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## **An Analysis of Illocutionary Act Spoken by The Contestants of Semi-Finale Service Challenge, Australia MasterChef Season 13**

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### **Abstract**

*This study analyzed the frequency and types of illocutionary acts spoken by contestants during the Semi-Finale Service Challenge of Australia MasterChef Season 13, using Searle's (1979) theory about the type of illocutionary act. The data collected from the Contestant utterances on the Australia MasterChef Season 13 when accomplishing a mission, explaining the dish or situation, and talk to judges or another contestant. This study used qualitative methods to analyze the illocutionary act spoken by the contestant during the competition and describe the data with literal explanation. The result found the Assertive Illocutionary Act was the most dominant uses occur 92 or 54% data, the second frequently uses in the Directive Illocutionary Act occur 35 or 20 % data, and followed by the Commissive Illocutionary Act occur 23 or 13% data, the next is Expressive Illocutionary Act that occur 19 or 11% data, and the last position is the Declarative Illocutionary Act that consist 3 or 2% data. This study highlights the contestants use of language to describe, command, promise, express emotions, and declare states in a high-stress culinary competition setting. The implication of this research provided the understanding of the illocutionary act in daily live and the impact or the power of illocutionary act on conversation.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

People deliver their thoughts through communication so that every utterance has meaning behind it. Speech Acts are one of the pragmatic studies that are characteristically performed in the utterance of sound or the making of marks Searle (1969). Depend to Austin (1962), speech acts are the speaker's utterances that convey meaning and make hearers to do specific things. There are three types of speech acts in general; the first act in locutionary speech acts occurs when the speaker's utterances have a meaning in the traditional sense and make a meaningful utterance without any intention or followed by silence. The second act is

illocutionary is the performance of saying something and having a specific intention conveyed in their speech. The last act is a perlocutionary act, which is the effect on the listeners that happens when the speaker says something. Moreover, those acts are regularly conveyed in someone's utterances.

According to John R. Searle, in the Performance of Speech Act, the production of sentence tokens under certain conditions is an illocutionary act as the minimal unit of communication. Searle (1979) divides illocutionary acts into five illocutionary acts. The first assertive illocutionary act is the speaker's belief. The utterance or the sentence conveys fact, question, conclusion, and description. The second directive illocutionary act is the utterance or sentence from the speaker that has an intention for the speaker to do something. A third commissive illocutionary act points to committing the speaker to some future action. The fourth expressive illocutionary act is to express the physiological state. The last is the Declarative illocutionary act is what the speaker says could change the prepositional content and reality. In this research, the writer will focus on the types of illocutionary acts spoken by the contestants on the semi-finale service challenge Australia MasterChef Season 13. The researcher applied the note-taking technique in analyzing the types of illocutionary acts spoken by the contestant. The data are collected from the video of Australia MasterChef Season 13 Semi-Finale Service Challenge; the researcher watches and listens to the video carefully and makes a transcript of the contestant utterances, then the researcher makes a note of the contestant utterances which convey the types of the illocutionary act and classify the utterances based on the five types of the illocutionary act. This show has many utterances conveying types of illocutionary acts. This show is a cooking competition show it has much command or order to tell.

MasterChef is a reality show of cooking competition to find the best among several amateur chefs joining the competition. Australia was the first country to turbocharge the MasterChef format and now franchised all over the world. Australia MasterChef did not contain much back story from the contestants more focused on the competition, friendship between the contestants, and growing personality also skill day by day. In conducting this research, the writer focuses on the contestant utterances of Service Challenge episode 59 of The Australia MasterChef season 13. In this episode, contestants have to complete the challenge of creating a fine dining menu for a group of people. In winning this challenge contestant will get the spot on the top three. The contestant applied an illocutionary act during the challenge to explain the dishes, situation, and their feelings. This study was conducted considering that the data source of this study was coming from a TV show cooking competition that has a lot of expression and tension during the show and directed to the utterances that convey the Illocutionary act. Previous studies have examined illocutionary acts in various contexts, but none have explored a reality show of a cooking competition, and this makes the study unique. This study is aimed to add to a better understanding of an illocutionary act that is common in social contact. This study looks further into an illocutionary act in terms of its types and meaning.

In conducting this research, there are several literature reviews from previous studies to support the writer producing the research. Putra and Putri (2024) found 46 utterances identified as assertive illocutionary acts and classified them into 4 classifications such as informing, stating, asserting, and boasting. Yuniar et.al (2023) found 417 utterances and classified them into assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration, with the dominant of assertive found in the speech. Widya (2023) found that 48% of assertive

illocutionary acts dominated the movie by using the qualitative methods of analysis. Fitriani et.al (2020) found directive illocutionary act as the most frequent use on the movie.

The similarity of the previous study with this study was that all the studies above analyzed illocutionary acts and mostly used the theory from Searle and Yule. The study aims to identify the frequency and types of illocutionary acts and analyze their use in a competitive culinary environment. Previous studies have examined illocutionary acts in various contexts, but none have explored a reality TV cooking competition, making this study unique.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The data for the research was from the contestant speech from Semi-Final Service Challenge Australia MasterChef Season 13. The 13th season of Australia MasterChef consisted of 61 episodes total. The researcher focused on the 59th episode, which is the service challenge. The service challenge involves 3 contestants who will compete to join Pete as the winner of the previous challenge and fill the top 3 positions of Australia MasterChef season 13. The qualitative method involved watching the episode, transcript the contestants' utterances, and analyzing them according to Searle's (1979) classification of illocutionary acts: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. After classifying the types of illocutionary acts, the researcher will describe and explain the data found with a literal approach. Formal method and informal methods were also applied to the research. A formal Method used to analyze the types of illocutionary acts from the contestant utterances in the semi-final service challenges Australia MasterChef season 13 using the table. The informal method used to describe the type of illocutionary act from the contestant utterances in the semi-final service challenges Australia MasterChef season 13 descriptively on the explanation. The challenge that the researcher faced during the analysis was the ambiguity in determining the type of illocutionary act. To prevent the ambiguity of the study, the researcher has to analyze the context of the situation from the data.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This part presents the result of the analysis of the study, which answers the problem from this study to find out the frequency of Illocutionary acts found in this research and classify the type of illocutionary act spoken by the contestant from Semi-Finale Service Challenge Australia MasterChef season 13. The writer gives an overview for the result of this study on the following table.

**Table 1. The Types of Illocutionary Act**

Types of Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Percentages
Assertive	92	54%
Directive	35	20%
Commissive	23	13%
Expressive	19	11%
Declarative	3	2%
Total	172	100%

Based on the result summary presented in Table 1, the dominant illocutionary act used by the contestant in Semi-Finale Service Challenge Australia MasterChef season 13 is the Assertive Illocutionary Act. The contestants are mostly describing the facts when explaining

their cooking and their emotions or feelings. Following the assertive illocutionary act, the directive illocutionary act was in the 2nd position, mostly spoken by the contestant since some utterances conveyed some command, task, or order to make or do something. The third position will be the commissive illocutionary act. On this show, the contestants mostly promise that they will do the best that they can to win the challenge. Furthermore, guarantee that their dish will be the best and guide the contestant to the top three. The fourth position was an expressive illocutionary act, the contestant used this act to express their feelings after finishing the dish or getting a compliment from the judges or the other contestant. and also expressing the taste of the food. The last position will be the declarative illocutionary act, which the contestant barely uses. Only two data were found and classified as declarative when the contestant declared that they had done their best on the challenge.

The following is the discussion conveying the contestant utterances that consist the five types of illocutionary:

Data 1:

*Justin : "Today my entrée, I will be doing a cauliflower taco with a mussel emulsion, and my main will be a lamb backstrap. Then I'll have a curry sauce, a carrot and cumin puree, and a native thyme and mint oil. And then for my dessert, I'll be doing a brie cheese ice cream, which is really nice, with a confit apple, a walnut crumb, and then there's going to be an apple gel in there."*  
(00:06:35-00:06:57)

The utterance above was taken when Justin was preparing his ingredients on his bench when the challenge just started. Justin gave a narration to the reporter and viewers; Justin was explaining to the viewers about the dish that he is going to serve on the service challenge. Starting from what going to make for his entrée, main, and dessert. In his utterance, Justin was describing the condiment on every dish that he is going to serve. So that this utterance can be divine as an assertive illocutionary act because Justin was describing and explaining. Depending on Searle (1979) description and explanation categorized as an Assertive Illocutionary act. Besides, Searle (1979) also states that an Assertive illocutionary act delivers fact or speaker belief in the utterance above. Justin was stating the fact that he made a cauliflower taco with a mussel emulsion for his entree, a lamb backstrap as his main dish, and for dessert, he will make a brie cheese ice cream. All of the examples supporting this data as assertive illocutionary acts.

Data 2:

*Elise: "Cutting into these tenderloins, I'm noticing that some are more on the medium side rather than that nice medium rare to rare. I can't believe that in the semi-finals of MasterChef, I've cooked inconsistent cuts of meat. I could be in trouble."* (00:41:32-00:41:38)

This utterance above was uttered when the service started, and Elise was rushing to her bench to serve her main course for 60 diners. Elise cooks many meats that she hoping for a medium rare or rare cooked. Unfortunately, she found out that her meats are inconsistency cooked. Elise is very nervous about this situation. hence, Elise has to serve the main course, and she has no time to start over and fix the meat. Elise complained to this kind of mistake in the semi-finals of MasterChef, and it could stake her position. The utterance was categorized as an assertive illocutionary act, citing from Searle (1979), that an assertive Illocutionary act delivering fact or speaker belief by reason of the speaker conveying fact in her utterance since her tenderloins are not cooked the way she wants it to be cooked. The speaker also complains

about the condition when the tenderloins are inconsistency cooked in the semi-finals, that can get her in trouble. According to Searle and Vanderveken (1985), Complaining is expressing discomfort or dissatisfaction with a situation, incident, or condition. So that support the utterance from Elise as a Assertive illocutionary act since Elise were complaining about her cook.

### **Directive Illocutionary Act**

Directive Illocutionary Act is the speaker's utterances that have an intention that convey a meaning for the hearer to do what the speaker wants. The sentence is generally a command, order, request, and also suggestion (Searle 1979:13).

Data 3:

*Elise: "I need to get onto my semifreddo. To make a parsley semifreddo, you need to make a parsley puree that can be folded through the cream and the egg mixture. This can be really tricky to do in bulk. I start blanching some parsley. I need to get my semifreddo mixture into the molds and then get it into the blast freezer and move on." (00:14:29-00:14:51)*

This speech was spoken when Elise started to make her dessert, which was a Parsley semifreddo. The judges approached Elise's bench and gave her suggestions for this challenge that she needed to keep her wits and do things methodically. With that suggestion, Elise said, "I need to get onto my semifreddo." this speech was an intention for her to immediately make her semifreddo since the semifreddo will need some time to make and needs to be chill on the blast freezer so that when the service start, she has her semifreddo set in time. This utterance has a command for herself to do a specific thing. Following Searle's (1979) command is one of a kind to classify a directive illocutionary act; besides, in the utterance above, Elise also provides instruction or suggestions to the hearer regarding the steps and tips to make a semifreddo. The suggestion also categorizes as a directive illocutionary act following Searle (1979) so that supporting Elise's utterances above is categorized as a directive illocutionary act.

Data 4:

*Kishwar: "It's taken an hour and a half to really get my nihari for the main course in the right place. I was aiming for one hour so I'm half an hour off target at the moment I am worried that I haven't made any elements for my entree but even though I'm completely off my target time. I'm moving straight onto my own glaze for the beautiful leaf ice cream that's its kitty. I need to infuse my anglaise with beer leaf fennel and cardamom and really spice it up; otherwise it would just be a vanilla ice cream, but that's going to take time" (00:17:05-00:17:44)*

The judges announced that they were 90 minutes down and still had two and a half hours until the service started. During this one and a half hours, Kishwar had just finished her main course, and she had planned to take the main course only one hour and 30 minutes off schedule. Also, she still had much stuff to make for entrée and dessert. Kishwar was left behind, which made her anxious. The utterance above that was presented in italics was considered a directive illocutionary act when Kishwar said, "I'm moving straight onto my own glaze." the utterance has an intention, which is a command for herself to move forward since she was left behind after finishing the main course she moved on and starts making a glaze for the leaf ice cream due to it took much time to make it set on chiller and mixing some stuff in it. According to Searle (1979), a directive illocutionary act is a speaker utterance that has an intention that convey a meaning for the hearer to do what the speaker wants. In this case, the speaker's speech was intended to do a specific thing. Besides that, this utterance from Kishwar above also conveys

command, which classify as a directive illocutionary act, citing from Searle (1979). The utterance “I need to infuse my anglaise with beer leaf fennel and cardamom and really spice it up otherwise it would just be a vanilla ice cream but that is going to take time” also conveying command to the speaker itself to infuse the anglaise with beer leaf fennel and spice it up with cardamom. The command supporting this utterance is a directive illocutionary act.

#### Commissive Illocutionary Act

Searle (1979) asserts that the Commissive Illocutionary Act directs the speaker toward the action that will happen in the future. Promising, threatening, intending, vowing to do something, or refraining from doing something are actions that belong to commissive illocutionary acts.

#### Data 5:

*Elise: “I’ve seen the greats do this. You know all those contestants that I’ve admired in the past have worn these chef’s whites, and now it’s my turn. I’m still here, I’m in it to win it I feel alive.” (00:02:08-00:02:22)*

Elise spoke this speech at the opening of the show when the three contestants expressed their feelings and intentions for the challenge that day. Elise confessed that she saw seeing the great chef was in her position now, and all the contestants that she admired in the past were in this position now and wearing chef white like what she is wearing now. The excitement that she has because she was made herself to the semi-finale after all the challenges that she has been through since the first episode, and that day, she was very close to the finale and became the next Australia MasterChef. The feeling that she gets because she can be in the same position as the contestant that she admires it is makes her believe that today is her day and this is her chance to be the winner This is her promise to herself and the listeners. The speech with the italic words was intended as a commissive illocutionary act since the speaker vowed that this was her chance to wear the chef’s white as the great contestant that she admired. The speaker uttered a promise that she would win the competition. Following Searle (1979) says that Promising and vowing to do something are actions that belong to a commissive illocutionary act that was found in the utterance above. Also, Searle (1979) asserts that the Commissive Illocutionary Act directs the speaker toward the action that will happen in the future; the utterance above is the speaker's speech of a future action that she promised might happen to her.

#### Data 6:

*Justin: “I’m feeling pumped. If I get through today’s challenge, it would be an absolute dream to be in the grand finale.” (00:06:19-00:06:25)*

Justin spoke this utterance after the Judges announced and informed the challenge for the contestant on the semi-finale. The judges announced the service challenge, which the contestant needs to make 60 plus three entrées, mains, and desserts in four hours. Justin was feeling pumped to make the dish in significant amounts. Justin's utterances also showed that he wished he could finish the challenge so Justin could go to the grand finale as he dreamed. The speaker's utterance has an intention of intending something, and also the utterance shows that so that the speaker's utterances can be classified as a Commissive Illocutionary act. Following Searle (1979) saying that a commissive illocutionary act is the speaker's intention of a future action, the utterance from Justin in his wish for the future, which is the grand finale

also Searle (1979) saying intending was classified as actions that belong to commissive illocutionary act, so that can be supported the utterance above as a Commissive Illocutionary Act.

#### Expressive Illocutionary Act

An expressive illocutionary act is an act that conveys the speaker's perception feeling or emotions about something or someone, Searle (1979). Commonly expressive illocutionary acts include thanking, apologizing, welcoming, deploring, or disapproval.

Data 7:

*Elise : "I'm relieved the semifreddo's has set in the time it's not parsley, it's not what I intended, but I'm happy with the texture it's light it's not too sweet, it's not too spicy, and it's certainly not icy, and I think it suits the flavour profile". (00:47:01-00:47:15)*

The service has started, and all the contestant have already presented their entrée and their main dish. Now, it is time for the dessert. The first dessert was coming from Elise's bench. Elise said "I'm relieved the semifreddo's have set in time." From the utterance by Elise, we can find that she expresses her relief that her semifreddo has set in time because she had some challenges in making this semifreddo. Her semifreddo was supposed to be a parsley semifreddo, but she had to change her plan because the parsley did not work together with the semifreddo. She was worried that the semifreddo would not be set in time, hence the error previously that made her lose some time to re-prepared it. According from Searle (1979) that expressive illocutionary act is the speaker's feeling or emotion, including thanking, apologizing, welcoming, deploring or disapproval, so that in line with the utterances above Elise shows her feeling relief. Also, Elise said, "it's not parsley, it's not what I intended, but I'm happy with the texture it's light, it's not too sweet, it's not too spicy, and it's certainly not icy, and I think it suits the flavour profile" on this utterance it's showing her disappointed that her semifreddo is not a parsley but she directly said a physiological feeling that she happy with her semifreddo because the flavour is suit to the profile. From that, we can say that she was thanked for something that she had done. Besides Elise also expressed her disappointed due to the semi-freddo was not what she had planned before, but she was pretty happy with the result. This utterance supports it as an expressive illocutionary act for expressing feeling and emotion such as thanking and disagreeing or disappointed.

Data 8:

*Justin: "ice cream is meant to be the hero of this dessert, so I am very nervous right now. Oh, it's so bloody stressful. It is stressful. It just feels like... It feels like this ticket into the grand final is getting away from me. This is nuts". (00:50:05-00:50:15)*

The utterance from Justin spoken when he going to serve his dessert the bree-cheese Ice cream with a confit apple and a walnut crumb. Unfortunately, when he took the ice cream from the blast chiller, the texture of his ice cream was not the way he wanted. The ice cream is too hard and icy. The utterances from Justin show his stressfulness and nervousness about his Ice cream not coming up like how he wanted it to be, and he has to serve the ice cream right away. He did not have time to fix the ice cream. He feels stressed that the mistake happened in the semi-final finale, and will make his chance to the grand finale get away. Justin's statement shows his disappointment and expresses his disagreement or disapproval of what is happening to him. Citing from Searle (1979) that expressive illocutionary act is the speaker's feeling or

emotion that, including thanking, apologizing, welcoming, deploring, or disapproval so that this utterance can be divined as the expressive illocutionary act because the utterances above show Justin's emotion and feeling of his disappointment and also showing his disagreement and disapproval.

#### **Declarative Illocutionary Act**

The statement "Declarations bring about some alteration in the status or condition of the referred to object or objects solely in virtue of the fact that declaration has been successfully performed" by Searle (1979) illustrates how what a speaker says can affect the listeners so that was a declarative illocutionary act.

Data 9:

*Justin: "Boys, look at you guys. Looking sharp, eh?" (00:11:07-00:11:08)"*

Justin was preparing his Lamb backstrap, and the Judges, Andy, and Jock, appeared and approached him. Since this episode was a service challenge with a fine dining concept, the judges were dressed elegantly. Jock and Andy appear on Justin's bench with their tuxedo on to see how Justin is doing with his dish. The speech above shows Justin declaring to the judges Andy and Jock for their appearance. They look sharp and nice with the tuxedo on them. We can analyze that Justin praised the judges by their looks by declaring to them. Following Searle (1979:17) saying that the speaker's says can affect the listeners, this utterance from Justin affects the judges when Justin declares that he looks sharp and nice, so it leaves the effect on the judges that they look nice and sharp.

Data 10:

*Elise: "We did that. Not many people have done that." (00:56:20-00:56:26)*

This utterance was spoken by Elise when the contestant finished the service, and the contestant was waiting for the announcement from the judges about all of their dishes. In this situation, Elise, with the other contestant, was relieved because the contestant had finished the formidable challenge that day. The utterance from Elise declared that they had done all the hard work that day. Even though the challenge was not easy and not many people could finish it, they could finish it with much work. From this statement, we can see that Elise declares they have done a good job, and they must be proud of that. Searle (1979:17) says that the speaker's says can affect the listeners, and the utterance from Elise was proof of change from the crowded challenge, and they finished all the challenges very well.

#### **Assertive Illocutionary Act**

An assertive Illocutionary Act is a speech act that utters a fact or what the speaker believes. It is a statement, description, classification, explanation, and clarification. Concurring to Seale (1979:12), the reason for the assertive is to make the speaker say degrees to something that becomes the problem, to see the truth of the communicated recommendation.

### **CONCLUSION**

After analyzing the data using the theory from Searle (1979) and the data found from the contestant speech of Semi-Finale Service Challenge Australia MasterChef Season 13 the writer makes the conclusion that all type of the illocutionary act was found on the data, they are Assertive, Declarative, Commissive, Expressive, and Declarative. The dominant type of



illocutionary act use on this show is Assertive that convey the fact and truth the frequency was 92 utterances found (54%), the second frequently use was Directive found 35 utterances (20%) and the third position was Commissive that 23 utterances found (13%), continue by the Expressive with 19 utterances found (11%). And the last position was the Declarative with 3 utterances found on the show (02%). On analyzing the type of illocutionary act on this study and find out the frequency of the illocutionary the researcher found the assertive illocutionary act is the most frequent hence the contestant utterance mostly consisting fact and speaker believe in explaining the dish or the challenge. From this research we can see the important of speech act in communication especially in a dynamic and high-pressure situation. By doing this research it can help us analyzing the intention of the speaker when saying any speech and we can classify the utterances into any types of Illocutionary act even though the context or situation is under pressure this research can be applied. The study is far from a perfection study. But the writes hope this research will helps and useful for people who studying speech act especially Illocutionary act and can use this research as a reference or hoping this research providing better understanding for the readers and also helpful in daily live.

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