# An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts Found in Aespa Speech at The United Nation

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## ABSTRACT

A speech consisting of spoken sentences represents an utterance and contributes to the overall message being conveyed. We use utterances in action, known as speech actions, in communication. K-pop girl group Aespa in 2022 was invited by the United Nations High-Level Political Forum to give a speech. This study is aimed to determine the speech acts types used by Aespa and to find out the function of the speech acts. To collect the data, the researchers transcribed the data comprehensively, which were analyzed using descriptive qualitative research based on the type of speech. The finding data showed 18 utterances with illocutionary acts. Those are 12 representative utterances, 1 directive utterance, 4 expressive utterances, and 1 commissive utterance. It implies that representatives are preferred over the other type of illocutionary acts. It contributes to the understanding of how popular culture, specifically K-pop, can be harnessed as a platform for social advocacy and meaningful discourse on global issues. It contributes to the spread of the message.

*Keywords: Aespa,* illocutionary act, speech acts, united nation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the important aspects of human life. Language can take many forms, including spoken, written, and signed. People use language to communicate their feelings, thoughts, and intentions to others and deliver information to them once they have spoken. People can communicate with any expression by using language (Priambada & Sodiq, 2021). Communication can be done through writing or talking. As (Arta, 2023) stated in his article that language facilitates people to express their ideas into meaning. For example, when someone writes a thing, they apply formal language that is grammar-conscious. When someone speaks, they pay close attention to what they say, how it sounds, and how they gesture. Language may have a significant influence on one's social and cultural identity. Languages represent our cultural background and can serve to define our sense of self and place in society. Language may also be used to gain power in society and politics, with certain languages dominating others in particular settings.

A speech consisting of spoken sentences represents an utterance and contributes to the overall message being conveyed. According to (Febriana & Fajariah, 2018), speech is a type of public speaking that is frequently used by someone to express their perspective or provides an outline of a topic or event that needs to be considered. Speech utterance encompasses not only the words spoken but also the accompanying tone, intonation, and nonverbal cues that convey meaning and intent. These are spoken discourses, which are made up of numerous types of speech actions. Discourses are means of using and integrating words, actions, interactions, ideas, feelings, objects, tools, times, and locations to enact and acknowledge various socially situated identities (Gee, 2010). Speech performances may also be used to encourage and motivate others, whether in classrooms, community activities, or public forums. Individuals may make a beneficial impression on their audience by developing their speech craft, influencing perspectives and driving change.

AESPA is a South Korean girl group formed by SM Entertainment and released their first debute in November 2020. This group has tremendous fans and quickly gained attention in K-Pop Industry. The group is well-known because for its unique concept in combining virtual and real identities. The name of AESPA is a combination of 'æ' and 'aspect', 'æ' as the feature of human and virtual counterparts which represents the concept of avatar characters, 'aspect' signifying the various sides of oneself. The group consists of four members namely Karina, Giselle, Winter and Ningning.

The participation of Aespa at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) is a breakthrough moment in the history of K-pop and cultural diplomacy. Today's young K-Pop fans are beginning to adopt new attitudes, routines, and mindsets in response to their role models (Apsari et al., 2017). Aespa's arrival at the HLPF, as a highly influential and innovative girl group, shows the power of music and entertainment in pushing social change and developing worldwide awareness. Aespa arrival represents gen z towards creating a sustainable world and a way to connect with the next generation through music and represent sustainable goals in reality.  Aespa has successfully bridged cultural gaps and captivated the interest of a different international audience through their performance and interaction. Their participation in such an important event highlights the need of using pop culture to confront urgent global challenges and push for long-term development goals. The influence of Aespa at the UN HLPF shows the potential for artists to become global advocates for positive change, transcending boundaries and inspiring audiences worldwide.

The study was carried out in order to contribute to the larger body of knowledge, notably in the field of linguistics. A study of speech acts takes into consideration how the speaker uses language to accomplish their goals as well as how well their audience may deduce their intended meaning from what they have heard (Chakim & Dibdyaningsih, 2019). This study is aimed to help students improve their ability to use and comprehend speech actions in English courses. The outcomes of this study might be utilized as teaching materials and examples for teaching speech actions. Future studies in the linked subject and provide more information for linguistics research, particularly on speech actions.

Linguistics is a branch of study that seeks to learn more about language (Priambada & Sodiq, 2021). As stated by (Williams, 2002), in applied linguistics during the previous several decades, it has been well-known to split language into four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and to add grammar, vocabulary, and phonology to each of these. Language as a tool of communication, a conversation can sometimes fail due to misunderstandings between the speaker and the listener. The speaker's objective in communication is to communicate a message or information to the hearer, whose goal in communication is to obtain information from the speaker.  As a result, communication is impossible to separate from our lives. When communicating, both the speaker and the listener use many different kinds of utterances. In English linguistics, this type of utterance

is referred to as a speech act (Yule, 1996). Speech act included in pragmatic. Studying pragmatics, which deals with meaning in relation to its context in society.

According to (Leech, 1983), pragmatic is the study of meaning in the context of speaking situations. It means pragmatics understands that language usage extends beyond the literal meaning of words to incorporate the speaker's goals, the listener's assumptions, and the interaction's social and cultural context. To summarize, pragmatic deals with how individuals use language to accomplish social and communicative goals, and it offers an approach to comprehending the complicated and ever-changing character of the language in context.

The idea behind speech actions is that rather than a sentence or other expression, speech acts—such as compliments, asking questions, issuing instructions, describing, explaining, apologizing, promising, praising, and so on, are considered the minimal unit of human communication rather than a sentence or other expression. A speaker often performs one or more of those actions by stating one or more phrases; nevertheless, the act itself should not be confused with the sentence or other expression used to do the act (Searle, John, 1979). (White et al., 1963) stated three categories of acts in the speech act: locutionary acts, perlocutionary acts. and illocutionary acts

a. Locutionary acts are investigated in areas like phonetics, phonology, and language semantics, with an emphasis on meaningful linguistic expressions. These acts include communication activities such as real utterances.

b. Perlocutionary acts are those that are performed by speaking in a certain context. It acts as an example of how conditions are always changing. These acts, which are outcomes of communication, are accomplished through speech, provocation of fury, pain relief, and other techniques. It implies making a speech with a function but not with the intention of affecting someone.

c. Illocutionary acts include speaking, swearing, promising, saying thank you, requesting questions, and other similar actions. The communicative power of an utterance, on the other hand, is used to carry out an illocutionary act when making a declaration, an offer, an explanation, or for some other communication goal.

According to (Searle, 2011), a speech act is an action that, when made by a speaker and understood by a listener, alters the world of discourse. It may be said orally, through writing, or via other means of communication such as sign language. Searle splits the

Illocutionary Act into five types, those are: directive, representative, declarative, commissive, and expressive. Directive refers to the speaker's desire for the listener or someone else to do something, representative refers to whether the speaker believes something is true or false, declarative refers to an act that occurs immediately, commissive refers to the speaker's commitment to future action, and expressive refers to the speaker's expression or feelings.

The previous research about *"An Analysis of Speech Act In Award-Winning Short Movie (The English Teacher-200)"* is written by (Annida et al., 2023). Analyzed about the forms οf illocutionary speech acts in the film "the English Teacher" include representative, directive, expressive and commission speeches. The most dominant form of speech act in the film "The English Teacher" is a representative speech act with a total of 20 representative speech acts. The other previous research is *"Illocutionary Speech Acts Analysis in Nadhira Afifa's Speech as A Student Speaker at Harvard Graduation 2020"* is written by (Amalia et al., 2021). Their article focused on illocutionary acts in Nadhira Afifa's Speech. The similarities between her article and this study are the data source taken from speech. The result from this research findings there are four types of illocutionary speech acts which are used in Nadhira's speech. They were representative, expressive, directive and commissive.

It is interested in analyzing Aespa's speech at the United Nation as a source of data to examine illocutionary acts. This speech is intriguing for a variety of reasons. The researchers applied the theory to the types of illocutionary acts found in speech then examines how the illocutionary system functions.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative descriptive method was chosen in this study. The objective is to describe each form of illocutionary action in the Aespa speech at the United Nation, as well as the purpose of illocutionary acts uttered by the members in the UN HLPF. Qualitative research focuses on the detailed description of context and frequently comes situated problems in the area (Tracy, 2013).

The data were taken directly from the speech utterance, focusing on the speech acts uttered by the member of Aespa, and the context of the occurrence of the utterance. In collecting the data, the researchers transcribed the data and by watching the video speech comprehensively, which were analyzed using descriptive qualitative research on the UN

HLPF. The researchers were evaluated using Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1974) classification theory of illocutionary acts as the foundation theory of speech acts. The data were in the form of linguistic units, such as words, phrases, clauses, or sentences, because it was a descriptive qualitative method.

The process of data analysis started with the researchers collecting the data. Following data identification, the data is classified and analyzed according to the types of speech acts proposed by J.L. Austin and further developed by John Searle which classifies it into representative, directive, commissive, and expressive. The researchers described and evaluated the data in order to answer the research objective.

## 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this part, the writers discovered four types and functions of speech acts in the Aespa speech at the United Nation. They are representative, directive, commissive, and expressive. The following are additional explanations based on the data from the video.

### A. Representative

A representative expresses someone's belief that something is true or false. When a speaker performs a representative utterance, they are asserting or stating something they believe to be true. Statements, claims, hypotheses, descriptions, telling, urging, recommending, asserting, reminding, reporting, forecasting, agreeing, complaining, concluding, and deducing are examples of representative act (Suryanti, 2020). In the current research, there were 12 utterances that researchers found, most of which were statement utterances. The data shown below are the examples of utterances that use representative speech acts.

Table 1. The examples of representative utterances

| No. | Utterance | Meaning |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Hello we are Aespa. | The representative in this utterance is a statement. It means that they made a straightforward utterance, introducing themselves as the K-pop girl group Aespa. They are providing information about their identity. |

| 2. | We exist here in the real world and four of our avatar members exist in the virtual world. | The representative in this utterance is description. It means that she claimed about the existence of "we" in the real world and the existence of four of their avatar members in the virtual world. A digital representation of a person used in virtual settings such as video games, online forums, or virtual reality experiences is known as an avatar. The sentence signifies the dual nature of human interaction in both the physical and digital realms. |
| 3. | It would become difficult to sustain the possibilities of the virtual world. | The representative in this utterance is hypotheses. It means that she is expressing a conditional situation, suggesting that if our own reality is unsustainable, it would lead to difficulties in sustaining the possibilities within the virtual world. |

## B. Directive

Directive is used to persuade the addressee to do something. In Aespa's speech, the researchers found one utterance that showed a directive. The data shown below was an example of the use of directive. It involves giving requests, commands, and asking (Fatma Yuliana Sari and Dr. Deli Nirmala, 2004). The data shown below are examples of utterances that use directive speech acts.

Table 2. The example of directive utterance.

| No | Utterance | Meanings |
|----|-----------|----------|
| 1. | As the metaverse accelerates we have to ask the question, are we working just as hard to create the best possible real world? | It implies that Giselle's implicit query challenges the audience to evaluate their behaviors, priorities, and contributions to both the digital and real domains. While the statement does not prescribe a |

specific action, it does lead the audience's attention to a certain thinking process or reflection concerning the allocation of effort and resources between these two.

## C. Commissive

Commissive commits the speaker to some future action. Examples of commissive speech acts include promises, swearing, threatening, declaring ability, vowing, and offering (Sofeny et al., 2023). Based on researchers' analysis, there was one utterance showed the commissive speech act.

Table 3. The example of commissive utterance.

| No | Utterance | Meanings |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | And we will now be performing our song next level. | It means she stated the audience's intention about their performance after this speech. Because she committed the audience to a future action that they intend to carry out, the utterance constituted a commissive speech act. |

## D. Expressive

Expressive describes a person's emotional condition. It includes the following: thank you, congrats, condolences, praise, blame, forgive, and pardon (Putra, 2019). Based on the researcher's analysis, there were 4 utterances that showed expressive acts, mostly stated in this speech as expressions of honor.

Table 4. The examples of expressive utterances.

| No | Utterance | Meanings |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | We are so honored to be here | This utterance expressed her feeling of honor and |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | today. | gratitude for being present at the United Nation's to give speech as a representative of Z generation and their influence. |
| 2. | We hope you enjoy. | This utterance expressed her hope or wish that the audience will have an enjoyable experience watching them performed. The utterance was expressive because it consisted of her desire to convey a positive and warm sentiment to the audience. |

The discovery shows that Aespa's address in the United Nations contained just four of the five forms of illocutionary act. The speech is classified in this way: representative with 12 utterances data or 67%, expressive 4 utterances or 22%, directive 1 utterance or 5,5%, and commission 1 utterance or 5,5%. Furthermore, the declarative speech actions with 0% were omitted from the speech. The results showed that a majority of illocutionary speech acts in Aespa utterances are Representative.

According to the analysis of the speech, the representative speech act is frequently used with 12 utterances, accounting for 67% of the total number of utterances in the text. Aespas asserts to the audience on how the world will be in her speech. It is discovered that Aespa's speech acts are designed as statements of reality and assertion. Their presence and message aided worldwide cultural exchange and diplomacy, as suggested by Aespa's speech acts. As shown in the table above, Aespa believed that the audiences would be encouraged to act.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The researchers would like to make the conclusion that there are four categories of speech acts in Aespa Speech at The United Nations after evaluating and presenting the data. Representative, directive, commissive, and expressive are examples of these kinds. According to the data research, the most common occurrence of speech actions in the movie Aespa Speech is representative. Children may learn, imitate, and adopt utterances representing many forms of speech acts. It helps children learn how to express their beliefs,

how to persuade others to do something, how to commit to a future action, how to express their psychological condition, and how to act immediately in one situation. People may understand of how popular culture, specifically K-pop, can be harnessed as a platform for social advocacy and meaningful discourse on global issues. It helps to spread a message to all listeners around the world. This finding is also beneficial for the other researchers to investigate the influence of K-Pop in Teaching Speech Act Awareness. This kind of research will also be beneficial for English teacher in finding innovative educational strategies.

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Harisna Hikmah is a lecturer of English Education Department of University of Nahdlatul Ulama Yogyakarta. She graduated from Yogyakarta State University in English studies. She did research in linguistics and also language teaching.