

## ILLOCUTIONARY FORCE AND PRAGMATIC IDENTITY: A SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS OF GLINDA'S UTTERANCES IN *WICKED: PART ONE* (2024)

Iftitakhur Rahmah Rahadian<sup>1\*</sup>, Agus Wardhono<sup>2</sup>  
English Language Education, Universitas PGRI Ronggolawe  
\*Email: [titarahadian29@gmail.com](mailto:titarahadian29@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

The pragmatic aspects of Glinda's language use in *Wicked: Part One* (2024) are examined in this study, with a particular emphasis on how her statements fit into Searle's (1979) taxonomy of illocutionary acts. As one of the film's primary figures, Glinda exhibits a discursive complexity through which her social identity, emotional maturation, and interpersonal techniques are built. Utilizing qualitative content analysis supported by ATLAS.ti software, the research identifies and categorizes her speech acts into five illocutionary types: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. The results show that Glinda's speech serves to performatively alter social connections, assert authority, and negotiate ideological positions in addition to conveying information. From a total of 288 utterances, the most frequently occurring illocutionary act was assertive (48.26%), followed by directive (36.81%), expressive (10.42%), commissive (3.82%), and declarative (0.69%). This article contributes to the junction of linguistic pragmatics and character discourse analysis in cinematic texts, demonstrating how illocutionary force might index character identity and relational power in fictional tales.

**Keywords:** *Illocutionary act, speech act theory, pragmatics, cinematic discourse, ATLAS.ti*

### INTRODUCTION

People communicate with one other through language. Emotions can be expressed through words, sounds, and gestures thanks to language. Hornby characterizes language as a human, non-instinctive means of using a system of sounds and sound symbols to transmit thoughts, feelings, and needs. Language is more than just a way to replace words or sounds; it has meaning. Therefore, the message needs to be properly understood. But sometimes a misunderstanding between the speaker and the listener causes the discussion to break down. In communication, the speaker's goal is to persuade the listener (Hornby, 2010). Understanding and communicating meaning is the process of communication. Language is used to convey concepts, goals, and intentions to others. The ability to share and exchange information with one another is known as communication (Jarassri & Phennapha, 2020).

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics that examines language use in everyday contexts. The study of pragmatics focuses on how individuals interact with signs and symbols in particular. The study of pragmatics explores how individuals operate in situations where they are continually interacting and decoding cues from one another.

Pragmatics is the study of spoken language, or utterances, and how speakers and listeners interact. Speech acts, which deal with speaking and uttering, are one branch of pragmatics. Yule defines pragmatics as understanding the speaker's meaning (Setyaji et al., 2022; Yule, 1996). The study of meaning in relation to speech contexts, such as greeting and being greeted, context, purpose, illocutionary act, speech, time, and place, is known as pragmatics (Leech, 2016).

Individuals who are attempting self-communication do more than simply create words and grammatical structures; they also employ those words to perform tasks. Actions accomplished via words are often dubbed speech acts (Yule, 1996). A theory known as "speech act" in English explores language meaning by investigating the connection between the speaker's speech and actions. A speaker can demonstrate at least three distinct types of pragmatic acts, according to Austin: Perlocutionary, illocutionary, and locutionary acts (Austin, 1975). Research on speech acts contributes to a better understanding of human communication. Speech acts according to Yule are utterances that are carried out in action by two or more persons as speakers and listeners (Yule, 1996).

Speech act theory focuses on the use of words. When speaker speaks the word or statement, they anticipate that hearer can grasp what the speaker means and react with the word or sentence that speaker stated. The speech act aims to clarify how the speaker constructs words so that the listener can comprehend both explicit and implicit meaning.

The researcher specifically studies the utilization of illocutionary behaviors in this study. According to Cruse, an illocutionary act is when a speaker says something (in the right context and with the right meaning) rather than saying anything to have a certain effect (Piscesco, 2022).

According to Austin, speaking acts can be classified into three levels such as locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary (Austin, 1975). The locutionary act is the act of speaking. According to Austin, when a term is said with a specific context and reference, a locutionary act is essentially comparable to its conventional meaning. An illocutionary act is required when something is performed. Whether deliberate or not, the hearer's reaction and the outcome of speaking a word constitute a perlocutionary act.

According to Searle illocutionary act is an act performed in saying something (Jarassri & Phennapha, 2020; Searle, 1979). Searle also divided “illocutionary acts into five types: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.” These categories are used to differentiate the speaker's utterances Searle's (1979) classification of illocutionary acts provides the analytical lens for this study. The five types are:

- **Assertives:** Commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition.
- **Directives:** Attempt to get the hearer to do something.
- **Commissives:** Commit the speaker to a future course of action.
- **Expressives:** Express the speaker's psychological state.
- **Declarations:** Bring about a change in reality by the utterance itself.

Each category carries a distinct illocutionary point and direction of fit (word-to-world or world-to-word), and the performativity of such utterances is highly context-dependent—especially within dramatized texts like musicals, where intention, emotion, and institutional authority are stylistically heightened (Searle, 1979).

Beyond referential meaning, language in cinematic discourse performs social acts, creates identity, and promotes narrative coherence. As a cornerstone of pragmatics, speech act theory—first formulated by Austin (1962) and systematized by Searle (1979)—proposes that utterances are not merely carriers of information but actions themselves. This study foregrounds the character of Glinda in *Wicked: Part One* as a site of pragmatic inquiry, examining how her linguistic expressions function illocutionarily within the unfolding narrative.

Movie is short for motion films. A camera is used throughout the recording process to create a movie (Barsam & Monahan, 2016). Movie presents the outcomes of complete moving visuals accompanied by sound, because it is a fascinating audio-visual media. Movies are a sort of entertainment that has always appealed to many people of all ages. Watching movies is a daily activity for some people.

People watch movies to kill time, learn new things, unwind, study languages, and try to understand other people's cultures. Despite their visual nature, movies have the capacity to inform and increase viewers' awareness of a number of subjects. As a result, a movie provides a genuine picture of communication. Furthermore, movies are the most convenient medium for kids to learn English, making them an outstanding alternative for English language training. In this instance, the film can aid in comprehension of the illocutionary act. In a movie that incorporates oral media, the conversation of each character in the film can be identified through listening and evaluating pragmatically (Noviansyah et al., 2022).

Researchers generally agree that ATLAS.ti is an effective tool for analyzing qualitative data. According to Friese (2014), ATLAS.ti is aimed to assist researchers in the methodical investigation of complex phenomena concealed in unstructured data such as interviews, open-ended survey responses, field notes, and audiovisual recordings. The software enables users to write, retrieve, and display links within the data, making it particularly valuable in linguistic and discourse studies (Friese, 2014). Based on the illocutionary act theory, utterances are identified, categorized, and coded using ATLAS.ti. It lets academics systematically examine qualitative data by grouping and classifying dialogue in a structured manner.

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Moreover, ATLAS.ti to accurately classify each speech act in a video, emphasizing the software's value in managing vast volumes of linguistic data and enhancing the validity of qualitative linguistic analysis (Winda Angreni & Candra, 2024).

A prior study refers to earlier research on the same subject as the current study. The researcher took three previous related studies to assure the authenticity of the study. The first previous study related to illocutionary act is a journal written by Warsidi et al, in their research under the title "Forms and Functions of Illocutionary Speech Acts in the Film *The Imitation Game*" (Warsidi et al., 2023). The second study is a journal by Anjani et al. entitled "An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts In Enola Holmes Movie (2022)" (Anjani et al., 2024), The third previous study is a journal written by Jarassi & Phennapha. "Illocutionary Act Analysis of Encouragement Songs" (Jarassri & Phennapha, 2020). Unlike prior studies that encompass multiple characters or aim to determine dominant act types, this research exclusively isolates Glinda's utterances and classifies them by type, refraining from statistical dominance analysis to prioritize functional diversity and character-driven linguistic performance.

## METHOD

This study used qualitative content-based speech act analysis. The data source comprises Glinda's utterances from *Wicked: Part One* (2024), extracted and verified through official script documentation and film scene transcriptions. The focus of this research is to describe and interpret the types and functions of illocutionary acts uttered by Glinda in the movie *Wicked: Part One* (2024). The data are in the form of spoken utterances taken from the movie's script and scenes involving Glinda as the primary subjects.

ATLAS.ti was utilized to facilitate data segmentation, coding, and classification based on Searle's categories. Contextual interpretation was vital in determining illocutionary force, as indirect speech acts and performative markers often required inferential analysis.

The main tool used in qualitative research for data collection and analysis is the human investigator. According Stake, a human researcher is the primary machine in all research. or a group of people. Humans have a lot to do in qualitative research, including organizing the study, setting up observational scenarios, conducting interviews, reviewing documentation, piecing together ideas, and writing reports. Humans must be considered as one of the primary instruments when considering the use of instruments in research (Stake, 2010).

According to Creswell, the steps for collecting data include gathering information through observation, interviews, documents, and visual materials (Creswell, 2016). In research, observation is a method of data collection that involves systematically watching, listening, and recording behaviors, actions, or events in their natural environment. It can be structured or unstructured, and it is especially vital in qualitative research to understand context and meaning. Documentation for this study entails gathering data, such as movies and movie transcripts. The ATLAS.ti tool is used by the researcher to collect data.

According to Miles and Huberman, there are three steps of activities to analyse qualitative research (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming data that appears in field notes or written transcriptions. In this study, the researcher will use ATLAS.ti as a software instrument of collecting the data, focusing on the classification of the utterances of illocutionary act from the main characters in *Wicked* movie.

Data display is an organized and compressed collection of information that allows conclusions and action to be drawn. In this study, the researcher displays the research data using table to analyse the data for easy understanding. The last step of activity is conclusion drawing and verification. After displaying, describing or explaining the existing data, then the researcher drew conclusion. Conclusion are made clearly to make the readers easier to know the result of this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

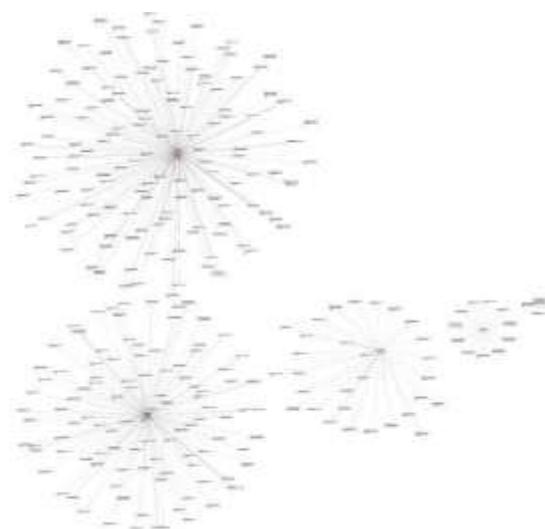


Figure 1 ATLAS.ti data display

Table 1 Illocutionary Act Frequencies Uttered by Glinda

Type of Illocutionary Act	Total	Frequencies
Assertive	139	48.26%
Directive	106	36.81%
Expressive	30	10.42%
Commissive	11	3.82%
Declarative	2	0.69%
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Glinda employed five distinct types of illocutionary acts in her discourse, as seen in the above table. It identified the five classifications of illocutionary acts. There are assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declaration. There were 288 different illocutionary acts found in Glinda's utterances.

### Assertive Illocutionary Acts

Glinda employs assertives to affirm, confirm, inform, and predict. These utterances construct her epistemic stance and social alignment.

- *"They are gonna miss me so much."*  
This predictive assertive positions Glinda within a framework of social desirability, affirming her belief in her relational value.
- *"The Wicked Witch of the West is dead."*  
An epistemic reporting act, framed in institutional rhetoric, which serves not only as an assertion but as a legitimizing declaration of order.
- *"So do I." / "Oh, me too."*  
Minimalist affirmations reinforcing shared emotional experience, indicating pragmatic alignment and solidarity.

### Directive Illocutionary Acts

Directives in Glinda's dialogue illustrate her role as an influencer, often masked by politeness or emotional charm.

- *"Let's tell each other something we've never told anyone before."*  
A collaborative directive disguised as an invitation, which reflects Glinda's strategic agency in fostering disclosure.

- “*You got to see him.*”  
A soft command imbued with urgency and emotional appeal, reflective of indirect speech act structures.
- “*Don’t be ridiculous.*”  
A negatively valenced prohibition that functions as both correction and affection, suggesting control masked by friendliness.

### **Expressive Illocutionary Acts**

Expressives reveal Glinda’s psychological states—gratitude, joy, guilt, and empathy—positioning her as emotionally transparent and socially competent.

- “*Oh, thank Oz!*”  
An exclamatory expression of gratitude, infused with performative exaggeration fitting the musical genre.
- “*I’m so sorry, Elphie.*”  
A remorseful expressive that functions as both apology and relational repair.
- “*You look positively—*”  
An incomplete compliment that nonetheless functions as expressive affirmation and enthusiasm.

### **Commissive Illocutionary Acts**

While limited in frequency, commissives in Glinda’s speech are emotionally significant, indicating commitment and loyalty.

- “*I’ll go first.*”  
A promise of vulnerability and trust-building, serving a relational function beyond mere order.
- “*I will never forget you.*”  
A vow that carries narrative closure and emotional finality, indexing long-term affective commitment.

### **Declarative Illocutionary Acts**

Though rare, Glinda performs declarations that enact change in social status or identity.

- “*I hereby christen this frock ‘glorious.’*”  
A stylized performative act that mimics institutional declarations, aligning with the theatricality of the genre and asserting semiotic power over appearance.

This study shows that Glinda uses different kinds of speech acts in her conversations. She uses assertives to share beliefs or facts, directives to give suggestions or commands, commissives to make promises, expressives to show feelings, and declarations to make changes through words. Her language helps shape her personality as confident, friendly, caring, and expressive.

Compared to previous studies, this research is different because it focuses only on one character—Glinda—while other studies analyzed many characters. For example, Warsidi et al. (2023) studied *The Imitation Game* and found that directive acts were most common, but they did not focus on one character. Anjani (2024) looked at *Enola Holmes* but did not use a clear theory to classify the speech acts. Jarassri & Phennapha (2020) studied song lyrics and found expressive acts common, but their data came from songs, not conversations.

This study is more focused and detailed. It uses Searle’s theory and looks at how Glinda’s speech shows her character and role in the story. It gives a deeper understanding of how one character’s language can reflect personality and relationships.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on Searle’s (1976) speech act theory, this study examined the illocutionary acts that Glinda, the main character in *Wicked: Part One*, performed. Five illocutionary types assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration, were identified and categorized from their utterances.

From a total of 288 utterances, the most frequently occurring illocutionary act was assertive (48.26%), followed by directive (36.81%), expressive (10.42%), commissive (3.82%), and declarative (0.69%). This pattern indicates that Glinda predominantly used language to state beliefs, present facts, and persuade others through instruction and influence.

Glinda's linguistic behavior in *Wicked: Part One* exemplifies the interplay of language, identity, and interpersonal power in fictional narrative. Through her varied illocutionary acts—assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative—Glinda enacts a dynamic social persona that is by turns authoritative, empathetic, strategic, and ceremonious. Her utterances do not merely decorate the script but actively shape the character's arc and the story's ideological fabric. This analysis reaffirms the utility of Searle's speech act taxonomy in unpacking character discourse and offers a pragmatic model for studying performative language in film narratives.

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