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A Library Research Review of Illocutionary Acts in Contemporary Pragmatics

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Abstract

This study examines the development and contemporary relevance of illocutionary acts within pragmatic scholarship. As one of the core concepts of Speech Act Theory, illocutionary acts continue to play a significant role in explaining how communicative intentions are performed and interpreted through language. The study aims to synthesize and critically evaluate contemporary literature concerning the theoretical foundations, conceptual developments, and scholarly debates surrounding illocutionary acts in pragmatics. Employing a qualitative research design, this study utilized Library Research as the data collection technique by systematically reviewing scholarly journal articles, academic books, and other reputable academic publications relevant to the topic. The collected literature was analyzed using Thematic Analysis to identify recurring concepts, theoretical patterns, and major themes across the selected sources. The findings reveal four principal themes: the central role of illocutionary acts in Speech Act Theory, the continuing influence of established speech act classifications, the importance of contextual factors in determining illocutionary force, and the emergence of contemporary theoretical discussions concerning conceptual refinement and scholarly debate. The review demonstrates that although classical theories remain influential, contemporary scholarship increasingly emphasizes contextual interpretation and theoretical development. This study contributes to pragmatic research by providing a comprehensive synthesis of illocutionary act scholarship and clarifying its position within contemporary theoretical discussions, thereby offering a foundation for future research and theoretical advancement in pragmatics.

Keywords: Pragmatics; Speech Act Theory; Communicative Meaning; Contextual Interpretation; Illocutionary Force



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1. Introduction

Language functions not only as a medium of information exchange but also as a mechanism through which individuals perform actions, establish social relationships, and negotiate meaning. Within the field of pragmatics, speech act theory has become one of the most influential frameworks for understanding how language users achieve communicative purposes through utterances. The increasing complexity of communication in educational, political, institutional, and digital environments has intensified scholarly interest in how speakers convey intentions and how hearers interpret them in context. Huang (2021) argued that pragmatics is fundamentally concerned with the relationship between linguistic expressions and their contextual meanings. Afzaal et al. (2024) demonstrated that speech act research continues to expand globally across multiple disciplines, indicating its enduring relevance in contemporary linguistic scholarship. Marsevani et al. (2024) further revealed that illocutionary acts remain prominent in online learning environments, reflecting the adaptability of speech act theory to emerging forms of communication. These developments suggest that investigating illocutionary acts remains essential for understanding language use in contemporary society.

The concept of illocutionary acts originates from Speech Act Theory proposed by Austin (1962), who argued that utterances perform actions rather than merely describe reality. Austin introduced the distinction among locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, thereby establishing the foundation for analyzing language as action. Searle (1979) subsequently refined this framework by proposing a systematic classification of illocutionary acts consisting of representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Levinson (1983) emphasized that speech acts constitute a central component of pragmatic inquiry because they explain how communicative intentions are encoded and interpreted. Mey (2001) further argued that the interpretation of illocutionary force cannot be separated from the social and contextual conditions in which communication occurs. More recent theoretical discussions continue to reassess classical speech act theory. Wanderer (2023) highlighted the need to clarify the concept of illocutionary force in contemporary philosophical and linguistic inquiry. Reiland (2024) revisited the theoretical distinctions between Austin's and Searle's approaches, demonstrating that foundational debates concerning the nature of speech acts remain unresolved. House (2025) further argued that speech act theory continues to provide a valuable framework for understanding communicative competence in second-language pragmatics despite changing communicative environments. These discussions indicate that illocutionary acts remain theoretically dynamic and open to further conceptual development.

Recent studies have investigated illocutionary acts across diverse communicative contexts, demonstrating both the versatility and continued relevance of speech act theory. Wanderer (2023) revisited the concept of illocutionary force and argued that



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greater conceptual clarity is necessary for understanding how speech acts function in contemporary communication. Yulian & Mandarani (2023) analyzed classroom discourse and revealed that directives and representatives dominate instructional interaction. Rahayu (2023) showed that students strategically employ various illocutionary acts to achieve persuasive objectives in public speaking. Marsevani et al. (2024) demonstrated that online educational interactions are shaped by multiple forms of illocutionary force. Afzaal et al. (2024) provided a bibliometric perspective and identified increasing scholarly attention to speech act research across educational, political, and digital communication domains. Despite differences in context and methodology, these studies share a common focus on identifying and classifying speech acts within particular communicative settings. Their findings collectively confirm the applicability of speech act theory across diverse domains; however, they also reveal a tendency to prioritize empirical description over theoretical synthesis and conceptual analysis.

Despite the substantial body of empirical research, several important gaps remain in the existing literature. Most recent studies concentrate on analyzing speech acts in specific discourse settings, such as political speeches, classroom interactions, public speaking performances, and digital communication. While these investigations provide valuable insights into the realization of illocutionary acts, they offer limited discussion of broader theoretical developments and conceptual debates within contemporary pragmatics. Existing scholarship therefore remains fragmented, as individual studies tend to focus on isolated communicative contexts rather than synthesizing the evolving understanding of illocutionary acts across the field. Furthermore, relatively few studies critically evaluate how the foundational theories proposed by Austin and Searle have been interpreted, challenged, refined, and extended in recent scholarship. Addressing this gap is essential for developing a more integrated understanding of the current status and future direction of illocutionary act theory.

To ensure that the review reflects the most recent developments in the field, this study focuses primarily on scholarship published between 2020 and 2025. This review period was selected because it captures contemporary discussions emerging in response to rapidly evolving communicative environments, including digital communication, online learning, and interdisciplinary applications of pragmatics. In this study, the term “contemporary scholarship” refers to recent theoretical and empirical contributions that reassess, refine, or extend existing understandings of illocutionary acts within current linguistic and communicative contexts.

The novelty of the present study lies in its adoption of a qualitative library research approach to critically review, synthesize, and evaluate contemporary scholarship on illocutionary acts. Unlike previous studies that primarily investigate speech acts in specific discourse contexts, this research focuses on theoretical development, conceptual evolution, and scholarly debates surrounding illocutionary acts within contemporary pragmatics.



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Based on these considerations, the present study aims to review and synthesize contemporary literature on illocutionary acts from a pragmatic perspective. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the theoretical foundations of illocutionary acts, identify major conceptual developments and debates, evaluate current scholarly trends, and explore future directions for research.

To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the main theoretical foundations underlying the concept of illocutionary acts in contemporary pragmatic scholarship?
2. What major conceptual developments and scholarly debates have emerged in recent studies on illocutionary acts?
3. How has contemporary scholarship contributed to the refinement and extension of classical theories of illocutionary acts?

Through a qualitative library research approach, this study is expected to contribute to the advancement of pragmatic scholarship by providing a comprehensive theoretical synthesis of illocutionary act research. The findings may serve as a valuable reference for researchers, educators, and students interested in speech act theory while offering a clearer understanding of how illocutionary force continues to shape communication in contemporary contexts. Ultimately, the study contributes to strengthening the theoretical foundations of pragmatics and enriching scholarly discussions concerning the relationship between language, meaning, and social action.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that examines how meaning is constructed and interpreted in context. Unlike semantics, which focuses on the conventional meaning of linguistic expressions, pragmatics investigates how speakers and hearers use contextual information to communicate intended meanings. Levinson (1983) defined pragmatics as the study of language use and the principles governing the relationship between linguistic forms and their interpretation in communicative situations. This perspective highlights the importance of context in shaping meaning beyond the literal content of utterances.

The development of pragmatics has significantly influenced contemporary linguistic research because it provides a framework for understanding how language functions in real-life communication. Mey (2001) argued that language cannot be separated from its social environment since communicative intentions emerge through interaction among participants within specific social and cultural contexts. Similarly, Huang (2021) emphasized that pragmatics seeks to explain how speakers successfully convey meanings that are often not explicitly encoded in linguistic forms. Consequently, pragmatic analysis focuses on how contextual factors, shared knowledge, social relationships, and communicative goals contribute to meaning construction.



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Within pragmatic studies, several theoretical approaches have been developed to explain language use, including Speech Act Theory, Grice's Cooperative Principle, Politeness Theory, and Relevance Theory. Among these approaches, Speech Act Theory has become one of the most influential frameworks because it conceptualizes language as a form of action. Rather than viewing utterances solely as carriers of information, Speech Act Theory proposes that speakers perform actions through language. This perspective has become fundamental for understanding communicative intentions and interpersonal interaction in various discourse contexts.

Contemporary scholarship continues to demonstrate the relevance of pragmatics across diverse domains of communication. Afzaal et al. (2024) identified a substantial increase in speech act research within educational, political, media, and digital communication studies. Their findings indicate that pragmatic concepts remain essential for analyzing how meaning is negotiated and interpreted in modern communicative environments. Therefore, pragmatics provides the broader theoretical foundation for investigating illocutionary acts as one of the central mechanisms through which communicative intentions are expressed and understood.

Recent developments in pragmatics have expanded the scope of analysis beyond traditional face-to-face interaction. Scholars examining digital discourse argue that communicative intentions are increasingly shaped by technological affordances, including social media platforms, online learning environments, and computer-mediated communication. In such contexts, pragmatic meaning is often negotiated through asynchronous interaction, abbreviated linguistic forms, emojis, and other digitally mediated resources. These developments suggest that contemporary pragmatic analysis must account for communicative practices that differ substantially from those envisioned in classical theories.

Furthermore, multimodal communication has emerged as an important area of inquiry within contemporary pragmatics. Multimodal approaches emphasize that meaning is constructed not only through verbal language but also through visual, auditory, and spatial resources. Consequently, communicative intentions may be realized through the interaction of linguistic and non-linguistic modes, requiring broader analytical frameworks for understanding how meaning is produced and interpreted in contemporary communication.

Another significant development concerns intercultural pragmatics, which examines how speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds negotiate meaning in interaction. Intercultural scholars argue that pragmatic interpretation is influenced by culturally specific norms, values, and expectations. This perspective challenges assumptions of universality embedded in some traditional pragmatic models and highlights the importance of considering cultural variability in the interpretation of communicative intentions.

2.2 Illocutionary Acts



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Illocutionary acts constitute one of the most significant concepts within Speech Act Theory because they represent the communicative intentions performed through utterances. The concept originated from Austin (1962) distinction among locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Austin argued that when individuals speak, they not only produce linguistic expressions but also perform actions such as promising, requesting, apologizing, warning, or declaring. Among these dimensions, illocutionary acts occupy a central position because they reflect what speakers intend to accomplish through their utterances.

Building upon Austin's framework, Searle (1979) developed a systematic classification of illocutionary acts consisting of representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Representatives commit speakers to the truth of a proposition, directives attempt to influence hearers' actions, commissives commit speakers to future actions, expressives convey psychological states, and declarations bring about changes in social reality through language. Searle's classification remains one of the most widely used analytical frameworks in pragmatic studies because it provides a structured approach to examining communicative intentions across different discourse settings.

Despite its widespread acceptance, the concept of illocutionary acts continues to generate theoretical discussion. Levinson (1983) emphasized that illocutionary force cannot be interpreted solely through linguistic forms because contextual information plays a crucial role in determining communicative intentions. Mey (2001) further argued that speech acts should be understood within broader social and cultural contexts since meaning emerges through interaction rather than through isolated utterances. These perspectives suggest that the interpretation of illocutionary acts depends on the dynamic relationship between language, context, and participants.

Although Austin's and Searle's contributions provide the foundation of Speech Act Theory, scholars differ in their understanding of how illocutionary force should be interpreted. Searle's classification system has been widely praised for offering analytical clarity and systematic categorization of speech acts. However, critics argue that rigid categorization may oversimplify the complexity of communicative practices because the same utterance can perform multiple functions depending on context.

Levinson (1983) and Mey (2001) challenge purely form-based interpretations by emphasizing the decisive role of contextual and social factors in determining illocutionary force. From this perspective, communicative intentions cannot be fully understood through linguistic structure alone. This view contrasts with approaches that prioritize speech act classification, highlighting an ongoing theoretical debate concerning whether illocutionary force is primarily determined by conventional linguistic forms or by contextual interpretation.

Recent scholarship has revisited several theoretical assumptions underlying classical Speech Act Theory. Wanderer (2023) argued that the notion of illocutionary



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force requires greater conceptual clarification because contemporary studies often apply speech act categories without sufficiently examining their theoretical foundations. Similarly, Reiland (2024) reexamined the conceptual differences between Austin's and Searle's approaches and demonstrated that fundamental questions concerning the nature of illocutionary acts remain unresolved. These discussions indicate that illocutionary acts continue to evolve as an area of theoretical inquiry rather than merely serving as a descriptive analytical tool.

In contemporary pragmatics, illocutionary acts have been applied to the analysis of various forms of communication, including educational discourse, political communication, institutional interaction, and digital media. Although empirical studies consistently demonstrate the usefulness of Speech Act Theory, Afzaal et al. (2024) observed that most research focuses on identifying and classifying speech acts within specific contexts. Consequently, relatively limited attention has been devoted to synthesizing theoretical developments and conceptual debates surrounding illocutionary acts. This observation highlights the importance of reviewing contemporary scholarship to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the theoretical evolution and current relevance of illocutionary acts within pragmatic studies.

The emergence of digital communication, multimodal interaction, and intercultural exchanges has also prompted scholars to reconsider the applicability of classical Speech Act Theory. In digital environments, illocutionary force may be conveyed through combinations of text, images, emojis, hyperlinks, and audiovisual resources. Similarly, intercultural communication demonstrates that the interpretation of communicative intentions may vary across cultural contexts. These developments do not invalidate classical theories but suggest the need for their refinement and adaptation to contemporary communicative realities. Consequently, current scholarship increasingly views illocutionary acts as dynamic and context-sensitive phenomena that extend beyond the boundaries of traditional spoken interaction.

Overall, the literature demonstrates that illocutionary acts remain a fundamental concept for explaining how communicative intentions are realized through language. The theoretical contributions of Austin (1962), Searle (1979), Levinson (1983), Mey (2001), Wanderer (2023), and Reiland (2024) collectively provide the conceptual foundation for understanding the role of illocutionary force in contemporary communication. These perspectives underpin the present study's effort to critically synthesize and evaluate contemporary literature on illocutionary acts through a qualitative library research approach.

3. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research design using a Library Research approach. Qualitative research is appropriate for examining theoretical and conceptual issues because it focuses on interpreting meanings, ideas, and scholarly perspectives



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rather than measuring numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Accordingly, this study did not involve primary data collection but relied on the systematic review and analysis of existing academic literature related to illocutionary acts and contemporary pragmatics.

To enhance methodological transparency, the literature search was conducted systematically using a review procedure adapted from the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework. The review focused primarily on publications published between 2020 and 2025 in order to capture recent theoretical developments and contemporary discussions concerning illocutionary acts. Seminal works by Austin (1962), Searle (1979), Levinson (1983), Mey (2001), and Huang (2021) were additionally included to establish the theoretical foundations of the study.

The literature search was conducted through several academic databases and scholarly search platforms, including Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journals, Taylor & Francis Online, SpringerLink, ScienceDirect, and Wiley Online Library. The search employed combinations of keywords such as “illocutionary acts,” “speech act theory,” “illocutionary force,” “pragmatics,” “speech acts in digital communication,” “contemporary pragmatics,” and “theoretical developments of speech acts.” Boolean operators (AND, OR) were used to refine search results and improve relevance.

The inclusion criteria consisted of: (1) peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and conference proceedings; (2) publications written in English; (3) studies discussing illocutionary acts, speech act theory, or related pragmatic concepts; and (4) publications presenting theoretical, conceptual, or empirical contributions relevant to the objectives of the study. The exclusion criteria included duplicated records, non-academic publications, studies unrelated to speech act theory, and publications lacking sufficient theoretical discussion.

The initial search identified 127 publications. After removing duplicate records and screening titles and abstracts, 74 publications remained for eligibility assessment. Following a full-text review based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 38 sources were selected for detailed analysis and synthesis. The literature selection process followed the stages of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion, consistent with PRISMA guidelines. A PRISMA flowchart was developed to illustrate the selection procedure and enhance methodological transparency.

Data collection was conducted through library research procedures involving literature identification, screening, evaluation, and organization (Snyder, 2019).

The collected literature was analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2006). The coding process consisted of six stages: (1) familiarization with the literature through repeated reading; (2) generation of initial codes representing significant concepts, arguments, and theoretical perspectives; (3) searching for patterns and relationships among codes; (4) developing preliminary themes; (5) reviewing and refining themes to ensure conceptual coherence; and (6) defining and naming final themes.



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Through this coding process, recurring concepts were grouped into broader thematic categories, including theoretical foundations of illocutionary acts, classifications and functions of illocutionary acts, contextual determinants of illocutionary force, and contemporary theoretical developments. The themes were continuously reviewed and compared across studies to identify similarities, differences, and emerging scholarly debates.

The results of the analysis were then synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of illocutionary acts within contemporary pragmatic scholarship. This systematic procedure was intended to improve the credibility, transparency, and replicability of the review while providing a comprehensive synthesis of contemporary scholarship on illocutionary acts.

4. Result

This study aimed to review and synthesize contemporary scholarship on illocutionary acts within pragmatics through a qualitative library research approach. Using thematic analysis, the selected literature was examined to identify recurring concepts, theoretical patterns, and major scholarly discussions concerning the nature, functions, and development of illocutionary acts. The analysis revealed four interconnected themes: (1) illocutionary acts as the core component of Speech Act Theory, (2) the classification and functions of illocutionary acts, (3) the contextual determination of illocutionary force, and (4) contemporary developments and theoretical debates in pragmatic scholarship.

The first theme highlights the position of illocutionary acts as the central mechanism through which communicative intentions are realized. The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that language functions not merely as a medium for conveying information but also as a form of social action. Austin (1962) introduced the distinction between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, while Searle (1979) further systematized the concept through a classification of speech act categories. The literature indicates that illocutionary acts remain fundamental for understanding how speakers perform actions such as requesting, promising, apologizing, asserting, and declaring through language.

The second theme concerns the classification and communicative functions of illocutionary acts. The reviewed studies reveal that Searle's taxonomy of representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations continues to serve as the dominant analytical framework in pragmatic research. Although researchers frequently apply these categories in various communicative contexts, the literature suggests that speech acts often perform multiple communicative functions simultaneously, particularly in complex discourse environments.

The third theme emphasizes the importance of context in determining illocutionary force. The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that the interpretation of



communicative intentions depends on contextual factors, including social relationships, situational conditions, shared knowledge, and communicative purposes. Consequently, the meaning and force of an utterance cannot be fully understood without considering the context in which it occurs. This finding reflects the broader pragmatic principle that meaning is negotiated through interaction rather than encoded solely within linguistic forms.

The fourth theme relates to contemporary developments and theoretical debates surrounding illocutionary acts. Recent scholarship indicates increasing attention to conceptual clarification, theoretical refinement, and interdisciplinary applications of Speech Act Theory. While speech act research continues to expand across educational, political, and digital communication studies, scholars have also questioned whether traditional classifications fully capture the complexity of contemporary communicative practices. These discussions demonstrate that illocutionary acts remain an active area of theoretical inquiry within contemporary pragmatics.

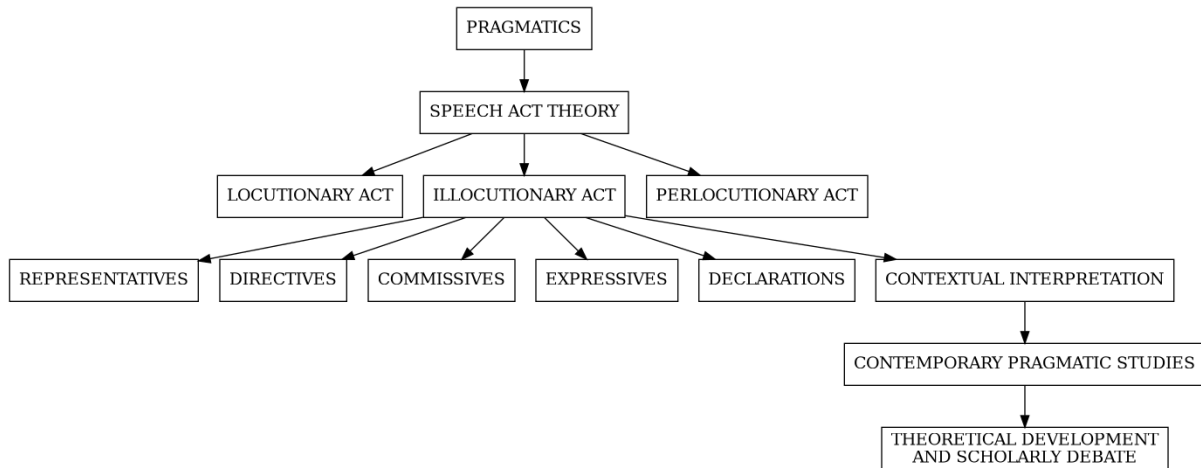
Table 1. Major Themes Identified in the Literature Review

Theme	Key Concepts	Synthesized Findings	Supporting References
Illocutionary Acts as Social Action	Speech Act Theory, communicative intention	Language functions as action rather than merely transmitting information	(Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979)
Classification of Illocutionary Acts	Representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, declarations	Searle’s taxonomy remains the dominant framework in pragmatic analysis	(Levinson, 1983; Searle, 1979)
Context and Illocutionary Force	Context, meaning, interpretation	Illocutionary force depends on contextual and social factors	(Huang, 2021; Mey, 2001)
Contemporary Developments	Conceptual refinement, scholarly debates, digital communication	Speech act theory continues to evolve through theoretical and interdisciplinary discussions	(Afzaal et al., 2024; Reiland, 2024; Wanderer, 2023)

Source: Synthesized by the author based on the reviewed literature.

The relationships among the identified themes are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Illocutionary Acts in Contemporary Pragmatics



Source: Adapted from Austin (1962), Searle (1979), Levinson (1983), and Huang (2021).

The results demonstrate that contemporary scholarship consistently recognizes illocutionary acts as a foundational concept in pragmatics. At the same time, the literature reveals an increasing emphasis on contextual interpretation and theoretical refinement, suggesting that Speech Act Theory continues to evolve in response to new communicative environments and scholarly perspectives.

5. Discussion

5.1 The Centrality of Illocutionary Acts in Pragmatic Theory

The findings indicate that illocutionary acts remain one of the most influential concepts in contemporary pragmatics. The reviewed literature consistently supports Austin (1962) argument that language functions as action and not merely as representation. This perspective fundamentally transformed linguistic inquiry by shifting attention from what utterances mean to what speakers accomplish through them. The continuing prominence of Searle (1979) taxonomy further demonstrates the enduring explanatory power of Speech Act Theory. The widespread application of illocutionary categories across different research contexts suggests that the theory remains highly relevant for understanding communicative behavior.

These findings are consistent with Afzaal et al. (2024), who identified sustained growth in speech act research across multiple academic disciplines. However, the present study extends previous observations by demonstrating that the importance of illocutionary acts lies not only in their practical applicability but also in their theoretical capacity to explain the relationship between language and social action. Consequently, illocutionary acts continue to serve as a foundational analytical framework within pragmatic scholarship.

5.2 Context and the Interpretation of Illocutionary Force



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A second major finding concerns the crucial role of context in determining illocutionary force. The reviewed literature demonstrates that communicative intentions cannot be interpreted solely through linguistic structures. Rather, successful interpretation depends on contextual knowledge, social relationships, cultural expectations, and situational factors. This finding supports Levinson (1983) view that pragmatic meaning emerges through the interaction between linguistic forms and contextual information.

The importance of context also reinforces Mey (2001) socio-pragmatic perspective, which emphasizes that language use is inseparable from social practice. While classical Speech Act Theory focused primarily on the classification of speech acts, contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes the need to examine how contextual variables shape communicative intentions. Therefore, the present study suggests that future research should integrate speech act analysis with broader contextual approaches to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of meaning construction.

5.3 Contemporary Developments and Theoretical Debates

Another important finding concerns the continuing evolution of Speech Act Theory. Although Austin's and Searle's frameworks remain influential, recent scholarship demonstrates that several conceptual issues continue to generate debate. Wanderer (2023) argued that the concept of illocutionary force requires further clarification, while Reiland (2024) highlighted unresolved differences between Austin's and Searle's theoretical formulations. These discussions indicate that Speech Act Theory remains an active field of theoretical inquiry rather than a completed framework.

The findings also reveal a growing tendency to apply speech act concepts to contemporary communicative environments, including digital communication and interdisciplinary research contexts. Such developments expand the scope of Speech Act Theory and demonstrate its adaptability to evolving communicative practices. Nevertheless, they also raise questions concerning whether traditional classifications fully capture the complexity of contemporary discourse. As a result, theoretical refinement remains necessary to ensure the continued relevance of illocutionary act research.

5.4 Theoretical Contributions and Future Directions

The present study contributes to the existing literature by providing a systematic synthesis of contemporary scholarship on illocutionary acts. Unlike many previous studies that focus on identifying speech acts within specific discourse contexts, this research emphasizes theoretical development, conceptual relationships, and scholarly debates. The findings reveal that contemporary scholarship is characterized by three major trends: the continued influence of classical Speech Act Theory, the increasing recognition of contextual interpretation, and the emergence of theoretical discussions concerning conceptual refinement.



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The novelty of this study lies in its integration of foundational theories with recent scholarly developments to provide a comprehensive overview of illocutionary acts within contemporary pragmatics. By synthesizing diverse perspectives, the study clarifies the current position of illocutionary acts in pragmatic research and highlights unresolved theoretical issues that warrant further investigation. Future studies may expand this discussion by examining how illocutionary force operates in digital communication, multimodal discourse, intercultural interaction, and emerging forms of mediated communication. Such investigations would contribute to the continued development of Speech Act Theory and enrich scholarly understanding of language as social action.

6. Conclusion

This study reviewed and synthesized contemporary scholarship on illocutionary acts within the field of pragmatics through a qualitative library research approach. The findings demonstrate that illocutionary acts remain a fundamental concept in understanding language as social action and continue to occupy a central position in Speech Act Theory. The review revealed four major themes: the role of illocutionary acts as the core component of speech acts, the continuing influence of Searle's classification of illocutionary categories, the significance of contextual factors in determining illocutionary force, and the emergence of contemporary theoretical discussions concerning the refinement and development of speech act theory. These findings indicate that although the foundational contributions of Austin and Searle remain highly influential, contemporary scholarship increasingly emphasizes the importance of context, interpretation, and conceptual clarification in explaining how communicative intentions are realized through language. By integrating classical and contemporary perspectives, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive theoretical synthesis of illocutionary acts and highlighting their continued relevance within contemporary pragmatic inquiry.

The findings also have broader implications for the development of pragmatic theory and future research. The review suggests that illocutionary acts should not be understood solely as fixed linguistic categories but as dynamic communicative phenomena shaped by contextual, social, and cultural factors. Consequently, future studies may further explore how illocutionary force operates in emerging communicative environments, including digital communication, multimodal discourse, intercultural interaction, and technology-mediated communication. Since the present study is limited to the analysis of existing literature, future research could also employ comparative theoretical reviews or empirical investigations to examine how contemporary communicative practices challenge or extend traditional speech act classifications. Such efforts would contribute to the continued development of Speech Act Theory and advance scholarly understanding of the relationship between language, meaning, and social action in contemporary communication.



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