



## Illocutionary Act in Disney Pixar Movie “Soul”

Putu Devi Maharani<sup>1</sup>, Ni Putu Nilam Sari<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>English Literature, Faculty of Foreign Language, Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar  
Correspondence Email: [devi.maharani@unmas.ac.id](mailto:devi.maharani@unmas.ac.id), [putunilamsari31@gmail.com](mailto:putunilamsari31@gmail.com)

### Abstract

This research is aimed to analyse the illocutionary act which were found in *Soul* movie. Movie is one of entertainment that can show the use of language in society. Speech act is the focus of this research especially in illocutionary act. By using descriptive qualitative analysis, this research is conducted. The data were collected from observation, documentation, and note taking techniques. After the data collected, the result was analysed based on the speech act theory from Searle in (Yule, 2017). Besides, theory of context of situation proposed by Halliday & Ruqaiya (1989) was used in explaining the situation happened in the story. The findings were explained by using context of situation of this research showed that there were 86 all of 5 illocutionary acts found. There were 23 Representative, 30 Directive, 12 Commissive, 19 Expressive, and 2 Declarative. The directive illocutionary act was the most speech act found in the movie. By conducting this research, it is intended to help people to understand and comprehend what message that discovered in the utterances in a movie.

**Keywords:** *speech act, illocutionary act, soul movie*

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tindak ilokusi yang ditemukan dalam film *Soul*. Film merupakan salah satu hiburan yang dapat menunjukkan penggunaan bahasa dalam masyarakat. Tindak tutur menjadi fokus penelitian ini khususnya pada tindak ilokusi. Dengan menggunakan analisis deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini dilakukan. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan teknik observasi, dokumentasi, dan catat. Setelah data terkumpul, hasilnya dianalisis berdasarkan teori tindak tutur dari Searle dalam (Yule, 2017). Selain itu, teori konteks situasi yang dikemukakan oleh Halliday & Ruqaiya (1989) digunakan untuk menjelaskan situasi yang terjadi dalam cerita. Temuan-temuan yang dijelaskan dengan menggunakan konteks situasi penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa dari 5 tindak ilokusi ditemukan sebanyak 86 dari 5 tindak ilokusi. Ada 23 Representatif, 30 Direktif, 12 Komisi, 19 Ekspresif, dan 2 Deklaratif. Tindak ilokusi direktif merupakan tindak tutur yang paling banyak ditemukan dalam film. Dengan melakukan penelitian ini, dimaksudkan untuk membantu orang memahami dan memahami pesan apa yang ditemukan dalam ucapan-ucapan dalam sebuah film.

**Kata kunci:** *tindak tutur, tindak ilokusi, film Soul*

### Introduction

Language is how human communicate with others by oral or written and consisting the use of words. Based on that, language has very important part in human life. Human uses language to interact with the other human in giving or gaining information process. Without a language, we as human being must be really hard to make connections with others. People communicate with others using different ways based on with whom they communicate, where they communicate,

and when they communicate. It means that the use of language has important relationship with context and society. According to Edwards (2009), language is a symbol purely from human and the way to communicate ideas, emotions, and desires. Moreover, people use language to deliver various purposes. Generally, people use language in requesting something, giving orders, asking questions, making promise, offering apologize, etc. (Altikriti, 2011). It means that language is very essential to communicate and convey meaning of the communication.

Language has two functions in its usage as the tool of communication namely linguistically and pragmatically. Language can be used as a linguistic function when it is related to the form of accuracy and also the language structure. On the other hand, language is functioned pragmatically when it is related to the form of accuracy and also the structure based on its context. Pragmatics is the study between the relation of language and its context and how the context contributes to the meaning. Despite of the structure of language, context is very important as the background of knowledge on how the speaker shares their utterances by constructing the hearer's interpretation. Therefore, the element of pragmatics that observes the intention behind the utterances called as speech acts.

In a view that language is used for delivering meaning, it is very essential to have reception skill to understand the meaning. Tajeddin & Bagherkazemi (2021) mention that in order to make successful communication, people should have ability to infer what meaning is said. In other words, we have to be able to understand the coherent discourse that people tell in our society. And it leads to speech act theory. Cohen (2008) defines speech act as a patterned and routinized language that used by people to perform some functions communication such as to thank, complement, request, apologize, and complain. Speech act is the way how speaker uses language to achieve an intentional action and how the one who hears the speaker concludes the meaning of what being said. It can be concluded that speech act is one of language used that can deliver meaning to do some acts in society.

There are some studies concerning about speech act. Firstly, Prayitno et al. (2020) studied about speech act in one of famous talk shows in Indonesia. They focused on hate speech that occurred along the talk show. Besides, the form of speech act in hate speech was analyzed. The study found that there were some forms of hate speech including insult, defamation, hatred provoking, inappropriate action, blasphemy, and hoax news spreading. It can be concluded that speech act can be found also in television talk show especially in hate speech form. Secondly, Tutuarima et al. (2018) studied about speech act in a movie entitled London Has Fallen. By using descriptive qualitative research, type of speech act is analyzed. It found that there were 76 utterances of speech and mostly it was illocutionary act. Besides, in 99 utterances, directive and expressive illocutionary act is dominant from other types. Lastly, Sari (2020) studied about the speech act that used by one of cartoon character, SpongeBob SquarePants, in focusing how the directive of speech act occurs. The result of the study showed that the main character mostly used directive of illocutionary act. Based on those studies, the novelty of this study is this study using different movie which is Soul movie. This study focuses on all of the utterances delivered by the characters in the movie rather than focusing only one

character. Moreover, this study is trying to find out the meaning of each illocutionary act.

Speech act can be found in every form of communication happens in society. It occurs whether in written or oral communication. In pragmatics view, speech act is the goal and the intention of a language (Prayitno et al., 2021). It means that speech act cannot be separated with communication. Nowadays, communication happens across the world. Speech act is considered to change information distribution in this era and it can influence the socio cultural, politics, and economic (Prayitno et al., 2020). The use of speech act can be found in every part of human life. Daily communication, speech, song or even in movie. Movie is one of the digital transformations happened broadly. Development of movie can be seen from the enthusiastic of viewers that increase day by day. According to Kaiser (2011), movie can provide people the exposure about a certain language and its cultural context in which the language is spoken. It can be said that movie is one of opportunities to have big exposure about a certain language.

This study is intended to investigate illocutionary act that appears in a movie entitled *Soul*. Sari (2020) states that there still lack of analysis in speech act in a cartoon movie. So, the study is aimed to find out what are the speech act types in the movie. According to Austin (1962), there are three types of speech act, namely, locutionary act, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. Each of the types have different characteristic. Based on Austin (1962) as cited in (Putri, Ramendra, & Swandana, 2019), locutionary refers to the literal meaning of the speech. Illocutionary means the function of the utterance. While perlocutionary act is the effect of the utterance to the listener. Focusing to the illocutionary act, it can be divided into five types of illocutionary act from Searle as cited in Yule, (2017). Those five types are Representative, Directive, Commissive, Expressive, and Declarative. Based on Searle, Representative illocutionary act refers to a speech act that expresses the speaker believes and desires such as denying, believing, complaining, concluding, and reporting, suggesting or aggreging. Directive means a meaning that speaker want to say to make other people to do something including asking, commanding, demanding, recommending, requesting. Then, Expressive refers to the speech act that used by the speaker to state something that they feel such as pain, like or dislike, etc. Commissive refers to the statement that the speaker says to dedicate their self to do something in the future. It can be in the form of promise, volunteer, threat and so on. Next, Declarative means to the statement of the speaker that infers to make a change to condition. This study focuses on illocutionary act that appears in the movie. The study is important to conduct because there might be misunderstanding in watching movie for everyone. Thus, this study aims to find out the illocutionary act that can be found and relate it to the speech act theory proposed by Searle.

Based on the explanation above, this study will be focused on the analysis of illocutionary in an animated movie entitled *Soul* (2020). There are many types or genre of a movie. There are thriller, horror, comedy, science-fiction, drama, and animation. The present study focuses on an animation movie entitled *Soul* by Disney and Pixar. Disney is known well as a company that produce animation movies as well as Pixar. Both companies are collaborated, and they make a meaningful movie named *Soul*. This study uses this movie as a source of the data. This movie is

directed by Pete Docter and produced by Pixar Animation Studios. It also first released on October 11th, 2020, in America. This movie consists of some genres such as fantasy, comedy, and family drama. The story tells about the journey of Joe Gardner, a middle school band teacher who loves jazz music. *Soul* animated by collaboration of Pixar and Disney was chosen as the object of this study because of several reasons and considerations. First, this film had won the best animated film nomination at the 2021 Academy Awards. In the same year this film also won about 14 awards for character, music and composer nominations. This animated film raises the concept of a life story with a stunning musical bandage, that is why they deserve several awards as well for music and composer. The animation in the *Soul* animation is interesting as well for researchers to discuss. This film is not an ordinary animated film but raises a story full of meaning and philosophy of life with a touch of jazz music in it. Although there is no plot twist and seems light, this film has many life lessons to be learned. For example, to never give up on reaching your dreams, but this film also makes us to think again about the purpose of life, whether dreams are our only purpose in life that make us forget to enjoy the life. In addition, this *Soul* movie also teaches us to fight the fear of anything that we have not even tried before.

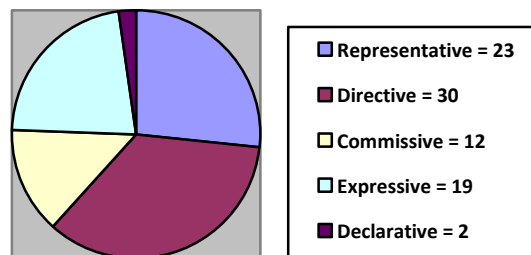
## Method

This study is designed as descriptive qualitative research. According to Ary et al. (2010), qualitative research is a research which focuses on understanding a phenomenon rather than analyzing with numerical. It can be said that it will not count numerical data but it describes the finding in descriptive way instead. The data are gained from the movie entitled "*Soul*". It is a cartoon movie produced by Pixar Animation Studio. The movie is released on 2020. The data are in the form of dialogue and it will be supported with English subtitled. In this case, the study focuses on the illocutionary act of the characters occur in the movie.

In order to collect the data, this study used documentary technique which gathering the data through written note and pictures as the proof of the data. After watching the movie repeatedly to give much attention to the conversation happens, the data are obtained. The data is identified and categorized into types of illocutionary act. After that, the data are analyzed and interpreted based on the Searle's theory about speech act. Finally, the data are reported in descriptive explanation. There are some steps of analysing the data, such are analysing the type of illocutionary act based on the theory from Searle (1979) to validate the data. Then, the data is analysing about the context of situation.

## Result and Discussion

Based on the observation that conducted, there were some findings found. From all of the characters in the *Soul* movie, it was found that 86 speech acts obtained. The data were not only taken from the main character only, but from supporting character as well. After the data collected, it was classified based on the Searle as cited in Yule (2017). The data classification can be seen in the following chart.



**Figure 1. Pie Chart of Illocutionary Act**

From the chart above, there were 86 illocutionary acts consisted in the *Soul* movie. Representative illocutionary act is 23. Declarative illocutionary act is 30. While commissive illocutionary act is 20. Then, expressive illocutionary act is 19. Last, declarative illocutionary act is 2. It can be concluded that the directive illocutionary act was the most speech act that can be found in the *Soul* movie. The declarative is the rarest illocutionary act that can be found. Some examples of the illocutionary act can be seen in the discussion.

***Representative Illocutionary Act***

Datum 1

Mama Joey : You're going to tell them yes, right?

Joey : Don't worry, Mom, **I got a plan.**

(*Soul*, 00.03.42)

The situation in this conversation was when Joey, the main character got an opportunity to be a permanent teacher in his school. He was not going to be a part-timer again. And his mother, that was Mama Joey was really excited to hear that, but Joey was not sure about it because his dream is not to be a music teacher but performs on the stage to play piano. Mama Joey did not want Joey to be a musician because she thought that he will not make it as the same as his father.

From the explanation above, it can be inferred that Joey was claiming that he has a plan and not accepting the offer to be a full-time teacher. He wanted to achieve his goal. So, he stated to his mother that he gets a plan. It showed that Joey was delivering speech act which was representative illocutionary act since he believed and really sure about what he wants to do. Searle as cited in Yule (2017) mentions that representative speech act refers to the statement that shows a believe from the speaker that tries to convince the hearer. It is usually used for claiming, stating, reporting or concluding. It can be concluded that the first utterance shows representative illocutionary act as he said that he wanted to convince his mother about his decision.

Datum 2

22 : What can I say, Joe? **Earth is boring.**

Joey : Well, what else can we do, then?

(*Soul*, 00.28.22)

In this situation the conversation was about Joey, the main character and 22, the new soul was back from the Hall of Everything. They already tried all the activity there, but 22 still did not get her spark at all. She kept underestimate the earth and thought earth is boring. Because out of time, Joey asked about what else they could to try to find her spark.

So, it can be inferred that 22 stated and believed herself about earth is boring. She did not want to go to the earth at all and underestimated it. So, she said earth is boring and she could do anything about that. It meant that 22 was delivering speech act which was representative illocutionary act because she believes, and state really sure earth is boring. Representative speech act that mentions by Searle is the statement and believe from the speaker that convince the hearer. The conclusion that the first utterance, 22 showed representative illocutionary act as she said that earth is boring to convince Joey as the hearer.

### ***Directive Illocutionary Act***

Datum 3

Gerel : **I don't think you're supposed to go that way.**

Joey : This can't happen. Im not dyin' today. Not when my life just started.

(*Soul*, 00.10.52)

In this situation Joey and Gerel, the grandma *soul* that already dead were meet each other in the way that called the Great Beyond where all the *soul* went after death. At that time, Joey did not believe what is happening and asked Gerel where he is. Gerel believed that Joey must be died in accidentally so that is why he kept asking. Finally, Joey was denying that he is not dead yet and not accepting to go to the great beyond. So, he went to the opposite way of the Great Beyond.

From the explanation above, Gerel tried to make Joey in the right track to the Great Beyond. As she said, "*I don't think you're supposed to go that way*", she wanted to say that the way that Joey went to is not the right way, so she wanted Joey to turn back to the right way. She acted like she wanted Joey to do what she wanted to which was turn back to the Great Beyond. From Searle's definition as cited in Yule (2017), directive illocutionary act is type of speech act that shows the speaker's intention to make the hearer to do something. It can be concluded that Gerel was using Directive illocutionary act as she wanted Joey to turn back to the right way by giving them suggestion. The datum was also indirectly spoken to hearer. It meant that Gerel not directly ask Joey to not going to that way, but it was only suggestion for him.

Datum 4

Joey : **Now push the down button.**

22 : (GRUNTS)

(*Soul*, 00.39.02)

This part was when 22, the new soul and Joey the main character were back to the earth but accidentally Joey was in the cat body and 22 was in Joe's. They were

having trouble because of this. This was the first time 22 being a human so she did not know how to walk for escaping from hospital with Joey, who in the cat's body. So, Joey was trying to help 22 by giving her command how to get on the lift.

From above, it can be concluded that Joey tried to help 22 by giving her command "Now push the down bottom". This sentence sounded like asking or commanding her that made 22 pushed down the lift button. According to Searle's definition, directive illocutionary act is speech act that make someone or the hearer to do something by command, ask, beg, etc. It can be concluded that Joey was using Directive illocutionary act as he asked 22 to push the down bottom by giving her command. Moreover, this datum was direct spoken language which meant that Joey directly asked 22 to help him to push the down button.

### ***Commissive Illocutionary Act***

Datum 5

Joey : **I'll be right back.**

22 : Don't get ahead of yourself, pal.

(*Soul*, 00.26.03)

In this part Joey and 22, the new *soul* that Joey had to be mentor to, were trying to make she get her "spark" which means her passion for life. If she could find it, she could go to the earth and become a human. Joey helped her in intention that if 22 got her pass to earth, she would give the pass to Joey so Joey could come back to earth to live again. So, they agreed to go to the place called Hall of Everything where all the *soul* could find their spark. And he told 22 that he would be back from there in the conversation.

Searle as cited in Yule (2017) defines commissive illocutionary act as a speech act that used by the speaker to commit their self to do something in the future. It means such as promise, swear, or being volunteer. From the explanation above, it shows that Joey was promising 22 to come back from the Hall of Everything. He wanted to go to there because he would make 22 got her spark. As he said: "*I'll be right back.*", he would go back as soon as possible to 22. It can be concluded that he expressed a commissive illocutionary act.

Datum 7

Terry : You're out there somewhere, little soul, and **I'm gonna find you.**

(*Soul*, 00.43.41)

In this part, Terry was looking for the name of Joey soul. He did that because Joey is a soul that was not supposed to get to earth yet. That is why he wanted to find him to make him go back to heaven. He was looking in every soul library and could not find it yet. But he promised that he will find him. He knew that that soul is out there in earth.

The utterance above refers to commissive as Searle defines commissive illocutionary act as a speech act that used by the speaker to do promises. It can be seen from the utterance delivered by terry that he would find the soul. He promised

himself to find it. It can be concluded that Terry was using commissive illocutionary act to express his promise.

### ***Expressive Illocutionary Act***

Datum 6

Joey : Can you tell me what day it is?

22 : **It's the worst day of my life.** I don't wanna be here.

(*Soul*, 00.37.19)

In this conversation was when 22, the new *soul* that Joey mentoring, and Joey were success to go to the earth. It was the first time for 22 to go there. They were in a hospital since Joey got accident that made him dies. Joey was really happy at first, but he just realized that his soul did not go back to his body but a cat instead. At the same time 22 felt like she could not live longer in earth. Thus, 22 told Joey that this was the worst day of her life. Because earth did not fit with her. So, when the doctor wanted to know what day, it was from 22, which was stuck in Joey's body, she answered the worst day of her life.

From that explanation, 22 was using expressing illocutionary act which showing her feeling about her life in earth. Searle as cited in Yule (2017) defines expressing illocutionary act as a speech act used to show the speaker expression and feeling about certain thing. Here, 22 showed her feeling by using expressive act as she said that it was the worst day of her life.

### ***Declarative Illocutionary Act***

Datum 7

Joey : Huh. Really?

Jerry : **So, we all decided to give you another chance.**

(*Soul*, 01.29.09)

The conversation occurred in the movie was 22 the new soul now was born to the earth, and it meant Joey should be dead because he was supposed to be dead in the first place because an accident. But Jerry, the one who responsible with every new soul in the Great Before, gave Joey one more chance to be back to his body in earth and be alive one more time.

As Searle definition as cited in Yule (2017), declarative illocutionary act refers to the speech act that used by the speaker to make change to the situation happens in the conversation. From the utterance 5, it showed that Jerry changed the faith that Joey should be alive again instead of dead. He used speech act to change the situation in the story. It can be concluded that Jerry was using declarative illocutionary act.

### **Conclusion**

*Soul* movie is an animated movie collaboration between Pixar animation and Disney. It released in 2020. This study intended to investigate speech act that consists in the movie. From the result, it can be said that there were 5 types of



illocutionary act that can be found including Representative, Directive, Commissive, Expressive, and Declarative act. It means that all the speech act was found in the movie. Besides, in the illocutionary data, the intended meaning of the speaker is found both directly and indirectly. It can be concluded that the directive speech act was the most speech act occurred in the movie which 30 utterances. Further, the representative speech act was the second place with 23 utterances. Then, the data showed that commissive and expressive speech act was the third and fourth place with 12 and 19 utterances. Next, declarative speech act became the littlest speech act that can be found in the movie with 2 utterances. This research was intended to give contributions to the pragmatics research which focuses on speech act. Hopefully, it can help other researchers to infer meaning from different movie.

## Reference

- Altikriti, S. F. (2011). Speech Act Analysis to Short Stories. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(6). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.6.1374-1384>
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., & Sorensen, C. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education* (8th ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to Do Things with Words. Analysis* (Vol. 23). London: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2307/3326622>
- Cohen, A. D. (2008). Teaching and assessing L2 pragmatics: What can we expect from learners? *Language Teaching*, 41(2), 213–235. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444807004880>
- Edwards, J. (2009). *Language and Identity. Journal of Physics A: Mathematical and Theoretical* (Vol. 44). New York: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1088/1751-8113/44/8/085201>
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Ruqaiya, H. (1989). *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. HongKong: Oxford University Press.
- Kaiser, M. (2011). New Approaches to Exploiting Film in the Foreign Language Classroom. *L2 Journal*, 3(2). Retrieved 7 August 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.5070/l23210005>
- Prayitno, H. J., Huda, M., Inayah, N., Ermanto, Ardi, H., Giyoto, & Yusof, N. (2021). Politeness of Directive Speech Acts on Social Media Discourse and Its Implications for Strengthening Student Character Education in the Era of Global Education. *Asian Journal of University Education*, 17(4), 179–200. Retrieved 7 August 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v17i4.16205>
- Prayitno, H. J., Sari, I. D., Nasucha, Y., Ratih, K., Utami, R. D., Jamaludin, N., & Thambu, N. (2020). Speech Act of Hate Speech in the Discourse of Ilc Talkshow Tvone: Literature Study on Humanity Using Psychopragmatic Perspective \*1. *PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION*, 57(8), 1044–1053. Retrieved from [www.psychologyandeducation](http://www.psychologyandeducation).
- Putri, I. A. P. A. D. P., Ramendra, D. P., & Swandana, I. W. (2019). An Analysis of Speech Act Used in Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire Movie. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 3(2), 78. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijll.v3i2.20845>
- Sari, I. F. (2020). The Speech Act of Cartoon Movie: Spongebob Squarepants' The Movie. *Linguists : Journal Of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 6(1), 126. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.29300/ling.v6i1.2854>
- Tajeddin, Z., & Bagherkazemi, M. (2021). Implicit and Explicit Pragmatic Learning Strategies: Their Factorial Structure and Relationship with Speech Act Knowledge,

25(3).

- Tutuarima, Z., Nuraeningsih, N., & Rusiana, R. (2018). An Analysis of Speech Act Used in London Has Fallen Movie. *Vision: Journal for Language and Foreign Language Learning*, 7(2), 122. Retrieved 7 August 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.21580/vjv7i23022>
- Yule, G. (2017). *The Study of Language*. Cambridge University Press.