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# SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS OF THE PARTICIPANTS' SPEECHES IN THE STUDY OF THE U.S INSTITUTES (SUSI) PROGRAM

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**Abstract:** Research related to speech acts in speeches is frequently conducted, particularly in the context of speeches delivered by political and prominent figures. However, speeches by international exchange program students receive less attention despite their potential impact to influence audiences. Moreover, this study investigates the types of illocutionary speech acts employed by 20 undergraduate participants who were part of the 2021 Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSI). The theme of the analyzed speeches is "This I Believe." A descriptive-qualitative method was employed, with data collected through audio and video recordings, transcribed, and analyzed using Searle's speech act theory. Based on the findings, it was discovered that the exchange students' speeches, which employed illocutionary speech actions including assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive, function to represent their cultural background and life experiences. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that SUSI participants predominantly relied on assertive illocutionary acts to articulate their personal beliefs and values in their "This I Believe" speeches. This analysis highlights the importance of understanding the types of speech acts in different contexts, as they reveal the underlying intentions and strategies of the speakers in conveying their messages.

**Keywords:** *exchange students, illocutionary speech act, speech*

## INTRODUCTION

Expanding upon the significance of language and verbal communication, the concept of speech acts within speech adds another layer to their interconnectedness. Speech acts, as proposed by scholars like J.L. Austin (1962) and John Searle (1969), delve into the performative aspect of language in how utterances not only convey information but also perform certain actions. Yule (2006) also defines a speech act as an action that is displayed through speech in a communication process. In the realm of speech, which is a specific manifestation of verbal communication, individuals go beyond merely exchanging words, it is because they engage in purposeful acts that influence the listener and shape the dynamics of communication.

Furthermore, Yakubu (2021) defines speech act theory as a subject of pragmatics that studies how language is used not just to convey information but also to carry out actions. In the context of speech acts, utterances are more than just statements of cognition. For example, a speaker may use their words to commit, give a demand, or express gratitude. This aligns with the idea that speech acts are a fundamental component of effective communication, allowing individuals not only to convey information but also to perform social functions and shape the interpersonal context.

Nowadays, speech act theory has been widely applied in analyzing various types of speeches, such as political speeches, presidential speeches, and other public discourses. However, there has been limited research on how this theory can be used to analyze the speeches of students participating in international exchange programs, particularly those with the personal and reflective nature of "This I Believe" speeches. Most studies on speech acts tend to focus on more formal contexts involving prominent figures, leaving a gap in understanding how young leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds utilize speech acts to express personal beliefs and contribute to cross-cultural communication.

In the speeches delivered by students participating in exchange programs, there exists complexity in the use of speech acts that extend beyond mere information dissemination. According to Ekoro & Gunn (2021), it is easy for speakers or listeners to determine the intended meaning of utterances if they are familiar with the types of speech acts and their functions. However, it is still uncertain how this concept is reflected within the context of 'This I Believe' speeches. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the types of speech acts employed in 'This I Believe' speeches by SUSI's participants.

Moreover, existing research often emphasizes the more structured and rhetorical aspects of speech acts, overlooking the informal, personal, and belief-driven nature of speeches like "This I Believe." These speeches, though more personal and reflective, play a crucial role in fostering understanding across different cultural perspectives. This research aims to fill this gap by analyzing the illocutionary speech acts used in the "This I Believe" speeches by 20 SUSI participants. The participants consist of 20 undergraduate students from Brazil, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Russia, as part of the 2021 Study of the U.S. Institute (SUSI) for Student Leaders on Education and the Future of Work. The program held in person in seattle in 2022.

Throughout the 5-week program, the participants will explore how technology, innovation, and globalization are driving new initiatives to educate and equip young people with the professional skills necessary for future success. Additionally, they will participate in curriculum development seminars aimed at preparing them to create and lead training sessions that benefit their local communities. Moreover, "This I Believe" is a well-known essay genre that gives writers the opportunity to express a personal belief and explain its significance or origin. This form of essay gained popularity in the 1950s after being featured on a radio show hosted by journalist Edward R. Murrow. In 2004, NPR revived the program. Dan Gediman, the executive producer of "This I Believe" on NPR, explained that the goal is not to persuade Americans to adopt the same beliefs, but rather to encourage them to undertake the more challenging task of respecting beliefs different from their own.

As part of the Study of the U.S. Institute (SUSI) for Student Leaders on Education and the Future of Work, each participant developed a "This I Believe" speech during their time in Seattle. Moreover, by doing the research, it will provide new insights into how students from

Brazil, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Russia employ speech acts not only to communicate their personal beliefs but also to perform social functions that enhance cross-cultural understanding in an educational and leadership-focused environment. It is important to acknowledge that both have equal value in the context of communication.

*Speech Act*

A speech act is a form of pragmatics in which a speaker's intentions extend beyond the words or phrases which he or she says. Speech acts are acts that refer to the action performed by produced utterances. People can act by saying something. Through speech acts, the speaker can convey physical action merely through words and phrases. Austin (1962) defines speech acts as actions done by produced utterances. In line with this, Yule (2006) defines a speech act as an action accomplished through utterances. In summary, a speech act is a linguistic action that occurs when someone says something with a specific intention, and the utterance itself performs an action.

Moreover, Yule (2006) also defines speech acts as a study of how the speakers and hearers use language. It could be said that the speech act involves examining the way speakers and listeners use language to achieve communication. It is not only concerned with the literal meaning of words, but also with contextual usage, implications, and effects resulting from the use of language in communicative interactions. In other words, speech acts examine more than just the grammatical structure or meaning of words, but also how language is used in everyday practice to create the desired communicative effect. According to Searle (1969), speech acts can be analyzed on three levels: the locutionary level, the illocutionary level, and the perlocutionary level.

*Illocutionary speech act*

It is the performance of an act in saying something. Illocutionary acts refer to what an utterance is doing. That is, the meaning that the speaker wishes to convey or the action that should be performed; the force or effect of an utterance or unit of language will have when uttered. In other words, this speech act not only functions to state or inform something but also to act. Therefore, it is also referred to as "The Act of Doing Something". Rohmadi (2017) provides some examples related to illocutionary speech acts.

1. Yuli presented her thesis proposal seminar yesterday.
2. Santoso is currently sick.

Utterance number 1, if delivered to a 12th-semester student, the purpose of the statement is not only to provide information but also to encourage the student to start working on their thesis. Meanwhile, utterance number 2, if the situation is addressed to a conversational partner who has turned on the radio at a loud volume, it means not only conveying information but also intending to instruct the conversational partner to lower the volume or turn off the radio. The identification of illocutionary speech acts is difficult because it requires considering who the speaker and addressee are. Illocutionary speech acts are categorized into five types by Searle in Leech (1993), namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration speech acts.

*Types of Illocutionary Speech Act*

In general, illocutionary speech acts are classified into five forms. Searle in (Leech, 1993) classifies the forms of illocutionary speech acts into five types. The following is the divided according to Searle.

1. *Representative*

According to Yule (2006), a representative speech act is one in which the speaker expresses whether or not they believe something is true. In performing this type of speech act, the speaker represents the world as he or she believes it is, thus making the world fit the world's belief. Similar to this idea, Leech in Mey (2001) states that these speech acts are assertions about a state of affairs in the world and thus carry the values of true or false.

Example: The earth is flat.

The speaker stated that the earth is flat, which is true. The previous utterance serves as a representative speech act since it can be used to make a factual statement.

Another example: The fact that girls have been outstripping boys academically has been acknowledged for the past 12 years or so.

This sentence is assertive because it makes a declarative statement about a factual situation (the academic performance of girls versus boys) and presents it as something true and recognized by others. According to Searle (1969), assertive or representative speech acts involve the speaker committing to the truth of the proposition they express. These utterances stem from the speaker's observations and are followed by a statement that presents either a fact or an opinion based on those observations. The key purpose of assertive speech acts is to make the speaker responsible for asserting that something is true. In addition, Yule (1997) explains that representatives include various forms of expression such as factual statements, assumptions, opinions, descriptions, conclusions, as well as quotations and paraphrases.

2. *Commissive*

Searle (1969) defines commissives as illocutionary acts that commit the speaker to carrying out a future action. These acts reflect the speaker's intentions. When performing a commissive, the speaker is taking responsibility to align the future reality with their words. In line with this, Cutting (2002) explains that commissive speech acts involve utterances that bind the speaker to a future action, such as making promises, offering, threatening, refusing, vowing, or volunteering. Similarly, Yule (1997) notes that commissives are used by speakers to commit themselves to future actions.

Example: I'll be back.

From the utterance above, it can be identified as a commissive speech act in the form of a promise. The use of the word "will" indicate that the speaker is making a commitment, which is one of the functions of commissive speech acts.

3. *Directive*

Directives are speech acts where the speaker attempts to persuade the addressee to perform an action, expressing the speaker's wish or desire for this to happen. According to Searle (1969), the illocutionary point of directives lies in the speaker's effort to get the hearer to do something.

Mey (2001) similarly explains that directive speech acts represent an attempt by the speaker to guide the hearer toward a particular goal, often in line with the speaker's intention.

Example: Give me a cup of coffee. Make it black

The above example illustrates the speaker's intent to have the addressee make a cup of coffee. This is an instance of a directive speech act, functioning as a command or request, as indicated by the use of an imperative at the beginning of the sentence.

4. *Expressive*

Expressives are speech acts that convey the speaker's feelings. Searle (1969) explains that the purpose of expressive acts is to express the speaker's psychological state, as indicated by the sincerity condition, to a particular situation described in the propositional content. Expressives typically reflect emotions such as pleasure, pain, like, dislike, or sorrow. Additionally, Mey (2001) emphasizes that expressive speech acts reveal the speaker's internal state, and are inherently subjective, providing no direct information about the external world.

Example: I'm really sorry

The speaker is performing an apology, expressing regret or remorse for their actions or words. The illocutionary force here is an attempt to convey the speaker's feelings of sorrow and to seek forgiveness or reconciliation from the addressee.

Example: Thank you for the help

The speaker is expressing gratitude, recognizing and appreciating the help they received. The illocutionary force lies in the act of thanking, which serves to acknowledge the effort or kindness shown by the addressee. In conclusion, expressive speech acts are focused on conveying the speaker's emotions, attitudes, or psychological states. Unlike declarative speech acts, which bring about a change in the external world, expressive acts primarily serve to share or communicate the speaker's internal state with the addressee.

5. *Declaration*

Declarations or declarative speech acts, are those that bring about immediate changes in a current state of affairs. Because their success often depends on specific external institutions, they can be referred to as institutionalized performatives. According to Searle (1969), declarations alter the status or condition of the object(s) being referred to simply by the act of making the declaration.

Similarly, Cutting (2002) defines declarations as words or expressions that change reality through their very utterance, such as "I bet," "I declare," or "I resign." The idea of "changing the world" means that once the speaker makes the declaration, it doesn't just represent a belief, but a reality that is accepted by others. Common examples of declarations include:

Example: Priest: I now pronounce you husband and wife.

As shown from the example above, the priest, by their recognized authority in the religious or legal institution, performs the act of marrying the couple through their words. The utterance changes the social status of the individuals from being unmarried to being legally recognized as a married couple.

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Example: You are fired

When spoken by a manager or someone with the appropriate authority within a company, this utterance changes the employment status of the worker. The worker goes from being employed to being unemployed as a direct result of the manager's declaration.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the descriptive-qualitative method and the data was served in the form of sentences and presented descriptively, then was observed by the theory of speech act by Searle. A descriptive study has the purpose of describing the types and functions of speech acts found in the SUSI participants' utterances. Descriptive qualitative will be applied in describing the data in words or making interpretations. Additionally, the purpose is to draw the result of the study. It is the most appropriate for this research because it is considered to result in a detail description of the use of illocutionary speech act in SUSI Participants' speech.

The primary tool in this research is the set of criteria used to identify types of speech acts based on Searle's theory and their functions. The researcher establishes several indicators to streamline the process, particularly in the data collection, classification, and analysis stages. This is crucial because not every utterance can be classified as an illocutionary speech act according to Searle's criteria. These acts possess distinct characteristics that must be met. The indicators employed include illocutionary speech, act indicators, and types of speech act indicators. In this study, investigator triangulation is used.

Additionally, a data-sheet was used as a secondary research tool. This sheet tracked the study's focus on illocutionary speech acts within the speeches of SUSI participants, specifically documenting the speech acts found in the utterances.

**Table 1. Table of Analysis**

| Code | Utterances | Classification of Illocutionary Acts | | | | | Functi | Context |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rep | Dir | Com | Exp | Dec | --- | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

**Notes:**

Code : In the form of participant number code sorted by the initial name of the country and the initial name of participant.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| IDN | : Indonesia | DWK, ZEN, ALF, WIL | : Indonesia's Participants |
| NGA | : Nigeria | PAU, ZOL, ZIO, ALY | : Nigeria's Participants |
| IND | : India | ARH, RIS, HNA, DRU | : India's Participants |
| RUS | : Rusia | KAT, VIN, SVT, ALZ | : Rusia's Participants |
| BRA | : Brazil | MRL, MRM, HEN, GAB | : Brazil's Participants |

Rep : Representatives

Dir : Directives
Com : Commisives
Exp : Expressives
Dec : Declaratives

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

The data in this section represents the findings obtained from the transcript analysis of the Study of the U.S Institutes Participants' Speech using Searle theories. The researcher found out that speeches from the SUSI's participants employed assertives, directives, expressives and commisives. While there is no declaration employed, the assertives/ representatives were the most frequently used speech acts. Conversely, commissives were the least frequently found in the speeches. Additionally, directives and expressives were used with moderate frequency. The detailed explanation of these findings will be explained as follows:

**Table 2**. Table of speech acts findings

| No | Searle's Classification of Illocutionary Speech Acts Types | Subcategories/Function of Illocutionary Speech Acts | Frequency of Illocutionary Speech Acts |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Assertive/Representatives | a. Asserting<br>b.<br>c. Describing<br>d. Reporting<br>e. Acknowledging<br>f. Claiming | Most Dominant |
| 2. | Commisives | a. Commiting | Least Frequent |
| 3. | Directives | a. Requesting<br>b. Suggesting | Moderate Level |
| 4. | Expressives | a. Thanking<br>b. Apologizing<br>c. Praising | Moderate Level |

***Assertives/ Representatives***

The data analyzed from the transcripts of the Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSI) participants revealed that assertives, or representatives, were the most commonly used speech act. Findings and discussion will be explained based on their categories, assertive can be categorized based on its function, including: asserting, describing, reporting, acknowledging and claiming.The detailed analysis of how assertives were utilized by the SUSI participants is presented below.

1. *Asserting*

BRA/GAB/02/ASS : I believe in the power of education

Locutionary Speech Act : "*I believe in the power of education.*"
Context of Speech Act: The speaker express her personal belief, higlighting in the importance of education in her life and its impact on her growth and development.
Classfication & Function: Assertive ( Asserting)

2. *Describing*

BRA/ML/36/ASS: *"Or when you noticed a mom and his son feeling lost because they want their Thanksgiving food but they're not understanding English, They just speak Spanish. And you turning your empathy on, and because of this, you try to speak Spanish..."*
Locutionary Speech Act: Or when you noticed a mom and his son feeling lost because they want their Thanksgiving food but they're not understanding English, you try to speak Spanish.
Context of Speech Act: The speaker describes a personal experience of using empathy to help a Spanish-speaking family.
Classfication & Function: Assertive ( describing)

3. *Reporting*

IND/ARH/90/ASS: "*Time passed by, working and studying from home. And finally, sometime in December, 2020, I heard that vaccines were found."*
Locutionary Speech Act : Time passed by, working and studying from home. And finally, sometime in December, 2020, I heard that vaccines were found.
Context of Speech Act: The speaker narrates how time passed while working and studying from home. At one point, in December 2020, she heard the news that vaccines had been discovered.
Classfication & Function: Assertive ( reporting)

4. *Acknowledging*

NGA/ALY/290/ASS: "*I realized that Brazilians can be calm and composed, like my dear friend Henrique. And at the same time, full of humor and beautiful smiles, like Gabriella and the two Mariannas."*
Locutionary Speech Act : I realized that Brazilians can be calm and composed, like my dear friend Henrique. And at the same time, full of humor and beautiful smiles, like Gabriella and the two Mariannas
Context of Speech Act: The speaker shares personal observations and experiences while correcting a stereotype.
Classfication & Function: Assertive ( acknowledging )

5. *Claiming*

IDN/WIL/244/ASS : *I do believe. We all believe in education.*
Locutionary Speech Act : I do believe. We all believe in education.
Context of Speech Act : The speaker assert a personal belief and general statement about the value of education.
Classfication & Function : Assertive (claiming)

***Commisives***

In the data from the SUSI participants' speeches, commissives were found to be the least frequently used type of speech act. Commissives are speech acts where the speaker commits themselves to future actions, thereby creating an obligation to fulfill the mentioned actions.

While these acts are important for setting expectations and building trust by making intentions explicit, they were less prominent in the SUSI speeches. This is because the theme "This I Believe" focuses more on expressing current beliefs and values rather than making promises or commitments to future actions. As a result, speakers were more likely to assert their beliefs rather than commit to specific future actions, which is why commissives appeared less frequently in the data. Findings and will be explained bellow.

1. *Commiting*

NGA/PAU/318/COM : "*And so I decided, and I chose, not to be any other person, but to be distinct".*
Locutionary Speech Act : And so I decided, and I chose, not to be any other person, but to be distinct
Context of Speech Act : The speaker commits to being distinct and true to themselves
Classfication & Function : Commisives (commiting)

***Directives***

In the SUSI participants' speeches, directives were used with moderate frequency. Directives are speech acts in which the speaker tries to influence the listener to take some action, such as requesting, advising, or urging them to do something.The moderate frequency of directives in these speeches can be explained by the nature of the "This I Believe" theme, which primarily focuses on sharing personal beliefs rather than instructing or influencing others.

1. *Requesting*

BRA/GAB/01//DIR: "*I'm gonna sit right here because I'm gonna share a very personal stuff. So if I get emotional, don't judge me please. Right"*
Locutionary Speech Act : I'm gonna sit right here because I'm gonna share a very personal stuff. So if I get emotional, don't judge me please. Right?
Context of Speech Act: To open her speech, the speaker states to audience that her speech will be personal and also requests the audience not to judge her if she becomes emotional during her speech.
Classfication & Function : Directive ( requesting)

2. *Suggesting*

IND/ARH/101/DIR: *"We need to grab all the opportunities, take the risks, go to new places, accept new jobs, meet new people, and move ahead in life".*
Locutionary Speech Act : We need to grab all the opportunities, take the risks, go to new places, accept new jobs, meet new people, and move ahead in life.
Context of Speech Act : The speaker urges the audience to take actions that will lead to personal growth and advancement.
Classfication & Function : Directive ( suggesting)

***Expressives***

Expressives were used with moderate frequency in the SUSI participants' speeches. Expressives are speech acts that convey the speaker's psychological states, such as feelings of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, or sorrow. Moreover, In these speeches, expressives included acts like thanking, apologizing, and praising.

1. *Thanking*

IND/RIS/155/EXP: "*So, thank you so much for having this, all you're for making it feel like home for all of us, creating an atmosphere like this"*.
Locutionary Speech Act : So, thank you so much for having this, all you're for making it feel like home for all of us, creating an atmosphere like this.
Context of Speech Act: To express gratitude for the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere created by the audience.
Classfication & Function: Expressive ( thanking)

2. *Apologizing*

RUS/KAT/452/EXP: It's almost the end. I'm sorry, I'm trying. Okay, I can see with the tears.
Locutionary Speech Act : It's almost the end. I'm sorry, I'm trying. Okay, I can see with the tears.
Context of Speech Act : The speaker apologizes for becoming emotional.
Classfication & Function : Expressive (apologizing)

3. *. Praising*

BRA/HEN/29/EXP: "*I believe in people from India, who show great respect for my culture and who shared a room with me, like we were longtime friends".*
Locutionary Speech Act : I believe in people from India, who show great respect for my culture and who shared a room with me, like we were longtime friends.
Context of Speech Act: The speaker praises people from India for their respect
Classfication & Function : Expressive (praising)

**Discussion**

In this section, the researcher discussed the findings in order to clarify to the statement of the problem. The objective of the study, as outlined in the previous chapter is to find out the types of illocutionary speech act used by The Study of The U.S Institues (SUSI) Participants' speech under the theme "This I Believe". The researcher found that the participants used 4 types of illocutionary speech act such as representatives/assertives, directives, commisives, and expressives. However there is declaration found in the speeches. The observation result shows that the types of patterns of each illocutionary speech act are varied, they will be elaborated as follows.

1. *Assertives/representatives*

Assertive illocutionary acts refer to speech acts where the speaker commits to the truth value of a statement, expressing whether they believe something to be factual (true) or not (false). In this research, the researcher identified assertive as the most found speech act in the utterance employed by the SUSI's participants. According to Searle (1969) in this research, assertive speech acts are consistently found throughout the speeches delivered by SUSI's participants. This aligns closely with the theme "This I Believe," as the participants are tasked with articulating their deeply held personal beliefs and values. The study reveals that these acts were predominantly used to convey/ express personal beliefs, observations, and experiences.

Assertive illocutionary acts involve the speaker committing to the truth value of a statement, showing confidence that what they assert is true. In the context of the SUSI participants' speeches, assertive acts were the most prevalent, reflecting the nature of the "This I Believe" theme, which revolves around expressing personal beliefs and values. Participants used

assertive speech acts to assert, describe, report, acknowledge, and claim their deeply held beliefs, aligning closely with their task of articulating their personal convictions.

The dominance of assertive acts in SUSI speeches mirrors findings from Permana & Mauriyat (2021) analysis of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's political speeches, where assertive acts were also the most frequent. In both cases, assertives like reporting, stating, and explaining were used to present information as factual, persuading the audience by conveying truth and reliability. Yudhoyono often employed assertives to describe the current political and social landscape, while SUSI participants used them to express personal beliefs and values. This similarity suggests that assertives play a crucial role in both personal and political contexts by helping speakers establish credibility and make their messages convincing.

*Classification & function of assertives/representatives*

The findings also showed various ways SUSI participants utilized assertive speech acts, including asserting, describing, reporting, acknowledging, and claiming.

*Asserting beliefs with conviction*

According to Searle (1969), asserting involves making a declaration with strong conviction, often supported by evidence, indicating a high level of commitment from the speaker. In the analysis, participants often used assertive speech acts to assert their beliefs, reflecting their confidence in the truth of these beliefs Also, often grounded in personal experiences. For instance, when a participant stated, “I believe in the power of education," the speaker was not merely sharing a thought but emphasizing a deeply held belief. The context of this assertion, where education is highlighted as a transformative force in the speaker's life, strengthens the impact of the statement, making it more persuasive and compelling. Similarly, another participant asserted, "I believe that connections between people are above national differences," drawing from personal beliefs and experiences to make a strong case for the importance of human connections. This aligns with Searle's view that asserting involves a high level of speaker commitment, making it a powerful tool in influencing the listener's beliefs.

Similarly, when another participant asserts, "I believe that connections between people are above national differences," they are drawing on their personal beliefs and experiences. This kind of assertion emphasizes the importance of human connections, transcending national boundaries and differences. By grounding their statements in personal conviction, the speakers make their message more relatable and convincing to the audience. In conclusion, in the "asserting" category, speakers make declarations with strong conviction, often rooted in their personal experiences. This approach allows them to express deeply held beliefs in a way that is both persuasive and impactful.

*Describing personal experiences*

Descriptive assertive acts were employed to provide the audience with detailed accounts of the speaker’s experiences, allowing listeners to visualize the situations being discussed. Searle and Vanderveken (1985) explain that description involves revealing directly observable details, which is the basis of assertive speech acts. When participants described their experiences, they provided detailed accounts that allowed listeners to visualize the situations being discussed. For example, a participant described an empathetic act of trying to communicate in Spanish with a mother and her son who were struggling to order Thanksgiving food. This act of describing not only conveyed the speaker's observations but also highlighted their empathy and adaptability, painting a vivid picture for the audience. Descriptions like these functioned to

bring the audience closer to the speaker's experiences, fostering a sense of shared understanding. This supports Levinson's (1983) perspective that describing helps create a mental image, thereby enhancing the audience's connection to the speaker's narrative.

*Reporting events and experiences*

Reporting, as described by Searle (1969) and Grice (1975), involves conveying information from other sources or recounting events that have occurred. In the SUSI participants' speeches, the reporting function was used to share factual accounts that were central to their narratives. For instance, participants often recounted specific events, such as the timeline of their application and interview process for the SUSI program, or the discovery of vaccines during the pandemic. By providing these detailed sequences of events, participants not only informed the audience of important occurrences but also added depth and context to their personal stories. This type of assertive speech act aligns with Hornby's (2010) view that reporting provides detailed information about past events, which in turn helps to build credibility and trustworthiness. Furthermore, these reports served to inform the audience about significant experiences that had a profound impact on the participants' beliefs, thus reinforcing the personal and transformative nature of their narratives.

*Acknowledging New Understandings*

Acknowledging, as defined by Searle (1969), involves recognizing and accepting a fact or proposition, often demonstrating a shift in understanding or perspective. In the speeches, participants used acknowledgment to express recognition of new truths or changes in perception. For example, when a participant acknowledged that "there is more to India than Bollywood," they were not just agreeing with a statement but actively engaging with a new understanding of Indian culture. This acknowledgment goes beyond simple agreement; it reflects a transformation in the speaker's understanding, resulting from direct experiences or interactions. It demonstrates the participants' willingness to challenge stereotypes and embrace new perspectives.

The acknowledgment of new truths and shifts in perspective is a key element in the speeches of international exchange students. While speeches by prominent figures like politicians often receive considerable attention, the speeches delivered by exchange program students, hold significant potential to influence audiences and broaden understanding across cultures. The act of acknowledging, as seen in these speeches, plays a vital role in this process, as it reflects the students' personal growth and their ability to navigate and bridge different cultural contexts.

*Claiming Personal Truths*

Claiming, as an assertive act, involves the speaker making a strong, confident statement based on personal beliefs or experiences. According to Hornby (2010), claiming is defined as asserting something emphatically, even if it is not entirely proven. In the SUSI participants' speeches, claiming was frequently used to assert beliefs and experiences as truths, which were meant to inspire or motivate the audience.

For example, when the speaker states, "Those actions definitely can change many lives, and picturing in a bigger way, it can change the world." This is a clear instance of an assertive speech act, specifically in the category of claiming. Here, the speaker is not merely describing or reporting a fact but rather asserting a strong belief in the transformative power of empathy. Another example is when a speaker claimed, "But always believe that education is a good start to make it possible all these scenarios, as turn out to be true in my case," they were not

just sharing a belief but asserting its validity based on their own experiences. This kind of assertive speech act often carried a persuasive element, as the speaker aimed to convince the audience of the truth and importance of their claim.

In conclusion, such a claim, although not always backed by proof, can reflect the speaker's confidence and attempt to persuade the audience of their validity. This aligns with the idea that claiming involves taking a strong stance, emphasizing the speaker's belief in the truth of their assertion.

*2. Commissives*

Commissive illocutionary acts are speech acts in which the speaker commits themselves to a future course of action. According to Searle (1969), these acts create an obligation for the speaker to fulfill the mentioned action, thereby increasing their motivation to perform it. Commissives play a crucial role in establishing trust and accountability in interactions, as they set expectations and reinforce social bonds.

In the SUSI participants' speeches, commissive illocutionary acts were identified mainly in the form of committing, where the speakers expressed personal resolutions and goals in the future, According to Searle (1969), commissive are those illocutionary acts whose point is to commit the speaker to some future course of action. They express what the speaker intends. In using the commisive, the speaker undertakes to make the world fit the words (via the speaker). Aligning with this, Cutting (2002) states that commissive speech acts include acts in which the words commit the speaker to future action, such as promising, offering, threatening, refusing, vowing, and volunteering. This contrasts with the use of commissive acts in political speeches, where the emphasis is often on making promises and declaring commitments to future actions. The difference lies in the context and purpose of the speeches.

In political speeches, as seen in studies by Safwat (2015) and Cindy & Gultom (2017), commissive acts dominate because political figures like John Kerry and Hillary Clinton need to build trust and accountability with their audience by making promises and committing to future actions. These acts are crucial in political contexts where speakers aim to persuade the public by aligning their words with their intended future policies and actions.

Although commissive speech acts were found less frequently in this study, they were still present in the form of personal commitments. This differs from previous studies, Safwat (2015) and Cindy & Gultom (2017), where commissives were more dominant and used to make promises or declare larger-scale commitments in political contexts. In the SUSI speeches, commissives focused not on public or formal promises, but rather on personal resolutions and future goals.In this research, commissive speech acts were identified in the speeches of SUSI participants, primarily in the form of committing.

The differing emphasis on commissive acts between these contexts underscores how the purpose of the speech, whether it's to articulate personal beliefs or to influence public opinion and gain trust, shapes the type and frequency of speech acts used. In political speeches, where influencing others and establishing credibility is key, commissive acts are more prominent. In contrast, in the SUSI speeches, which are more introspective, reflects the participants' focus on internal resolutions and self-driven goals rather than the external obligations and assurances typically found in political discourse.

*Classification & Function of Commissives*

The findings revealed that SUSI participants predominantly utilized the commissive illocutionary act of committing to articulate their personal goals and intentions within their speeches.

*Committing as an Assertion of Intention*

Committing involves the speaker making a deliberate choice and asserting their intention to perform a particular action. This speech act creates an obligation for the speaker to adhere to their stated course of action, often reinforced by the social context in which the commitment is made.

The emphasis on committing can be attributed to the personal and introspective nature of the speeches delivered by the SUSI participants. These speeches often center on themes of self-discovery, personal growth, and the determination to adhere to one's values and aspirations. For example, statements like "And so I decided, and I chose, not to be any other person, but to be distinct" and "At this moment, I know I have to become an education activist to let everyone know that 'illiteracy is the enemy'" illustrate how participants commit to their paths and beliefs. These utterances do not include explicit conditions or formal assurances typical of promising, as they are more about internal declarations of intent and personal commitments.

The absence of promise in the analyzed speeches indicates that the participants were more focused on affirming their own decisions and goals rather than offering assurances or guarantees to others. This aligns with the nature of the SUSI program, which encourages participants to reflect on their experiences, articulate their personal journeys, and commit to future actions that align with their individual values and aspirations. Thus, the identified speech acts are best classified under committing, as they underscore a commitment to oneself and one's chosen direction, without the formalities and explicit assurances characteristic of promising.

*3. Directives*

In the SUSI participants' speeches, directives were used with moderate frequency. Directives are speech acts in which the speaker tries to influence the listener to take some action, such as requesting, advising, or urging them to do something. The moderate frequency of directives can be explained by the nature of the "This I Believe" theme, which primarily focuses on sharing personal beliefs rather than instructing or influencing others. However, some participants likely used directives to encourage their audience to reflect on certain ideas, adopt similar beliefs, or take actions aligned with the values they were discussing. This explains why directives were present but not as prevalent as assertives, which aligned more closely with the theme of expressing and asserting personal beliefs.

Directive illocutionary acts, as explained by Searle and Vanderveken (1985), include asking, ordering, commanding, inviting, requesting, suggesting, insisting, warning, and advising. Each of these acts represents a different way for the speaker to influence the listener's behavior or decisions. In the SUSI speeches, participants used softer forms of directives, such as suggestions or invitations, reflecting the reflective and persuasive nature of the speeches rather than forceful commands or demands.

The moderate occurrence of directives in the SUSI speeches mirrors findings from a study by Cindy & Gultom (2017), which analyzed speech acts in Hillary Clinton's speech at the Annual NAACP convention in 2016. Their analysis found that directives made up 21.4% of the speech acts, a moderate percentage compared to other types like commissives and assertives. In both cases, the moderate frequency of directives reflects a balance between

sharing beliefs and encouraging action. While directives play a role in influencing the audience, they are not the dominant force, allowing space for personal reflection and subtle persuasion, rather than overt instruction or imposition.

*Classification & Function of Directives*

The findings revealed that SUSI participants predominantly utilized the directives illocutionary act, where the speaker tries to influence the listener to take some action through requesting and giving suggestions/suggesting.

*Requesting with Politeness*

Requesting is a form of directive speech act where the speaker politely asks the interlocutor to perform an action, giving them the option to accept or refuse. Searle and Vanderveken (1985) emphasize that a request inherently allows the listener to deny the speaker's wishes. Requests often involve polite forms such as "please" or modal verbs like "can," "could," "will," and "would" (Yule, 1996). The illocutionary force of a request lies in its politeness and the option it gives the listener to refuse.

For example, in the utterance "I'm gonna sit right here because I'm gonna share a very personal stuff. So if I get emotional, don't judge me, please. Right?" The speaker is making a request for understanding and non-judgment from the audience. The use of "please" adds a layer of politeness, emphasizing that the audience has the choice to comply or not. This aligns with the notion that a request, unlike a command, does not impose an obligation but rather seeks the listener's voluntary cooperation.

Similarly, the utterance "And yes, if you're clicking pictures of this. Note, do send it to me." illustrates a polite request where the speaker is asking the audience to share any pictures they take. The conditional phrasing "if you're clicking pictures" and the respectful tone underscore the non-imperative nature of the request, reinforcing the audience's autonomy to decide whether to fulfill it or not. This example perfectly fits Searle and Vanderveken's (1985) definition of a request as a directive that allows for refusal, highlighting the cooperative nature of the interaction. Moreover, the politeness of requests, often marked by phrases like "please" or modal verbs, reflects the speaker's awareness of social norms and their desire to maintain a positive relationship with the listener.

*Giving Suggestion/ Suggesting*

Suggesting and insisting represent different levels of directive force, where suggesting involves proposing an action or course of action gently, while insisting involves a more forceful push for the listener to comply. Traugott & Pratt (1980) describe suggestions as invitations for the listener to consider an option, without pressing for immediate action. In contrast, insisting involves a stronger determination for the listener to follow through.

In the SUSI speeches, participants employed suggestions to gently guide the audience towards certain viewpoints. For instance, in the utterance, "We need to grab all the opportunities, take the risks, go to new places, accept new jobs, meet new people, and move ahead in life," the speaker uses "we need to" to soften the directive. This phrasing implies a shared goal, making the suggestion feel more collaborative and less imposing.

Searle and Vanderveken (1985) explain that while suggestions serve as invitations to consider options, insistence involves a more compelling push. In SUSI speeches, the predominant use of suggestions reflects the speaker's intention to influence the audience without applying excessive pressure. This aligns with the reflective nature of the speeches,

which tend to provide space for the audience to think and reflect, rather than being forced to agree or take action in a specific way.

The speeches focus on subtly influencing the audience's perspective, rather than compelling them to accept or act. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of suggestions in these speeches primarily reflects the speaker's desire to influence in a non-imposing manner, which enhances the open and reflective tone of the speeches.

*4. Expressives*

Expressive illocutionary acts are speech acts that convey the speaker's psychological state or feelings toward a particular situation or event. According to Searle (1969), the primary function of expressive is to communicate emotions such as pleasure, pain, like, dislike, or sorrow. Mey (2001) emphasizes that expressive are inherently subjective, reflecting the speaker's internal state rather than providing factual information about the external world. In my research on SUSI participants' speeches, expressive acts, such as thanking, apologizing, and praising, were present and used to convey emotions like gratitude, regret, and admiration, mirroring the emotional responses of the speakers to their experiences.

The moderate presence of expressive acts in my findings can be attributed to the personal nature of SUSI speeches, where participants shared their beliefs and life experiences, naturally leading to emotional expressions. Expressives appeared moderately because these speeches were not only about conveying facts or persuading the audience but also about connecting emotionally with the listeners. This contrasts with political speeches, where expressives are often less dominant due to the focus on persuasion, commitment to future actions, and providing factual statements.

For example, studies on political and motivational speeches, such as Safwat's (2015) analysis of John Kerry's and George Bush's speeches, showed that expressive acts were the least frequent, comprising only 5% of the overall speech acts. Kerry and Bush relied more on commissives and assertives to convey commitments and facts, reflecting the more formal and persuasive goals of political speeches. Similarly, Cindy & Gultom's (2017) research on Hillary Clinton's speech at the NAACP convention revealed that expressives made up only 10.7%, while commissive acts dominated the speech as she focused on promising future actions and aligning the world with her vision.

In the study of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's political speeches by Permana & Mauriyat (2021), expressive acts were notably absent. This absence highlights the minimal role expressives play in political speeches, where the speaker's primary objective is to present factual information and make commitments rather than express personal feelings or emotions. Yudhoyono's focus was on assertive and commissive acts to convey the truth and his promises for the future.

Moreover, in Warsidi et al.'s (2023) study of Oprah Winfrey's motivational speeches, expressive acts accounted for only 6.98%. Although Oprah's speeches are more personal and motivational, her primary use of assertive aimed to make her messages more relatable and collaborative, showing that even in motivational contexts, the need to persuade and connect with the audience outweighs the use of personal emotional expressions.

In conclusion, the moderate frequency of expressive acts in SUSI speeches compared to their lower frequency in political and motivational speeches can be explained by the nature of the "This I Believe" theme. SUSI participants were focused on sharing personal experiences and beliefs, naturally incorporating emotional elements to connect with their audience. In contrast, political speeches, like those analyzed in other studies, prioritize persuasion and

commitment, leaving less room for the speaker's emotional expression. This explains why expressive appeared more frequently in my research but were minimal or absent in the political and motivational speeches analyzed in the other studies.

*Classification & function of expressive*

In this study SUSI participants' speeches employed expressive acts, such as thanking, apologizing, and praising, were present and used to convey emotions like gratitude, regret, and admiration, mirroring the emotional responses of the speakers to their experiences.

*Thanking as an expression of gratitude*

Thanking is a way of expressing gratitude, where the speaker acknowledges the benefit received from the listener and the listener's responsibility for it. Searle (1969) explains that expressive speech acts like thanking are essential for maintaining social harmony, as they reinforce positive interactions between individuals.

In the analysis of SUSI participants' speeches, thanking was often used to express appreciation for the support, hospitality, or opportunities provided by others. For example, one participant concluded their speech with, "Thank you guys," acknowledging the audience's attention and presence. This utterance serves as an expressive speech act, specifically thanking, as it conveys the speaker's gratitude towards the audience. The context of concluding the speech further emphasizes the importance of this expression of gratitude, making it a fitting and effective way to end the speech.

Another example is the utterance, "So, thank you so much for having this, all you're for making it feel like home for all of us, creating an atmosphere like this." Here, the speaker expresses deep gratitude for the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere created by the audience. This speech act is classified as an expressive act of thanking, as it reflects the speaker's appreciation for the efforts made to create such an environment. By expressing this gratitude, the speaker strengthens the bond between themselves and the audience, reinforcing the positive impact of the experience.

Another instance of thanking was observed when a participant stated, "Thanks to U.S government who had sponsored it for me," expressing gratitude towards the U.S. government for sponsoring their participation in an exchange program. This speech act highlights how thanking can be used to acknowledge institutional support, reinforcing the speaker's appreciation.

*Apologizing for mistakes*

Apologizing is an expressive speech act where the speaker expresses regret or sorrow for a situation in which they are responsible. Searle (1969) notes that apologizing involves acknowledging responsibility for an action or situation that has caused harm or inconvenience. This act is essential in maintaining social relationships, as it demonstrates the speaker's awareness of their mistakes and their willingness to make compensation.

In the speeches analyzed, participants often apologized for verbal mistakes or disruptions during their speech. For instance, one participant said, "I believe in people from Tunisia, who know a lot about Brazilian soccer. And whose excitement about the trip made everything sorry." Here, the speaker apologizes for an awkward pause and for forgetting what they were going to say next. This apology serves as an expressive speech act, as it conveys the speaker's regret for the disruption and their desire to maintain the flow of the speech.

Another instance is the utterance, "I'm sorry, I'm trying." In this example, the speaker apologizes for becoming emotional during the speech. The speaker's psychological state is one of vulnerability, and the apology serves to acknowledge the emotional disruption while demonstrating respect for the audience. This highlights that apologies were not only made for language-related errors but also for moments of emotional overwhelm during their speeches.

Another participant, while discussing a significant personal experience, made a verbal mistake and immediately corrected it by saying, "And I think that was the beginning of my personal, of my personal change, chain, sorry, the chain of goodness and kindness." This immediate correction and apology not only underscore the speaker's commitment to clear and precise communication but also reinforce the importance of maintaining a respectful and engaging dialogue with the audience. By addressing and correcting their mistake promptly, the speaker ensures that their message remains effective and that the audience stays focused and connected to the narrative.

It is important to note that many of these mistakes and apologies occurred because the participants were not speaking in their native language. This added complexity makes their ability to navigate these situations and apologize for mistakes all the more significant. Recognizing this helps the audience understand the challenges the speakers face and the importance of their efforts to communicate effectively in a second language. Additionally, participants also apologized when they became emotional during their speeches, as seen in the example of "I'm sorry, I'm trying." Recognizing these factors helps the audience understand the challenges the speakers face and the importance of their efforts to communicate effectively, despite the linguistic and emotional hurdles they encounter.

*Praising as a reflection of admiration*

Praising is an expressive speech act where the speaker expresses a positive evaluation of a person, object, or event. According to Searle (1969), praising reflects the speaker's positive emotional state and serves to acknowledge and commend the subject of the praise. The primary function of praising is to convey approval and admiration, making the recipient feel appreciated and valued.

In the speeches of SUSI participants, praising was used to express admiration for the qualities or actions of others. For example, one participant praised people from India by saying, "I believe in people from India, who show great respect for my culture and who shared a room with me, like we were longtime friends." This utterance reflects the speaker's positive feelings towards the people they encountered, emphasizing the respect and friendship they experienced.

Another participant expressed admiration for the essays written by others, stating, "I'm not ready for this because I'm the second last and I'm not ready to stop listening to the beautiful essays that you all had written." This praise not only highlights the speaker's appreciation for the work of others but also reinforces the sense of community and mutual respect among the participants.

Praising, like thanking and apologizing, plays a crucial role in building and maintaining positive relationships. By expressing admiration, the speaker acknowledges the contributions of others and fosters a supportive and encouraging environment.

Praising as a speech act plays a significant role in fostering positive cross-cultural understanding. When individuals from different cultural backgrounds express appreciation or admiration for aspects of another culture, they help to build bridges of understanding and mutual respect. This act of praise can highlight common values, acknowledge the strengths and contributions of other cultures, and encourage an open-minded exchange of ideas.

The objective of the study, as outlined in the previous chapter, was to analyze and describe the types of politeness maxims employed by the main characters during their conversations in the language lessons movie. The researcher found that the main characters used all six types of politeness maxims namely: tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. The observation result shows that the types of patterns of each maxim are varied, they will be elaborated as follows.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, the researcher aimed to identify the types of illocutionary speech acts used by SUSI (Study of the U.S. Institutes) participants in their speeches under the theme "This I Believe." The analysis revealed that the participants predominantly utilized four types of illocutionary acts: representatives/assertives, directives, commissives, and expressives. However, no declarations were found in the speeches.

Assertives were the most frequent, reflecting the theme of the speeches, as participants expressed their beliefs and values. These acts helped convey personal truths and persuade the audience by presenting information as factual. Commissives, used to express personal resolutions, appeared less frequently but still shaped the speeches by indicating future intentions. Directives, mostly in the form of requests and suggestions, encouraged reflection rather than issuing commands. Expressives conveyed emotions like gratitude, admiration, and apologies. Participants often apologized for two reasons: making verbal mistakes due to their non-native speaking skills and when they became emotional or were on the verge of tears. These acts further emphasized the personal and emotional nature of their speeches.

The study concluded that assertives dominated, with other speech acts adding depth and emotion. The absence of declarations aligns with the personal nature of the speeches, as declarations are more common in authoritative or formal settings. The findings underscore the importance of understanding speech acts in various contexts to reveal speakers' strategies and intentions.

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