

# MORAL JUDGMENT OF ILLOCUTIONARY ACT IN THE 10<sup>TH</sup> EPISODE OF VIOLET EVERGARDEN ANIME

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## Abstract

This study explores the linkage between illocutionary acts and moral judgments from researchers' and respondents' perspectives by using the 10<sup>th</sup> episode of Violet Evergarden's anime. By using mixed methods, the authors collected the data using note-taking methods and analysed the utterances from their perspectives and the moral story based on their and participants' views. Next, the authors distributed a pre-online questionnaire, including a website link to watch the anime. After filling in the demography data and watching the anime, the participants answered a post-online questionnaire about this episode in moral judgment contexts. This study found that the assertive type is the significant utterance containing 77 (51%) utterances and 151 illocutionary acts utterances, including the central characters of the anime (Ann: 38/67); (Violet: 24/40). Moreover, the third character showed the directive-type of illocutionary act dominantly (Clara: 17/44). Furthermore, in line with the author's finding, both perspectives found the matching result of moral judgments (connectedness: 85%); (sadness: 85%); (love tension: 90%); and (tension: 85%). Thus, the significantly contained utterances in this episode are reciprocal with its moral judgment from both views.

**Keywords:** Illocutionary Acts; Moral Judgment; Anime

## INTRODUCTION

These days, the popularity of anime on numerous big-name entertainment platforms, such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon (Salemme, 2019), has become a part of daily conversations among all ages (MacWilliams, 2014) and developed into various online communities discussing and debating its characters' development, storyline, art style, etc. (Annett, 2014; Cho et al., 2018). Thus, this study highlights anime as one of the various ways in expressing individuals' utterances and acts simultaneously, called illocutionary acts and associated with moral judgments. However, as a rough and ready tool, the illocutionary acts limit us in displaying various dimensions of language-use that could be complicated for commonality (Bäckström, 2020; Miller, 2005). Consequently, when watching anime, each person may have their own discerned storyline and comprehension of its characters' spoken words due to different viewpoints (Chankova, 2019; Flowerdew, 1990). On the other hand, an individual standpoint about moral values is generally the same as others because they tend to view creation from holistic pictures of morality principles. Moreover, these similar perceived moral judgments occur because they assess anime content comprehensively from its situation, course of action, characters, behaviours, etc. (Lin et al., 2021; Sbisà, 2014). Hence, the author argues that moral judgment is a balanced approach to illocutionary acts, synchronising and comprehending the output. Prior literature has provided some evidence classified types of illocutionary acts from numerous media, for instance, movies, comics, and newspapers (Muliawati et al., 2020; Puspita & Sunarti, 2019; Sihombing et al., 2021) and also from diverse disciplines, for example, political field (Kusmanto, 2019; Mufiah & Rahman, 2019; Ramadhani et al., 2019), economic field (Aditria & San Rizqiya, 2021; Dewi, 2021; Prastio et al., 2021), religious studies of field

(Akmal et al., 2020; Annahlia et al., 2020; Sholihah & Syahrizal, 2021), and education field (Gasparatou, 2018; Ihsan & Syafitri, 2021; Simanjuntak, 2022; Sukinah & Effendi, 2021). However, these former studies resulted only from different fields. Specifically, this study highlights that the illocutionary act classification emergences the nonexpert's difficulty in digesting the review (Bäckström, 2020; Chankova, 2019; Flowerdew, 1990). On the other hand, prior literature correlates illocutionary acts and moral values (Marsili, 2016; Miller, 2005; Sbisà, 2014; Sinclair, 2017). Moreover, little evidence empirically tests the theoretical link between illocutionary acts and moral values. Therefore, this study contributes to previous studies by linking illocutionary acts and moral values from authors' viewpoints and others, leading to a comprehensive understanding. Hence, this study offers a broad contribution to educators and students practically and theoretically, specifically in speech acts and moral judgments literature. This study considers Bäckström (2020); Miller (2005); Sinclair (2017), explaining the linkage between illocutionary acts and moral judgments from broad perspectives, reflecting the importance of language use. Moreover, Bauer (2015); Stenlund (2013) points out that this approach is how philosophers' views digest the complexity of language. Furthermore, Bäckström (2020) highlights that it should be seen as a non-technical and context-sensitive tool due to different aspects of particular issues, for instance, the intention and cognitive bias of a measurement complexity. So, individual judgment is needed in a wide range, justifying the outcome of illocutionary acts to determine the intended meaning behind utterances. Moreover, due to the defeasibility, Sbisà (2014) also declared that an illocutionary act is not only carried out on one level only (classification level) but on two: systematically and unsystematically, such as moral value. On the other hand, moral values generally should be logical, based on facts, and reach the defensible ethical principles, getting the high-level bloom taxonomy of speech act assessments (Ditto et al., 2009; Hogan, 1970; Minakova, 2014). Therefore, the evaluation of utterances is not enough based on the taxonomy approach if the aim is to understand the proposed words deeply. The authors conclude that this speech act has moral principles owned, understood, assessed, and generally accepted by everyone.

Naturally, language and moral values are intertwined, becoming moral communication. Furthermore, Luckmann (2002); Sbisà (2014); Xu (2022); Zigon (2007) state that they are intersubjectively constructed in communication interactions, selected, maintained, and transmitted in complex social processes. However, this study underlines this concept in artwork perspectives, particularly in Anime, which is moral values in communication between anime characters via utterances Bäckström (2020); Cho et al. (2018); Miller (2005). Moreover, as a critical part, words are created by an anime's author, reflecting the author's intended moral value in each utterance of their artwork. On the other hand, as taxonomy tools, speech acts theory plays an essential role in classifying phrases into specific dimensions of language use. Nevertheless, this study focuses on the illocutionary act, followed by critical arguments. First, the illocutionary acts dimension contains utterances intended to inform the subsequent or future acts conceptually. The audience may misunderstand the speakers' intention until they clearly say their intention (locutionary) or perlocutionary. Thus, the authors aim to reach the various criticism of illocutionary acts, helped by the moral judgments approach via both researchers' and respondents' perspectives. Second, this study synchronises the anime selection related to the philosophical concept of illocutionary acts and moral values (Bäckström, 2020; Miller, 2005; Sbisà, 2014). Based on moral reasoning theory, moral judgments refer to individual assessment in assessing the contained moral elements of something, for instance, novels and comic books (Barberis & Grüning, 2021; Lin et al., 2021; Mercier, 2011). Although there is no standard principle for moral judgments, they should be logical, based on the existing facts, and sound or defensible moral principles (Colby et al., 1983; Gray & Schein, 2016; Nichols, 2004). Moreover, Goodwin and Darley (2008); Mitchell et al. (2006) said that the result of individual

moral judgment is confirmed if it could be compared with other results in similar circumstances. In other words, moral judgments from a person should be the same or generally accepted by people widely. In judging carried morals of something, individuals use their cognition, emotion, and intuition resulting in the all-inclusive picture of moral value elements (Lin et al., 2021; Schein, 2020). Furthermore, the authors posit Steffens (2020) as the recent literature, considering cognition, emotion, and intuition elements extensively to get the complete result of respondents' moral judgment through videos. Based on the explanation above, the authors pick out the 10th Episode of Violet Evergarden Anime as the object and source of this study owing to the main character's job as a ghostwriter that should be able to put out utterances, intentions, and goals of their client into a written work. Hence, this anime is the most suitable since the anime reflects the whole concept of illocutionary acts and moral values synchronously. Additionally, the anime received and earned several awards three times in a row from 2019 to 2021 (Anime, 2021; Sherman, 2015), which shows that the anime offers learning values packaged into animated works. Thus, this study argues that the object would frame the illocutionary act and moral judgment from the authors' and respondents' sides.

## METHOD

This study uses qualitative methods via interpretive analysis and a survey method to get the highest accuracy of research data (Bengtsson, 2016; Maxwell, 2021; Thorne, 2014). Thus, the authors design qualitative methods as follows. First, interpretive analysis in this study is based on identifying, documenting, and knowing what the speakers say, commonly called note-taking methods. Then, the authors make a script from The 10th Episode of Violet Evergarden Anime to analyse the words and sentences formed by categorising the type of illocutionary acts and concluding the primary type that are the authors of the anime trying to convey. In addition, based on the conclusion of illocutionary acts, the authors also judge its moral values classified by Steffens (2020) and synchronise them with respondents' viewpoints later on. Second, the survey method in this study focuses on moral judgments of respondents' perspectives, deploying pre- and post-online questionnaires. This study embraces a wide range of samples from 13 to 18 years old (FallinHate, 2019; MyAnimeList, 2019), taken with a convenience sampling method (Armour & Iida, 2016; Chan et al., 2017). Furthermore, this study considers sample size justification issues heuristically for discontinuing data collection (Lakens, 2022). By their contact and relation, the authors look for the respondents willing to participate fully in the research data collection process. Furthermore, the respondents are directed by researchers to watch the anime completely through the provided link (pre-questionnaire) from Google Form. After the respondents watched the 10th Episode of Violet Evergarden, the authors collected the data using prior literature questionnaires from Herget (2021); Steffens (2020), also conducted via Google Form (post-questionnaire), specifically in the **Appendix**. Finally, the authors compile, analyse, synchronise, and conclude the holistic picture of the 10th Episode of Violet Evergarden from illocutionary acts and moral judgment elements from all the collected research data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The data analysis found five illocutionary acts: assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative, with 151 total utterances (see. **Table 1**). The authors also found that the assertive-type of illocutionary acts is the type that is mainly performed by the three main characters in The 10th episode of Violet Evergarden anime. Based on findings, the authors

reveal the type of illocutionary act by each character; First, Ann, this character is the character that essentially uses assertive-type (38/77) and directive-type (25/51) among others, with assertive-subtype of stating facts (12), suggesting (8), and complaining (18). For example, an utterance reflects the assertive subtype (complaining): *“life is not fair.”* Moreover, the directive subtypes from this character are commands (3), asking (18), and requests (4); for instance, the directive subtype (asking): *“then can I sleep here with you?”*. Thus, Ann’s behaviours are mainly complaining and whining about her condition.

The second character, Clara (Ann’s Mother), essentially has the directive-type of the illocutionary act (17), with directive-subtype of command (7), asking (3), and request (7) and the assertive type (15), with subtype: stating of facts (11), suggesting (3), and complaining (1). By this means, this character tends to understand and teach her daughter patiently, confirmed by these utterances as follows: 1) the directive subtype (commands) - *“You’re not allowed in the sunroom, okay?”*; 2) assertive-subtype (stating of facts) - *“It’s an important letter.”*

The last character, Violet, mainly has the assertive type (24) with the subtype of stating facts (18), suggesting (4), complaining (2), and directive-type (9) with the subtype of commands (1), asking (5), request (3). Therefore, the authors state that Violet’s behaviour is closely related to a robot or doll due to her character is fundamentally created by the mangaka/creator as a combat machine, resulting in robotics communication as a consequence of her character building, proved by these utterances as follows: 1) the assertive-type (stating of facts) *“That is outside my expertise”*; 2) the directive-type (asking) *“Is something the matter?”*. Overall, the three main characters’ major types of illocutionary acts are assertive- and directive-type. Thus, as Sbisà (2013); Yule and Widdowson (1996) said, the anime’s utterances contain utterances that are performed via the communicative force and the speakers (the anime characters) make it possible for the audience to understand the meaning, culminate in sensing the action of doing something attached from each utterance.

**Table 1.** Result of Illocutionary Act Categorization

No.	Types of Illocutionary Act	Utterances from the characters			The number of utterances (%)
		Ann	Clara	Violet	
1.	Assertive	38	15	24	77 (51%)
2.	Directive	25	17	9	51 (33.78%)
3.	Expressive	1	7	5	13 (8.60%)
4.	Commissive	-	1	1	2 (1.32%)
5.	Declarative	3	4	1	8 (5.30%)
<b>Total</b>		<b>67</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>151 (100%)</b>

As a second part of the empirical study, the respondents were asked to assess the moral value after watching the anime linked via questionnaire form and succeeded in collecting respondents for two weeks. Moreover, the authors stopped collecting the data due to the sample size justification heuristically based on several prior kinds of literature (Lakens, 2022; Ploughman et al., 2010; Sekhon et al., 2022; Smidt et al., 2019). Thus, the authors got 20 respondents,

dominated by males (75%) with high school backgrounds. Finally, this study also captured the respondents’ responses, viewing anime as a desirable watching preference (60%). Therefore, it presented respondent demography in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2. Respondent Demography**

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	15	75%
Female	5	25%
<b>Recent Education:</b>		
<b>High School Student</b>	9	45%
<b>University Student</b>		
Bachelor	4	20%
Master	7	35%
<b>Choosing Anime as Watching Preference</b>		
Slightly desirable - Very desirable	12	60%
Undesirable – Enough	8	40%

For the moral judgment side, this study concluded that the 10<sup>th</sup> episode of Violet Evergarden Anime contains connectedness (85%), sadness (85%), love tension (90%), and tension-type (85%) of moral value as significant responses, reflected in **Table 3**. In particular, it also shows that respondents judged the characters’ behaviour; Ann’s Mother (Clara) was assessed that indicating the right decision, ignoring her daughter for a week (70%), and Ann’s behaviour as the wrong behaviour for being sulking at her mother for a week (70%). Furthermore, even the unbeknownst (12 respondents) displayed dominant and similar moral judgment, as well as those that knew about the anime before (8 respondents). Surprisingly, the authors’ assessment of moral judgment also indicates the same moral value as the significant result of the respondents’ assessments.

**Table 3. Result of Moral Judgment Categorization**

	Frequency (Percentage)
<b>Knowing the anime before or not</b>	
Yes	8 (40%)
No	12 (60%)
<b>Type of Moral Judgments</b>	
Aggression	1 (5%)
Anger	3 (15%)
Connectedness	17 (85%)
Fear	1 (5%)

Happiness	3 (15%)
Peacefulness	4 (20%)
Relaxation	3 (15%)
Reflectiveness	2 (10%)
Sadness	17 (85%)
Tenderness/Love Tension	18 (90%)
Tension	17 (85%)
<b>Characters' Moral Values</b>	
The decision of Ann's mother	14 (70%) - somewhat true-very true
Ann's behaviour	14 (70%) - very untrue-neutral

\*frequency range of moral judgments types (strong-very strong) and characters' moral values (very untrue-neutral; somewhat true-very true)

## Discussion

### Moral Judgment as Synchronisation Part of Linguist Assessment

This study suggests that a linguist should also consider the recipients' perspective, strengthening their illocutionary act analysis and discovering the real meaning of the contained utterances. For instance, the authors collected their and viewers' assessments, showing the harmonising review from both aspects, illocutionary acts and moral judgments.

#### Contained utterances

1. *I can write a letter for you!*
2. *Daddy isn't even with us anymore!*
3. *You don't know how to spell hard words yet, Anne*
4. *I'll get better in no time*
5. *Talk to her, or take care of her, obviously!*
6. *How much longer will I be able to be with you?*
7. *But please it's just for seven days*
8. *Madam, would you allow me a short break?*

#### Categorization

- (assertive-type)
- (assertive-type)
- (assertive-type)
- (assertive-type)
- (directive-type)
- (directive-type)
- (directive-type)
- (directive-type)

#### Moral Judgements

- Sadness (2,7)
- Tenderness/Love (5,6)
- Tension (1,3,4,8)

\*both views (authors and participants); based on Likert scale 5-points

The authors inferred that from both points of view, the judgments reflect concurrent discernments in comprehensive (moral judgment) and substantial (illocutionary act) perspectives. Moreover, moral judgments mirror the intended meaning of utterances categorised by each sub-dimension of the illocutionary act dimension, such as "*How much longer will I be able to be with you?*" representing sadness, love, and tension of moral values simultaneously. Furthermore, the result reveals that synchronisation is a critical part of the illocutionary act because the linguist may analyse the utterances subjectively. Also, based on moral judgment perspectives, the viewers' judgments place valuable elements in comprehending linguist assessment, diminishing misunderstanding categorisations even into other speech act types. In other words, linguist-experts could objectively validate their analysis, revealing intended utterances. Hence, the authors believe moral judgment could frame the illocutionary act and moral judgment integratively.

## Enriching Illocutionary Act Measurement

This article raises the high validity of taxonomy in speech act analysis, supported by (Ditto et al., 2009; Hogan, 1970; Minakova, 2014). Moreover, the result reveals that moral judgments could profoundly enrich illocutionary act measurement, comprehending the proposed words. Therefore, the research shows the collected data below.

### Contained utterances

1. *There's nothing more important than you*
2. *It's an important letter*
3. *All I want is to be close and squeeze her hand*
4. *Please, I ask you not to be angry with your mother*
5. *I'm very sorry*
6. *"Your mother loves you very much."*
7. *Anne. I will always, always be watching over you."*
8. *I have a duty to confidentiality*
9. *He died a hero*
10. *I... I'll be all alone once you're gone!*

### Categorization

- (assertive-type)  
 (assertive-type)  
 (directive-type)  
 (directive-type)  
 (expressive-type)  
 (expressive-type)  
 (commissive-type)  
 (commissive-type)  
 (declarative-type)  
 (declarative-type)

### Moral Judgements

- Sadness (5,9,10)
- Tenderness/Love (1,3,6,7)
- Tension (2,4,8)

\*both views (authors and participants); based on Likert scale 5-points

This study infers that each utterance contains a moral value from the participants or linguists. For example, quotes (5,9, and 10) reflect sadness elements, complementing the illocutionary act categorisation. Shortly, the authors summarise that moral judgments comprehend and enrich the measures, enhancing the taxonomical level.

## CONCLUSION

This article aimed to validate the linkage between illocutionary acts and moral judgments from different perspectives. Furthermore, from these results, the authors confirmed that moral judgments assessment could strengthen the analysis and classification by matching the moral values the researchers and the respondents gave. Then, the authors validated that their moral judgments were consistent with the participants' views. Moreover, these similarities are confirmed theoretically and technically in assessing and classifying the type and sub-type of illocutionary acts because the authors consciously and unconsciously consider each utterance while recalling the scenes pinned with these utterances. Therefore, the authors also sum up that moral value links in each sub-type of illocutionary acts, confirmed by both perspectives.

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