

**Research Article**

# Speech Acts in the "Say It Loud" YouTube Video

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**Abstract.**

This study aimed to describe the types of speech acts in the "Say It Loud" YouTube video by Azie and Evelyn. This study found that there were three types of John R. Searle's speech acts in the video. Those are the Locutionary Act, the Assertive Illocutionary, and the Perlocutionary Act. The Assertive Illocutionary Act was the most used speech in the video. It was concluded that the illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts make this video interesting and informative.

**Keywords:** Speech Act, Locutionary Act, Illocutionary Act, Perlocutionary Act.

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## 1. Introduction

Pragmatics is the study of the relationship between language and context and is the basis for understanding<sup>1</sup> added, that pragmatics includes discussion about presumptions, speech acts, the meaning of dialogue, discourse structure, and deixis. This is closely related to semantics in discussing meaning. Semantics is the study of meanings associated with meaning or vocabulary, namely meaning without context. In contrast, pragmatic meaning is the context, a speaker's goal, or emotions. Pragmatics allows us to explain what the speaker or writer is saying from spoken speech, but the pronunciation is not clear.

Pragmatic meaning deals with context; this is what distinguishes between pragmatics and semantics. Context According to<sup>2</sup>, it can help readers or listeners determine the meaning of what is being said. In this context, the listener or reader can interpret the importance of the speaker or writer's language. Listeners must know who the target is and the relationship between them, when, and where the communication occurs.

Speech is the expression of or the ability to express thoughts and feelings by articulate sounds. In the communication process, speech is a tool, and information

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is conveyed. People who act as providers and recipients of information together form what is called speech acts and speech events in speech situations<sup>3</sup>.

The speech act is a theory that tests the meaning of language based on the relationship between speech and actions performed by the speaker. Speech acts are a pragmatic element that involves the speaker, audience or writer and reader, and discussed. Oral language can be said to be an actor because it can have specific goals and objectives. Speech is the primary communication tool and has real meaning in communication. The form of speech involves two parties under certain conditions<sup>3</sup>. The researcher then concluded a general definition of speech acts based on John Langshaw Austin, John Searle, and George Yule.

Austin's speech act theory is based on a speaker, where the focus of attention is on how the speaker realizes his intention in speaking; on the other hand, Searle sees speech acts based on the listener, namely how the listener responds to the utterance, namely how he estimates the purpose of the speaker's use of using certain words<sup>4,9</sup>. So, Searle tries to see how the illocutionary value is captured and understood by the listener. Meanwhile, Yule's focus on the speech act is performed or raised after someone receives a speech.

The researcher chose John R. Searle's theory because he re-developed Austin and Searle's approach, which categorized speech acts into five categories: declarative, communicative, expressive, demonstrative, and assertive. Hence, this category divides every utterance uttered by the speaker. After the speaker has finished the type round, the word produced the result. This action is called perlocutionary. This is what has an impact on the audience, the response of the audience. In short, to recognize the audience's verbal expressions, it is necessary to understand the context, and speech acts. Besides, according to the speech act classification, the researcher looks for a specific purpose in each verbal expression. Therefore, researchers are interested in the theory of John R. Searle.

Speech acts are speech and actions that are used in everyday life when interacting. Speech acts can also be found on a platform where everyone interacts, like YouTube, and many people discuss their daily activities. YouTube is one of the ways used by speakers to convey their speech. Sayings in YouTube videos sometimes don't match the primary form of a written rule of a language, but language is more important than that because the meaning contained in it can be understood. In addition, YouTube videos complement exciting entertainment things that can have a more significant influence. We get moral values from the videos on YouTube that can be applied in life [11].

Say It Loud is a PBS Digital Studios series that celebrates Black culture, context, and history. Several videos on the Say It Loud channel discuss the actual identity of black people living in America. The videos on this channel are made in the United States and joined the YouTube platform on January 8, 2019. All videos on this channel have been viewed 3,622,490 times.

The researcher chose the video entitled "Are you black or African American" because there are characteristics of speech acts that are very important to consider as an understanding of the current context when acting, and the benefit is also to avoid misunderstandings in speech. This video also produces some meaning, like the context of the video itself. The speech in this video has a meaning that can be understood pragmatically. So the researcher wants to know more about the speech act from the video.

## 2. Research Methodology

The researcher used qualitative descriptive methods to analyze the data in John R. Searle theory. The Primary data of this research is the video "Are You Black or African American?" in Say It Loud YouTube Video. The data were collected by searching and downloading video, watching video, screen shooting, transcribing, reading transcription, classifying data, and coding. The technique of data analysis in this study was presenting, describing, interpreting, and concluding.

## 3. Finding and Discussion

In this part, the researcher described the types of speech acts in "Say It Loud" on YouTube Video by Azie and Evelyn, especially in the video entitled: "Are You 'Black' or 'African American'?".

### 3.1. Searle's Speech Acts in "Say It Loud" On YouTube Video by Azie and Evelyn

This part explains the use of locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts in the video through the theory of John R. Searle. This part provides an analysis of the Speech Act used in the video entitled: "Are You 'Black' or 'African American'?" which is presented qualitatively. The researcher used a video script to analyze and facilitate data discovery.

### 3.1.1. Locutionary Act

Locutionary acts is actions that are used to say something<sup>5</sup>. According to<sup>6</sup>, the locutionary act is an act of saying certain words, and the action prioritizes the content of the speaker's utterance. Therefore, the role of the track is to convey the information conveyed by the speaker. Locutionary acts can be the most effortless speech acts to recognize because they can be done without including the context of the address in the speech context<sup>7,10</sup>. Searle divides locutionary act into two, namely Utterance Act and The Prepositional Act. This type of speech act will then be expressed through illocutionary and perlocutionary act.

At the beginning of the video, Azie and Evelyn mutter the term black people in America. They talk about the importance of terms and categories of unified races, then wonder why it happened. After showing the music on the video, they continued talking.

Azie: "At the very foundation of America, our entire economy was based on racial categories. Who was allowed to own land, where you could live, and how you were taxed. Whether you were a slave, indentured, free, poor, or rich was all determined by your racial category."

Azie's statement aside is merely to convey to Evelyn and the video audience related to the influence of racism in the lives of black people in America.

Locutionary Act:

This utterance is included in ("At the very foundation of America, our entire economy...so on), which is contain a locutionary element such as providing information, utterance act, and preposition.

Illocutionary Act:

This utterance is also included in the Assertive Illocutionary Act because it contains an assertive element, namely stating to convey real information to the listener.

### 3.1.2. Illocutionary Act

Illocutionary acts are speech acts that contain the power to act by saying something<sup>5</sup>. These actions can be in the form of promises, offers, or questions in the speech. Therefore, this illocutionary speech act is also called the act of doing something. Illocutionary acts are classified into speaking activities into five speech forms<sup>8</sup>: namely Declarative, Assertive, Expressive, Directive, and Commissive.

### 1.1.1.1. Declarative Illocutionary Act

Declarative in the form of speech utterances is linking content with fact. The success of this speech creates a match between proposition and reality.

In the conversation, Azie and Evelyn discuss the results of quick math calculations. Jefferson is trying to say that if a person has 1/8 or less of "black blood," they will be considered white. But this will not change their status in society. Until then, Azie and Evelyn's speech appears again, as in the conversation below.

Azie: "They would then be considered white. Did this change their status as a slave? No. But according to Jefferson, if that person were to be emancipated, they would enter the free world as a white American citizen. Like these kids."

Evelyn: "What?!" Azie: "Yeah, I know, it makes no sense."

Illocutionary Act:

The point of this utterance is that Azie tries to tell Evelyn and the video audience that even though everyone in America has black blood even though only 1/8 of them can still be said to be white, because there is only a little black blood in her, and get freedom in him even though this doesn't make sense. This utterance is included in the Declarative Illocutionary Act because it contains statements in the form of declarations and is enough to make the listener able to interpret it.

Perlocutionary act:

When Azie said, "like these kids," Azie and Evelyn directed the video showing a photo of American children who have 1/8 black skin in their blood and are said to be white. This utterance included the Declarative Perlocutionary Act because it indirectly announces or tells the video audience the child's identity, which is one of the elements of the perlocutionary act itself.

### 1.1.1.2. Assertive Illocutionary Act

Assertive is a speech act in which the speaker is related to the truth being revealed. This form connects speakers with the authenticity of prepositions expressed in speech and refers to stating, suggesting, boasting, complaining, and claiming.

After listening to Azie's explanation about the racial experiences that black people have in America, Evelyn immediately continued by providing data. The situation and the context were still in the form of a conversation and conveyed race information.

Evelyn: "In 1790, the first US census was managed by none other than your boy Thomas Jefferson."

Locutionary Speech Act:

This utterance is included in the Locutionary Act because it contains a locutionary element such as providing information to the interlocutor about who was managed the first census in America. This utterance is also included in Utterance Act.

Illocutionary Act:

Evelyn called "your boy, Thomas Jefferson" because everyone can directly think that Thomas Jefferson was an important person. This utterance means that Thomas Jefferson has managed the first census. He is the third President of the United States. This utterance is included in the Assertive Illocutionary Act because of the truth that is revealed and attracts people to think more deeply about the meaning of this utterance.

### 1.1.1.3. Expressive Illocutionary Act

Expressive is a form of speech that expresses or shows speakers' psychological attitudes toward a situation. This speech act is interpreted as an evaluation of the things mentioned in the address.

Still, Evelyn wants to know ideas or opinions from other people in their forum with the same question. So, for the data below, Azie and Evelyn are listening to Black Panther's opinion.

Black P: "if this cat thinks I'm gonna call myself a Negro, he's got another thing coming, Jack! I'm Black! Black as the night sky! Black as the pit they try to keep us in, ya dig?" Azie: "So you think we should be called Black and not African American?" Black P: "Black as the womb we came from in our mother, Africa. Black is beautiful."

Illocutionary Act:

If Frederick Douglass declares himself a "Negro", in contrast to Black Panther, he still chooses to be called Black, because the only person who can describe him is Black, as well as his mother, who is black, then it is appropriate for him to say himself, Black. The statement "I'm Black! Black as the night sky! Black as the pit they try to keep us in, huh dig?" was included in the Expressive Illocutionary Act because Black Panther expressed it with passionate emotion and a very convincing expression.

#### 1.1.1.4. Directives Illocutionary Act

Directive speech acts as an illocutionary speech whose goal is to produce an effect in the form of actions taken by the interlocutor such as ordering, commanding, requesting, advising, and recommending. In the state of this directive, attention must also be given to the form of politeness.

Azie and Evelyn, pictured through the video, want to prove Jefferson's quick little mathematical. Therefore, in the previous scene, they had prepared writing tools to start practicing mathematical equations. It is clear that in the video, they support each other to form the calculation. Azie mentions the formulas and numbers while Evelyn writes that on the whiteboard.

Azie: "Okay, ready?" Evelyn: "Yes" Azie: "Okay, little a equals pure Negro, and capital A equals pure white. Now, the unit of the blood of the issue, that means kid.  $H$  over  $2 +$ , So let the second crossing of little hand (speech overlaps) Half of a b...(speech overlaps). So now it's one  $\frac{1}{8}$  of A, so that the third cross, that the third equation clears the blood."

##### Illocutionary Act:

Azie's question, besides "Okay ready?" was to ask Evelyn to get ready to write down what Azie would mention on the count. When Evelyn said "Yes," they immediately started the calculation. This utterance is included in the Directive Illocutionary Act because this utterance is affecting the listener or interlocutor in interpreting.

##### Perlocutionary Act:

When Azie mentioned "little a equals pure Negro... .." Evelyn immediately wrote it down on the whiteboard. This utterance is indirectly included in the Directive Perlocutionary Act because the utterance aside is influencing the interlocutor to make a physical movement.

#### 1.1.1.5. Commissive Illocutionary Act

These commit the speaker, to varying degrees, to some particular future course of action. Very similar to Austin's class of the same name, these acts place obligations on the speakers. They may be in the form of promising, vowing, and offering.

Evelyn is still with other sources, namely the third source. In the situation seen, Evelyn no longer asked questions, but the interviewee herself immediately gave answers to what identity she would say when asked.

Interviewer 2: "I would say either. First of all, my idea on race, I feel like I know, is slightly different from everyone else's. As far as I'm a Christian, I'm a follower of Jesus, and so I believe this idea of how we try to categorize ourselves can be a good thing and a bad thing. But I don't allow it to take away from my walk with God at the end of the day."

#### Locutionary Act:

This utterance is included in the Locutionary Act because it contains a locutionary element such as providing information to the interlocutor about whatever term people call us, it will not reduce the closeness of our relationship with God. This utterance is also included in Utterance Act.

#### Illocutionary Act:

This resource person cannot clearly choose her identity because she believes that every identity must have its own negative and positive sides. That identity will also not reduce the way he worships or his belief in her God. She also said that because she is a Christian, she believes whatever identity she chooses will not reduce his steps toward God. Therefore, this statement of the source is included in the Commissive Illocutionary Act because it contains a promise or belief in her God.

### 3.2. Perlocutionary Act

The perlocutionary act is an act by stating something<sup>5</sup>. This perlocutionary act influences speech partners who listen to the speech<sup>3</sup>. As a result of this influence, the speech partners' products are not only in the form of words but also in the form of actions or deeds. Perlocutionary activity is referred to as the act of influential someone. The effect is in the form of the result of the expressions heard by the interlocutor according to the situation and conditions.

At the end of the scene in the video, the atmosphere has started to melt. It is more relaxed, especially Azie and Evelyn are more concerned with the answers from Ms. Nerd, who can put together and conclude all the answers to questions from this video.

Evelyn: "Subscribe, follow, social media, etc." Both (Azie & Evelyn): "Bye!"

#### Perlocutionary Act:

The statement, in addition, contains a directive meaning because it directly asks the audience to subscribe to the Say It Loud channel. Therefore, this action is included in the Directive Perlocutionary Act.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study in findings and discussion, the researcher concludes 29 data were included in three types of John R. Searle's Speech Acts. Those are the Locutionary Speech Act is 10 data, the Assertive Illocutionary and Perlocutionary Act is 13 data, the Directive Illocutionary and Perlocutionary Act are 8 data, the Commission Illocutionary Act is 1 data, Expressive Illocutionary Act is 4 data, and Declarative Illocutionary and Perlocutionary Act is 2 data. The most used speech act found in the video is Assertive Illocutionary Act because the audience's expressions contain the truth. This study concludes with three types of Searle's Speech Act. Those are locutionary acts and five classifications of illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, namely Declarative, Assertive, Expressive, Directives, and Commission. This video is informative, educates everyone, and is based on facts or truths in America.

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