

Illocutionary Speech Act Analysis of Virtual Youtuber's Viewers in Super Chat

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Abstract: Super chats are popular in the Virtual YouTuber community. This platform enables the viewers to donate their money to express what they feel or react to a certain situation that is happening during the live stream session. This study aims to find out the speech acts and their illocutionary forces used by the viewers of a Virtual Youtuber in super chats. The data were taken from the archive of a Virtual Youtuber live stream as the interactions in the Super Chat. This research used a descriptive qualitative method. The result of this study shows that the most dominant speech act is expressive (46,53%) followed successively by assertive (28,71%), directive (20,80%), and commissive (3,96%). In addition, some illocutionary forces were found, namely asserting, promising, excommunicating, explaining in pain, inquiring, and ordering. Expressive speech act was mostly used, for example when the viewers thanked a Virtual Youtuber because she/he made the viewer have a happy year. By analyzing the viewers' speech act pattern, this study further raises the awareness of what the viewers are trying to express while they are watching their favorite streamers.

Keywords: illocutionary speech act; live streaming; pragmatics; super chat; virtual youtuber

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The recent significant growth of Virtual Youtubers have caught the attention of millions of viewers in the world-famous video publishing site, YouTube. Alongside other social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google, YouTube is one of the world's largest video sharing platforms, where contents in the form of videos are being uploaded continuously by millions of active users (Severyn et al., 2016). Due to its popularity, millions of people take advantage of YouTube to make videos, such as vlogs, short movies, music videos, and more to make money with the help of AdSense. There are also groups of people who prefer to do live streams to earn money through donations.

Live streaming enables the streamer to interact with their viewers via text, emoji, stickers or other modalities through features called live chat and virtual gifting (Lu et al., 2021). In YouTube, these virtual gifts are called *the super chats*, in which viewers are able to donate while sending their desired messages to their favorite streamer. Due to this reason, super chats are extremely popular in the Virtual YouTuber community, because they could donate their money to express what they feel or react to a certain situation that is happening during the live

stream session.

There are many super chats sent by the viewers that contain speech acts. As an example, a viewer sent 50\$ only to say “Give ‘em hell pardner!” to the streamer. At first, this message might seem as if it were intended to order the streamer to do something (directive), but in fact it was to encourage the streamer, since the viewers were attending a racing game tournament. These interactions between the streamer and the viewer contain pragmatic elements, one of which is called speech acts (Ibrahim & Qura, 2021). Pragmatics is the study of intent in relation to speech situations (Jap et al., 2013). The study of pragmatics also examines the context in relation to the corresponding speaker, since the meaning of an utterance is always related to the speaker. Meanwhile, illocutionary acts are one of the speech act types that occurs in minimal human communications (Austin, 1962). It occurs whenever a speaker utters a sentence in an appropriate context with certain intentions, by which it may occur once or more.

In order to determine the speaker’s intention, a framework of speech acts by Searle (1976) was used in this study. According to Searle (1976), speech acts can be classified into five illocutionary acts classifications, namely assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. A sample live stream archive was used to determine the speech acts employed by the viewers through super chats. The analyzed archive of the live stream in this case was one uploaded in the selected Virtual YouTuber’s channel. In conducting this study, the researchers aim to find out the viewers’ trait when they interact with a certain Virtual YouTuber by analyzing which most frequent speech acts types are used and exploring their illocutionary force within the given context. The trend of super chat is currently gaining its momentum and is becoming increasingly prevalent in this era. As a result, this will be the main discussion in this study and will be thoroughly discussed.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Studies of illocutionary act and illocutionary force have been done by several scholars. The researchers have collected some relevant studies with different data. The first study was from Desinta Larasati, Arjulayana, and Cut Novita Srikandi (2020); the title is “An Analysis of The Illocutionary Acts on Donald Trump’s Presidential Candidacy Speech”. The authors describe the various types of illocutionary acts that are delivered in Donald Trump’s speeches. Then they identify and analyze the data using John R. Searle’s concept. As a result of their research, they discovered 77% assertive speech acts, 1% directive speech acts, 18% commissive speech acts, and 4% expressive speech acts in the first speech. While in the second speech, the discovered 88% assertive speech acts, 8% commissive speech acts, and 3% expressive speech acts.

The second research was done by Putri, Suyadi, and Silfia (2021) entitled “An Analysis of Illocutionary Act in “Ratatouille” A Movie by Brad Brid”. Their research uses Yule’s concept and as the result they discovered 10 utterances of representative speech acts, 21 utterances of directive speech acts, 12 utterances of expressive speech acts, and 7 utterances of commissive speech acts. Meanwhile, for illocutionary force research, there is a study that was done by Sari and Sinaga (2012) entitled “Illocutionary Force in The Novel Darkest Hour by Cleo Virginia Andrews”. Their research used descriptive qualitative method. As a result, they discovered 21,29% of asserting, 13,89% of promising, 12,04% of excommunicating, 15,74% of exclaiming in pain, 11,11% of inquiring and 25,91% of ordering. This research attempts to fill in the gaps from the previous studies as it analyzes the online interaction of netizens in a feature called Super Chat.

1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics which is concerned with meaning (Levinson, 1983). Crystal (1997) also states that pragmatics is a term traditionally used to label one of three major divisions of semiotics, along with syntactics and semantics. Pragmatic meaning is connected with the intention of the way speakers communicate with each other (Schiffrin, 2001: 59). It means that the pragmatic meaning is directly related to speakers' utterances which has the speakers' communicative intent. Pragmatics studies how the transmission of meaning depends not only on speakers and hearers' knowledge of linguistics, but also the intentions that can be inferred from the speakers, the contexts of the utterances, knowledge about the status of those involved, and so on. Yule (1996: 46) states that pragmatics is the study of meaning communicated by the writers or speakers interpreted by the readers or hearers. In communicating, the speakers are not only conveyed their ideas to others but also try to communicate the meaning of the conversation. So, it makes the speakers expect the hearers to understand their intention, so the hearers can respond correctly. In addition, Mey (2001) also states that pragmatics is the study of how humans use language. The advantage of studying language via pragmatics is we can understand people's intended meaning, the purpose, the goal, and the kinds of actions (for example: command) that they perform when they speak.

2. Speech Act

Speech act is a subfield of pragmatics, according to Saputro (2015: 16), pragmatics has many scopes such as deixis, speech acts, cooperative principle, presupposition, and implicature. Yule (1966: 47) defines speech act as performed via utterance. It means that speech act is the study of action or expression performed via utterances. Speech act is the study to learn how the speakers produce utterances, so the hearers can recognize their communicative intention. Yule also stated that speech acts are utterances produced by speakers which are commonly used for labeling the form of commanding, informing, promising, requesting or apologizing. When people say "Can you come tomorrow?", it is not only an utterance but also the performing speech act of requesting. Those expressions also carry out some actions such as to greet, to inform, to promise, to apologize, to express feelings, to give advice, and to deliver messages. According to Austin (1962: 108), there are three types of speech acts, locutionary act, illocutionary act, and the last is perlocutionary act. According to Paltridge (2012:40), locutionary act is known as the literal meaning. It means that the meaning of the speaker's utterances is exactly the same as the meaning of the words in the dictionary and it doesn't have any intended meaning. Illocutionary act, according to Sadock (1974: 9) is another intention of the speakers' utterances. Different from locutionary act, it means that the meaning of speaker's utterance has a lot of other meanings. Meanwhile, perlocutionary act is the effect of the hearers' understanding of the speaker's utterances (Alston, 2000: 18).

3. Illocutionary Act

Illocutionary act deals with the speakers' intention while communicating with the hearer. Searle (1976) states that speech acts can be classified into five illocutionary acts classifications, which can be seen as follows:

1. Declarative

Declaratives are the kind of speech acts that can change the situation or the condition via utterances. Some categories of declarative speech act are naming, baptizing, resigning, appointing, and dismissing. The utterance "I hereby announce you husband and wife" is an

example of declarative speech act because the utterance can change the status of a woman and a man into a spouse.

2. Assertive

Assertives are one of speech acts categories that state what the speakers believe to be the case or not. It is a statement of fact, description, assertion, conclusion, and description. The utterance “The earth is spherical” is an example of assertive speech act because the utterance states the fact about the earth.

3. Commissive

Commissives are the category of speech acts that cause the speakers to do something in the future. Threatening, promising, offering, and vowing are some categories of commissive speech acts. The utterance “I won’t lie again” is an example of commissive speech act because the utterance consists of one category of commissive speech act which is promising on something.

4. Expressive

Expressive speech act is used to express the speakers’ feelings. Statements of joy, dislike, pleasure, sorrow, and pain are categorized into expressive speech acts. The utterance “I don’t like mint choco” is an example of expressive speech act because the utterance expresses the feeling of dislike.

5. Directive

Directives are those kinds of speech acts that speakers want to get someone to do something. Orders, commands, suggestions, and requests are some categories of directive speech acts. The utterance “Can you open the door, please?” is an example of directive speech act because the utterance causes the hearer to do an action.

4. Illocutionary Force

The illocutionary force of an utterance is the speaker’s true intention, which consists of many aspects in producing the corresponding utterance. While the propositional content is something that becomes the speaker’s assumption before even stating the utterance (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985). Each type of illocutionary acts has different types of illocutionary forces. The illocutionary forces of assertive speech acts are state, claim, remind, report, inform, assure, report, predict, agree, boast, complain, conclude, hypothesis, and insist. In directive speech acts, there are command, suggest, order, beg, and request. Then, in expressive speech acts, there are apologizing, congratulating, welcoming, thanking, praising, expressing regret, condoling, encouraging, and others. In commissive speech acts, there are promises, threats, pledges, planning, refusals, voluntary, guarantees, and so on. Meanwhile for declarative speech acts, there are baptizing, blessing, confirming, cursing, betting, disapproving, agreeing, declaring, firing, refusing, resigning, and others.

5. Internet Communication

Communication is the process of interaction that provides a transfer of information between the speaker and the listener (Zeleňáková, et al., 2012). The influence of the internet in the modern era has been interfering positively towards the process of communication. Through

the use of the internet, people could communicate by creating, encoding, exchanging, and perceiving information with other people using the internet network as the mediator. Internet-driven communication tools broadly allow the implementation of communication between the sender and the receiver (Smetanová, 2010).

RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive qualitative method was applied in conducting the study. According to Nassaji (2015), qualitative research involves investigation of the data to identify patterns, themes, or concepts and the description and interpretation of the data. Thus, descriptive qualitative research does not use any statistics, the data analysis also involves non-numerical data such as words, sentences, and pictures. The object of this study was the viewers' interaction of a virtual youtuber named Gawr Gura. The data for this study were collected and transcribed into written text from Gawr Gura's live stream archive on 6th-7th January 2022, by observing the interaction between her and the viewers through Super Chat. The researchers chose those 2 live streams because there was a Mario Kart tournament which made a lot of interactions between the viewers. After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed and observed the types of illocutionary acts and illocutionary force from the interaction of Gawr Gura's viewers. In analyzing the data, the researchers used the framework proposed by Searle (1976).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses on illocutionary act. According to Searle (1969), illocutionary act is a type of speech act with a specific purpose which is classified into five categories, they are assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. In this study there are 101 utterances of illocutionary acts and the result is presented in Table 1:

Table 1 The Findings of Illocutionary Act

No	Illocutionary Acts	Illocutionary Force	Frequencies	Percentages %
1.	Expressive	Praising	22	21,78%
		Congratulating	10	9,90%
		Encouraging	6	5,94%
		Expressing joy	6	5,94%
		Thanking	2	1,98%
		Apologizing	1	0,99%
Total of Expressive Acts			47	46,53%
2.	Assertive	Informing	24	23,76%
		Stating	3	2,97%
		Reporting	2	1,98%
Total of Assertive Acts			29	28,71%
3.	Directive	Requesting	7	6,93%
		Commanding	8	7,93%
		Suggesting	4	3,96%
		Questioning	2	1,98%

Total of Directive Acts		21	20,80%
4.	Commissive Promising	4	3,96%
Total of Commissive Acts		4	3,96%
5.	Declarative -	0	0%
TOTAL		101	100%

a. Expressive Speech Acts

In this study, the researchers found 47 utterances of expressive speech acts. It consists of 22 utterances of praising, 10 utterances of congratulating, 6 utterances of encouraging, 6 utterances of expressing joy, 2 utterances of thanking, and 1 utterance of apologizing. The examples of each illocutionary force of expressive speech act can be seen as follows:

1. Praising

Excerpt 1:

"Great job at the tourney Gura!!!!!!!!!!!!!! All that practice paid off in a big way! Proud of you" - Chibbers the Squirrel.

Context: Gura was in Mario Kart (racing game) tournament and she got 3rd place in semifinal after all the practice she had. Chibbers the Squirrel's comment shows that he/she admires Gura for all the hard working.

Force: This is considered as the force of praising because the viewer felt proud of Gura's progress where she was able to get 3rd place despite all the odds, in line with the purpose of praising is to express someone's positivity towards the other in order to make other people feel good of what they had achieved

Excerpt 2:

"YOU DID IT YOU'RE AMAZING GURA" - Quib.

Context: This comment was written by Quib when Gura got the 3rd place in the semifinal. He/she praised Gura for her amazing gameplay in the tournament.

Force: This is also considered as a force of praising because the viewer felt proud of his/her idol of her accomplishment in the race tournament, therefore he wanted to compliment her with a praise to make Gura feel good of what she had achieved.

2. Congratulating

Excerpt 3:

"Congrats Gura!!!!!!!!!! I knew you could do!" - Erick Hernandez

Context: Eric's comment is to congratulate Gura because she got the 3rd place in the semifinal tournament.

Force: The force of the viewer's comment is considered as congratulating because he wanted to share his happiness for Gura's successful achievement in the race tournament by congratulating her.

3. Encouraging

Excerpt 4:

"Good luck in tournament you got this." - Jebusky.

Context: Jebusky's comment shows that he/she is cheering for Gura for her tournament. He/she wished Gura good luck.

Force: The viewer's comment showed the force of encouraging because he wanted to support Gura emotionally, so that she would be able to do her best in the tournament. In line with the purpose for encouraging other people is to provide people with strength to look ahead for the next goal.

4. Expressing Joy

Excerpt 5:

"I hope you had a good night sleep. It was so much fun cheering you on." - あなり.

Context: あなり's comment show that she/he got so much fun watching Gura's live stream and cheering her for her tournament.

Force: This comment is considered as the force to express joy because he/she was feeling happy at the time and wanted to express it together with Gura and her other viewers by saying that he had so much fun watching the live stream.

5. Thanking

Excerpt 6:

"Thanks for keeping me company hololiveEN.... today is a sad day." - KMFDMWaste.

Context: KMFDMWaste just wrote this comment without a specific context. He/she was just grateful because hololiveEn (groups of Vtubers, including Gawr Gura) did a live stream, so he/she felt that Gura accompany him/her when he/she felt sad.

6. Apologizing

Excerpt 7:

"I am SO sorry. I was trying to hit the person behind you but the shell went for you instead. Please forgive me." - Richard DeMonterrozo.

Context: Gura invited her viewers to play Mario Kart with her and Richard was one of her viewers who invited to play the game with her. In the game, he wanted to hit the player behind Gura, but it missed and hit Gura instead. So, he apologized to Gura about it.

Force: The viewer's comment showed the force of apologizing because he began the utterance with "sorry", clearly stating that he felt terrible of what he did to Gura in the past during the live stream. In order to redeem himself, he expressed his feeling of guilt by apologizing to Gura for his misdeed, and asked for Gura's forgiveness.

b. Assertive Speech Acts

There are 29 utterances of assertive speech acts discovered by the researchers. It consists of 24 utterances of informing, 3 utterances of stating, and 2 utterances of reporting. The examples of each illocutionary force of assertive speech act can be seen as follows:

1. Informing

Excerpt 8:

"It's my first Super Chat for my favorite shark." - Jebusky.

Context: The comment does not have a specific context related to Gura's live stream. Jebusky just wanted to tell Gura that it was the first time he/she donated and wrote in Super Chat for Gura.

Force: This is considered as the force of informing because the viewer wanted Gura to know that that is her/his first Super Chat for Gura. It clearly shows that he/she just wanted to inform Gura about it.

2. Stating

Excerpt 9:

"The difference between playing in the tournament and playing with us is in the tournament everyone is trying to win but playing with us is usually focused on trolling you" - Thomas Gabriel White.

Context: There is no specific context related to Gura's live stream. Thomas' comment just shows her/his opinion after he/she watched Gura's tournament.

Force: This viewer's comment is considered as the force of stating because she/he was sharing his/her opinion about the difference between playing in the tournament and playing for fun with her viewers. He/she noticed that there was a slight difference about it, therefore she/he shared this opinion with Gura.

3. Reporting

Excerpt 10:

"That Enrique guy is on his 3rd or 4th game" - DeskKun.

Context: Gura invited her viewers to play with her in Mario Kart. The rule was one viewer only could play once, but there was a guy named Enrique who broke the rule and played 3rd or 4th times. DeskKun wanted to tell and report about Enrique to Gura.

Force: The force of this example is considered as reporting because he wanted to report that someone broke the rule to Gura. He/she told Gura about Enrique so she could kick him/her from the game.

a. Directive Speech Acts

For directive speech acts, the researchers found 21 utterances of directive speech acts which contain 8 utterances of commanding, 7 utterances of requesting, 4 utterances of suggesting, and 2 utterances of questioning. The examples of each illocutionary force of directive speech act can be seen as follows:

1. Commanding

Excerpt 11:

"Don't get last place Gura!!" - Curtingus Dingus.

Context: This comment was written by Curtingus Dingus at the end of Gura's live stream on 6th January 2022 before the tournament. She/he told Gura to not get the last place in her tournament.

Force: The viewer's comment showed the force of commanding because there is a command from the viewer to Gura. She/he was commanding Gura to not get the last place to make her stronger in her tournament. Therefore, it can be said that this comment is used to express a command of what the viewer intends Gura to do.

2. Requesting

Excerpt 12:

"Can you say hello to me?" - OwnedSage.

Context: There is no specific context related to Gura's live stream. OwnedSage just wanted Gura to greet him/her so he/she requested Gura to say hello.

Force: This example showed the force of requesting because the viewer wanted to request Gura to do something. It shows that the viewer asked whether Gura can say hello to him/her or not.

3. Suggesting

Excerpt 13:

"If you're nervous and think it will help, you don't have to stream your perspective. I don't wanna hold you back Gura!!!" - Nitch.

Context: Gura told her viewers that she got nervous for her Mario Kart tournament so Nitch suggested Gura to not do a live stream for her tournament if she got nervous.

Force: This comment is considered as the force of suggesting because there is a suggestion from the viewer to Gura about not doing a live stream when she had a tournament if she were nervous. He/she was worried about Gura so he/she made a suggestion for her. Therefore, it can be said that this comment is used to express a suggestion.

4. Questioning

Excerpt 14:

"Have you ever felt like u want to punch someone when playing this game?" - Im mk.

Context: There is no specific context related to Gura's live stream. Im mk just suddenly asked the question about it to Gura.

Force: This comment showed the force of questioning because there is a question given from the viewer to Gura. She/he expressed that she/he wanted Gura to answer his/her question.

c. Commissive Speech Acts

The only illocutionary force of commissive speech acts observed by the researchers is promising which consists of 4 utterances. The examples of each illocutionary force of expressive speech act can be seen as follows:

1. Promising

Excerpt 15:

"I'll give 50 bucks to you if you win the tournament!" - Poor RG.

Context: This comment was written by Poor RG at the end of Gura's live stream on 6th January 2022 before her tournament. She/he promised to give some money to Gura if she can win the race.

Force: This viewer's comment is considered as the force of promising because there is a promise between the viewer to Gura. He/she wrote this comment to cheer Gura in her tournament along with her/his promise about giving money to her. Therefore, it can be said that this comment is used to express a promise from the viewer.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, 4 out of 5 types of illocutionary acts were found in the data. The four types from the most used illocutionary acts to the least used illocutionary acts of Gura's viewers in Super Chat are expressive, assertive, directive, and commissive. Moreover, the most dominant type of illocutionary act used by the viewers is expressive speech acts. Expressive speech act is used by the viewers to express admiration with praising, to express joy, to congratulate, to encourage, to thank, and to apologize. Mostly, the viewers used the expression of praising to praise their idol for winning in the tournament. The finding of this study implies that people use expressive speech acts when they engage in communication with an internet celebrity through the internet. In other words, people also use speech acts not only in face-to-face interactions but also when communicating through the internet. In addition, by analyzing the viewers' speech act pattern, this study further raises the awareness of what the viewers are trying to express while they are watching their favorite streamers.

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