

Directive Speech Acts As A Strategy to Winning World Competition in The First M-Series Final Documentary By Team Evos Legends

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Abstract

The rapid evolution of competitive gaming has emphasized communication as a crucial strategy in elite tournaments. However, directive speech acts in this high-pressure environment remain largely unexplored in sociopragmatic research. This study addresses that gap by examining the sociopragmatic features of directive speech acts in professional e-sports, using the documentary EVOS Legends: Final M-Series Pertama (M1) as a case study. As findings from a single bounded case, results are specific to this context and should not be generalized to other gaming communities, e-sports titles, or media; this also means the observed patterns may be shaped by the documentary's emphasis on striking, authority-driven exchanges. Spradley's ethnographic framework, comprising domain, taxonomic, and componential analysis, was applied to organize the data and reveal relational patterns across the documentary's narrative stages. A total of 515 directive speech acts were identified and validated through an expert-led Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Taxonomic classification shows register variation shaped by situational constraints: of twenty theoretical directive types, only nine emerged, concentrated in tell (28.74%), order (21.55%), and command (17.09%). Componential

mapping ties this uneven distribution to recipient design and shifting urgency within the team's temporary hierarchy; its consistency with the team's documented authority structure suggests genuine register constraints rather than mere narrative artifact. Authoritative roles use direct commands to enforce strategic plans during orientation and evaluation phases, while peers rely on implicit "tell" functions in declarative form during crisis resolution, enabled by a shared mental model (SMM) of game mechanics that lets brief utterances be read as explicit tactical moves. Rather than proposing a generalized model, this study offers a structural account of linguistic compression and cognitive alignment in one elite e-sports discourse, suggesting testable hypotheses for future research, such as whether implicit directives correlate with faster response times in peer-to-peer versus hierarchical exchanges.

Keywords: *Sociopragmatics, Directive Speech Acts, E-sports, Mobile Legends (MLBB), EVOS Legends, M1 Documentary.*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the digital era has transformed online gaming from a casual hobby into a highly organized and competitive global industry known as electronic sports (e-sports). Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (MLBB), a Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) game, has emerged as one of the most prominent titles, particularly in Indonesia, demanding intensive communication and a high level of cooperation between players to achieve victory (Ambarwati & Rahman, 2022; Mora-cantallops & Sicilia, 2018). In a professional competitive environment, communication is not simply a medium for exchanging information, but rather a strategic tool for coordination (Firdaus & Thamrin, 2023). Directive speech acts are communicative acts intended to make the hearer perform a particular action. According to Searle (1976;1979;1985), Directives include requests, commands, orders, suggestions, and advice. In interactive team-based games, these speech acts become vital because players continuously exchange instructions and must make split-second tactical decisions under high-pressure conditions that determine the outcome of the match.

This phenomenon of professional e-sports communication is clearly captured in documentaries, such as the one documenting the journey of the EVOS Legends team in the first M-Series world championship (M1). The documentary EVOS Legends: Final M-Series Pertama (M1) offers valuable insights into how communication functions within a

professional e-sports team competing at an international level, featuring spontaneous speech from coaches, captains, and players throughout various stages of competition, from initial preparation to the final resolution (Aufderheide, 2007; Hedlund, 2021). In the broader landscape of computer-mediated discourse, e-sports communication represents a reconfigured linguistic environment where traditional boundaries of interaction are constantly challenged (Bezuidenhout, 2013). This shifting digital ecosystem is further amplified by the rise of modern gaming culture and streaming practices, which redefine how professional players construct performance under public scrutiny (Taylor, 2018). While speech acts have been extensively studied in fiction films, their manifestation in e-sports documentary content represents a new linguistic phenomenon that merits deeper investigation through a sociopragmatic lens, which links functional aspects of language to social variables, social roles, institutional authority, and situational urgency (Levinson, 1983; Wolfram Bublitz, 2011).

Despite the increasing interest in this area, earlier studies on directive speech acts still reveal several important gaps. Most current research tends to focus on identifying general categories of illocutionary speech acts in fictional films, without exploring specific types of directives. Additionally, studies that address directive speech acts often restrict their analysis to frequency percentages and do not connect these acts to social factors like character roles (coach, captain, player) or the grammatical forms (imperative, declarative, interrogative) used. Recent research is utilized by the researcher to uncover new developments in this field and to highlight the empirical novelty of this study through a thorough review of global literature. In structured, low-urgency instructional environments such as EFL and university classrooms, researchers like (Farashaiyan et al., 2018; Manulang & Manaf, 2018; Susanti & Liusti, 2025) have noted that directives are widely distributed across various types, including questions, commands, requests, prohibitions, and invitations, where it is crucial to maintain pedagogical hierarchy and social politeness. Likewise, in the realm of fictional films and media platforms like YouTube vlogs, studies by (Hidayah, 2019), Pablos-Ortega (2020; Widyastuti, 2023) show that a

diverse range of directives, such as asking, suggesting, pleading, and advising, are strategically used to enhance complex narrative plots, clarify meanings in internal dialogues, and manage long-term social relationships among characters.

Meanwhile, in professional and high-pressure environments, the language patterns still show significant variety. The research conducted by Holmes & Marra (2004), Stephanie Schnurr (2017), and Bakkar et al. (2025) on workplace discussions and institutional meetings reveals directive forms such as requests, orders, and collaborative questions that are aimed at task delegation, institutional control, and conflict resolution while also maintaining corporate solidarity. Moreover, in the context of casual online multiplayer gaming, scholars like Nardi & Harris (2006), Crispin Thurlow (2011), and Agus Eko Cahyono & Putri Rahmawati Nur Afifah (2026) point out that players employ commands, requests, suggestions, and warnings to achieve real-time tactical coordination and correct errors while also building friendships.

This study specifically addresses a gap in the literature by emphasizing how communication in a professional e-sports documentary under strict time constraints diverges from these established frameworks. Unlike casual gaming or workplace interactions, elite e-sports communication leads to a significant reduction in traditional linguistic categories. Through a descriptive qualitative approach, this study presents a comprehensive sociopragmatic analysis of 515 directive speech acts found in the EVOS Legends M1 documentary. The findings show that the range is condensed into a highly focused representation of only nine out of twenty theoretically possible directive types, with a strong prevalence of tell (28.74%), order (21.55%), and command (17.09%). Similar observations have been made in studies of institutional communication, where authoritative and task-oriented environments favor direct directives to ensure clarity and reduce ambiguity (Bezuidenhout, 2013).

In this competitive setting, extended instructions and passive phrasing are rarely used due to the high stress levels experienced by players. Instead, short tells and quick updates are quickly recognized as clear tactical commands, reflecting a pattern of ellipsis

and shared understanding in task-related communication: concise expressions are reduced because both the speaker and the audience share enough familiarity with game mechanics to deduce the intended meaning without it needing to be fully explained. The use of directives also varies by the speaker's role: coaches and captains typically give commands and advice based on their authority, while regular players prefer to use telling and ordering phrases in response to rapidly changing game situations (Wardhaugh, 2006). This study's contribution is not to introduce a new linguistic mechanism, but to explore how established sociopragmatic processes like shared knowledge interact with speaker roles, types of directives, and real-time situational pressure in a professional e-sports context that has not been previously studied in sociopragmatic research. This study extends the application of sociopragmatics to competitive gaming and offers a detailed view of how strategic communication operates under pressure, providing insight into the language patterns that may contribute to effective coordination in elite e-sports. The results of this embedded single-case study are limited to this specific corpus and should not be interpreted as indicative of e-sports communication, coaching practices, or competitive outcomes beyond the documentary that was analyzed.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a qualitative descriptive design with a sociopragmatic approach to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of real-world linguistic phenomena. Qualitative descriptive research is uniquely suited for this study as it allows the researcher to examine communicative events in their natural, high-pressure context, interpreting social interactions through the precise words uttered by the participants rather than artificial variables (Creswell, 2018). The primary focus of this study is to analyze the types, strategies, and syntactic forms, specifically declarative, interrogative, and imperative modes of directive speech acts, utilized under severe operational duress. The data source for this inquiry is the official e-sports documentary film titled "EVOS Legends: Final M-Series Pertama (M1)," published on the EVOS esports YouTube channel in 2019. This specific documentary was purposively selected because its intense tournament

setting yields a dense, concentrated corpus of natural verbal interactions among the team's core organizational roles, namely the coach, the captain, and the peer players.

The data units in this linguistic inquiry consist of specific clauses, phrases, and sentences containing directive forces, representing the empirical communication realities within the team (Santosa, 2021). To ensure a meticulous and replicable data collection procedure, a systematic four-stage technique was executed. First, the researcher engaged in critical viewing and immersive observation, repeatedly watching the documentary film from beginning to end to grasp the situational context, shifting game phases, and non-verbal cues. Second, through orthographic transcription, all verbal utterances between the coach, captain, and players were transcribed verbatim into a textual manuscript, carefully cross-referencing audio cues with in-game video timelines. Third, the textual data were scanned during the identification and coding phase to isolate directive speech acts from other illocutionary forces, yielding a final corpus of 515 distinct directive data units. Finally, a taxonomical categorization was performed, where the identified directives were systematically coded and cross classified taxonomy of directive types, a framework of grammatical and sentence structures based on (Searle, 1985; Yule, 1996).

To establish rigorous validity and reliability, often conceptualized as trustworthiness, credibility, and dependability in qualitative inquiry, this study implemented strict methodological safeguards (Santosa, 2021). Theoretical triangulation was consistently maintained by checking the empirical data against multiple pragmatic frameworks. Furthermore, to eliminate subjective researcher bias and secure internal validity, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted as an expert-judgment validation instrument. The FGD panel consisted of linguistic experts and e-sports communication analysts who critically audited, debated, and re-verified the classification of all 515 data units. Discrepancies in coding, particularly regarding the functional shift of declarative sentences acting as implicit tell directives, were thoroughly resolved during the FGD until a robust consensus was reached. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using the qualitative interactive analysis model proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994), which

comprises three concurrent flows of activity: data condensation to filter and focus the 515 directive units, data display to organize the matrix of directive types against character roles and match phases, and conclusion drawing or verification to formulate the final sociopragmatic insights regarding the team's communication efficiency.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach; the study identified 515 instances of directive speech acts occurring throughout the documentary. These data were categorized according to the classifications proposed by Searle (1976, 1985) and further interpreted through pragmatic principles discussed by Yule (1996). The findings indicate that only nine directive categories emerged from the twenty theoretically possible directive types. These categories include tell, order, command, advise, ask, suggest, warn, forbid, and beg. Such findings suggest that professional gaming communication prioritizes efficiency and practicality, resulting in the selection of directive forms most suitable for high-speed interaction and tactical coordination. The comprehensive distribution of these directive types, alongside their frequencies and percentages, is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of Directive Speech Acts

Type of Directive Speech Act	Frequency	Percentage
Command	88	17,09%
Order	111	21,55%
Advise	83	16,12%
Tell	148	28,74%
Ask	26	5,05%
Forbid	14	2,72%

Warn	20	3,88%
Suggest	22	4,27%
Beg	3	0,58%
Total	515	100,0%

The quantitative distribution shown in Table 1 reveals a strong concentration of directive utterances; the directive types identified, tell, order, and command, were the most significant, representing 28.74%, 21.55%, and 17.09% of the data, respectively. This prevalence highlights the urgent and action-oriented nature of professional e-sports. Similar findings have been noted in studies of institutional communication, where authoritative and task-focused settings often favor direct directives to ensure clarity and reduce ambiguity (Vásquez & Sharifian, 2013). In competitive gaming, any delay in understanding or misinterpretation can result in immediate tactical failure; hence, concise and direct instructions are essential communication tools.

The study also indicates that the use of directive speech acts varies depending on the speaker’s social role within the team. Coaches and captains often use commands and advice because their authority provides them with greater legitimacy in guiding team behavior. Their directives typically serve to reinforce discipline, adherence to strategy, and performance optimization. Conversely, ordinary players tend to rely more on telling and ordering expressions when coordinating movements and reacting to rapidly changing game situations. This finding supports sociopragmatic theories that suggest linguistic choices are shaped not only by communicative goals but also by social relationships and power dynamics within specific communities of practice (Wardhaugh, 2006)

To carry out a true sociopragmatic analysis instead of a simple distributional or statistical count, this study systematically connects these nine directive types to the speaker’s institutional roles, situational urgency, and recipient design. Under

intense time constraints, team members frequently utilize indirect communication strategies through declarative constructions or truncated elliptical data. Such indirectness became effective because team members shared extensive knowledge of game mechanics, strategies, and contextual cues. This phenomenon aligns with sociopragmatic perspectives emphasizing that successful communication depends on common ground and shared contextual understanding between interlocutors (Cutting, 2002). In the EVOS Legends team, implicit statements could be immediately interpreted as tactical instructions because players possessed a collective understanding of gameplay situations and strategic objectives, conceptually articulated in organizational communication as a Shared Mental Model (SMM) (Mathieu et al., 2000; Muslimin, 2024).

Command

The first type is the command. According to Searle, the command type is used to give orders to the interlocutor without any element of refusal. This type is used by people in authority, in this case, the coaches and captains, whose instructions must be followed. The command type was found in 88 items, indicating its significant relevance in relation to direct speech strategies. An example can be seen in the following data:

Data 35	play the best game you've ever played
Context	The conversation took place between the coach and the players who ordered them to play well and with total commitment.
Implication	The coach's final order is to give everything in the arena to get the best results.

In example 35 above, a conversation occurs between the coach and the players, ordering them to play with total commitment and all-out effort to achieve maximum results. This conversation occurs early in the film, before the match has even begun. In the early stages of the conversation, there is a lot of one-way

communication, from the coach to the players. The communication often contains tactical and firm instructions aimed at disciplining the players and building their confidence. Commands are always associated with direct speech and is usually accompanied by an imperative mood (Risselada, 1993), as indicated that imperative moods like (command) only come from people with power or authority (Karandeeva et al., 2020).

Order

The second type is the order. This type has the same meaning as the command type, but it has a refusal option and can be used by the public without any binding authority. The order type has 111 data points, indicating that this type of utterance is widely used by EVOS Legends players in this documentary. An example can be seen in the following data sample:

Data 86	<i>tarik ke gua (pull on me)</i>
Context	The incident occurred when a player, Wan, told his teammates to attract the enemy and direct him to be eliminated.
Implication	Coordination instructions to draw the enemy to a certain position.

In the example above, data 86 occurs when player Wan orders his teammate Donkey to kidnap and drag an enemy for elimination. Unlike the command type, the command-based order type can be carried out by anyone without power or authority (Searle, 1985), although both types often use an imperative mode. Moreover, in this situation, it is evident that this particular type of order is exclusively utilized by players lacking authority within the team, allowing them to issue commands without imposing burdens on one another.

Advise

The third type is advice, which means recommending an action deemed beneficial or advantageous. Advice can be an assertive expression, taking the form of a statement, a directive, or a command. 83 instances of this type of advice were

found, and it is often used by coaches and captains as important advice both in and out of the game. Here are some examples of these utterances:

Data 11	<i>ya sebelumnya kan udah dibilang harus jaga kesehatan. (Previously, it was said that you have to take care of your health.)</i>
Context	This advice was given during a briefing before the match started by the coach, who kept reminding the players to take care of their health.
Implication	Coach's warning regarding the obligation to maintain health.

Based on data 11 above, the conversation took place between the coach and the players before the match. The coach used this type of advice conversation to track and control his players, who had been preparing for the tournament for a long time. The advice wasn't just focused on immediate benefits, but rather on long-term benefits and the potential consequences if not implemented. This is similar to Prayitno et al (2017;2021), who stated that advice acts as a guide that contains valuable and learned lessons from speakers, which can be employed as reasons for partners to take action. This indicates that a partner is recommended for what the speaker should pursue. Moreover, the directive speech act of suggesting a category is generally accompanied by linguistic markers and should not belittle individuals thoughtlessly. Thus, advising is perceived as an utterance that the speaker intends for the hearer to interpret as a directive to undertake actions that are beneficial for the hearer.

Ask

The fourth type is the ask. Ask has two illocutionary meanings: requesting and asking. If the question requires an answer, it is considered a directive. The use of the asking type can be concluded as a request function (Widyastuti, 2023). This study found 26 ask types, and they are used as monitoring tools both inside and outside the game. For example:

Data 312	<i>bisa cycle ga? (can you do the cycle?)</i>
Context	This question was asked by Rekt, the captain to Donkey the player who asked about his hero's ultimate skill whether it was ready to be used or not.
Implication	An initiation to prepare to attack the enemy by asking what skills the player has.

The 312 data above shows a question posed by Captain Rekt to player Donkey regarding the opponent's skills or abilities. Questions are often used as a form of two-way communication within a team, both in-game (relating to opponents) and outside of the game, dealing with technical issues. As previously stated, in the execution of directive speech acts, it is essential to consider two key variables: the relationship dynamics between the interlocutors, namely the speaker and the hearer, and the intended action for which the directive speech act is being executed (Pablos-Ortega, 2020). In the directive speech acts present in this film, both players and the coach employ question utterances to guide the hearer towards supplying particular information, confirming details, or offering suggestions.

Tell

The fifth type is tell. Tell has the dual meaning of providing a fact and giving an order (tell to), with no option to refuse (Searle, 1976). This type of tell in this study has a very large data set, totaling 148. Although this type has irresistible directive power, it is often spoken indirectly. This occurs because of the shared knowledge base between players, allowing players to understand the intended meaning of the utterance, even if it is implicit. For example, as follows:

Data 346	<i>28 seconds, LORD LORD.</i>
Context	This conversation occurs between a player, namely Donkey, to his partner who informs him that the lord will appear in 28 seconds.

Implication	Call to prepare and gather in the lord area to his teammates in the next 28 seconds.
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In data 346, Donkey uses the declarative mode (tell) to inform his teammates about the Lord's appearance. The statement is grammatically declarative, but its illocutionary force acts as a directive, consistent with Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1976) assertion that illocutionary force does not have to align with grammatical mood. Traditional accounts often attribute these mismatches in indirect speech acts to politeness, social distance, or face-saving strategies. However, data 346 reveals a different motivation: the shift from declarative to directive is not due to politeness but rather to domain-specific shared knowledge, particularly a mutual understanding of the Lord's tactical importance and the urgency to act. In the high-pressure context of elite competition, this shared knowledge allows a statement without explicit imperative cues to be quickly understood and acted upon as an instruction. This finding does not challenge the form-function distinction established by Austin and Searle; instead, it empirically extends it, showing how domain-specific shared knowledge in a fast-paced team setting facilitates this shift, rather than the socio-cultural motivations highlighted in classical accounts (Degaf & Anggrisia, 2024).

Forbid

The sixth type is forbid. This type of utterance was found in 14 data sets. Forbid has the same equivalent, prohibit. Both types are directives, but the difference is that prohibit is used as a permanent or long-term prohibition, while forbid is a prohibition that is not time-bound (Searle, 1985). This can be seen in the following example:

Data 34	<i>jangan under estimate jadi diri kita sendiri (don't underestimate being ourselves)</i>
Context	This speech was made by the coach who forbade the players from being discouraged.
Implication	The coach's explicit warning to his team to stay motivated and confident.

Based on data 34 above, the forbid type of utterance was used by the coach, who forbade his students (EVOS players) from doubting their own abilities. This type is often found with the word "don't" at the beginning of the sentence (Pamungkas & Utanto, 2018).

Warn

The seventh type of directive is the warn. This type of utterance was found in 20 utterances. A warning is an utterance aimed at making someone aware of a detrimental or negative situation that needs to be avoided (Searle, 1985). In this study, the warning type was used as a means of controlling individuals so that they do not do something detrimental to the team. For example, the following:

Data 134	<i>Sabar dia ada ulti bentar lagi.(Be patient, he has an ultimate soon.)</i>
Context	This speech is spoken by the player, namely Luminaire, as a warning to delay attacks on the enemy.
Implication	The player, Luminaire warned his teammates not to be reckless in attacking the enemy, considering that the enemy would soon have an ultimate.

Based on data 134 above, the warning type was used by a player named Luminaire to warn his teammates not to rush into an ambush. The team wanted to avoid this type of directive to avoid fatal mistakes in the future. Therefore, this type

of utterance is crucial, especially during the game, as it serves as a tool for control and minimizing errors within a team.

Suggest

The eighth type is suggest. This type was found in 22 instances. Suggest is a weak directive, where the interlocutor is not obligated to follow the speaker's advice (Searle, 1985). Here is an example of this utterance:

Data 56	<i>kita bisa co bisa. (we can do it bro)</i>
Context	This quote is delivered by player Luminaire as advice to his teammates on eliminating the lord.
Implication	Optimistic advice from a player to remain fearless and confident in eliminating the lord.

The suggest utterance is found in data 56, used by Luminaire to direct his team to make the decision to eliminate the lord. Suggest is a directive with low power, allowing the interlocutor to reject the speaker's suggestion if they feel it is inappropriate.

Beg

The final type is beg. Beg has the fewest data points, with only three. Beg means a request, but is accompanied by sincerity and humility. Here is an example of this utterance:

Data 123	<i>plis lah yur plis gua gabisa yur kalo terlalu kaya gitu yur. (Please, please, I can't continue if you're like that.)</i>
Context	This statement was uttered by the player, Luminaire, as a request to his teammate, Yurino or Donkey, not to get emotional often during the match.
Implication	Request between players to be able to cooperate in a team.

Based on the data 123 above, the beg type is used by Luminaire towards his teammate, Yurino, so he can control his emotions during the match. The directive

acts categorized as begging were strictly limited, with only three instances (0,58%). This is in line because this film is a documentary that raises the reality of the gaming world on the international stage, so that it is very rare to find this type of utterance, considering that this is not a drama or social life genre film. Although only very little, the role of this type is very crucial, considering that this is not an ordinary request but a request accompanied by humility and sincerity so that the interlocutor can be controlled (be conditioned).

CONCLUSION

This analysis provides a comprehensive sociopragmatic overview of directive speech acts within the professional e-sports landscape, revealing how verbal strategies are rigorously condensed under the pressures of high-stakes tournament conditions. Instead of merely presenting a statistical distribution, the identification of a specialized subset of only nine directive types from Searle's twenty theoretical categories across 515 data points highlights a functional adaptation in digital discourse. The significant concentration in tell (28.74%), order (21.55%), and command (17.09%) demonstrates that professional competitive communication is strictly governed by institutional role hierarchies and immediate situational urgency. Authoritative figures, particularly the coach and the captain, utilize command and advice to systematically enforce tactical frameworks and maintain collective discipline. In contrast, the dense frequency of tell and order among peer players reveals a highly specialized linguistic mechanism: under severe time constraints, players rely on abbreviated declarative modes infused with implicit directive forces. Driven by a Shared Mental Model and an advanced mutual understanding of game mechanics, these concise informational cues are decoded instantly, transforming passive observations into explicit, coordinated tactical maneuvers.

Regardless of this discovery, the study points out two key methodological limitations that create significant opportunities for future empirical research. First,

because the corpus was taken from the documentary EVOS Legends: The First M-Series Final (M1), the identified speech act distribution should be interpreted carefully due to possible biases from curation and media editing. To address the inherent gap between post-production narrative framing and actual verbal interactions in the game, the research uses Focus Group Discussions (FGD) led by experts as a qualitative validation method. The FGD verified that while filmmakers selectively curated dramatic and engaging conversations over regular communication, the linguistic units analyzed still maintained their situational authenticity, reflecting natural tactical discourse rather than scripted dialogue for audience consumption. However, to accurately capture the pure baseline of esports interactions at the exact moment, future linguistic projects should focus on raw, unedited in-game voice recordings. Secondly, as a single case study, these findings are inherently linked to this specific Indonesian MLBB team during their M1 campaign; thus, there are no broad empirical claims applicable to other esports titles (like Dota 2, League of Legends, Counter-Strike), different team compositions, or diverse cultural contexts. Rather than aiming for universal generalizations, this study offers a local structural baseline for verbal efficiency within a high-context cultural framework.

As a result, future research should build upon this foundation by conducting large-scale comparative studies that examine the dynamics of winning and losing teams. By cross-examining raw communication data with concrete performance metrics such as gold differentials, objective control, and match outcomes, future scholars can ascertain whether these specific directive patterns universally optimize verbal interaction efficiency or if alternative, decentralized communication models yield superior team performance in international tournaments.

AI Declaration

The authors declare that Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were used only as assistive instruments during the preparation of this manuscript. Specifically, the following tools were employed for targeted administrative and stylistic purposes: Gemini was used for language clarity, structural refinement of arguments, and manuscript formatting; Grammarly was applied for advanced grammatical correction and proofreading; and Consensus AI was utilized during the literature mapping phase to synthesize comparative data structures from international repositories. The AI tool did not generate, fabricate, or manipulate research data, analysis, interpretations, or references. All AI-generated outputs were carefully reviewed, verified, and edited by the authors, who take full responsibility for the content of the manuscript. This use of AI complies with the Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement of the *Journal of Pragmatics Research*.

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