



## AN ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACT IN THE MOVIE “EDGE OF TOMORROW”

Suriyapong Chaisiripun<sup>1</sup>, Nakonthep Tipayasuparat<sup>2</sup> and Abhinan Wongkittiporn<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Graduate student, College of Liberal Arts, Rangsit University, suriyapong.c@rsu.ac.th

<sup>2</sup>Head of English Language Department, College of Liberal Arts, Rangsit University, nakonthep@rsu.ac.th

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Head of English Language Department, College of Liberal Arts, Rangsit University, abhinan.w@rsu.ac.th

### ABSTRACT

This research examines the illocutionary speech acts of the main character in "Edge of Tomorrow." The purpose of this research is to identify types of speech acts in the movie. The analytical framework in this present study follows Searle (1975). The data collection includes fifteen dialogues from William Cage, the main character. A total of 15 dialogues as uttered by William Cage were randomly by a purposive sampling method. The results of this current study shows that directive acts occur the most at 40 percent. Representative acts and commissive acts occur equally at 26.6 percent. However, expressive acts only occur at 26.6 percent. The results of the study clearly reflect the main character in this study a commanding person. It is hoped that the results of this study will be useful for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in order to gain deeper understanding of the main character's intention whilst watching a movie.

**Keywords:** Speech Acts, Illocutionary Acts, Edge of Tomorrow

### 1. Introduction

Nowadays, English has been productively used as international communication. When communicating, people could provide their utterances to reach their objectives and accomplishment. Because of this, it is interesting to study how people use their utterance to receive what they want. Bach (1982) stated that speech acts involve multiple simultaneous acts, each reflecting different aspects of the speaker's intention. In other words, a speech act does not mean only uttering words, but the speakers expect to accomplish their goals.

To reach the speakers' goals, Austin (1962) classified speech acts into three levels which are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts. *Locutionary acts* involve the expressions of meaningful statements. This is the basic act of uttering sounds, words, or written symbols that have a certain meaning and grammatical structure. For example, *today the weather is sunny and warm*. The speaker conveys a specific message regarding the weather conditions at the moment. Secondly, *illocutionary acts* refer to the act of performing an action (Austin, 1962). This refers to the speaker's intended purpose in the utterance, like asserting, questioning, commanding, requesting, or apologizing. It represents the communicative intention behind the statement. For example, *I promise to be there on time*. The speaker made a promise to be punctual. In this case, the illocutionary act is the act of promising. The



third one is perlocutionary acts, referring to the achievement of effects, such as convincing, persuading and surprising (Austin 1962). In speech-act theory, the term *illocutionary act* refers to the use of utterances to convey a particular attitude or perform a specific function, characterized by what is known as *an illocutionary force*. This idea of illocutionary acts differ from locutionary acts in that illocutionary acts convey a sense of urgency to the intended meaning of the speaker (Nordquist & Richard, 2020). In this study, gaining an understanding of illocutionary acts, therefore, helps us to gain a speakers' intended meaning.

Aside from the different levels of speech acts, speech acts are categorized by different functions (Austin, 1962; Hymes, 1962). The classification includes declarations, representatives, commissives, directives and expressives. One of them is known as *directives* or an intention to get the listener to perform a specific action, such as requesting, commanding and inviting. For example, *close the door, please*. The speaker instructs the listener to close the door. The second one is known as *declaratives*, involving the exercise of power and assertion of rights. For example, *if you don't finish your work on time, there will be consequences*. The speaker warns the listener regarding negative consequences that may occur if the listener fails to complete their work on time. The third one is known as *commissive* or an action that the speaker commits to do something, such as promising. For example, *I promise I will be there for your graduation ceremony*. The fourth one is *expressives*, referring to a psychological expressed utterance. For example, *I'm sorry for my mistake. It won't happen again*. The speaker expresses his regret by offering his apology. The last one is known as *representatives*, referring to the references of the truth of the expressed utterance. For example, *the sun rises in the east*. The speaker makes an assertive speech act by stating a fact.

Regarding related previous studied, Sitanggang, Roy and Natsir (2010) conducted a study called *An Analysis of Speech Acts in Avatar Movie Script*. The study examined the types of speech acts of the movie Avatar. The study found that the character *Sully* in the Avatar movie script uses five types of speech acts. The most common type is *representatives acts* at 50.28 percent. This result reflects that the main character put emphasis on conveying facts and making assertions.

In addition, Zumaroh (2012) examined speech acts the script of *"Air Force One"*. The results show that there were direct and indirect speech acts, as well as literal and non-literal speech acts in the script. The analysis found 127 direct speech acts, 35 indirect speech acts, 147 literal speech acts, and 16 non-literal speech acts. The study also examined the illocutionary force behind the utterances and identified representative, directive, commissive, expressive, but no declarative speech acts in the script.

Widayanti and Kustinah (2018) conducted the research named *Speech Act Analysis on Walt Disney Film Entitled 'Frozen'*. This article focuses on the children's genre and examines the influence of speech acts used by characters in the film "Frozen" on children's language acquisition. The study analyzed the types of speech acts in the film Frozen and concluded that the most frequent type was directive acts. These speech acts in the film can contribute to children's language acquisition by teaching them how to express beliefs, psychological states, persuade others, and commit to future actions.



Santia and Kurniawan (2019) studied on *Speech Act Analysis in the Movie 'Aladdin* to explore speech acts in the film. The study found 317 utterances with speech acts, which were categorized into locutionary acts at 38.64 percent, illocutionary acts at 44.13 percent and perlocutionary acts 17.23 percent. The findings in this study provide insights into the characters' communication and contribute to understanding the movie's storytelling.

Aside from that, Lestari and Hartati (2017) conducted a research study names *A Pragmatics Analysis of Speech Act in 'Thor' Movie*". The article analyzes the speech acts as expressed by Thor based upon Searle's theory. The researcher found four classifications of speech acts as demonstrated by the main character: in the movie, representative and directive acts were equally prevalent, each accounting for around 34.78%. Commissive acts constituted approximately 12.42% of the speech acts, while expressive acts accounted for approximately 18.01%. Declarative acts were not expressed by Thor in the movie due to the absence of special events and people necessitating them.

When it comes to this study, this study focuses of the film named *Edge of Tomorrow*. *Edge of Tomorrow* is an American science fiction. The main character in this movie called *William Cage* as portrayed by Tom Cruise. He starts as a military public relations officer named Major William Cage, who unexpectedly found himself to be trapped in a time loop during a war against alien monster known as *Mimics*. With each reset, Cage gains newfound combat skills and knowledge, allowing him to become a powerful soldier. Through his repeated encounters with fellow soldier Rita Vrataski, Cage found a way to end the time loop and save humanity. By examining the dialogue and interactions between characters, the film serves as a valuable case study because the film offers a wide range of speech acts. It will be a useful case study for EFL learners to gain the fundamental knowledge of speech acts.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

To classify the types of illocutionary acts found in the "Edge of Tomorrow" movie.

## 3. Research Questions

What are the types of illocutionary acts in the 'Edge of Tomorrow' movie dialogue?

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Source of Data and Data Collection

In this research analysis, the researcher adopted Searle's (1975) framework to identify speech acts. Searle's framework provides a systematic approach to categorize and analyze types of speech acts as performed by speakers. The researcher was randomly by a purposive sampling method to select 15 utterances from the conversation in Edge of Tomorrow movie.

The purposive sampling method is suitable for this current study because it allows the researcher to select specific utterances from the conversation in the Edge of Tomorrow movie to study. The researchers focus on the main character's utterances that contain concealed meanings. The researchers are studying the hidden meanings in the main



character's utterances in the movie "Edge of Tomorrow," aiming to gain insight into their emotions, motivations, and intentions. The researchers took 15 tokens in the study to gain an in-depth analysis and explanation as a qualitative study.

#### 4.2 Analytical Framework

After receiving the data collection, the researchers applied Searle's (1975) framework including the representative, commissive, directive, declaratory and expressive speech acts. *Representative speech acts* refer to the speakers' statements or assertions with their intention to convey information or express beliefs. Representative speech acts include asserting, claiming, concluding, reporting and stating. *Directive speech acts* refers to the speakers' attempts to persuade the addressee to take a specific action, including giving advice, issuing commands, giving orders, asking questions, and making requests. *Commissive speech acts* refer to speakers' expression of their intentions or commitments to perform certain actions in the future such as making offers, pledges, promises, refusals and threats. Expressive speech acts involve speakers' expression of psychological attitudes, such as joy, sorrow, likes and dislikes such as apologizing, blaming, congratulating, praising, and thanking. *Declarative speech acts* speakers' abilities to changes present situations. By performing declaratives, the speaker actively transforms the world such as declaring war, excommunicating someone, terminating employment and nominating a candidate.

#### 5. Results

This study aimed to analyze William Cage's utterances and classify them based upon the speech acts theory. The investigation in this study focused on categorizing the types of speech acts found in the dialogues, namely representative, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative acts. With this standing point, the following section presents the results in this study as in Table (1).

Table 1 Illocutionary Speech Act used in the "Edge of Tomorrow"

No.	Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Percent
1	Directives	6	40%
2	Representatives	4	26.6%
3	Commissives	4	26.6%
4	Expressives	1	6.6%
5	Declaratives	0	0%
	Total	15	100%



According to Table 1, 15 dialogues involving William Cage's utterance were gathered. Directive acts were found at 40 percent. Representative acts were found at 26 percent. Equally, commissive acts were found at 26.6 percent Expressive acts were observed only once at 6.6 percent. However, no instances of declarative acts were found in this study.

### Qualitative Results

#### Representatives Speech Acts

Scene: William Cage asked the Sergeant where he was and told the Sergeant who he was and where he was from.

William Cage: Where the hell am I, sergeant?

Sergeant: Forward Operating Base Heathrow. You just came in with the fresh recruits.

William Cage: Do I strike you as a fresh recruit?

Sergeant: No, sir, you do not.

William Cage: **My name is Major William Cage. I'm an American officer.**

In this scenario, William Cage's utterance is identified as a representative act of the explaining type. William Cage aims to inform his identity to the interlocutor, specifically the Sergeant. The purpose of this utterance is to convey factual details about his identity as an officer.

#### Directives Speech Acts

Scene: Sergeant asked William Cage how he was here. Then, William Cage need to explained it all to his officer.

Sergeant: How the hell did you end up in processing? What was it? Poker night? Bachelor party?

William Cage: If it's all the same to you, sergeant. **I'd like to explain that to my commanding officer in Washington. If you'll take me to a phone.**

In this situation, William Cage's utterance can be classified as a directive speech act with a specific requesting intent. By seeking assistance from the Sergeant, he is making a clear and direct request to get in touch with his commanding officer. The main purpose behind his utterance is to guide the Sergeant's actions towards providing the necessary help to fulfill his request effectively.

#### Commissive Speech Acts

Scene: Griff, the soldier in J Squad, was preparing the suit for William Cage. William Cage pressed the unlock button suit, so it made Griff afraid.



### Dialogue

Griff: Let's get this show on the road. I gotta suit up. Hey, what the hell wrong with you?

Haven't you ever been in one of these before?

William Cage: Maybe

Griff: Know where the safety is?

William Cage: **I'm not sure.**

Griff: Good

In this situation, William Cage's utterance can be classified as a commissive act of the refusing type, as he expresses uncertainty about the safety tap's location, implying that he does not know where it is. However, it is revealed that William Cage actually possesses the power to restart a new day and does know where the safety tap is. This act of refusing to reveal the information can be classified as a commissive act, as William Cage intentionally commits himself to retain the knowledge he possesses.

### **Expressive Speech Acts**

Scene: William Cage and Rita came to meet Carter, Rita's close friend, and Carter tested William Cage's power by putting his fingers behind his back and letting William Cage guess.

Carter: How many fingers am I holding up behind my back?

William Cage: **How should I know that?**

Carter: Okay. So, this is the first time we've had this conversation.

In this scenario, William Cage's utterance is classified as an expressive act of the confusing type. William Cage and Carter had just met for the first time, it is unlikely that William Cage would possess the knowledge or information being referred to in the question. The utterance reflects William Cage's state of perplexity and his inability to provide a clear answer.

## **5. Discussion**

The researcher examined 15 dialogues as uttered by William Cage and identified five types of illocutionary acts. *Directive acts* were found at 40 percent. *Representative acts* were found at 26.6 percent. Equally, *commissive acts* were found at 26.6 percent. *Expressive acts* were found at 6.6 percent. On the other hand, *declarative acts* were not found in this study.

The highest percentage of directive act in this study is explained by William Cage's characters. This result of this study provides valuable insights into the protagonist's characteristics in the movie script as someone who often gives instructions, commands and guidance as he is a military officer to give orders to his subordinates. This study reveals that the protagonist, as a military officer, frequently gives instructions, commands, and guidance to his subordinates. This insight sheds light on his character traits and leadership role.



The second place of percentage is representative acts and commissive acts. The protagonist usually expresses facts, provides explanations and share information toward other characters. For example, William Cage provides essential information and explanations to the soldiers about the mission, including the objective, security checkpoints, and the importance of capturing General Ramirez. Commissive acts in the dialogues could mean that Cage's character usually makes commitments and assurances to other characters, for example, Cage's character assures Emily that he will protect and support her during the mission, emphasizing their teamwork and commitment to each other.

Utterances of declarative acts were not found in this scope of Cage's dialogues. Declarative acts involve bringing about changes in the external world through speech. The absence of declarative acts in Cage's dialogues may indicate that his character did not significantly impact the external reality in the real world.

To compare this study with related previous studies, Sitanggang, Roy and Natsir (2010) focused on the utterances of the main character in Avatar movie script. This current study and Sitanggang, Roy and Natsir's (2010) research paper share something in common in that the representative acts in both movies occur frequently in both movies emphasize on providing information and making statements. In both Avatar and this study, the main characters frequently provide information and make statements, emphasizing their importance. For example, in Avatar, Jake Sully shares the Na'vi's belief in being born twice, while the main character in the current study discusses the severe impact of climate change on coastal regions based on research findings.

To compare this study with Lestari and Hartati (2017) examining speech act in Thor movie. Both research studies applied Searle's theory. Lestari and Hartati's (2017) study focuses on "Thor". Thor and William Cage differ in their speech acts and character traits. Both characters display directive acts, giving instructions and commands. However, Thor frequently uses representative acts to share information, while Cage does not. In terms of commissive acts, Cage makes commitments and assurances more often than Thor. Additionally, Thor openly expresses emotions through expressive acts, whereas Cage does not do so as frequently. For example, Thor commands, "Release him!" while Cage orders, "Prepare for the assault!" These distinctions highlight the varying communication styles and character dynamics between Thor and William Cage.

## 6. Conclusion

15 dialogues spoken by Cage in the film "Edge of Tomorrow" offers valuable insights into the four types of illocutionary acts. The findings in this study reveal that directive acts were the most frequently, followed by representative acts and commissive acts. No occurrences of declarative acts were found in this study.

This analysis sheds light on William Cage's communication patterns and his characteristics in the movie script. Cage's frequent use of directive speech acts go along the same line with authoritative character, which reflects the occupation of military officer in the real world.



One limitation of this study is the small sample size. This limited dataset can partially explain Cage's communication patterns. Although it may not offer a complete explanation, it can contribute something to EFL learners to learn speech acts in the context movie. The researcher hopes that this study will serve as a valuable resource for other researchers who are interested in analyzing speech acts as their future research.

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