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EXPLORING SPEECH ACTS IN THE SHORT FILM "VALIDATION"

by

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Abstracts

This research analyzed speech acts that were uttered in the Validation short film. This study used pragmatics analysis to consider problems in English language learning, focusing on speech acts. This study aimed to classify the speech act in the Validation short film based on Searle's theory and the types of speech acts used in the Validation short film. This research used a descriptive qualitative method. The data used in this research included all of the utterances performed in the movie. The data analysis used a pragmatic approach based on Searle's theory. According to the theory, there are five classifications of speech act: representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Searle discusses two types of speech acts: direct and indirect. It was found that the characters engaged in various classifications of speech acts, including representative, directive, commissive, and expressive. Notably, directive speech acts emerged as the most prevalent form employed by the characters. Additionally, direct speech acts were more frequently utilized than indirect ones. Future researchers are expected to conduct such research to analyze other aspects of pragmatics.

Keywords: pragmatic, speech act, validation short film **Abstrak:**

Penelitian ini menganalisis tindakan ucapan yang diucapkan dalam film pendek Validasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis pragmatik untuk mempertimbangkan masalah dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, dengan fokus pada tindakan bicara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengklasifikasikan tindak tutur dalam film pendek. Validasi berdasarkan teori Searle dan jenis-jenis tindak tutur yang digunakan dalam film pendek Validasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini mencakup semua ucapan yang dilakukan dalam film. Analisis data menggunakan pendekatan pragmatis berdasarkan teori Searle. Menurut teori tersebut, ada lima klasifikasi tindakan ucapan: representatif, direktif, komisif, ekspresif, dan deklaratif. Searle membahas dua jenis tindakan bicara: langsung dan tidak langsung. Ditemukan bahwa karakter terlibat dalam berbagai klasifikasi tindakan ucapan, termasuk perwakilan, direktif, komisif, dan ekspresif. Khususnya, tindakan pidato direktif muncul sebagai bentuk yang paling umum digunakan oleh karakter. Selain itu, tindakan ucapan langsung lebih sering digunakan daripada yang tidak langsung. Peneliti masa depan diharapkan untuk melakukan penelitian semacam itu untuk menganalisis aspek pragmatik lainnya.

Kata kunci: pragmatis, tindak pidato, validasi film pendek

INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary means of communication worldwide, and in this study, we focus specifically on English. Language, as a symbolic system of sound, plays a pivotal role in the daily lives of Generation Y-Z, particularly in social interactions. It is essential for conveying ideas, thoughts, and emotions across various domains, including business and education. Recent research in speech acts underscores the growing importance of understanding how language functions not just as a communication tool but also as a means of shaping social dynamics and influencing interpersonal relationships. This study aims to explore these evolving dynamics and their implications, providing readers with insights into how effective communication strategies can be developed and utilized in contemporary contexts.

Language has dynamic features essential in communicating more complex forms of meaning (Mangilaya II, 2020). Understanding how language functions involves exploring various theories in communication and speech acts. These theories help us understand how language is used and influences social relationships and daily interactions. The following is a detailed examination of key communication and speech acts theories.

Language is also an essential communication tool in human interaction. Humans use language to express their ideas, desires, feelings, and experiences to others (Nasution & Tambunan, 2022). Picture language is a vibrant tapestry we use to express ourselves and understand the world. Whether through speaking, writing, or sign language, it is a powerful tool that enables us to connect.

Moreover, communication allows exchanging thoughts, directly impacting the quality of life. Understanding what is communicated will shape our actions. Communication includes both spoken and unspoken forms. According to Buck and VanLear (2002), there are two main types of communication: verbal and nonverbal. Verbal communication sends messages through words, while nonverbal communication uses gestures, body language, eye contact, facial expressions, and overall appearance.

Pragmatics is a field of linguistics that studies how context, purpose, and social context affect communication. Various phenomena in practical life will majorly affect a language (Liliyan et al., 2023). It is in line with Dey (2023) that pragmatics is an essential aspect of language beyond the exchange of information between speaker and listener. In

communication, the statements made by speakers carry a significance that extends beyond the straightforward meanings of the words or phrases. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is more concerned with understanding the implications behind people's expressions rather than the literal meanings of the words themselves. Additionally, pragmatics is closely tied to the context or situation in which statements are made, emphasizing the importance of considering the surrounding circumstances.

In the scope of pragmatics, some factors should be considered. These factors establish the very definition of pragmatics itself. The factors are Implicature, Speech Acts, Presupposition, Context, Adjacency Pairs, Deixis, and Distance. A speech act, verbal communication, and a subset of pragmatics are frequently observed in spoken and nonverbal interactions. According to Yule (1996), the study of speech acts revolves around understanding how speakers and listeners employ language.

Speech acts, as discussed by Fatmawati and Mulatsih (2024), are actions performed through language, including requests, warnings, promises, and greetings. They play a crucial role in daily conversations, often without conscious recognition. According to Yule (1996), speech acts involve interactions between a speaker and a hearer. Austin (1962) emphasizes that they encompass both the propositional content and the situational context of utterances.

Austin's theory outlines three levels of speech acts: locution (what is said), illocution (the intended action or purpose behind the utterance), and perlocution (the effect on the listener). Cutting (2002), drawing from Searle (1979), classifies illocutionary acts into five types: declarations (e.g., "I resign"), representatives (e.g., reporting events), commissives (e.g., promises), directives (e.g., requests), and expressive (e.g., apologies). Searle distinguishes between direct speech acts (where form and function align) and indirect speech acts (where they differ), illustrating how meaning can be conveyed beyond the literal words used.

Conveying information or expressing a speech act is only sometimes successful because the speaker employs various types of utterances with different meanings. This can challenge the listener, requiring them to reconsider and possibly leading to misunderstandings. Consequently, communication issues arise in cases that need resolution (Lestari & Hartati, 2020).

Our everyday understanding and use of the word "language" can lead to confusion (Forrester, 1996). These linguistic challenges are not confined to everyday conversations but extend to various aspects of human interaction, including debates, films, art performances, and television programs. Movies, in particular, have become widespread across many countries, being produced domestically and screened internationally. In Indonesia, foreign films enjoy significant popularity, yet viewers often struggle to understand them due to language barriers. This linguistic challenge arises when people have difficulty comprehending the meaning of utterances or grasping the intended messages.

Individuals may need to study other languages to overcome these hurdles, primarily focusing on speech acts. Acquiring proficiency in the English language, for example, serves as a crucial means to access a vast array of global knowledge in our interconnected society (Rakhmyta & Rusmiati, 2024). By improving their English skills, viewers can better understand foreign films and other media, enhancing their overall cultural and intellectual experience.

Many short films use English as the primary language, often originating from the United States, the center of the film industry (Kerry, 2011). One such famous short film is "Validation," a recognized and beloved work that has attracted attention in various countries. As a captivating and popular production, "Validation" has earned numerous awards. When the discussion revolves around this short film, fans are sure to find the conversation interesting and engaging.

Hugh Newman, a parking attendant, brings joy to his customers by validating their parking stubs and uplifting their spirits. After forming a long line of depressed customers, Hugh's efforts make them smile. He meets Victoria, a serious woman at the DMV, where smiling is prohibited. Hugh falls in love with her and tries to make her smile. Despite losing his job, he later finds Victoria at her new job, where she now smiles and spreads positivity. Victoria reveals her past reasons for never smiling, and they end up together, with Victoria affirming Hugh's impact on her life.

In this short film, numerous speech acts unfold within the conversations, skillfully performed by the actors and ripe for analysis through a pragmatic lens. These utterances, portraying a range of communicative functions, serve as intriguing elements for exploring the

subtleties of language use and interpersonal dynamics. Through a pragmatic analysis, one can delve into the intentions behind the characters' words (Purwani & Hidayah, 2023), examining how speech acts contribute to the overall narrative, character development, and the creation of meaning within the film. The actors' nuanced delivery and the contextual nuances of these speech acts provide rich terrain for understanding the pragmatic dimensions that enhance the depth and impact of the short film.

Many utterances unfold in the realm of this short film, reflecting the nuances often found in everyday conversations. This indicates that one form of communication, cinema, is utilized to convey information (Purwani & Hidayah, 2023). These utterances may need explicit explanations to ensure proper classification and understanding of their types, rendering them somewhat enigmatic to the audience. This emphasizes the film's role as a representative snapshot of daily activities, meticulously captured for public consumption. It underscores the notion that films serve as mirrors reflecting our daily interactions and behaviors. Acknowledging this intriguing phenomenon, the researcher endeavors to conduct a comprehensive investigation entitled "Speech Act Found in Validation-Short Film." The research questions can be formulated as follows:

- 1. What are the types and frequencies of speech acts used in the Validation short film based on Searle's classification?
- 2. How do the Validation short film characters employ direct and indirect speech acts to convey their intentions?

METHOD

Design

The study employs descriptive qualitative research by analyzing movie video scripts (Creswell, 2014). He outlines three research approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. This study's qualitative design was chosen because it focuses on exploring human issues and understanding social dynamics. Specifically, this study analyzes speech acts in the short film "Validation" by Kurt Kuenne (2007), released on March 1, 2007. The 16-minute film has won awards at the Cleveland International Film Festival and the Hawaii International Film Festival. Although primarily qualitative, this study also includes some numerical data to enhance the presentation of the findings.

Instrument

The primary instrument in this qualitative study is the researcher. The researcher is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data as the main instrument. The researcher employs systematic observation as a key method to ensure consistency and accuracy in the analysis.

Systematic observation is utilized to examine the film's script in detail. This approach involves a structured and organized examination of each utterance in the film. The researcher analyzes every relevant instance of speech acts, consistently identifying and categorizing them according to a specific coding framework.

To support the analysis, the researcher uses a coding framework as a co-instrument. This framework serves as a structured method for categorizing and analyzing the types of speech acts identified in the film. Based on Searle's theory, the framework includes predefined categories for different types of speech acts, ensuring consistency in the analysis process.

The data for this study comprises two main types. The first type of data is Language data. It includes the exact spoken utterances from the film's script. These utterances form the raw linguistic material for analysis. The second data type is content data. This involves the interpretation of these utterances within the film's context. The researcher examines how the speech acts are used and understood within the film's narrative framework.

Combining systematic observation with a robust coding framework and analyzing language and content data, the researcher aims to comprehensively and accurately analyze speech acts in the short film "Validation."

Data collecting technique

In this study, the researcher systematically collected language and content data from the short film "Validation." The data collection process involved the following steps: (1) Watched the Validation Short Film. (2) Searched the scripts that were uttered. (3) Analyzed the utterances. (4) Re-checked the analysis of the results while watching the film.

In summary, the study collects both language data, which consists of the exact spoken utterances, and content data, which involves the interpretation of these utterances within the

film's context. These data types are crucial for analyzing how different speech acts are used and understood in the film "Validation."

Data analysis technique

Data analysis, including the movie script, was used to interpret the research data. The analysis followed several steps to ensure a thorough examination and accurate results. First, the analysis began by preparing and familiarizing oneself with the data. Next, speech acts were categorized into five different types. After that, each utterance in the script was analyzed individually to identify and classify the speech acts. Finally, the findings were synthesized to comprehensively understand the speech acts used in the short film "Validation."

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

In the short film Validation, characters engage in three types: representative, directive, commissive, and expressive. Notably, declarative speech acts were not used as they require special events and specific individuals for expression. Since the film's characters are ordinary people and the storyline lacks extraordinary events, declarative speech acts were not expressed.

Researchers found 114 sentences containing speech act classifications in this data part. The highest percentage is in the directive speech act type, up to 44,74%; the second percentage is followed by the expressive speech act type, at 42,11%; the representative speech act type is followed by 10,53%, and the last type of commission speech act type is only 2,62%.

Table 1. Speech acts classification.

No.	Kinds of Speech Act	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Representative	12	10,53%
2.	Directive	51	44,74%
3.	Commission	3	2,62%
4.	Expressive	48	42,11%

Directive speech act

Directive speech acts are utterances intended to get the listener to act. These include advice, questions, requests, commands, recommendations, orders, suggestions, and prohibitions.

The directive, a specific illocutionary act, is a linguistic expression involving others in the conversation. In this communicative act, the speaker conveys information and prompts the listener to take a particular action. Unlike other speech acts where the speaker is the primary actor, the listener is expected to act or respond to the expressed request in directives. This type of interaction is inherently interactive and relies on the collaboration of both the speaker and the listener for its successful execution. The significance of directives is evident in their occurrence, totaling 51 instances in collected data. This frequency underscores the prevalence of this communicative strategy, emphasizing its role in engaging others and eliciting specific responses or actions within the dynamic exchange of language. The cooperative nature of directives involving both parties contributes to the richness and complexity of interpersonal communication.

Expressive speech act

Expressive speech acts express the speaker's psychological state or attitude. These include apologizing, blaming, praising, thanking, regretting, and expressing other emotions.

Expressive speech acts fall within the classification of language use that involves conveying the speaker's emotions and sentiments during certain occasions. This form of communication consists of using words to express the speaker's feelings, providing insight into their emotional state or reaction to a situation. Unlike other speech acts that may convey information or elicit specific actions, expressive are primarily concerned with unveiling the speaker's internal emotional landscape. This classification gains particular significance when considering the physical attitude of the speaker, as it allows for a nuanced understanding of their emotional responses. The richness and variability of these expressive utterances underline the character's emotional depth and contribute to a more profound engagement with the narrative. In total, 48 expressive speech acts were found, highlighting their prevalence and importance in capturing the emotional nuances of communication.

Representative speech act

Representative Actions are a type of speech action that includes describing things, reporting events, and drawing conclusions.

Representative speech involves using words that express something as either true or false. It is a way of stating facts or making claims that can be proven right or wrong. This type

of communication has been used 12 times in this finding, showing its frequency and importance. When people use representative speech acts, they try to share information that can be checked for accuracy. The repetition of these acts in various situations underscores their significance in effective communication. In simpler terms, it is about stating things that can be either right or wrong, and it happens a lot - 12 times in this case.

Commissive speech act

Commissive speech acts are utterances that commit the speaker to future actions. These primarily include promising, threatening, offering, and refusing.

Commissive speech acts involve a speaker committing to doing something in the future. This commitment can happen right after they say it or later. In the provided data, there are three instances where people express their commitment to future actions. These moments show that the speakers are promising to do something specific in the future. Understanding commissive speech acts helps us see people's intentions and responsibilities in conversations, giving a sense of their willingness to follow through on what they say. It is like making a promise or stating a commitment; noticing these instances helps us better understand communication dynamics.

Moreover, in this film, characters use two kinds of speech acts: direct and indirect. Direct speech acts happened when they spoke in a regular way that we all expected. It was straightforward and clear. On the other hand, sometimes characters use indirect speech acts, where they do not follow the usual way of speaking. This made things more complicated. Instead of being transparent, they added some extra meaning or used different words. Seeing both types of talking in the film made the story more interesting. It showed us more about the characters and how they connect. The different ways characters spoke in the movie helped us understand more about their feelings and relationships.

The study showed 99 examples of these direct speech acts performed by the characters. This indicates that characters in the movie or story often spoke in a straightforward and precise way, making statements, asking questions, or giving commands directly. This helps us understand more about what the characters are saying and doing in the story.

Indirect speech acts are a way of expressing things differently than how we usually expect. Instead of being straightforward, they involve a twist in how we talk. In this study,

talking that did not fit the usual direct way was considered indirect. The research found three specific forms of indirect speech acts: using regular sentences to ask for something, asking for something with a question, and using a question to say something indirectly.

The characters in the research used these indirect speech acts 15 times. This shows that characters rarely use these indirect ways of talking in the story or movie. Exploring these instances helps us understand more about how the characters communicate, showing the clever and indirect ways they express themselves in the story.

Discussion

This section discusses the information obtained from the analysis of the results. In this study, researchers discussed the illocutionary acts used by teachers based on Searle's theory (1979). The core of speech act theory was the illocutionary act, which showed how the whole utterance was interpreted in conversation (C.J., 2018). In this study, the researchers revealed that the actors in the movie Validation used four forms of illocution. The communication styles were directive, representative, commissive, and expressive (Eslami, 2013). Research on politeness theory supports directive acts to navigate social interactions and maintain face. In "Validation," the use of directives aligns with their findings on how speakers use politeness strategies to achieve their communicative goals.

The current study found that directive speech acts were predominant, with 51 instances identified. This finding falls within the range of previous studies, although the exact numbers vary across different contexts. Widyastuti and Sartika (2023) reported 327 types of directive speech acts, while Lestari and Hartati (2020) identified 56 directives, closely aligning with our results. Yulian and Mandarani (2023) suggested up to 151 directive statements, and Tutuarima et al. (2018) found 32 directive utterances in their analyzed movie. Interestingly, our results contrast with those of Haucsa et al. (2020), who found only two directive utterances and identified representative speech acts as the most common, highlighting the importance of context in speech act analysis.

The prevalence of directives in this study and most comparative research underscores their importance in engaging others and encouraging specific responses. Directive speech acts prompt the listener to take action. They are crucial in various contexts, from film narratives to

daily communication, in encouraging and validating others. This observation is consistent with Widyastuti and Sartika's (2023) assertion that directive speech acts play a key role in fostering genuine human connections. Moreover, Eslami (2013) studied politeness theory in supporting directive acts to navigate social interactions and maintain face. In "Validation," the use of directives aligns with their findings on how speakers use politeness strategies to achieve their communicative goals.

It can be said that the findings of the current study are supported by most comparative studies and theoretical frameworks, suggesting that directive speech acts are a core aspect of natural communication and interpersonal dynamics. The variations in frequency across studies underscore the contextual nature of speech acts and the need for nuanced analysis in different communicative situations.

Expressive speech acts were used 48 times in the current study, ranking second in frequency and underscoring their significant role in conveying emotions and attitudes. This finding contrasts with most previous studies, where expressive speech acts typically ranked third. Jatmiko and Agustina (2022) reported nine instances of expressions, Lestari and Hartati (2020) found 29, Yulian and Mandarani (2023) identified 42 utterances, and Tutuarima et al. (2018) noted 23 utterances, all ranking third in their respective studies. Interestingly, our results align more closely with the study by Haucsa et al. (2020), which found 15 expressive utterances ranking second, suggesting a potentially higher emphasis on emotional expression in our analyzed context.

The prevalence of expressive speech acts in this study highlights their importance in the film's narrative, where the protagonist's validation of others leads to immediate and positive emotional changes. This aligns with Siagian and Sitorus's (2023) definition of expressive speech as acts produced by the psychological condition of a speaker based on environmental conditions. Besides, it is supported by Asdar and Lutfin (2024), reinforcing the notion that expressive speech acts are prevalent in daily social interactions. This research contributes to understanding how expressive speech acts serve important functions in facilitating emotional communication and interpersonal relationships across various contexts, particularly in narrative media, where emotional expression may be more pronounced.

In the current study, representative speech acts appeared 12 times, ranking third in frequency. This finding contrasts significantly with most previous studies, where representative acts typically ranked higher. Jatmiko and Agustina (2022) reported 22 instances of representatives ranking second, Lestari and Hartati (2020) found 56 data also in second place, and Yulian and Mandarani (2023) identified 68 utterances ranking second. Tutuarima et al. (2018) noted 26 utterances, again in the second position. Notably, Haucsa et al. (2020) study found 19 representative utterances ranking first, possibly due to the interview format rather than film dialogue. Our study's relatively low occurrence of representative acts indicates that the film focuses more on positive interactions and emotional engagement than factual communication. This aligns with Budiasih et al.'s (2018) definition of representative acts as those conveying the speaker's belief in the truth of the proposition, linking the utterance to reality.

The current results suggest that in the context of our study, factual statements or assertions of truth play a less prominent role compared to other forms of communication. This could indicate a narrative structure prioritizing emotional connections and actions over information delivery. The disparity between the current findings and previous studies highlights the contextual nature of speech acts and how they can vary significantly based on the medium and communicative goals of the analyzed content. This research contributes to understanding how representative speech acts function within various contexts, particularly in narrative media, where emotional expression and character interactions may take precedence over factual communication.

Commissive speech acts, which express the speaker's commitment to future actions, were identified only 3 times in the current study, ranking last in frequency. This finding aligns closely with some previous studies but contrasts with others. Yulian and Mandarani's (2023) study similarly found commissives to be the least frequent, with five instances, and (Lestari & Hartati (2020) reported 20 commissives, ranking last. However, Jatmiko and Agustina (2022) identified 22 commissive utterances ranking fourth; Tutuarima et al. (2018) noted 12 utterances in fourth position, and Haucsa et al., 2020 found three commissives ranking third. The infrequency of commissive speech acts in the current study reflects the film's emphasis on direct engagement and emotional validation rather than future commitments. This focus aligns with the film's goal of fostering immediate emotional connections rather than planning

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for future actions. As defined by Ashfiya and Degaf (2023), these acts include promises, threats, and pledges, which appear to play a minor role in the analyzed context.

Compared to the varying frequencies in other research, this study's low occurrence of commissives underscores the contextual nature of speech acts in different communicative situations. This aligns with Siagian and Sitorus's (2023) observation that conversations are influenced by local cultural contexts, shaping how speech acts are used and understood. The disparity between the current findings and some previous studies highlights how speech act distribution can vary significantly based on the medium and communicative goals of the analyzed content. Interestingly, Mukminin and Angelita (2023) identified three main functions of directive speech acts: asking, commanding, and advising. While their focus was on directives, this categorization demonstrates the multifaceted nature of speech acts and how they can serve various communicative purposes. Our research contributes to understanding how commissive speech acts function within narrative media, suggesting that future-oriented commitments may play a less prominent role in contexts prioritizing immediate emotional engagement.

In addition, the characters from the film used both direct and indirect speech acts. According to Yule (1996), direct speech acts will happen if there is a direct relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance, while indirect speech acts will happen if there is no relationship between the structure and the function of the utterance. Direct speech acts were shown 99 times, making it easy to understand the characters' intentions as they made statements, asked questions, or gave orders directly. In contrast, indirect speech acts, which occurred 15 times, raise complexity by conveying messages in less conventional ways, like using statements to imply something indirectly. Overall, the movie's varied use of speech acts enriches the narrative, illustrating the characters' personalities and dynamic interactions. One limitation of this study is its focus on a single short film, which may not represent the use of speech acts in other contexts or genres. Another limitation is the potential subjectivity in categorizing and interpreting speech acts despite efforts to maintain consistency.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

We can draw some conclusions from the research based on what we discussed earlier. The first conclusion is about the classifications of speech acts in the Validation short film based on Searle's theory. There are five classifications, but in the movie, only four were used: representative, directive, commissive, and expressive. Characters mostly used directives (51 times) to express things directly and share much information. Representative (12 times) and commissive (3 times) were rarer, indicating characters who did not care much about others. Expressive (48 times) was also common, showing characters expressing their feelings, emotions, attitudes, or psychological states. The primary function of an expressive speech act is to convey the speaker's mental or emotional state to the listener. It involves the speaker revealing their internal experiences or reactions to a particular situation.

Moving on to the second problem, there are two types of speech acts: direct and indirect. Both are used, but the direct way happens a lot more—like 99 times more—direct means saying things clearly, like just asking or telling. Indirect is different, happening only 15 times. It is when people do not say things in a standard, straightforward way. The film primarily uses the direct style, where characters express themselves openly. This choice makes things clear and accurate, showing how people talk when they want to be straightforward and honest with each other.

Limitation

Future researchers anticipate exploring various aspects of pragmatics beyond what has been covered in this study. This could involve a more comprehensive analysis of how language functions in different contexts, considering additional elements such as cultural influences, linguistic nuances, or variations in speech acts. By broadening the scope, researchers may uncover a richer understanding of how pragmatics operates in diverse settings and among varied linguistic communities. Moreover, future investigations could explore the evolving dynamics of communication in the digital age, examining how online interactions and technological advancements impact pragmatic elements. The continuous exploration of these facets promises to contribute to the academic understanding of pragmatics and its practical applications in enhancing effective communication across various contexts and mediums.

Implication

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The findings of this research regarding the prevalence and types of speech acts in the Validation short film have significant implications for linguistics and communication studies, especially in understanding the dynamics of interpersonal communication. The insights can guide decision-makers in creating communication strategies that encourage clarity and emotional intelligence in public and professional discourse, eventually fostering more effective and emotionally resonant communication practices.

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