the main or the secondary breadwinners uttered the most directives. This occurrence is similar to the findings Tryggvason (2006) where the mother is the dominant speaker during dinner. The use of directives by the breadwinners made up of 147 out of 351 of total directives realized across the data. The breadwinners use full form of imperatives the most, 119 times as compared to other types of directives. They use the directives to direct members of the family where it usually revolves around managing the dining area.

For example, in Extract 24, Extract 25, and Extract 26 where the speaker manages where dinner seating arrangement. The speakers use transitive verbs *kia* (go [there]), *kin* (go [away]), and *kitu* (come [here]) to indicate to the hearers specifically where the hearers should move to.

Extract 24

B2: <b>Nya kia nuan.</b> 'There, you go there.'
B4: ((dishes some vegetable))

Extract 25

B2: <b>Duduk kin di</b> ((points towards A2)) 'You sit there.'
B4: ((sits next to A2))

Extract 26

A1: <b>Kitu gi ((to A5))</b> 'Come closer.'
A5: ((moving closer to A7))

The breadwinners are also seemed to be in charge of keeping nutritional balance in the family by urging the rest of family members to eat vegetable. For example, in Extract 27, Extract 28, and Extract 29, the mothers in the family direct the members to get some more vegetable to eat. The mothers use the verb *pakai* (eat) in the utterances.

Extract 27

B2: **Nya pakai sayur.** Awakka bisi vitamin.  
*'That, eat that vegetable. So that you'd get vitamin.'*  
B4: ((takes some vegetable))

Extract 28

B2: **Sayur nya pakai mbih.**  
*'Eat all the vegetable.'*  
B4: ((dishes some vegetable))

Extract 29

E2: **Pakai sayur, au?**  
*'Eat the vegetable, alright?'*  
E5: Oh! ((cuts something on the plate))

The breadwinners also make sure that all food is not being wasted. Example of utterances like in Extract 30, Extract 31, and Extract 32 can be found towards the end of dinner where the breadwinners ask family members to finish the food. It is a stern directive, making it sound like a command. Every time this kind of directive is uttered in the video recordings, the hearer always complies with little objection.

Extract 30

B2: **Nya sadin nya pakai nya. Pakai sadin.**  
*'That sardine, eat it. Eat the sardine.'*  
B5 and B7: ((dishes some food, presumably the sardine))

Extract 31

C3: **Pakai nya. Agi tubah lauk nya.** ((hands bowl to S6))  
*'Eat that. There are plenty left.'*  
C6: ((dishes some)) amai mayuh.  
*'That's really a lot.'*



In Extract 32, E2 asks E6 to finish off a vegetable dish because there is just a little left. This extract is an example where the hearer, E6 first refuses to comply to his mother, E2. Then, E2 (mother) asks E6 to share it with his siblings and E6 complies by dishing out some of the remaining vegetable for himself and his brother.

#### Extract 32

E2:	<b>Alang-alang miding nya. Tembu mbih aa...</b> <i>'A little left of the fern. Finish it off.'</i>
E6:	Enggai. <i>'I don't want to.'</i>
E2:	Kunsi-kunsi. <i>'Share it.'</i>
E6:	((dishes some vegetable for himself and A4))

There are also instances where the speaker reprimands a child's behaviour by asking them to behave properly. The directives occur in prohibitive form with the use of the verb *anang* (do not). In Extract 33, for example, the father, E1 prohibit his son, E3 to drink water before finishing his meal. Meanwhile, in Extract 33, the mother, A2 prohibits her son from getting distracted by the cat while eating.

#### Extract 33

E3:	((drinks))
E1:	<b>Anang guai ngirup ai dulu.</b> Udah badu makai baru ngirup ai. <i>'Don't drink first. Drink only after you done eating.'</i>
E3:	((stop drinking water))

#### Extract 34

	((Cat meowing))
A11:	((Gets up from seat to look for the cat))
A2:	<b>Anang layan ia neh.</b> <i>'Don't be bothered by it.'</i>
A11:	((sitting back down for dinner))

### 4.3.2 Children's Directives

Children address their superiors more frequently than they address their equals and subordinates. Half of the children's total directives are intended towards their parents. The close parent-child relationship among the community may be one of the factors children are comfortable asking favours from their parents. Despite being the subordinates to their parents, the children commonly asked for the assistance of their parents for trivial matters such as getting drinks, more rice, or a particular dish. Extract 35 and Extract 36 are the examples from two separate dinners, which indicate exchanges between a son (A11) and his father (A1) in which A11 requests something from A1. Children, like their parents, tend to use imperatives to ask for something. However, in the data, parents never realized directives in the form of want statement (see 4.2.4, Extract 17) like the children. This reinforces Ervin-Tripp's (1976) claim which suggest that want statement is the earliest directives learnt by children.

Extract 35

A11: <b>Minta kuah nya ba.</b> <i>'Father, give me the gravy.'</i>
A1: ((spooning the gravy for himself first and then for S11))

Extract 36

A1: ((Holds a bowl, scoops some food for himself))
A11: <b>Minta ku ba.</b> <i>'Give me, dad.'</i>
A1: ((Scoops some into A7's plate))

It is also found that evident when grandchildren usually skip their parents (child) and address the ego of the family more often. Grandchildren seem to have manipulate the close relationship between them and their grandparents to ask for favours. For instance,

in Extract 37, D9 ask his grandfather, D11 to scratch his arm despite being seated right next to his father.

Extract 37

D9: <b>Ki, garu ki</b> ((points to her left arm)) <i>'Grandpa, scratch this for me.'</i>
D3: ((scratches the arm))

### 4.3.3 Grandparents' Directives

Out of directives occur within the data, only 34 directives are realized by grandparents. This accounts for 9.7 percent of total directives. Most of the directives uttered by the grandparents are used to address their subordinate, the children which make up 82.4 percent of directives realized by the grandparents. Between grandfather and grandmother, the grandmother utters the most directives. This once again supports Tryggvason's (2006) claim that a mother figure is dominant in dinner conversations. Extract 38 exemplified an interaction between a grandmother (D10) and her granddaughter (D9). D10 directs D9 to sit closer to her because D9's hand is blocked by her spoon. This shows the directives is uttered to manage the dining process, similar to how the breadwinners' utterances.

Extract 38

D4: <b>Kitu gi ah.</b> Jari tekul sudu aku. <i>'Come closer. Your hand is being blocked by my spoon.'</i>
D9: ((moves closer to D10))

There are few possible reasons that grandparents do not usually address other members of the family. The first reason might be that the children are young and need more instructions during dinner. In this case, grandparents assume the role as a reinforcement for the parents to get the children to do something hence managing the dining process. Secondly, the relationship between the grandparents and the children are close thus

making them more comfortable asking for favour from the children. Another reason that might contribute to this finding is the respect the grandparents have towards the parents as the breadwinners of the family. Therefore, they rarely need to manage the parents or ask for favour from them for a nuance tasks like passing a dish and pouring water. This occurrence suggests a complex power distribution in an Iban family where respect entails a lot more than just the gender, the generation, and the age of a person.

#### 4.3.4 Directives among Equals

Children to children directives are usually from an older child to a younger child. Imperatives are used the most among children directives to equals hearer and they are mostly uttered in prohibitive form. This means, the speaker uses the verb *anang* (do not) or *nibuh* (do not need). For example, in Extract 39, the older sister, A6 asks her younger brother, A11 to stop goofing around the dining area.

Extract 39

A6: <b>Di anang kembal-kembal dia.</b> <i>'You do not goof around.'</i>
A11: ((stops playing around dining area and follows A4))

Meanwhile in Extract 40, A6 realized four imperatives in one utterance to manage A11 that is to make sure he does not leave the dining area before everyone else finish their dinner. The used of imperatives in this extract seems to suggest assertiveness of A6. It looks like she really wants A11 to stay in the dining area to wait for everyone else to finish dinner. This suggests in that age plays a role in power distribution in the community.

#### Extract 40

A11:	Enggai agi. 'I don't want anymore.'
A6:	<b>Anang guai badu, Ben. Awakka dulu, Ben. Nibuh makai. Duduk aja, Ben.</b> 'Don't stop first, Ben. Let it be there first, Ben. You don't have to eat. Just sit there, Ben.'

#### 4.3.5 Other Social Dimension

Other dimensions of social distance in Iban family worth noting is the fact that some extended families live together or have dinner together regularly. Although not very significant, it is worth mentioning that these social distances also evoke interactions because there are no instances of directives where speaker is subordinate to the hearer. This means that directives are realized only when speaker is superior to hearer and when speaker and hearer are equals. The reason for this might be that social distance is perceived further among extended family. Therefore, one would not ask favour from his superiors. For example, in an instance where a guest interrupts Family C to ask for some lime, the guest asks his cousin, C5. The exchanges are shown in Extract 41. The guest seems to perceive C5 as his equal and the setting suggested that it is the most appropriate for him to ask favour from his cousin, not his uncle, aunty, grandaunt, or granduncle. C5 does not comply to the request but asks his cousin to get the lime himself by showing him that there are some in the garden outside of the house.

#### Extract 41

Guest:	((comes into the house)) <b>Wan, minta limau.</b> 'Wan, give me lime.'
C5:	Ambi kediri kin alai ((points towards the garden outside of the house)) 'Take it yourself there, go.'
Guest:	((walks away from the dining area))

#### 4.4 Physical Proximity Influences Directives

Another interesting finding in the video recording data is that the speakers usually address those who sit right next to them. The directives are uttered politely and straightforward. However, there are also some instances where speakers address someone sitting far away. Extract 42 and Extract 43 are some examples where a significant rise in the tone of the directives' utterances can be observed.

Extract 42

A13: <b>Kuyung nya!</b> ↑ <i>'The snail!'</i>
A6: ((dishes out some food into A5's plate))

Extract 43

D12: <b>Sudu ah. Oi sudu!</b> ↑ <i>'Spoon. Oi spoon!'</i>
D4: Nah. ((hands a spoon over to D12)) <i>'Here.'</i>

By cross-checking the participants' profiles and their behaviours, it is found that only the young children address someone seated further away from them in the dining area. It is often seen that this behaviour is being reprimanded by an adult. This suggests that there is an etiquette of directives among Ibans during family dinner and that is to address only those who are seated next to you. The adults have learnt this etiquette and young children are being shown example to it.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall findings of this research. The entire chapter is divided into four. The first part commences with a summary of the research findings and outlines the notable results of the research questions. The second part revisits the objectives of the research in relation to its implications. In section 5.4, the researcher highlights some recommendations for future research. Finally, the researcher reflects upon the entire steps and stages of the research and how it has contributed to the literature and how it can further contribute to the linguistics study of the Iban community.

### 5.2 Summary of Findings

Findings of this study provide insights into the manner of realization of directives among Iban. There are five different types of directives realized by the Ibans during family dinner namely, imperatives, elliptical imperatives, hints, want statements, and question directives (see Table 4.1).

The most common directive occurring in the data is imperatives which is realized with the verbs such as *ambi* (take), *meri* (give), *mint*a (request), *kin* (move [away]) and *pakai* (eat). There are also utterances of imperatives with the use of prohibitive verbs like *anang* (do not) and *nibuh* (do not need).

Elliptical imperatives, although very similar to imperatives, do not contain verb. This means that the action required by the speaker is understood by both the speaker and the hearer. The setting plays a huge role in the utterance of elliptical imperatives because a context provides a mutual understanding between the interactors. However, it must be noted that elliptical imperatives are often being accompanied by hand gestures which signaling a desire for something.

The third most realized directives in Iban is hint. Similar to elliptical imperatives, the realization of hints requires a mutual understanding regarding the context between the speaker and the hearer as to ensure the directives are fulfilled. Besides that, the realization of hint also requires a degree of familiarity between the interactors. Without a mutual understanding and familiarity of the context, the hearer can easily misinterpret hint as a statement.

In American English, want statement is the most realized directives, while in Iban it is the fourth. Want statement is used differently in Iban as compared to American English. The Iban uses the transitive verb *ka* (want) while American English uses the transitive verb *need*. It is ultimately revealed that only young children realized directives in the form of want statement. There is no instance where an adult realized want statement.

The least realized directives in Iban is question directives with only 13 occurrences out of 351 total directives. Questions directives are not a popular choice to direct someone because it is open for a broader interpretation and it usually contains no verb. Therefore, the hearer can answer the question with no action taken. Both speaker and hearer need to have a certain degree of familiarity of the context which takes account the setting of the utterance as well as the relationship between them.

Besides that, there are also utterances where the speakers combine two directives which usually imperatives and followed by other directives such as question directives and elliptical directives. The combination of directives is usually realized when the speaker wants to emphasize his requests by getting more attention with repetition.

Unlike the structure of directives in American English (Ervin-Tripp, 1976), there are no occurrence of imbedded imperatives and permission directives in Iban. This may be due to the fact that there is no modal form in the language in general. These directives are



realized according to Iban's social distance, that is the speaker's social status as either a superior, a subordinate, or an equal in comparison to the hearer.

Most of the directives found in the data are uttered by superior speakers to subordinate hearers. The superior, particularly the mother, being one of the breadwinners in the family, dominates dinner talks. The goals of their directives are boiled down to four objectives which are to manage the dining process, to ensure nutritional intake, to ensure food are not wasted, and to reprimand a supposedly unhealthy eating behaviour.

Meanwhile for the children, the directives are realized in order to ask for favour. They usually direct their superiors. With the presence of grandparents within the dinner setting, children usually ask for favour from them rather than from their own parents. Children do not usually direct another child but when they do, the directives are from an older child to a younger one with the goal of managing the dining area. There are very little instances where a younger child directing an older one.

For grandparents, they usually avoid addressing the EGO in the family and direct their grandchildren instead. They assume the role of reinforcement to manage the dining process. This shows a certain degree of respect the grandparents have for the breadwinners. As a result, they assist the breadwinners in managing the young children and making sure to not disturb them for nuance tasks.

### **5.3 Implication of Study**

This study has helped to understand the kind of directives used by the Iban during family dinner and the manner in which they are realized. The study also has noted the way dinner are being conducted with no interruption of smartphones usage among family member. There is no instance of threat being realized throughout the study which rebut

Hepburn & Potter's (2011) findings. Therefore, this study can be utilized to assist harmonious communication within family domain. Apart from that, this study can also serve as a reference to assist effective communication with the Iban. The overall finding of this study suggests that when asking for favour from the Iban, brevity is the key.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Future Research**

This research has its own limitations which constrained the procedure and indirectly affected the findings of the study. However, the researcher had tried her best to mitigate the limitations and work within the constraint of time and resources. This study is limited in term of scope of the data which was collected only from six families in one community of Iban people. As mentioned in the contextual information of the Iban (see 1.5), they are distributed across the island of Borneo. Therefore, in an attempt to generalize the findings, any future research in regard to the subject should include different communities of the Ibanic group.

Moreover, this study is also confined to the type data collected during dinner time. It is undoubtedly that data collected during dinner time is rich, however it is not representative of the entire way of life of the Iban people. Future research on directives within this community should also cover different mealtime of the day in an Iban's routine. Such prospect can provide broader view of how the Iban perform their speech acts. By comparing different time mealtime of the day, future research could potentially yield interesting findings which would enrich literature around directives.

One possible option is to focus on supper where most of the time it involves only the Iban elders. In a longhouse, supper is usually taken at the corridor and consists of neighbours sitting together enjoying some tea or coffee with biscuits and pastry. Research

focusing on supper may provide an insight on how the people in the same generation interact with one another without the presence of the younger generation.

To further extend on this matter, future research could also look into the influence of urbanization on the language and how speech acts are being performed. In the course of this research, there has been zero interference of technology during dinner in all of video recordings despite the fact that they own smartphones and there are 4G connection. If the research was to be conducted in Iban family living in the city, it might have yield different finding due to the assimilation with other culture and level of exposure towards technology.

Instead of focusing on the Iban language, study regarding directives should also be conducted in other languages. The researcher has reviewed a series of studies where the focus was on Scandinavian community. These studies have found intriguing similarities and differences on the use of the languages and how speech acts are being realized. This type of research will definitely yield enriching and insightful result as to how speech acts are being realized in different languages.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The overall research process is proven to be a challenge for the researcher, nonetheless exciting. The researcher had to go through flood in order to reach out to the participating community with the goal to collect authentic and natural occurring data.

Despite being only a preliminary attempt to establish the performance of directives in Iban, this research has indeed given a refreshing insight into this peaceful and harmonious community in the age of technology. Within Iban's family domain, there are still numbers

of aspects left unexplored. It is very exciting to look into this unique community to study their language and culture.

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## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS PRESENTED

### Conference papers presented:

Pragmatics Research Special Interest Group (PReSIG) Seminar 2017

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Title of paper: "The Role of Power and Solidarity in the Performance of Directives in Iban at Family Dinner"

12<sup>th</sup> Free Linguistics Conference 2018

Faculty of Art and Social Science, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur

11<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Title of paper: "Social Distance in the Realization of Directives in Iban during Family Dinner"

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