

# Expressive Speech Acts in the Movie ‘Joker’ As Teaching Materials for EFL Learners

Muhammad Zaenal Fanani<sup>1</sup>, Hidayati<sup>2\*</sup> and Irwandi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Muhammadiyah University of Mataram 1; [muhammadzaenalfanani8@gmail.com](mailto:muhammadzaenalfanani8@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Muhammadiyah University of Mataram 2; [hidayatinail73@gmail.com](mailto:hidayatinail73@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>Muhammadiyah University of Mataram 3; [irwandi.elt@gmail.com](mailto:irwandi.elt@gmail.com)

\*Correspondence:

Hidayati

Email:

[hidayatinail73@gmail.com](mailto:hidayatinail73@gmail.com)

Published: May, 2024



**Copyright:**© 2024 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Abstract:** Language has a crucial role in interaction, speech, and emotional expression throughout communication. Communication is the process of exchanging messages between individuals, when communicating with individuals it is essential to express not only our words but also use an action in our utterances, and it is referred as a speech acts. The kind of speech acts that are typically utilized in communication are expressive speech acts. Expressive speech acts are expresses the speaker’s feelings towards the situation in all earnestness and the social relationship among the speaker and the hearer. This research attempts to analyze the types and meanings of expressive speech acts used by the characters in the movie Joker by Todd Phillips as teaching materials for EFL learners. The teacher might have a discussion with the learners using a trustworthy example from the movie. In this research employed a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data by applying theory proposed by Searle (1979). The data was gathered from the movie that was taken from the utterances used by the characters. The finding shows there were ten types of expressive speech acts, they are; thanking, congratulating, apologizing, condoling, deploring, welcoming, praising, wishing, greeting, and attitude. A teacher could utilize these excerpts from the movie as teaching materials for EFL Learners.

**Keywords:** Language; Speech Acts; Expressive Speech Acts; Movie; Teaching materials.

## INTRODUCTION

Language is essential for conveying emotions and feelings, sharing ideas and perspectives, facilitating social interactions, and exchanging information between individuals (Hidayati et al., 2018). Language serves as a fundamental instrument within society (Sihombing et al., 2021). As human who live in society, humans always have desire to interact with other individual. They want to get to know the people around them and engage in interaction with their environment. To interact with their environment, humans need to use language as a means of communications in our daily lives (Irwandi et al., 2018). Achieving successful intercultural communication involves grasping grammatical structures and skillfully utilizing language functions appropriately in a real social context (Nugroho & Rekha, 2020). The goal of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) is to provide learners with the concept of communicative competence, which encompasses understanding of grammatical concepts and mastering pragmatics skills. The goal of instructing English as a foreign language is to equip learners with the ability to communicate effectively across all real-life contexts, because human and language are inherently interconnected and cannot be separated, as they share a close relationship (Sina & Bram, 2020). Language, being the foremost method of communication, is vital for humans to convey their thoughts and ideas effectively. Language is a crucial component of communication (Hauca et al., 2020). Communication is the act of initiating and exchanging messages, ideas, feelings, and

---

information between two or more people to achieve a common goal, it is about understanding and being understood. The act of communication, often referred to as speech, mainly involves a verbal expression. This implies that individuals not only produce utterances that comply with grammatical rules and vocabulary but also consider what is meant by the way they carry out those utterances.

According to Yule (1996), Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning and deciphering the intended meaning in a given context and analyzing how the context affects spoken words. When we are communicating with other people, it is crucial to express the content not only with our words but also with our actions to convey the messages and meaning. Effective communication relies on context as it enables the listener to understand the speaker's intention (Manalu et al., 2023). Speech acts are any actions that are chosen through the use of language, each utterance or sentence serves a specific purpose and affects how the speaker and hearer communicate. According to Marbun & Handayani (2020), a speech act examines how an utterance influences the behavior and interactions between the speaker and the listener. By focusing on the context of the speech acts, a hearer might determine the meaning that the speaker wanted to convey.

In this time, there has been a rising interest in instructing speech acts within the domain of English as a foreign language (EFL). Using authentic materials offers learners context, which is essential for effective language instruction. Teachers often utilize authentic materials such as movies, songs, and poems as highly practical, efficient, and engaging resources for instructional EFL learners. Movie is an audiovisual art form that uses moving pictures to tell a story, entertain, or deliver a message to viewers. Hayugraha W P et al., (2019) states that a movie is a cultural art that serves as a medium of mass communication, conveys messages to the audience that contain essential concepts, in addition to entertain them. In movies, the conversation between the characters is crucial for comprehending complex speech acts. We grasp what the characters are doing through these conversations because of the words they use. The conversation used by the characters in the movie aims to express their goals with the support of expressions, gestures, and body language. Moreover, using movies as pedagogical materials can cater to different learning styles and preferences, making the learning experience more inclusive and enjoyable for EFL learners. Additionally, it provides opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, as learners can connect the themes explored in the movies to other subjects such as literature, because movies offer a rich opportunity to learn various linguistic aspects like pragmatics, semantics, and sociolinguistics as well as speech acts can be learned through it.

In this research, the researcher uses movie as a media to teach the types and meanings of expressive speech acts for EFL learners. The movie 'Joker' serves as the object of study for this research. It is one of the American psychological dramas that were released in 2019 which has a running time of 2 hours, 1 minute, and 49 seconds, directed by Todd Phillips and produced by Warner Bros. Pictures. It tells the story of a man named Arthur Fleck (Joaquin Phoenix) who lives with his mother named Penny (Frances Conroy), and they live in Gotham City, a place rife with social inequality and injustice. Arthur is a theatrical clown who goes through many struggles in life, such as mental illness and unfair treatment from society, which make him a fragile and marginalized man. But as time goes by, the injustices he faces and increasing social pressure bring radical changes to his life. He turns into an unpredictable and unstable, Joker. Hopefully, by analyzing the types and meanings of expressive speech acts in the movie, the teacher can use it as teaching materials to facilitate discussions with students regarding the utilization of expressive speech acts in different contexts.

## METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative because it can make descriptions to analyze, present, and classify the data found, especially in analyzing the types and meanings of illocutionary acts used by all the characters in their utterances in the movie Joker. Based on the statement by Creswell (2009) states that the data obtained from qualitative research are descriptive. It means that the results of the data analysis are descriptive because the data are acquired as words or pictures, not in numerical formats.

The researcher took the data, consisting of the words, phrases, or sentences from the conversation. The data source in this research is the movie 'Joker'. The researcher utilized himself as the primary instrument in determining data by watching and observing the full movies, gathering and making a transcription of the characters' utterances, and identifying the data of expressive speech acts contained by using documentation instrument, especially the data documentation based on the script or synopsis of the movie 'Joker'. Then, the researcher used some media in this research, such as a laptop to watch Joker's movie, and notes to write the types of expressive speech acts found in the movie 'Joker'.

The researcher analyzing data involves systematically applying methods to depict and explain the data. Then, followed the methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data analysis consists of three current flows of methods they are (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) data drawing and verifying conclusion. And in the end, the researcher compiled the analysis results in a table format and also identified suitable activities for teaching expressive speech acts for EFL learners.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data in this research used the theory of Searle (1979). After analyzing the data in the movie 'Joker', the researcher found 113 data on expressive speech acts. The following table will present all the results including their types and which part of the movie the data was presented.

Table 1. Types of Expressive Speech Acts in the Movie

No	Types	Frequencies
1	Thanking	14
2	Congratulating	2
3	Apologizing	11
4	Condoling	5
5	Deploring	10
6	Welcoming	7
7	Praising	12
8	Wishing	15
9	Greeting	21
10	Attitude	16
	Total	113

### *Thanking*

Thanking is an act of expressing gratitude to someone for support, gift, favor, or form of appreciation for the kindness that has been given. According to Rahmawati (2021), thanking is a way to ex-

---

press appreciation for something that someone has done for the person speaking. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Murray (14:47-14:57) : Okay, we got a big show tonight, stay tuned. We'll be right back. That was great, Arthur. Thank you. I loved hearing what you had to stay, made my day.

Arthur (14:58-14:59) : *Thanks, Murray.*

In the conversation above, Arthur said "*Thanks, Murray*" as an expression of thanking for Murray's appreciation for his previous words. Murray said he liked what Arthur said and it meant a lot of him.

### ***Congratulating***

Congratulating is the act of expressing congratulations occurs when the speaker experiences joy in response to a particular event. According to Rahmawati (2021), congratulating is an action where the speaker expresses happiness for the accomplishment of the listener and extends positive wishes when something special or pleasant occurs to the listener's life. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Arthur (1:26:52-1:27:00) : That's sweet, but no, I feel good. I stopped taking my medication. I feel a lot better now.

Randall (1:27:03-1:27:18) : *Oh, Okay. Good for you.*

In the conversation above, Randall says "Oh, Okay. Good for you" is an expression of congratulations. Randall uses this phrase as a positive response to Arthur's decision to stop taking his medication. This shows that Randall recognizes Arthur's actions as appreciates him.

### ***Apologizing***

Expressive apologizing is the act of conveying regret or acknowledgment of guilt by the speaker to the listener about something unpleasant or inappropriate. According to Dewi & Utami, (2022), state that apologizing is a form of expressive speech act employed to convey regret on the part of the speaker. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Arthur (23:22-23:23) : I'm watching an old war movie.

Penny (23:24-23:25) : Turn it down.

Arthur (23:32-23:33) : *I'm sorry, mom.*

In the conversation above, Arthur says "*I'm sorry, mom.*" When Penny, his mother, asks him to turn down the volume of the war movie he is watching. This sentence shows that Arthur respond to his mother's request politely.

### ***Condoling***

Expressive condoling is an action that conveys a feeling of sympathy or condoles for someone who has suffered a loss or hardship and it is frequently used in the context of conveying sadness. According to Arfiawati & Agus (2020), condoling involves expressing of sympathy to someone experiencing sadness, adversity, or grief. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

---

Burke (57:06-57:13) : No. We just asked her some question and she started getting hysterical... hyperventilating... collapsed, hit her head pretty hard.

Arthur (57:14-57:16) : Yeah, the doctor said she had a stroke.

Garrity (57:17-57:26) : *Sorry to hear about that.*

In the conversation above, Garrity says “*I’m sorry to hear about that*” as an expression of condoling for Arthur’s mother who had suffered a stroke.

### **Deploring**

Expressive deploring refers to feelings of disappointment, and distress over an event or situation that is considered inappropriate, detrimental, and worrying. It refers to disapproval and disappointment with something that is considered bad or undesirable. According to Rahmawati (2021), an expression of deploring is a form of speech acts that conveys the speaker’s feelings of displeasure, anger, or irritation towards something that deviates from the speaker’s expectations. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Murray (1:44:20-1:44:23) : Me? I’m awful? Oh, yeah? How am I awful?

Arthur (1:44:25-1:44:36) : *Playing my video, inviting me on the show, you just wanted to make fun of me.*

In the conversation above, Arthur says “*Playing my video, inviting me on the show, you just wanted to make fun of me*”, because he felt that Murray was only taking advantage of the situation which made him a laughing stock on television shows.

### **Welcoming**

Welcoming could be described as an expression of delight or positive emotion regarding to someone’s presence or arrival. According to Widyowati (2019) welcoming is a phrase utilized by an individual to greet someone who arrives at their place. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Emcee (42:56-43:13) : *Okay. Please help me welcome Arthur Fleck!*

Arthur (43:38-45:02) : Hello, good evening. Good to be here.

In the conversation above, Emcee says “*Okay. Please help me welcome Arthur Fleck!*” because he wants to invite the audience to give a welcome to Arthur Fleck who will be the next comedian to appear on stage.

### **Praising**

An expression of praise is a form of expression or statement used to give praise or appreciation to someone or something. According to Tanjung (2021), praising is the act of conveying admiration for someone or something. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Penny (21:13-21:14) : He’s gonna help us.

Arthur (21:15-21:20) : You worked for him over 30 years ago. What makes you think he would help us?

Penny (21:21-21:35) : *Because Thomas Wayne is a good man.*

---

In the conversation above, Penny says “Because Thomas Wayne is a good man”, to praise Thomas Wayne because she believes that Thomas Wayne is the person they hope will help them, has a good nature and might be willing to help.

### ***Wishing***

Expressive wishing refers to phrases or sentences that express hopes, desires, and prayers for a particular for a particular person or situation. According to Padmi et al. (2022), the expression of wishing is how an individual conveys a desire or hope for something. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Arthur (07:18-07:22) : I was wondering if you could ask the doctor to increase my medication.

Debra (07:28-07:33) : Arthur, you’re on seven different medications. Surely they must be doing something.

Arthur (07:37-07:39) : *I just don’t want to feel so bad anymore.*

In the conversation above, Arthur says “I just don’t want to feel so bad anymore.” This expression reflects his desire to try to change his situation for the better and reduce the suffering he feels because he is very uncomfortable with his current situations and wants to feel better emotionally and physically.

### ***Greeting***

Greeting is an act of expression used to greet someone in a friendly and polite manner. According to Rahmawati (2021), a greeting is a friendly or polite expression used when meeting someone, typically conveyed through words such as ‘Hello’ and ‘Hi’ which are commonly employed in these social interactions. The data included this type as follows:

Example:

Randall (15:48-15:49) : what’s up, ladies?

Man (15:49-15:50) : *Hi, Randall. What’s up?*

Randall (15:50-15:52) : Another day in a Tawa town.

In the conversation above, the man says “*Hi, Randall. What’s up?*” as a greeting to Randall. He uses this greeting as a way to greet Randall in friendly manner and show his interest in his current situation.

### ***Attitude***

Attitude is the type of expressive illocutionary act that is aimed at expressing a feeling of disagreement or displeasure. According to Paramita et al. (2022) state that attitude is the expression that conveys a feeling of disagreement or dislike and this utterance involves criticizing, complaints, and depreciating while considering the listener’s attitude. This data included this type as follows:

Example:

Arthur on TV (59:56-1:00:11): I hated school as a kid. But my mother would always say “You should enjoy it. One day you you’ll have to work for a living”. “*No I won’t, Ma. I’m gonna be a comedian!*”

Murray on TV (1:00:17-1:00:25) : You should have listened to your mother. One more, one more, Bobby, let’s see one more. I love this guy.

---

In the conversation above, Arthur says “No. I won’t, Ma. I’m gonna be a comedian!” to emphasize his disagreement of the idea that he would work to earn a living according to his mother’s wishes. He wanted emphasize that he has a different dreams and believes that he will achieve them by becoming a comedian.

After discovering several types of expressive speech acts, in teaching materials for EFL learners about expressive speech acts through movie, the teacher can ask questions that encourage in-depth understanding. Some questions that may be asked are:

1. Can you provide other concrete examples of types of expressive speech acts in real life?
2. Show how to respond to speech acts that you encounter in everyday life?

Once the teacher has collected examples to aid understanding students can be challenged to find other examples of the conversation in the movie and explain its context, particularly about the types and meanings of expressive speech acts. Teachers need to cultivate students’ enthusiasm and understanding of various linguistic features and types of expressive speech acts, enabling them to attain maximum success in pragmatics. By employing interesting materials anticipated to serve as valuable resources for EFL learners, teacher aims to facilitate the understanding of pragmatic functions. In doing so, the teachers can foster and maintain the awareness of EFL learners. The produced materials should empower EFL learners to effectively utilize expressive speech acts in their everyday interaction.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis above, it can be inferred that there were numerous instances of expressive speech acts identified in the movie ‘Joker’, such as; 14 acts of thanking, 2 acts of congratulating, 11 acts of apologizing, 5 acts of condoling, 10 acts of deploring, 7 acts of welcoming, 12 acts of praising, 15 acts of wishing, 21 acts of greeting, and 16 acts of attitude. This research has examined the speech act theory and its relevance to the teaching materials for EFL learners. It is widely acknowledged that humans and language are inherently intertwined, as they share a close relationship. Language plays a vital role in facilitating communication for humans, enabling them to articulate their thoughts and ideas effectively. Using a media such as movie in teaching speech act as materials for EFL learners can help them gain an understanding of the strategies and structures necessary to enhance their proficiency in recognizing and producing expressive speech acts. As a result, the researcher strongly advised that the teachers introduced the concept of speech acts theory and offer interconnected knowledge as teaching materials. In the future, researchers interested in exploring the same issue can utilize the insights gained from this research to achieve more favorable results.

## REFERENCES

- Arfiawati, F., & Agus, R. (2020). AN ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACT TYPES OF EXPRESSIVE IN DGS BY BROWN BAG FILMS. *Journal Sastra Studi Ilmiah Sastra*, 10(1), 30–38.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* Third

- 
- Edition. In *SAGE Publications, Inc.* <https://doi.org/10.1128/microbe.4.485.1>
- Dewi, N. K. N. K., & Utami, N. M. V. (2022). Analysis of expressive illocutionary act in the movie entitled the conjuring 2. *Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 42–52. <https://doi.org/10.22334/traverse.v3i1.54>
- Haucsa, G. M., Marzuki, A. G., Alek, A., & Hidayat, D. N. (2020). Illocutionary Speech Acts Analysis in Tom Cruise’s Interview. *Academic Journal Perspective : Education, Language, and Literature*, 8(1), 11. <https://doi.org/10.33603/perspective.v8i1.3304>
- Hayugraha W P, A., Nababan, M. R., & Marmanto, S. (2019). Speech Act s Found in the Movie “ The Good Doctor .” *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 6(5), 840–848.
- Hidayati, Asbah, & A, A. (2018). THE SEMANTICS STUDY OF ENGLISH SLANG USED IN THE COLUMN COSMO MAGAZINE. *Paedagoria: Jurnal Kajian, Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Kependidikan*, 4(2), 55–70.
- Irwandi, Hudri, M., & April, W. (2018). An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts of Hillary Clinton’s Concession Speech to Donald Trump in Presidential Election. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics (JELTL)*, 11, 1. <https://doi.org/10.31764/jeltj.v11i1.741>
- Manalu, P. F., Sipayung, K., Silitonga, H., & Sinaga, N. T. (2023). An Analysis Of The Illocutionary Speech Act In Hua Mulan Movie By Disney. *INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research*, 3(5), 888–900.
- Marbun, L., & Handayani, N. D. (2020). AN ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACT IN THE GROWN UPS MOVIE. *Journal of English Education*, 6(1), 19–28.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis. In *Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.* (Second Edi).
- Ningsih, E. A., & Dian Dwi Laksani. (2020). Analisis Daya Saing Sektor Pertanian Indonesia (Agriculture In Indonesia : A SWOT Analysis). *Prosiding PERHEPI 2014*.
- Nugroho, A., & Rekha, A. (2020). Speech Acts of Requests: A Case of Indonesian EFL Learners. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 5(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v5i1.371>
- Padmi, N. L. I., Suastini, N. W., & Pratiwi, D. P. E. (2022). Expressive Illocutinary Act Found inThe “AFTER” Movie. *Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*, 3(2), 324–334. <https://doi.org/10.24843/e-jl.2023.v17.i01.p06>
- Paramita, N. P. D. P., Maharani, P. D., & Ariyaningsih, N. N. D. (2022). The Attitude Expressive Illocutionary Act Uttered by The Characters in Holidate Movie. *ELYSIAN JOURNAL English Literature, Linguistics and Translation Studies*, 2(3).
- Rahmawati, R. D. (2021). an Analysis of Expressive Speech Acts Used in Crazy Rich Asian Movie. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 9(1), 83–94. <https://doi.org/10.35760/jll.2021.v9i1.2961>
- Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. In Cambridge University Press.
- Sihombing, P. S. R., Silalahi, D. E., Saragih, D. I., & Herman. (2021). An Analysis of Illocutionary Act in Incredible 2 Movie. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)*, 4(2), 1772–1783.
- Sina, M. W., & Bram, B. (2020). Expressive speech acts of the main character in Harry Potter movie as

---

teaching materials for EFL learners. *PARAFRASE : Jurnal Kajian Kebahasaan & Kesastraan*, 20(1), 49–57.

Tanjung, I. (2021). The Expressive Speech Act in The Lovely Bones Movie. *SPECTRAL Jurnal Ilmiah STBA*, 7(2), 86–99. <https://doi.org/10.47255/spectral.v7i2.76>

Widyowati, N. (2019). An Analysis of the Expressive Speech Acts Used By John and Savannah As the Main Characters in Dear John Movie. *JELLT (Journal of English Language and Language Teaching)*, 3(1), 49–57. <https://doi.org/10.36597/jellt.v3i1.4484>

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.