Illocutionary Acts on @trustorchestra Instagram Account

Wati Purnama Sari [1], Aulia Haris Firstiyanti[2]

[1]Faculty of Letters and Cultures
Gunadarma University
Jakarta, Indonesia
watipurnama.s@gmail.com
[2]Faculty of Letters and Cultures
Gunadarma University
Jakarta, Indonesia
auliaharisfirstiyanti@gmail.com

Abstract — This research investigated illocutionary acts emerged on @trustorchestra Instagram account. By using Searle's theory, the important functions of illocutionary acts of the speaker to the hearer in conveying the message in communication were being highlighted and discussed. The qualitative research method was applied to analyze the illocutionary acts on @trustorchestra Instagram account, an account for group of Indonesian who play various musical instrument together. The data for this research were the Instagram captions of @trustorchestra account in 2024. This research could accommodate and give insightful knowledge related to the understanding of the speaker's intentions. The result demonstrated that the dominant illocutionary acts used were Assertive. It appeared that the speaker utilized the illocutionary acts on Instagram captions to warn and provide information to the Instagram users about the event they held.

Keywords — Illocutionary Act; Searle; Instagram.

I. INTRODUCTION

As a popular social media platform, Instagram enables users to upload and share visual content, such as photographs and videos, accompanied by captions that describe the content. The captions accompanying these visual posts on Instagram can be viewed as a form of linguistic expression, where users utilize language to convey their intended meaning, thoughts, and emotions to their audience (Sulasno et al., 2022). In this regard, the language used in these captions can be analyzed through the lens of speech act theory, which focuses on the different functions of language, including the illocutionary act (Sulasno et al., 2022). The illocutionary act refers to the intended communicative purpose or effect that a speaker or writer aims to achieve through their utterance, beyond the literal meaning of the words used (Ramalia, 2021). Captions on Instagram are meticulously crafted to engage a vast audience, making them a compelling subject for investigation as they often serve various communicative purposes beyond simply describing the accompanying visual content. By conducting this research, studying the linguistic devices and variations in language used in popular Instagram captions can provide insights into how users leverage language to achieve their intended communicative goals. (Bageshwar, 2021)

Given the widespread popularity of Instagram, with over 400 million active monthly users sharing millions of posts daily, the illocutionary acts present in the captions of highly followed Instagram accounts are exciting to examine (Ramalia, 2021). One Instagram account that commands a substantial following and, consequently, significant influence over its audience is *@trustorchestra*. This account boasts over one thousand followers and regularly shares content related to an orchestral music group

called the Trinity Youth Symphony Orchestra (TRUST) It is a non-profit organization as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility Program and has over 150 members consisting of Jakarta's finest young talents ranging from 10 to 35 years old and holds at least three public concerts every year. Analyzing the linguistic features and communicative functions of the captions used in this account's posts can provide valuable insights into the illocutionary acts employed by influential Instagram users to engage their audience and convey their intended messages. Therefore, analyzing illocutionary acts in Instagram captions can reveal the multifaceted ways in which language is utilized on this highly visual social media platform to achieve a variety of communicative goals, ranging from informing and persuading to entertaining and inspiring the audience (Bageshwar, 2021).

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive qualitative method is used to analyze the illocutionary acts found on @*trustorchestra* captions. This method involves close reading and examination of the linguistic features and communicative intent of the captions, allowing for the identification and classification of the various illocutionary acts present. This research aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on the use of language in social media contexts, particularly about the strategic employment of illocutionary acts to engage and influence audiences on highly visual platforms like Instagram (Ramalia, 2021) According to Mulyana (2008) in Fiantika et al. (2022), qualitative research is used to uncover a phenomenon by comprehensively describing data and facts through words regarding the research subject. To facilitate a deeper understanding of this research, the use of the qualitative descriptive method is considered appropriate as it aligns with the nature of the data sources used by the researcher, which consist of text. Qualitative research is inherently descriptive and tends to utilize analysis. Fiantika et al. (2022) stated qualitative research is applied to construct a complex and holistic depiction, analyzing words, opinions, and information obtained from informants (subjects) in a natural setting and presenting them in a report.

The data collected was in the form of words (captions) on posts of @*trustorchestra* from 2024 to early September of the same year, following to the time this research was conducted. After the data is collected, it is continued with the categorization and analysis of the illocutionary acts found using the theory proposed by John Searle in 1979. Searle (1979) classified types of illocutionary acts into five, they are assertive, directive, commissive, declarative, and expressive. By using the descriptive qualitative method, the captions are discussed and the illocutionary act can be mapped out to understand the communicative functions of these language-based expressions (Bageshwar, 2021).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data collected, the results showed that there were four illocutionary acts found namely Assertive, Directive, Commissive, and Expressive. Assertive was the most dominant illocutionary act type that appeared on the @*trustorchestra* Instagram account. Meanwhile, the illocutionary act type of Declarative was not found. A more detailed explanation related to the number of data is demonstrated in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Types of Illocutionary acts found on @trustorchestra Instagram captions

No.	Illocutionary Act Types	Number of Data
1	Assertive	46
2	Expressive	34
3	Directive	24
4	Commissive	7
5	Declarative	0
Total Data		111

Here are some data examples found on @*trustorchestra* Instagram captions.

Table 2. Examples of Illocutionary acts found on @trustorchestra Instagram captions

No.	@*trustorchestra* Instagram Captions	Illocutionary Act Types
1	7 DAYS TO GO!!! #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Assertive
2	3 MORE DAYS LEFT!!! #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Assertive
3	Thank you for supporting us! #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Expressive
4	Thank you for coming to The Legends 8 Replay: The World of Studio Ghibli x Makoto Shinkai Terima kasih untuk Teman TRUST yang sudah hadir dan memberikan energi dan dukungan yang luar biasa untuk kami! Semoga bisa bertemu teman-teman di panggung berikutnya. Untuk seluruh Team TRUST, Guest Stars, Media Partner, Tenants, dan seluruh crew di balik layar, terima kasih sudah bekerja keras 🔥 Hope you all had fun with us! AND.... we'll see you again in November! (or sooner hopefully) 👀 Photo by @rifan.oktavianus 📷 #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Expressive

5	Yuk ceritain momen favoritmu di The Legends 8 Replay! 🤩 📷 by @rifan.oktavianus @michael.dimass @k.kvn @samuel.p.l #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Directive
6	REPLAY? Silakan comment di bawah 🤩 #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Directive
7	SEE YOU TOMORROW! Udah gak sabar nih ketemu sama Princess Mononoke dan lainnya! 🤩 Gimana persiapan kamu untuk nonton The Legends 8 Replay besok? Ceritain di kolom komentar ya~ Ada hadiah untuk 3 komentar yang beruntung 🎁 #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Commissive
8	Calling all musicians to JOIN OUR FAMILY!!! Bisa bermain alat orkestra dan ingin bergabung bersama TRUST Orchestra? Register thru the contact above! ⚠️ Pastikan kamu sudah memenuhi syarat dan ketentuan di atas Good luck! 😊 ✨	Commissive

3.1. Assertive

According to Searle (1979), the purpose or goal of assertive words is to convince the speaker (to varying degrees) that something is true, and that the statement made is correct. It is included in the evaluation dimension which includes *true* and *false*. The direction of adaptation is "word to the world" and the psychological state expressed is Belief. Emphasize words such as

"belief" and "commitment" which aim to identify the dimension (true and false). This is due to something that can be determined, not something that can be determined.

Table 3. Examples of Illocutionary act types of Assertive

No.	@*trustorchestra* Instagram Captions	Illocutionary Act Types
1	**7 DAYS TO GO!!!** #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Assertive
2	**3 MORE DAYS LEFT!!!** #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Assertive

As Searle (1979) said Assertive were the speakers committed to the truth of their statements. In the data above, the first caption was "**7 DAYS TO GO!!!**" and the second caption was "**3 MORE DAYS LEFT!!!**", those captions related to the musical show which would be held by the members of Trust Orchestra as both of captions had hashtags #TheLegends8Replay and #TRUSTOrchestra. Besides, the words "**TO GO!!!**" in the first caption, the speaker marked the truth of the message intended that the musical show truly happened in the next 7 days.

In the second caption the word "**LEFT!!!**" emphasized the truth of the speaker's message about the event that would be held in the next 3 days. In addition, the use of capital letters and exclamation marks showed how important the event was. So, the Instagram users should note the event. Through those explanations, it concluded the speaker intended to announce and warn about the truth related to the musical show they held to the Instagram users that they should be aware of and not miss the event. Those data were counted into Assertive.

3.2. Expressive

The key point in expressive illocutionary acts is to express the psychological state determined by the condition of sincerity about the situation determined by the propositional content. The paradigm of expressive verbs is gratitude, blessing, apology, condolence, regret, and welcome (Searle, 1979)

Table 4. Examples of Illocutionary act types of Expressive

No.	*@trustorchestra* Instagram Captions	Illocutionary Act Types
3	**Thank you for supporting us!** #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Expressive
4	**Thank you for coming to The Legends 8 Replay: The World of Studio Ghibli x Makoto Shinkai** Terima kasih untuk Teman TRUST yang sudah hadir dan memberikan energi dan dukungan yang luar biasa untuk kami! Semoga bisa bertemu teman-teman di panggung berikutnya. Untuk seluruh Team TRUST, Guest Stars, Media Partner, Tenants, dan seluruh crew di balik layar, terima kasih sudah bekerja keras 🔥 Hope you all had fun with us! AND.... we'll see you again in November! (or sooner hopefully) 👀 ☐ Photo by @rifan.oktavianus 📷 #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Expressive

Searle (1979) said Expressive was to express a psychological condition especially related to sincerity states about something marked by expressive verbs such as thank, congratulate, apologize, condole, deplore, and welcome. In the third caption "**Thank you for supporting us!**" was the speaker's expression of appreciation for the sponsors who participated in the musical show held—as it showed in the hashtags #TheLegends8Replay and #TRUSTOrchestra.

Besides, in the fourth caption "**Thank you for coming to The Legends 8 Replay: The World of Studio Ghibli x Makoto Shinkai**" was the speaker's expressions to show the gratitude toward the Instagram users who bought the tickets to watch their musical show and all people who worked hard to make the musical show succeed—the hashtags #TheLegends8Replay and #TRUSTOrchestra written again to highlight the musical show they held. Those captions pointed out illocutionary act types of Expressive used. As those captions showed the speaker's psychological conditions related to the musical show held.

3.3. Directive

According to Searle (1979), the directive is about trying, or more precisely, about the speaker telling his listener to do something. This can be a very simple "attempt", as when I ask you to do it or suggest you do it, or when I ask you to do it, or when I ask you to do it. The direction of agreement is word for word, and the condition of sincerity is desire (or desire or desire).

Verbs that describe members of this class include asking, ordering, commanding, requesting, begging, begging, praying, begging, inviting, allowing, and advising.

Table 5. Examples of Illocutionary act types of Directive

No.	*@trustorchestra* Instagram Captions	Illocutionary Act Types
5	**Yuk** ceritain momen favoritmu di The Legends 8 Replay!🤩 📷 by @rifan.oktavianus @michael.dimass @k.kvn @samuel.p.l #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Directive
6	**REPLAY? Silakan comment** di bawah 🤩 #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Directive

Searle (1979) said Directives were the speakers who attempted to get the hearer to do something. In the fifth caption, the word "*Yuk*" (let's) emphasized that the speaker asked the Instagram users to tell their experiences related to the musical show that had been held—explained by the hashtag #TheLegends8Replay and #TRUSTOrchestra.

Furthermore, in the sixth caption the word "**REPLAY? Silakan comment…**" (Replay? Drop your comments…) it emphasized an order from the speaker to the Instagram users related to the musical show repetition plan that had been carried out which could be seen in the hashtag #TheLegends8Replay and #TRUSTOrchestra. Through the explanation above, it could be concluded those captions counted as Directive as the speaker instructed the Instagram users to do some actions related to the musical show they held and planned.

3.4. Commissive

The point is to make the speaker promise a future action. The direction of agreement is the world versus the word, and the sincerity condition is intention. The content of the proposition always states that the speaker will perform an action in the future. (Searle, 1979)

Table 6. Examples of Illocutionary act types of Commissive

No.	@*trustorchestra* Instagram Captions	Illocutionary Act Types
7	**SEE YOU TOMORROW!** Udah gak sabar nih ketemu sama Princess Mononoke dan lainnya! 🤩 Gimana persiapan kamu untuk nonton The Legends 8 Replay besok? Ceritain di kolom komentar ya~ Ada hadiah untuk 3 komentar yang beruntung 🎁 #TheLegends8Replay #TRUSTOrchestra	Commissive
8	Calling all musicians to **JOIN OUR FAMILY!!!** **Bisa bermain alat orkestra dan ingin bergabung bersama TRUST Orchestra?** Register thru the contact above! ⚠️ Pastikan kamu sudah memenuhi syarat dan ketentuan di atas Good luck! 😊✨	Commissive

Searle (1979) said commissive was the speakers' statements which the propositional intention was always the speakers did some future actions. In the seventh caption, "**SEE YOU TOMORROW!**" the expression emphasized the speaker promised to meet the Instagram users soon in the musical show they held which written in hashtags #TheLegends8Replay and #TRUSTOrchestra.

Besides, in the eighth caption the phrase "… **JOIN OUR FAMILY!!!**" was the speaker's expression to offer an opportunity to be a part of the speaker's team, TRUST Orchestra. As it showed "**Bisa bermain alat orkestra dan ingin bergabung bersama TRUST Orchestra?**", this caption was a question to make an offer to the Instagram users who could play the orchestra instruments to join the team. Through those descriptions, those were clear that commissive was used. The speaker's intention had future implications to the musical show they held and recruitment of the orchestra members.

IV.   CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

As indicated in the preceding analysis, there were 111 data of illocutionary acts found in the Instagram captions of @*trustorchestra* account. The types of illocutionary acts appeared were Assertive with 46 data, Expressive with 34 data, Directive with 24 data, and Commissive with 7 data. Meanwhile, Declarative was not found. From the research results, it showed that

Assertive was the most prominent illocutionary acts used. Through the captions, the speaker had a dominant intention to caution and inform the Instagram users regarding the musical show they organized.

4.2 Suggestion

The results of this research are anticipated to enhance comprehension of illocutionary acts utilized on social media, particularly on Instagram. The future researchers may also draw insights from this research to inform their investigations on illocutionary acts on other social media platforms, including TikTok, YouTube, and X social media.

REFERENCES

[1] Amalia, D., Adlina, N. (2022). An analysis of Illocutionary Acts in Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings Movie. IJPSAT: International Journal of Progressive Science and Technologies, Vol.31 No. 2 March 2022, pp. 154-160, http://dx.doi.org/10.52155/ijpsat.v31.2.4162

[2] Bageshwar, B. R. (2021). A study of literary devices used in the posts on Instagram. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, *6*(1), 414–421. https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.61.54

[3] Fiantika, F. R., & Wasil, M, et al. (2022). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. PT. GLOBAL EKSEKUTIF TEKNOLOGI.

[4] Ramalia, T. (2021b). The students' perspective of using Instagram as a writing assignment platform. *J-SHMIC : Journal of English for Academic*, *8*(2), 122–131. https://doi.org/10.25299/jshmic.2021.vol8(2).7433

[5] Sulasno, S., Hapsari, F. I., & Erlawati, E. (2022). Using Instagram to teach writing descriptive text. *Proceedings Series on Physical & Formal Sciences*, *3*, 36–43. https://doi.org/10.30595/pspfs.v3i.262

[6] Searle, J. (1979). *Expression And Meaning: Studies in The Theory of Speech Acts*. New York: Cambridge University Press.