

PRAGMATICS ANALYSIS OF DIRECTIVE ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS IN SPIDER-MAN: NO WAY HOME MOVIE

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Abstract:

This research entitled "Pragmatic Analysis of Directive Illocutionary Acts in Spider-Man: No Way Home Movie" aims to (1) identify the types of directive illocutionary acts and (2) find out the form of utterance contained in the dialogue. In this study, the theory of types of directive illocutionary acts according to Bach and Harnish (1979) and the forms of utterance of speech acts according to Parker (1994) are used. This research uses qualitative-descriptive method with the following research steps: determining the topic, conducting preliminary research, formulating problems, determining research methods, collecting, classifying, and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions and suggestions. The results of the research show that (1) from 53 data found in the movie Spider-Man: No Way Home, there are five types of directive illocutionary acts found with the following details: 24 data are requestives, 20 data are requirements, 5 data are advisories, 3 data are prohibitives, and 1 data is questions. There are no directive illocutionary acts expressing permissives found. (2) Regarding the form of utterance, 35 data are delivered directly, and 18 data are delivered indirectly. This research concludes that the directive illocutionary acts in the movie "Spider-Man: No Way Home" are dominated by requestives. While the most dominant form of utterance is conveyed directly.



Keyword: *pragmatics; directive illocutionary acts; form of utterance*

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INTRODUCTION

Words can perform an act. When a speaker using words to guide the hearer towards a specific action or response, it is called directive speech acts. Individuals may utter the speech acts in ways that are not always direct; it can be indirect (Wijana in Yasen, 2021). This phenomenon can lead to misunderstandings, where the hearer either does not perform the desired action or responds in a way that the speaker did not intend. For example, when someone says, 'Is it hot in here?' they may not just be asking a question but suggesting that the window should be opened or that they would like to move to a cooler place. The communication process can lead to different interpretations of the meanings conveyed by the speaker and understood by the hearer. Also, everyone has their unique way of communicating

their intentions, which depends on various social characteristics, as well as the situation and context of the speech (Hendar, 2021). To minimize these issues, it is essential to explore how illocutionary acts especially directives function in communication.

To show novelty, there are multiple works of literature had reviewed and examined. First, research conducted by (Hendar et al., 2021) entitled “Pragmatics Analysis on The Classification And Types of Directive Speech Acts in *Raya And The Last Dragon* Movie”. One of the objective of the research is similar with current research which to find out the types of directive speech act. The differences between this research and the current research is the theory used to classified the types of directive speech acts. They used Yule (1963) and Peccei (1999) theory on the classification of directive speech acts, and also used Wijana (1996) theory to find out the delivery strategy.

Second, research conducted by Oktaviani et al. (2021) titled “Directive Illocutionary Acts in *Me Before You* Movie”. The similarity between this research and the current study is the aim of the study to know the types of directive illocutionary acts used. The differences between this research and the current research are the theory that used to find out the types of directive illocutionary acts and the data source. They used

Third, an article entitled “Directive Illocutionary And Perlocutionary Acts in *Missing (2023) Movie*” by Aminnudin et al. (2023). The similarity is the method that used used descriptive qualitative method. The differences are the aim, the theory, and the data source. This research aims to examine the occasions of directive illocutionary by Searle and perlocutionary acts by Austin in the *Missing (2023)* movie.

Fourth, research was taken from an article by Cahyani & Ardiantari (2024) entitled “Exploring Directive Illocutionary Acts in “*Avatar: the Way of Water*” Movie”. The similarity is the purpose of the research which was to find out the directive speech acts in dialog film. The difference between these two studies is the data source and also the method used where this study uses the theory from Searle (1979) on types of illocutionary acts and by Yule (1996) on types of directive illocutionary acts.

The last research examined is authored by Syammmary et al. (2024) entitled “Student Directive Speech Acts to Teachers and Peers in Arabic Language Learning”. The similarity is the theory used related to directive illocutionary acts which is Bach and Harnish (1979). This research found out that requestives speech act used when asking, encouraging, and inviting, questions used when asking, investigating, and invoking, requirements used when giving orders and instructing, prohibitives used when prohibiting, advisories used when suggesting, and permissives used when asking permission. Even though this research and the current research used the same theory from Bach and Harnish (1979), the current research explores more about form of utterance about speech act in film dialog while the research conducted by Naufal et al focused on key aspects of speech acts in the context of Arabic language learning.

Directives are not only found in everyday life but can also be found in creative works of art such as films. A film can function as a medium to convey the message of speech actions quickly expressed by the characters through dialogue or action, considering that the film itself is generally not much different from everyday life (Mudjiono, 2011). Interaction within a film is manifested through speech acts that are conveyed in the dialogues of its characters (Supri, 2021) For this research, the film *Spider-Man: No Way Home* was chosen to be the data resource.

Based on the background above, this research will investigate what type of directive illocutionary acts used by the character in *Spider-Man: No Way Home* movie and what is the form of utterance conveyed in the dialog.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pragmatics

According to Levinson (1983: 7), pragmatics is the study of language from a functional perspective, aiming to explain aspects of linguistic structure by referencing non-linguistic pressures and causes. In other words, pragmatics seeks to explain linguistic structure in relation to non-linguistic influences and phenomena.

Leech (1983: 1) stated that pragmatics is an increasingly popular subdiscipline of linguistics. This is due to the growing awareness among linguists that understanding the nature of language will not succeed without grasping pragmatics, which is how language is used in communication.

Yule (1996: 47) further explained that pragmatics investigates the meaning conveyed by the speaker and interpreted by the listener. Pragmatic study focuses on utterances within their context and on the language users—both the speaker and the listener—who are involved in the communication process. Therefore, speakers can use language appropriately according to the situation and understand the relationship between context and the maxims or rules of conversation.

Speech Acts

Speech act theory was proposed by Oxford philosopher John Langshaw Austin (1962) in his book "How to Do Things with Words", and later developed further by American philosopher J.R. Searle. In conversations, most utterances do not merely convey meaning; they are designed to achieve something, such as persuading someone to believe something or prompting someone to take action (Austin, 1962).

Searle (1969: 16) argues that the unit of linguistic communication is not, as commonly thought, the symbol, word, or sentence, or even the sign of the symbol, word, or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol, word, or sentence in performing a speech act. He also asserts that speech act theory pertains to the use of language to perform actions and highlights the universal distinction between 'saying' and 'doing.' When a speaker delivers an utterance, the listener must be able to interpret the speaker's intent and what they desire, so the listener can act accordingly.

According to Yule (1996: 47), a speech act is an action performed through utterances. This means that a speech act is an action conducted through language; when a speaker says something, they expect the listener to do something in response to what was said.

Austin (1962) distinguishes three types of speech acts. First, locutionary acts (the act of saying something) involve conveying information or messages verbally to the listener. Second, illocutionary acts (the act of doing something) involve requesting something from the listener. Finally, perlocutionary acts (the act of affecting someone) refer to the consequences of the illocutionary act as directed toward the listener. The effect of the illocutionary act can influence the listener's feelings, thoughts, or actions.

Illocutionary Acts

An illocutionary act is the act of doing something based on what is said (Habermas, 1998). Illocution refers to what is accomplished by communicating the intent to achieve something. Through utterances, people can create something new, prompt someone to take action, change a situation, and so on. For example, when a marriage officiant says, "I now pronounce you husband and wife," the utterance creates something new—at that moment, the couple becomes legally married and can start a family

together. Therefore, the utterance does not describe something but instead declares a situation that will take place if spoken correctly and intended properly. Illocutionary acts are not subject to truth conditions, as they are the performance of an action through speaking and are not descriptive (Austin, 1962: 99)

An illocutionary act is the intended action or function performed by a speaker through their utterances. This act involves conveying a specific intention, attitude, or commitment. Illocutionary acts include making requests, giving commands, making promises, expressing opinions, and performing many other communicative functions. Searle (1969) categorizes illocutionary acts into five types: assertives, directives, commissives, declarations, and expressives.

Directive Illocutionary Acts

A philosopher, Searle (1969) said that directives are speech acts where the speaker tries to get the hearer to do something. The goal is to make the world match the speaker's words, driven by the speaker's desire or wish. The content of these directives always involves the hearer doing something in the future. Examples of directive verbs include ask, order, command, request, and invite. Leech (1983) also conveys that directive sentences are intended to produce several effects through actions by the speaker to the hearer such as commanding, requesting, advising, and recommending. Bach & Harnish (1979) stated that directives expressed the speaker's attitude toward a future action to be performed by the hearer and the speaker's intention or desire that the hearer takes the utterance or the attitude it reflects as a reason to act. Without this intention, directives would merely be constatives, with the only restriction being that the action is attributed to the hearer. Then, Bach & Harnish (1979) classified directive illocutionary acts into six categories, requestives, questions, requirements, prohibitives, permissives, and advisories.

Requestives

Requestives aim to show the speaker's desire for the hearer to do something. It indicates the speaker's intention so that the hearer can use the expression of his desire as an excuse to act. In other words, the speaker hopes that his desire can be a reason for the hearer to take such action. Bach & Harnish (1979) revealed verbs that categorized as requestives which are ask, beg, beseech, implore, insist, invite, petition, plead, pray, request, solicit, summon, supplicate, tell, urge.

Questions

Questions is a special case of directive because what the speaker asks is for the speaking partner to provide certain information to the speaker. The speaker asks a question to the hearer with the dual objectives of seeking to ascertain the truth or untruth of a proposition and fulfilling the speaker's desire to know the information.

Requirements

Requirements is where the intention expressed by the speaker is for the speaking partner to consider the speaker's remarks as a reason to act. The speaker expressed his belief that his speech motivated the speaker partner to act. The speaker assumes that he has authority over his speaking partner (physical, psychological, or institutional) that influences his speech when he expresses his or her beliefs and intentions accordingly. There are some verbs that often used to express requirements, such as command,

demand, instruct, order, require.

Prohibitives

Prohibitives means forbidding the hearer to act. The speaker states that his speech can influence the hearer not to take action. He separates verbs that are included in the prohibition because they have different grammatical forms, such as forbid, prohibit, proscribe, and restrict.

Permissives

Permissives in saying an utterance means that the speaker wants the speaking partner to take an action. The speaker gives confidence to the speaking partner to have the freedom to act, granting permission explicitly intended to grant the permission request or remove some restrictions previously imposed on the intended action. Therefore, it will be seen that the speaker assumes that the request has been made or that there is a restriction. Some of the verbs for permissive are often used, such as dismiss, excuse, and release.

Advisories

Advisories can be interpreted as a message asking a peer to do something. Speakers don't say that they want to do something, but they believe that doing it is a good and good idea for them. The speaker also said that he wants the speaking partner to consider the speaker's beliefs. Admonish, advise, caution, suggest, urge, warn are some of verbs that categorized as advisories.

Form of Utterance

Parker (1994) stated, "In general, an illocutionary act is issued directly when the syntactic form of the utterance matches the illocutionary force of the utterance." From this statement, can be concluded that direct illocutionary acts is when the syntactic form of utterance matches the illocutionary force, and indirect illocutionary acts is when the syntactic form of utterance does not match the illocutionary force.

Syntactic form refers to the relationship between words as they come together to form ideas and as part of sentence structure. According to Rothstein in Putri (2013), "a sentence is a word or group of words that conveys meaning to the hearer, can be responded to, or is part of a response, and is punctuated." A sentence is a word or a sequence of words that communicates meaning to the hearer, can be considered a response or part of a response, and is punctuated. Nordquist in Hidayatullah & Nur (2019), mentions that sentences can be categorized into four types based on their syntactic structure: declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory. According to Searle in Sari & Sinaga (2012), illocutionary force refers to the speaker's intention behind an utterance. When a speaker says something, it can carry a message or meaning intended to prompt the hearer to take action, potentially leading to a specific outcome. The strength of this illocutionary force depends on what is said, considering the function of the words and the purpose in the speaker's mind (Cutting in Sagita & Setiawan, 2020). It can be assertive, directive, commissive, yes-no question, or wh-question.

Parker (1994: 21) summarized that the declarative form is used for representative, commissive, and declaration illocutionary forces. The imperative form is used for directive illocutionary force. The yes-no interrogative form is used for yes-no question illocutionary force. The wh-interrogative form is used for wh-question illocutionary force. The

exclamatory form is used for expressive illocutionary force.

[1] "Keep quiet." (Parker, 1994: 21)

[2] "Did you bring any tennis balls?" (Bach & Harnish, 1979: 76)

In example [1] "Keep quiet." demonstrates an imperative sentence structure, which is characterized by the use of the base form of the verb without a subject. This syntactic form is typically employed to give commands or instructions. The illocutionary force here is directive, as the speaker is commanding the hearer to remain silent, thus directing the hearer's actions. This is an example of direct illocutionary acts. In contrast, the example [2], "Did you bring any tennis balls?" follows a yes-no interrogative syntactic form, marked by the inversion of the subject (you) and the auxiliary verb (did). This structure is commonly used to ask questions that anticipate a yes or no answer. The illocutionary force in this case is assertive, as the speaker is seeking confirmation or information from the hearer regarding whether or not they brought tennis balls. The question implies that the speaker expects a factual response, rather than directing the hearer to act. This is an example of indirect illocutionary acts.

METHOD

The type of research employed in this study is qualitative-descriptive. According to Anggito & Setiawan (2018), qualitative research involves data collection in a natural setting to interpret phenomena, where the researcher serves as the key instrument. Then, the data found is analyzed using the descriptive analysis method, which explains or describes the research object through the analyzed data.

The research data is a written document in the dialogue from the Spider-Man: No Way Home movie. This film was released on 15th December 2021, and directed by Jon Watts. As an action movie, Spider-Man: No Way Home presents many examples of directive speech acts such as requests, orders, suggestions, or prohibitions. This film provides insight into how language functions in a variety of social and narrative contexts. To get the data needed, the writer did the following steps: watching the movie repeatedly, transcribing the dialogue, searching the data, classifying the data, analyzing the data, and drawing a conclusion related to the types of directive illocutionary acts and form of utterance of illocutionary acts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis of 5 out of the 53 collected data. The data are classified according to the six types of directive illocutionary acts based on Bach & Harnish (1979), there are requestives, questions, requirements, prohibitives, permissives, and advisories. Among these six types, five directive illocutionary acts are found in the Spider-Man: No Way Home movie: requestives, questions, requirements, prohibitives, and advisories. Also, this section discusses whether these data are delivered directly or indirectly based on Parker (1994) theory about form of utterance.

1. Requestives Directive Illocutionary Acts

In the previous film, Spider-Man: Far From Home, May and Happy were shown to have a relationship that went beyond mere friendship. In this film (Spider-Man: No Way Home), however, Happy asks May about their relationship, and May firmly responds that their relationship has ended. Meanwhile, Peter Parker and MJ have just arrived at the apartment after seeing the news about Spider-Man's identity being revealed. May and Happy go to Peter's room after hearing a noise. May greets MJ, while Peter

asks Happy, who appears sad, how he's doing.

Peter : "Wait, have you been crying?"

Happy : "We broke up."

Peter : "Oh... oh. I didn't know you guys broke up. I thought you were in love, May. **Can we talk about this in the kitchen?**"

(SMNWH/00:03:52-00:04:04)

In the presented utterance, "Can we talk about this in the kitchen?" categorized as directive illocutionary acts because the speaker is requesting the hearer to do something. This utterance is classified as a **Requestives** because Peter is expressing his desire for the hearer to take an action. This is indicated by the use of the modal auxiliary "Can," which suggests a request. Within the requestives category, the utterance "Can we talk about this in the kitchen?" is an ask. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word ask is defined as "to tell somebody that you would like them to do something or that you would like something to happen." In this data, Peter is asking May and Happy to move to the kitchen to discuss their relationship.

In terms of the form of utterance, the utterance "Can we talk about this in the kitchen?" in dialog above delivered **indirectly**. This is because the utterance falls into the category of a yes-no interrogative syntactic form with directive illocutionary force. The syntactic form in the utterance is marked by the modal auxiliary "Can," which indicates a question intended as a request. The question mark (?) at the end of the utterance classifies it as an interrogative. However, the illocutionary force is directive, as the speaker is requesting the hearer to do something which in the dialog to discuss May and Happy relationship in the kitchen. Based on the analysis above, this utterance is considered as indirect because its syntactic form does not match with its illocutionary force.

2. Questions Directive Illocutionary Acts

Peter Parker has just encountered a villain from another multiverse, Doc Ock. They engage in a fierce battle, and at one point, Doc Ock is struck and utters something that Peter doesn't understand because the context refers to MJ in Doc Ock's multiverse, specifically Mary Jane. Then, Peter asks for clarification, asking Doc Ock to repeat what he said.

Doc Ock: "I should have killed your little girlfriend when I had the chance."

Peter : "**What did you just say?**"

(SMNWH/00:30:18-00:30:27)

In the utterance, "What did you just say?" qualifies as a directive illocutionary act because the speaker (Peter) wants the hearer (Doc Ock) to repeat what he has just said. This type of directive illocutionary act is categorized as a **Question** because the speaker is asking the hearer to provide specific information, which the meaning behind what was previously said. The use of the wh-question "what" at the beginning of the utterance and the question mark (?) at the end indicate that the speaker is expecting a response from the hearer.

Form of utterance in data, "What did you just say?" is delivered **indirectly**. This is because the utterance falls into the category of a wh-interrogative syntactic form with directive illocutionary force. The syntactic structure is indicated by the wh-question "what" placed at the beginning of

the utterance. The presence of a question mark (?) at the end of the sentence further classifies it as an interrogative utterance. However, its illocutionary force is directive because the speaker wants the hearer to do something, namely, repeat what was previously said. Therefore, the utterance in data is considered as indirect because its syntactic form and illocutionary force does not match.

3. Requirements Directive Illocutionary Acts

The dialog below takes place at the beginning of the film when the Sony Company logo appears. A voice-over (v.o.) from E.D.I.T.H (Even Dead, I'm The Hero), an artificial intelligence system embedded in a pair of glasses bequeathed to Peter Parker by Tony Stark, is heard, asking Peter a question. Peter then gives an instruction to E.D.I.T.H to execute an action.

E.D.I.T.H (v.o): "Are you sure you want to commence the drone attack?
There will be significant casualties."

Peter (v.o) : "**Do it. Execute them all.**"

(SMNWH/00:00:28-00:00:34)

The utterance "Do it. Execute them all." is an example of a directive illocutionary act because the speaker expresses a desire for the hearer to carry out the drone attack. This directive illocutionary act is categorized as a **Requirements** because the speaker gives a firm and urgent command to the hearer to perform an action without offering any alternative, as indicated by the use of the imperative verbs "do" and "execute." In the context of requirements, the utterance "Do it. Execute them all." functions as a command. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a command is defined as "(of somebody in a position of authority) to tell somebody to do something." In this dialogue, Peter holds the authority to command E.D.I.T.H to carry out his orders, as he is the rightful owner of the smart glasses.

Form of utterance in data, "Do it. Execute them all." is delivered **directly**. This is because the utterance falls under the category of a positive imperative sentence syntactic form with directive illocutionary force. The syntactic form of the utterance is marked by the use of the base form or bare infinitive of the verbs at the beginning of the sentence without an explicit subject. The verbs "do" and "execute" are used to give a direct command or instruction to the hearer to perform a specific action. The word "it" here refers to the action that the hearer is instructed to carry out, which is to "execute." The illocutionary force is demonstrated by the speaker is commanding the hearer to perform a specific action, in this case, initiating the drone attack. Based on the analysis above, the utterance above is classified as a direct speech act due to its syntactic structure and illocutionary force are match.

4. Prohibitives Directive Illocutionary Acts

In the scene, Peter and Dr. Strange are in conflict over "The Box" due to their different opinions. Peter wants to heal the villains from other multiverses before sending them back, while Dr. Strange wants to return them immediately to prevent further disruption to the multiverse. During their struggle, Dr. Strange uses a spell that separates Peter's physical body from his astral form.

Peter : "(in astral body) Oh my God, I'm dead."

Dr. Strange : "You're not dead. You've just been separated from your

physical form.”
Peter : “My physical—What?!”
Dr. Strange : “(tries to reach The Box from Peter’s physical body but somehow Astral Peter is controlling the body) How are you doing that?”
Peter : “(still in astral body) I have no idea...”
Dr. Strange : “(reaching for The Box) You should not... be able... to do that.”
Peter : “This feels amazing (somehow swims back to reenter his physical body, then tossed back onto the road and flips upright) That might have been one of the coolest things that’s ever happened to me. But **don’t ever do that again.**”
(SMNWH/00:56:23-00:56:51)

The utterance "don't ever do that again" in data above is a directive illocutionary act, as the speaker (Peter) is asking the hearer (Dr. Strange) not to perform a particular action, which in this context, separating his astral form from his physical body. The specific type of directive illocutionary act here is **Prohibitive**, as the speaker is forbidding the hearer from doing something, indicated by the word "don't." In the category of prohibitives, "don't ever do that again" falls under a forbid. According to the Oxford Dictionary, forbid means "to order somebody not to do something; to order that something must not be done." This definition aligns with the dialog, as the speaker is explicitly forbidding the hearer from performing the undesired action, which is using the spell to separate his physical and astral forms.

In terms of the form of utterance, "don't ever do that again" is delivered **directly**. This is because the utterance falls into the category of a negative imperative sentence syntactic form with directive illocutionary force. The syntactic structure of this utterance is shown by the direct command using the negative form "don't," providing an instruction not to perform a specific action. The illocutionary force is directive, as the speaker clearly prohibits the hearer from acting according to his wishes, specifically not to separate his physical body from his astral form again. Based on the analysis, the utterance is classified as a direct speech act due to its syntactic structure and illocutionary force does match.

5. Advisories Directive Illocutionary Acts

Peter invited MJ and Ned to join him in searching for villains from other multiverses. Before taking an action, they have a brief conversation in the Sanctum Sanctorum about how these villains ended up in their world and Peter’s role in the events.

Ned : “So, how did the bad guys get here?”
Dr. Strange : “He screwed up a spell trying to get you into college.”
MJ : “Wait, what? I thought it was the MIT lady you saved.”
Ned : “You did it with magic?!”
Peter : “Uh, no, that was after. **Let’s just focus on the good news**, okay?”

(SMNWH/00:37:45-00:37:57)

The utterance “Let’s just focus on the good news” is a directive illocutionary act because the speaker directs or requests the hearer to shift their attention and discussion to the good news. The type of directive illocutionary act in this utterance is classified as **Advisories**, as it is a suggestion or invitation to do

something. The use of "let's" in the utterance indicates a proposal to do something together, giving the impression of a suggestion or recommendation. The term 'let's' is a contraction of the imperative phrase 'let us,' where 'let' is a verb that functions to grant permission or make a suggestion, and 'us' is a pronoun referring to both the speaker and the hearer. Within the advisories categories, the utterance "Let's just focus on the good news" is a suggestion. According to the Oxford Dictionary, suggest means "to put forward an idea or a plan for other people to think about." In the context of the utterance, Peter is advising his friends to focus on the good news, which is their acceptance into MIT, the university of their dreams, rather than dwelling on how Peter disrupted Dr. Strange's spell.

Form of utterance in dialog, "Let's just focus on the good news" is expressed **directly**. This is because the utterance falls into the category of a positive imperative sentence syntactic form with the directive illocutionary force. The syntactic form of this utterance is indicated by the word 'let's.' Although this sentence does not give a direct command like a typical imperative, the form 'let's' (let us) is used to invite or suggest an action, which still falls within the domain of an imperative sentence. The illocutionary force is demonstrated as the speaker directly instructs the hearer to focus on positive news. Therefore, the utterance in data above is delivered directly because its syntactic structure and illocutionary force are match.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research of the dialogue in Spider-Man: No Way Home movie, the writer has described the directive illocutionary acts which showed what the speaker wants the hearer to perform an act. It can be request, ask, command, forbid, or suggest. The following conclusion will answer the two research questions. In type of directive illocutionary acts, there are 24 data are requestives, 20 data are requirements, 5 data are advisories, 3 data are prohibitives, and 1 data is questions. There are no directive illocutionary acts expressing permissives found. Regarding the form of utterance, 35 data are delivered directly, and 18 data are delivered indirectly. This research concludes that the directive illocutionary acts in the movie Spider-Man: No Way Home is dominated by requestives. While the form of utterance is mostly conveyed directly. This research concludes that understanding what type of directive illocutionary acts, as well as how both direct and indirect forms function, can better interpret the speaker's intention and minimize miscommunication. Future research is expected to expand on the study of illocutionary speech acts by exploring other types, such as assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative acts.

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