# The Function of Commissive Illocutionary Speech Acts in Anime Ajin

**Shofy Nur Aidzatul Izza[1*], Miftachul Amri[2]**

[1, 2]*Universitas Negeri Surabaya*
[1]shofynur.19015@mhs.unesa.ac.id

**Abstract-**This study aims to describe the function of commissive illocutionary speech acts. Determining this topic was based on a preliminary study conducted on 49 students at Surabaya State University, most of whom did not understand commissive illocutionary. The source of data is obtained from Anime Ajin by Gamon Sakurai, particularly the sentences containing commissive illocutionary utterances. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method. Then the main theory used is Ibrahim (1993:34-34). Based on the results, it found 6 functions of commissive illocutionary speech acts in the 41 data, namely 21 data of the promising function, 1 data of the swearing function, 10 data of the proposing function, 4 data of the offering function, 4 data of the bargaining function, and 1 data of the function declare voluntarily. The promising function is marked with 必ず、すぐ、約束する、てやる、swearing function is marked with 誓う、proposing function is marked with ほうがいい、どうですか、offering function is marked with ませんか、よかったら、f bargaining function is marked with ギブアンドテイク、代わりに, and voluntary function is marked with てもいい. Of the six functions, the promising function is the most dominant. This is due to the background of the film, which tells of the escape and hunting of Ajin, so each character often issues promises of action in the future.

**Keywords:** Pragmatics, Speech Acts, Illocutionary Speech Acts, Commissive, Ajin

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential tool for human's communication, especially in the process of exchanging information. Amri (2016) said that communicating something can make human relations better or worse because there are different terms. In connection with the above issues, language becomes an object in linguistic studies. In this case, Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that examines the meaning of utterances concerning word situations. Kridalaksana (2011) defined pragmatics as conditions that result in the compatibility or not of the use of language in communication related to aspects of language use or contexts outside language that contribute to the meaning of utterances. When communicating directly, it results in speech events or speech acts. Speech acts are important to study because they are limited to interpreting sentences as a form of speech and what the speaker wants to convey in terms of the speech situation.

Searle (1969) divided illocutionary speech acts into five types: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Directive and expressive are the most widely studied of the five types, while commissive still needs to be studied. In response to the small number of commissive illocutionary studies, the researcher tried to conduct a preliminary study of

49 students at Surabaya State University about their knowledge of commissive illocutionary speech acts. The results showed that of the 49 students, 36 students could not provide examples of commissive sentences.

In Japanese, illocutionary act is called 発話内行為」 *hatsuwanaikoui*. Harasawa (2016:180) said: 現在の時間を教えてほしい」と要求する行為。 *"Genza no jikan wo oshiete hoshii" to youkyuu suru koui."*

聞き手は、「今何時ですか」という発話を聞いた瞬間に(2)の話し手の　意図を理解します。そして、話し手の依頼に応える行動をとります。これが、発話によって相手への効果を生む(3)の発語媒介行為となります。 *Kikite wa "Ima nanji desuka? to iu hatsuwa wo kiita shunkan ni (2) no hanashite no ito wo rikai shimasu. Soshite, hanashite no irai ni kotaeru koudou wo torimasu. Kore ga hatsuwa ni yotte aite e no kouka wo umu (3) no hatsugobaikaikoui to narimasu.*

"Want to be notified of current time" as an action to request. The listener understands the speaker's intention (2) when he hears "What time is it?". Then, this response to the speaker's request (3) is called a perlocutionary act or the effect on others. From this understanding, it can be concluded that the illocutionary act is the intention requested by the speaker.

Yule (1996) defines commissive illocutionary speech as a type of speech act that binds speakers to perform actions in the future. Using commissive, speakers try to adjust what will happen in the future according to what they say. Additionally, Yule (1996) said actions performed via utterances are generally called speech acts, commonly given more specific labels, such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promises or request.

The following is an example of a commissive illocutionary speech act sentence described by Yule (1996):
1. I'll be back
2. I'm going to get it right next time
3. We will not do that

Ibrahim (1993) stated that there is a commissive function according to its type, namely:
1. Types of promises: contract, bet, condemn, guarantee, surrender, invite, promise, swear function.
2. Types of offers: offering, proposing, voluntarily declaring, bargaining function.

As explained above, research on commissive illocutionary speech acts is rarely done compared to other illocutionary speech acts. One example of research on commissive illocutionary work was carried out by Dian Eka et al. from Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta in 2020, entitled Exploration of the Function of Commissive Speech Acts as a Bushido Concept in Samurai Figures in the Rurouni Kenshin Film. This study found 17 commissive speech acts with the functions of promising, threatening, refusing, offering, and guaranteeing and their relation to the concept of Bushido.

Compared to the previous research, this current research focuses on commissive functions, speech situations, and features contained in these commissive utterances by using Ibrahim's theory as a reference for classifying the functions of commissive illocutionary speech acts found. In addition, this study uses the anime Ajin by Gamon Sakurai as data analysis. The researcher uses two full seasons with a total of 26 episodes.

The preliminary study conducted in February 2023 on 49 Japanese Language Education students at Surabaya State University showed that most of these students did not understand commissive illocutionary speech acts. Therefore, this research was conducted to be able to add insight to students, especially regarding pragmatic studies of commissive illocutionary speech acts, which are still rarely researched.

The following is an example of a commissive illocutionary act in the anime Ajin:
かい：もしあいつに何かあれば<u>必ず</u>助けに行く (1)
Kai: If something happens to her someday, I will definitely go to save her たけし: お前やっぱうざいな (2)
Takeshi: you do like meddling

The above conversation occurred between Kai and Takeshi, his cellmate in prison. During the break, they sat chatting together and talking about Nagai Kei. Kai, Kei's close friend, said that if one day something happened to Kei, Kai would go and save him, stated in utterance (1). Takeshi responded by stating that Kai was a person who liked to interfere, as stated in utterance (2).

The utterances above include commissive illocutionary speech acts with a promise function because the speaker promises to act in the future. It is marked in the underlined word, namely 必ず (kanarazu), which means certain. In this case, Kai, as the speaker, binds himself to do something in

the future, namely to save Kei if something happens to him.

Based on the example above, this study describes the function of commissive illocutionary speech acts according to the speech situation and the characteristics contained in the commissive utterance sentence.

## II. METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative method. Data collection uses listening and note-taking techniques to collect and accumulate data in sentences containing commissive illocutionary utterances in the anime Ajin.

The stages of this research are as follows:

1. Considering the focus and choose the topic of study and conduct a preliminary study related to the chosen topic.
2. Collecting data in the form of sentences containing commissive illocutionary utterances by means of listening and note-taking.
3. Classifying data and validating data to supervisors.
4. Describing the data based on the Abraham's theory
5. Discussing and drawing conclusions

The following is a description of the data code used.

AS1 : Ajin Season 1
E04 : Episode 4
21:26 : Minutes 21 second 26.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the data collection that has been done, there are 41 data containing commissive utterances with 6 functions, namely 21 data on the promising function, 1 data on the swearing function, 10 data on the proposing function, 4 data on the offering function, 4 data on the bargaining function, 1 data on the declaring voluntarily function. Then, these data are described according to Ibrahim's theory. For promising function, with 4 examples; swearing function, with 1 example; proposing function, with 2 examples; offering function, with 2 examples; bargaining function, with 2 examples; declaring voluntary function, with 1 example.

### 3.1 Promising Function
**Data 1**

さとう：新しい君には最高のショウ

を見せると約束しよう。まずは、慧理子ちゃんだ。次に海斗君と　君のご両親。それからトザキ君下村さん　中野君、彼ら全員を君の目の前で殺す。

Satou: I promise to give the best show to you as new one. First, Eriko-chan. Next, Kaito-kun and your parents. After that, Tosaki-kun, Shimomura-kun, Nakano-kun, I will kill them all before your eyes.

(AS2.E13.14:30)

The sentence above was spoken by Satou during a fierce battle with Kei. Satou grabbed Kei's head while saying a promise that he would show the best show to the new Kei after cutting his head off. The best show that Satou meant was the killing of those closest to Kei, starting with Eriko, Kaito, Kei's parents, Tosaki and Shimomura.

The sentence above is a commissive illocutionary speech act with a promising function. The speaker promises to do something in the future with the underlined word 約束しよう (yakusoku shiyou), which means promise. In this case, Satou promises to show the best show to the new Kei.

**Data 2**

こう：腹減ったな。な何か食うものない (1)
Kou: I am hungry. Is there no food?
けい：後で持ってきてやる (2)
Kei: I will bring it later

(AS1.E09.05:38)

The conversation above occurred between Kou and Kei during their first meeting in a small village where Kei was hiding. Kou intends to get Kei to work together to stop Satou. Before they started a serious conversation, Kou said he was hungry in speech (1). Responding to this, Kei promised to bring Kou food in utterance (2).

The utterances above are considered as promising functions because there are promising expressions. The speaker promises to give something in the future, as shown in utterance (2). It is marked in the word 持ってきてやる (motte kite yaru), which is interpreted as coming with carrying. In this case, Kei promised to bring Kou food later.

**Data 3**

とさき：何だと！なぜバレた？ああそっちは任せる。私もすぐに戻る。
Tosaki: What! Why get caught? Yes, that's where I leave it to you. I'll be right back too.

(AS2.E03.11:15)

The above statement was said by Tosaki while on the phone. Tosaki learns that one of the

government officials targeted by Satou has been killed. Receiving this news, Tosaki promised to return to the Ministry of Hunt office soon.

The utterance includes a promising function because the speaker promises to do something shortly. This utterance is marked by the word すぐ (sugu), means "immediately". In this case, Tosaki promised to return to the Ministry of Hunt office soon.

**Data 4**

けい：あんたらが僕にしたことを忘れたわけじゃないからな (1)
Kei: I haven't forgotten what you guys did to me either.
医者：必ず解剖台に戻してやる (2)
Doctor: I will definitely take you back to the operating room.

(AS1.E06.07:35)

The conversation above between Kei and the doctor in charge of conducting experiments on Ajin under the auspices of the government. At that time, Kei and the doctor were hiding from the pursuit of Satou, who was about to kill them. In utterance (1), Kei said that he had not forgotten the cruel experiment that the doctor had done on him. Feeling offended, the doctor replied that he would bring Kei back to the operating room, as stated in utterance (2).

The utterance above includes a promising function because, in utterance (2), there is an expression that promises to do something in the future. This utterance is marked by the word 必ず (kanarazu), which has a definite meaning. In this case, the doctor promised that he would bring Kei back to the operating room.

**3.2 Swearing Function**
**Data 5**

けい：僕はただ普通に静かに暮らしたいだけです　(1)
Kei: I just want to live as usual and peace.
さとう：ながいくん、君の考えはよくわかった。ただねこれだけはおぼえておいてほしい。静かに暮らすのがモットーだと私は言った。だがだが もし 君が理不尽な目に遭ったり捕まるようなことがあったら話は別だ 。その時は最善の策を講じて君を救い出すと誓う (2)
Satou: Nagai-kun, I totally understand your thoughts. But I want you to remember this. I did say that my motto is to live quietly. But it's a

different story if someone wants to trap and torture you. When that time comes, I will come up with the best plan and vow to save you.

(AS1.E04.21:26)

The sentence above is spoken by Satou in his first meeting with Kei in a hidden place in the forest. Kei said he just wanted to live an ordinary and quiet life, as stated in utterance (1). Knowing about Kei's situation, who is a fugitive from the government, Satou said that he really understood Kei's thoughts. Satou also has a motto of living in peace. But that will change when Kei is framed and tortured by other people, so at that moment, Satou vows to make the best plan to save Kei, as stated in utterance (2).

The sentence above includes the swearing function because the speaker undertakes to perform certain actions in the future. This utterance is marked by the word 誓う (chikau), which means oath. In this case, Satou vows to save Kei if anyone wants to trap and torture Kei.

**3.3 Proposing Function**
**Data 6**

おくやま：両手で狙ったほうがいいよ (1)
Okuyama: instead, you aim with both hands
たなか：分かってるよ (2)
Tanaka: Yes, I understand!

(AS1.E12.17:21)

The conversation above occurred when Okuyama and Tanaka were on the roof of the building because they served as the Shooting Team in Satou's attack plan. In utterance (1), Okuyama suggests that Tanaka use both hands to aim. Feeling a little annoyed because Okuyama knew that he was weak in aiming, Tanaka answered him angrily while saying that he knew this too, which was stated in utterance (2).

The utterance above includes the function of proposing because there is an expression stating the suggestion that the interlocutor should do as suggested. In the underlined word ほうがいい (hou ga ii), which means better or better. In this case, Okuyama suggested that Tanaka should use both hands to aim.

**Data 7**

ボディーガード：少し落ち着かれてはどうですか。今からそれで持ちませんよ(1)
Bodyguard: How about a little quieter? From now on they couldn't attack.
きし：ああ そうだね (2)
Kishi: Yes, yes.

(AS2.E03.09:34)

The above utterance occurred between Kishi and one of his bodyguards when they were in a secret house in the forest to hide from Satou's pursuit of Kishi's life. Seeing Kishi pacing around worried that Satou would catch him, the bodyguard suggested Kishi to be calm and relaxed. He thinks Satou won't be able to find their hiding place, as stated in utterance (1). Hearing this and feeling it made sense, Kishi agreed with his bodyguard's proposal, as indicated in utterance (2).

The utterance above is considered as proposing function because the speaker suggests being considered by the speech partner. Marked on the word どうですか (dou desuka), which means how. In this case, the bodyguard suggested that Kishi be calm.

## 3.4 Offering Function
**Data 8**

たなか：いっそのこと岸を飛ばして先に岩崎慶太<u>やりませんか</u> (1)
Tanaka: to accelerate. How about we skip Kishi and aim for Iwasaki Keita first?
さとう：却下だね。今回は順番にやるって決めたんだ (2)
Satou: Rejected. This time I've decided to do it in his order.

(AS2.E03.08:02)

The conversation above occurred between Satou and Tanaka at their hideout headquarters during the terror killing of government officials. After trying for a long time to find out where Kishi was hiding, who was their next target, but never being found, Tanaka offered to bypass Kishi and target Iwasaki Keita first, stated in utterance (1). Satou refused Tanaka's offer because in the plan this time, he had decided to do it according to the order he had set at the beginning, stated in utterance (2).

The sentence above is considered as offering function because there is an offer uttered by Tanaka. Marked on the word やりませんか (yaimasenka), which means "what if you do." In this case, Tanaka offered his team to continue their plan to the next target.

**Data 9**

秘書：よかったらショップ教えるけど(1)
Secretary: If you want, I'll tell the shop
しもむら：ありがとうございます。また機

会があれば (2)
Shimomura: Thank You. Next time if there is a chance.

(AS2.E05.15:50)

The conversation occurred between the Minister's Secretary and Shimomura in the secretary's office. Utterance (1) was spoken by the secretary to the Minister after being complimented by Shimomura on his fine watch. The secretary also offered to tell the shop where he bought the watch. Responding to the offer, Shimomura politely refused by saying another time if there was a chance, as stated in utterance (2).

The sentence above includes the function of offering, marked with the underlined word よかったら (yokattara), which means if you want. In this case, the secretary offered to tell the shop where to buy watches if Shimomura wanted.

## 3.5 Bargaining Function
**Data 10**

けい：僕は 絶対に ここから脱出する。あんたらも外へ避難したいんだろ？目的は一緒<u>ギブ・アンド・テーク</u>だ。僕が　おとりになってあんたらをここから出す。あんたらは
僕に安全に外まで行けるルートを ^しめ;示す (1)
Kei: I have to escape from here. You also want to go out for cover, right? Our goal is the same, it's going to be a <u>Give and Take</u>. I'll be the bait and then you guys get out of here. You guys tell me a safe route to go out
医者：いいのか？　おとりなんて (2)
Doctor: Is it okay for you to be bait?
けい：死なないですし (3)
Kei: Because I don't want to die

(AS1.E06.07:48)

The conversation above took place between Kei and two doctors when they were hiding together from Satou's pursuit who was about to kill them. They hid behind a large cupboard in a room in the experimental building. Due to being pressed and in the same situation, Kei offers a Give and Take or deal to the two doctors who are hiding with him in return as a form of exchange. Kei offered to act as bait, and two doctors told him a safe route out of the experimental building, as stated in utterance (2). Responding to Kei's offer, which was quite dangerous, the Doctor asked again if Kei was really okay to be bait, as stated in utterance (2). Kei replied that this was not a problem because he also did not want to die here, which is in utterance

(3).

The speech above includes the function of bargaining because the speaker offers something as a form of exchange to the speech partner. This utterance is marked by the word ギブ・アンド・テーク "Give and Take," or a situation where both parties make an agreement to give and take each other.

**Data 11**

そかべ：さとうを止める<u>代わりに</u>君らの存在は不問にする。

Sokabe: In exchange for stopping Satou, your existence is freed

(AS2.E13.18:34)

The sentence above was uttered by Sokabe to Team Tosaki (Kei, Kou, Shimomura) when they managed to beat Satou through a fierce battle in the underground passage. Sokabe said that in exchange for the services of Team Tosaki who had stopped Satou, Tosaki and his team, which consisted of Ajin fugitives from the government, would be released.

The utterance above includes a bargaining function because both parties exchange according to their respective wishes. The underlined word is 代わりに (kawari ni), which means instead. In this case, Sokabe gives freedom for Ajin's fugitive status in Team Tosaki in exchange for their services for stopping Satou.

## 3.6 Declaring voluntary Function
**Data 12**

医者：けどそれだけで待ってたわけじゃないんだ。下の降りたら俺の車でどこかまで<u>送ってもいいよ</u>

Doctor: But I'm not waiting for you just for that. After downstairs I can take you anywhere with my car.

(AS1.E06.14:56)

The sentence above is spoken by one of the doctors who survived Satou's pursuit after making a deal with Kei. The doctor was waiting for Kei on the emergency stairs. The doctor said that he could and agreed to take Kei wherever Kei wanted with his car.

The above utterance includes the declaring voluntary function because the speaker offers something to the speech partner of his own free will, without coercion, and also outside of his responsibility. It is marked with the form ～てもいい (temo ii), which means it's okay. In this case, the doctor voluntarily wants to take Kei wherever Kei wants to go.

The entire data found shows that there are 22 data for promising types and 19 data for offering types. In terms of the background of the anime Ajin which tells about the escape and hunting of Ajin, who is an immortal being. In this process, both the main and companion characters often state utterances that function as promises. e.g., the main character, Nagai Kei, whose status is a fugitive from the government to be used as an experimental subject, Kei often said that he must run away and will never return to the experiment room or building. The speech is a promise that binds him to take action according to what he has said.

Besides, Kei is also being chased by another Ajin named Satou because of their different principles. Kei wants to live in peace and make Ajin's image good in society. In contrast, Satou actually wants to make Ajin rule in Japan by terrorizing and committing mass murder, especially against government officials. Therefore, Satou targets Kei intending to kill the current Kei character and give birth to a new Kei character. Satou and Kei often issue promises about future actions, such as Satou who often promises that he will definitely kill Kei if caught, and also Kei who often promises that he will stop Satou's plans and actions which will further worsen Ajin's image in the eyes of public.

Following the anime background, the promises function is the most dominant, with 21 data and 1 data for the swear function. The promises function is found in data 1-4. The four data refer to commissive illocutionary speech acts. The promising function is stated with different characteristics. Data 1 uses the word 約束する (yakusoku suru), which means "promise", data 2 uses the form ～てやる (te yaru) which means "will do", data 3 uses the word すぐ (sugu) which means "soon," and data 4 uses the word 必ず (kanarazu). The four features in these data have the same function, namely promising to take action according to what is said. Then, data 5 is another function of the promises type, namely the Swearing function, denoted by the word 誓う (chikau), which means "oath."

There are 4 types of offers found, namely the proposing function, the offering function, the bargaining function, and the declaring voluntary function, which are contained in data 6-12. Data 6 and 7 include the proposed function. In this case, the speaker proposes something to the interlocutor for consideration.

Data 6 and 7 have different characteristics in conveying suggestions. Data 6 uses the form ～ほうがいい (hou ga ii), which means "better" or "preferably." Meanwhile, data 7 is marked with the question word どうですか (dou desuka), which means "how." These two characteristics function the same, namely giving suggestions so that the interlocutor wants to consider and do what is suggested by the speaker.

Data 8 and 9 are included as offerings functions. In this case, the speaker offers something to the speech partner. The utterance of offering in data 8 are marked with the form ～ませんか (masenka), which means "what if," while data 9 is marked with the word よかったら (yokattara), which means "if you please." These two characteristics show the expression of offering something to the interlocutor with the intention that the interlocutor is willing to accept.

Data 10 and 11 are classified as bargaining functions because the speaker and interlocutor give something to each other as a form of exchange according to each party's wishes. The data of 10 bargaining utterances are marked with the word ギブ・アンド・テーク (gibu ando teeku), which means "give and take." This statement follows the function of bargaining because the term "give and take" expresses a situation where both parties give and receive each other. In other words, there is an exchange between speakers and interlocutors.

Data 11 is marked with the word ～代わりに (kawari ni), which means "in lieu of," the word is used instead of the service that the interlocutor has given, so the speaker gives something else in return. Thus, the speaker and interlocutor are getting benefits.

Data 12 is a declaring voluntary function. The speaker stated his ability to do something without being asked and beyond his responsibility. Thus, the speaker performs the action voluntarily. In data 12, voluntary speech is marked with the form ～てもいい (temo ii), which means "It's okay." The speaker conveys it voluntarily without being asked by the interlocutor.

## IV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, commissive illocutionary speech acts belong to the types of promising and offering, namely promising consist of 22 data and offering consist of 19 data. The promising type is most dominant due to the background of the anime Ajin tells of Ajin's escape and hunting so that both the main character and companion often utter stories that are binding on him to take certain actions in the future, such as promising to run away and promising to catch Ajin. In addition, 6 other functions were found, namely the promising, swearing, proposing, offering, bargaining, and declaring voluntary functions, as stated below.

1. **Promising function:** 約束する (*yakusoku suru*)、～てやる (*te yaru*)、すぐ (*sugu*)、必ず (*kanarazu*)
2. **Swearing function:** 誓う (*chikau*)
3. **Proposing function:** ほうがいい (*hou ga ii*)、どうですか (*dou desuka*)
4. **Offering function:** ～ませんか (*masenka*)、よかったら (*yokattara*)
5. **Bargaining function:** ギブアンドテイク (*gibu ando teiku*)、代わりに (*kawari ni*)
6. **Declaring voluntary function:** ～てもいい (*temo ii*).

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