

Illocutionary Acts Found in Comic Strips Written by Eleventh Grade of Senior High School Students

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to figure out illocutionary acts found in comic strips. This research was a qualitative research. The data of this research were obtained from comic strips written by senior high school students. This research was conducted at SMAN Agam Cendekia. The population of this research was eleventh grade students of SMAN Agam Cendekia. The researchers found 11 illocutionary acts in total. In detail, there were 6 representative, 4 directive, and 1 commissive illocutionary act. The results implied that eleventh-grade students at SMAN Agam Cendekia tend to focus on conveying information and directing actions through their comic strip dialogues, as indicated by the predominance of representative and directive illocutionary acts. This suggests that the students' primary goal was to communicate ideas, facts, or beliefs and to influence or guide the behavior of the characters. The relatively low occurrence of commissive and the absence of expressive acts might indicate a less frequent use of promises, commitments, or emotional expressions in their narratives. This could reflect the students' narrative style, which emphasizes action and information over emotional depth or future commitments. Overall, the study highlights the linguistic choices made by the students in constructing meaning and interactions in their comic strips.

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui illocutionary acts yang ditemukan dalam strip komik. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif. Data penelitian ini diperoleh dari strip komik yang ditulis oleh siswa SMA. Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMAN Agam Cendekia. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas sebelas SMAN Agam Cendekia. Peneliti menemukan 11 illocutionary acts secara total. Secara rinci, terdapat 6 illocutionary act representative, 4 directive, dan 1 commissive. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas sebelas di SMAN Agam Cendekia cenderung fokus pada penyampaian informasi dan pengarahan tindakan melalui dialog dalam strip komik mereka, seperti yang ditunjukkan oleh dominasi illocutionary act representative dan directive. Hal ini mengindikasikan bahwa tujuan utama siswa adalah untuk mengkomunikasikan ide, fakta, atau keyakinan serta mempengaruhi atau membimbing perilaku karakter. Jumlah illocutionary act commissive yang relatif rendah dan tidak adanya illocutionary act expressive mungkin menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan janji, komitmen, atau ekspresi emosional dalam narasi mereka lebih jarang. Hal ini dapat mencerminkan gaya narasi siswa yang lebih menekankan pada aksi dan informasi daripada kedalaman emosional atau komitmen masa depan. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menyoroti pilihan linguistik yang dibuat oleh siswa dalam membangun makna dan interaksi dalam strip komik mereka.

INTRODUCTION

Language is a sacred gift from God¹. Language is the main means of communication, allowing us to convey our ideas and thoughts to others². Language is a crucial tool that

¹ Chaman Lal Banga, Jyonica Suri, and New Delhi, "Role of Language In Human Life," *International Journal of Language, Literature and Humanities* III, no. VII (2015): 180–97.

² Niyozova Aziza Ilyosovna, "The Importance of English Language," *IJOT 2*, no. 1 (2020): 1028–35, <https://doi.org/10.15864/ijelts.2119>.



connects people and bridges differences. It serves as a medium that reflects the distinctiveness of cultures and thoughts within a region, community, or country³. Language can be described as the means of communication between one individual and another⁴. The number of languages is believed to range from 6,000 to 7,000. While natural language is primarily communicated through speech or gestures, it can also be encoded into other forms, such as writing, braille, or whistling, utilizing sensory inputs like hearing, sight, and touch⁵.

Language is not only a tool for communication but also a means for expressing intentions, beliefs, and emotions. In the study of pragmatics, illocutionary acts play a crucial role in understanding how speakers convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words. Illocutionary acts refer to the speaker's intention behind an utterance, which can be categorized into various types such as representative, directive, commissive, and expressive, among others. These acts shape the way individuals interact, make requests, express opinions, or share emotions in different contexts.

English is a global language due to its status as the main language spoken in most countries around the world. Moreover, it is one of the most important languages to learn or master⁶. It serves as the official or second language in numerous nations, making it essential for international business, diplomacy, education, and technology. As the language of global commerce and the internet, English has become a bridge for people from diverse linguistic backgrounds, enabling them to collaborate, share ideas, and access information across borders. Furthermore, mastering English opens up opportunities in both personal and professional spheres, as it is often a requirement for higher education, employment in multinational companies, and travel. Its widespread use in media, literature, and popular culture also contributes to its importance, making it a key tool for global communication and understanding.

Comic strips, as a form of visual and verbal storytelling, offer an interesting medium through which illocutionary acts can be explored. For senior high school students, creating comic strips is often part of language learning activities, as it combines creativity with language use. By examining the illocutionary acts in these comic strips, we gain insights into how students utilize language to express their thoughts, influence others, and engage in social interaction through their characters.

This research aims to identify and analyze the illocutionary acts found in comic strips written by eleventh-grade students at SMAN Agam Cendekia. Through a qualitative analysis of student-created comic strips, this study seeks to explore the frequency and types of illocutionary acts present, shedding light on how students employ language to fulfill specific communicative purposes in their writing.

Related to illocutionary act analysis, there were some researchers conducted some researches. The first research conducted by Maulidiyah, *et al.*⁷. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach to identify the illocutionary speech acts performed by the politician mentioned above and to understand the purpose behind each speech act. The data analysis revealed that Sherly used sixteen illocutionary speech acts, with assertive speech acts being

³ Sneha Dutta, "The Importance of 'English' Language in Today's World," *International Journal of English Learning and Teaching Skills* 2, no. 1 (n.d.): 1028–35.

⁴ Rizky Yuniarta, Wijayadi, and Linda Mayasari, "An Analysis of Code Switching and Code Mixing Used by the Characters in Novel Perahu Kertas by Dewi Lestari (Dee)," *Tell Journal* 2, no. 1 (2014): 8–14.

⁵ Sharofiddinov Yashnar and Tolibjon Ogli, "The Importance of Language in Society," *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research* 4, no. 10 (2020): 116–18, www.ijeais.org/ijamr.

⁶ Rizki Novia Darma and Hesty Widiastuty, "The Importance of Learning English at School," *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 1, no. 1 (2023): 23–29, <https://doi.org/10.37253/landmark.v1i1.7878>.

⁷ Lukluatul Maulidiyah *et al.*, "The Analysis of Illocutionary Acts Used By Sherly Annavita in Indonesia Lawyers Club," *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching* 9, no. 1 (2021): 53, <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v9i1.3280>.

the most dominant, followed by expressive and directive speech acts. Additionally, Sherly's statements served seven different purposes: expressing opinions, providing notifications, stating arguments, offering advice, giving thanks, offering praise, and making criticisms.

The second research conducted by Rahayu, *et.al*⁸. The purpose of this research was to identify the types of illocutionary acts in the main characters' utterances in the movie *Mirror Mirror*, based on Searle's theory of illocutionary acts, and to examine the context underlying the illocutionary acts of the main characters using Hyme's SPEAKING model. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with the data consisting of the characters' utterances in the *Mirror Mirror* movie. The data collection involved several steps: downloading the movie script, watching the film multiple times, reading and analyzing the dialogue, and selecting the utterances of Queen and Snow White that contained illocutionary acts. In the data analysis, the researcher applied Miles and Huberman's procedures, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The findings show that there are 55 utterances containing illocutionary acts from the main characters. These utterances were categorized into five types: representatives (4), directives (37), declaratives (0), commissives (2), and expressives (12). Directives were the most frequent illocutionary acts, as the main characters often expressed their utterances in direct forms such as orders, requests, questions, and commands.

The next research conducted by Damayanti⁹. This study aimed to analyze the illocutionary acts used in Melati and Isabel Wijsen's United Nations speech, delivered on World Oceans Day 2017. The analysis of these illocutionary acts revealed that utterances can serve as actions that influence people to take certain actions. The study applied a qualitative descriptive method to collect and analyze data, following the model proposed by Miles *et al.* (2014), which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The researcher used Searle's (1976) classification of illocutionary acts as the theoretical framework to categorize the illocutionary utterances found in the speech. The results showed that the speech contained 18 assertives (56.25%), 7 declaratives (21.88%), 4 commissives (12.5%), 3 expressives (9.38%), and no declaratives (0%).

Based on previous researches, most of them discussed about illocutionary acts in English movie and speech. In contrast, this research investigated illocutionary act found in comic strips written by senior high school students. As a result the researchers formulated a research question: 1) What are illocutionary acts found in comic strips written by eleventh-grade senior high school students of Agam Cendekia?

METHODS

This research was a qualitative research with content analysis method. The population of this research was eleventh grade students of Agam Cendekia Senior high school. The data were collected from 6 comic strips written by the students. In collecting the data, the researchers collect the comic strips written by the students in the class. Then, the utterances in the comic strips were analysed individually. As the final step, the researchers classified the illocutionary act by using a theory of speech act from Austin.¹⁰

⁸ Fita Nur Rahayu, M Bahri Arifin, and Setya Ariani, "Illocutionary Act in the Main Characters' Utterances in *Mirror Mirror* Movie," *Jurnal Ilmu Budaya* 2, no. 2 (2018): 175–87.

⁹ Luh Sri Damayanti, "Illocutionary Act Analysis of Melati and Isabel Wijsen Speech at United Nations," *Journal of Linguistic and Literature Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 29–38, <https://doi.org/10.36663/jolles.v2i1.664>.

¹⁰ J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Clarendon Press, 1962), <https://doi.org/10.2307/3326622>.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The researchers found 11 illocutionary acts in comic strips written by the students. The detail of the result can be seen in the table 1.

Table 1. Amount of Illocutionary Act

No	Illocutionary Act	
	Types of Illocutionary Act	Amount
1	Representative	6
2	Directive	4
3	Commissive	1
4	expressive	0
Total		11

Table 1 presents the frequency of different illocutionary acts found in the analyzed data. The table shows that the most frequent illocutionary act is the representative, with 6 instances, followed by directives with 4 occurrences. Commissive acts appear only once, while no expressive illocutionary acts were found in the data. The high number of representatives suggests that the speakers in the study were more focused on expressing beliefs, facts, or opinions, which are characteristic of representative acts. This is consistent with contexts where sharing information or stating one's perspective is a primary objective. The relatively high occurrence of directives (4) indicates that the speakers were also concerned with influencing the behavior of others, potentially guiding actions or requesting something. The minimal occurrence of commissive acts (1) suggests that speakers were less focused on making promises, offers, or commitments to future actions. Finally, the absence of expressive acts points to a possible lack of emotional expression or a focus on actions and information rather than feelings in the analyzed communication. Overall, the distribution of illocutionary acts in this table reflects a communication style oriented more towards conveying information and directing actions rather than making promises or expressing emotions.

DISCUSSION

The first illocutionary act found by the researchers was representative illocutionary act. It is a type of speech act that conveys the speaker's belief or assertion about the truth of a proposition. This act is used when the speaker commits to the truth or accuracy of a statement, based on their perception or understanding of reality.

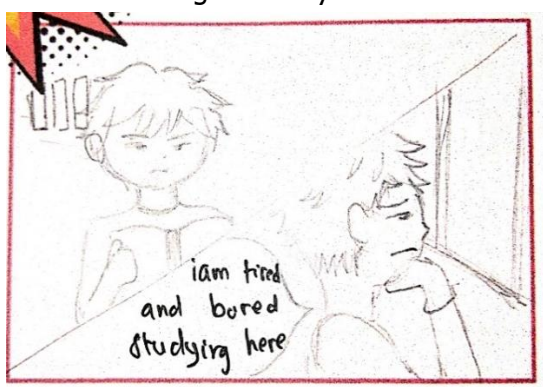


Figure 1 : Representative Illocutionary Act

In Figure 1, the speaker's utterance, "I am tired and bored studying here," is an example of a representative illocutionary act. A representative illocutionary act is one where the speaker asserts a belief or a statement they consider to be true, reflecting their perspective or mental state. In this case, the speaker is expressing their subjective feelings of tiredness and boredom while studying in a particular location. By saying "I am tired and bored," the speaker is committing to the truth of these emotions, effectively stating their current condition. This act does not aim to request or influence the listener's behavior, nor does it involve a promise or a commitment. Instead, it serves to inform the listener about the speaker's state of mind. The statement provides an insight into the speaker's emotional and physical state, communicating frustration or dissatisfaction with the environment or activity. The illocutionary act thus functions to share personal experience, contributing to the flow of information in a conversation, while also potentially inviting empathy or understanding from the listener.

The second illocutionary act was directive. A directive is used when the speaker aims to get the listener to do something or to change their behavior in some way. The core function of a directive is to influence the listener's actions or decisions. In contrast to representative illocutionary acts, which are concerned with expressing beliefs or stating facts, directives involve a request, suggestion, command, or invitation.



Figure 2 : Directive Illocutionary Act

In Figure 2, the utterance "Come on Fasel! Put the fire off" is an example of a directive illocutionary act. The speaker is issuing a command or request, explicitly urging the listener (Fasel) to take action—specifically, to extinguish the fire. This directive acts as a clear instruction, where the speaker expects the listener to follow through with the action of putting out the fire. The force of the directive is amplified by the informal tone and urgency conveyed through the phrase "Come on," which adds a sense of immediacy and perhaps frustration. By using an imperative verb "put off," the speaker directly instructs the listener to perform the action without offering alternatives or options, demonstrating the authoritative or commanding nature of the illocutionary act. The directness of the command indicates a high level of expectation that the listener will comply, and the context (e.g., dealing with a fire) likely heightens the urgency and seriousness of the directive. This example highlights how directives are often used to influence behavior and prompt immediate action, particularly in situations where timely intervention is required.

The last illocutionary act found by the researchers was commissive. A commissive act is one where the speaker commits themselves to a future course of action, making a promise, offer, or vow. The core function of a commissive is to express the speaker's intention to perform a specific act in the future, thus binding them to a certain commitment.

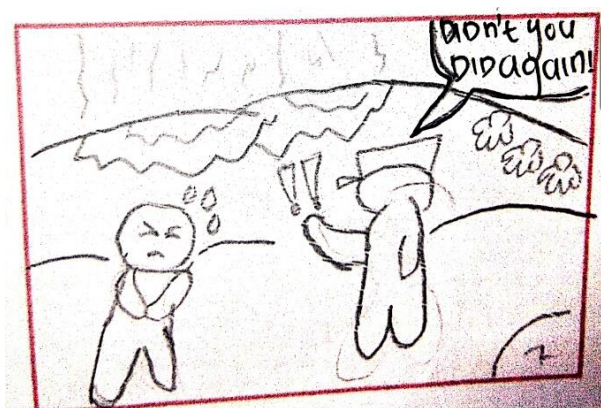


Figure 3 : Commissive Illocutionary Act

In Figure 3, the utterance "Don't you did again" is an example of a commissive illocutionary act, although the phrasing is slightly unconventional. The speaker is expressing an intention or commitment, specifically aimed at preventing a future action from being repeated. The intended meaning behind this statement seems to be a request or promise not to engage in a particular behavior again, thus reflecting the speaker's commitment to ensuring that the action is not repeated. The use of "Don't" is likely meant as a command or strong advice, while "did again" implies a past action the speaker expects the listener to avoid in the future. The commissive nature of this act lies in the speaker's attempt to influence future behavior by establishing an expectation for the listener not to repeat the action. While the phrasing could be clearer ("Don't do it again" would be more grammatically conventional), the essence of a commissive act is still present: the speaker is binding themselves and possibly the listener to a future course of action by implying that the behavior will not be tolerated again. This reflects the speaker's commitment to ensuring that the undesirable action is avoided in the future.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research identified and analyzed three types of illocutionary acts found in comic strips written by senior high school students. The first illocutionary act, representative, was the most frequent, highlighting the students' use of statements to assert beliefs or convey information about their emotional or physical states. The second act, directive, was also prominent, demonstrating the students' tendency to issue commands or requests to influence others' actions or behaviors, often in a direct and authoritative manner. Lastly, the commissive act was found less frequently, reflecting the students' commitment to future actions, though it was often expressed in unconventional phrasing. Overall, these findings suggest that the students predominantly used language to express their perceptions, guide behavior, and make commitments, indicating a focus on communication that emphasizes information sharing and action-oriented dialogue.

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