
An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts Used by Cyrus in the Film Lift (2024) Based on John R. Searle's Speech Act Theory

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ABSTRACT; *This study investigates the types and functions of illocutionary acts used by the character Cyrus in the Netflix action heist film Lift (2024), directed by F. Gary Gray, based on Searle's (1979) Speech Act Theory. Cyrus, as the operational leader of a professional heist team, employs varied and strategic verbal communication throughout the film to coordinate the team, negotiate cooperation, manage interpersonal relationships, and advance the narrative. The study is motivated by the limited pragmatic scholarship on Lift (2024) and the broader gap in speech act research on heist film discourse. A qualitative descriptive method was employed. Data were collected through repeated viewing of the film and systematic transcription of Cyrus's utterances from 20 selected scenes, yielding a total of 43 illocutionary act tokens. The findings reveal that Cyrus employs four of Searle's five illocutionary act types. Directives constitute the most dominant category (18 utterances, 41.86%), followed by representatives (17 utterances, 39.53%), expressives (5 utterances, 11.63%), and commissives (3 utterances, 6.98%). Declaratives were absent from all data, consistent with Searle's prerequisite of institutional authority. Functionally, Cyrus's illocutionary acts serve four interconnected purposes: operational coordination and control, strategic persuasion and negotiation, relational management and team cohesion, and identity and narrative construction. The findings suggest that Cyrus's communicative behavior is highly strategic and contextually adaptive, with language functioning simultaneously as an instrument of leadership, coordination, and character construction in the film.*

Keywords: *Illocutionary Acts, Speech Acts, Lift, Cyrus, Pragmatics.*

ABSTRAK; *Studi ini menyelidiki jenis dan fungsi tindakan ilokusi yang digunakan oleh karakter Cyrus dalam film aksi perampokan Netflix, Lift (2024), yang disutradarai oleh F. Gary Gray, berdasarkan Teori Tindakan Tutur Searle (1979). Cyrus, sebagai pemimpin operasional tim perampokan profesional, menggunakan komunikasi verbal yang beragam dan strategis sepanjang film untuk mengoordinasikan tim, menegosiasikan kerja sama, mengelola hubungan interpersonal, dan memajukan narasi. Studi ini dimotivasi oleh keterbatasan kajian pragmatik tentang Lift (2024) dan kesenjangan yang lebih luas dalam penelitian tindakan tutur pada wacana film perampokan. Metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan. Data dikumpulkan melalui penayangan film berulang dan transkripsi sistematis ucapan Cyrus dari 20 adegan terpilih, menghasilkan total 43 token tindakan ilokusi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Cyrus menggunakan empat dari*

lima jenis tindakan ilokusi Searle. Ujaran direktif merupakan kategori yang paling dominan (18 ujaran, 41,86%), diikuti oleh ujaran representatif (17 ujaran, 39,53%), ujaran ekspresif (5 ujaran, 11,63%), dan ujaran komisif (3 ujaran, 6,98%). Kalimat deklaratif tidak ada dalam semua data, konsisten dengan prasyarat otoritas institusional Searle. Secara fungsional, tindakan ilokusi Cyrus melayani empat tujuan yang saling terkait: koordinasi dan kontrol operasional, persuasi dan negosiasi strategis, manajemen relasional dan kohesi tim, serta konstruksi identitas dan naratif. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa perilaku komunikatif Cyrus sangat strategis dan adaptif secara kontekstual, dengan bahasa berfungsi secara bersamaan sebagai instrumen kepemimpinan, koordinasi, dan konstruksi karakter dalam film.

Kata Kunci: Tindakan Ilokusi, Tindakan Tutur, Lift, Cyrus, Pragmatik.

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a fundamental role in human communication, enabling individuals not only to exchange information but also to perform social actions and achieve specific communicative goals. Within the field of pragmatics, Speech Act Theory provides a theoretical framework for explaining how utterances function as actions rather than merely conveying propositional meanings. According to Austin (1962) and subsequently developed by Searle (1979), speakers perform a range of actions through language, including stating, requesting, promising, apologizing, and commanding. Among the three levels of speech acts proposed by Austin locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary the illocutionary act occupies the central analytical position, as it concerns the speaker's communicative intention embedded within an utterance.

The study of speech acts has attracted considerable scholarly attention in film discourse analysis, as film dialogues constitute rich and contextually embedded examples of language use. Although fictional, film dialogues are carefully crafted to resemble natural communication and serve important narrative functions, including character development, relationship management, and plot progression. Through speech acts, characters reveal their personalities, intentions, emotional states, and social positions within the narrative. Therefore, analyzing illocutionary acts in cinematic dialogue provides valuable insights into how language functions in specific communicative situations, and how it constructs both character and story.

Previous studies have examined speech acts across a range of film genres and television series. Research conducted by Diffani and Kholis (2023), Rahayu et al. (2024), and Nisa and Naomisa (2025) consistently found that directive and representative speech acts dominate film

dialogues due to their roles in directing actions and conveying information. Other studies have focused on character construction through speech acts, demonstrating how linguistic choices contribute to the portrayal of personality traits and interpersonal dynamics (Sam and Hasbi, 2025; Situmorang and Meisuri, 2025). However, the majority of previous studies have concentrated on animated films, fantasy narratives, television series, or broad multi-character interactions, and research specifically investigating speech acts in heist film narratives remains limited.

The film *Lift* (2024) presents a particularly productive context for speech act analysis because it centers on a professionally coordinated heist operation that demands continuous strategic communication. Cyrus Whitaker, the leader of the heist team, regularly employs language to organize operations, issue instructions, negotiate with authorities, influence team members, and respond to unexpected challenges throughout the film. These communicative demands make his utterances especially well suited for examining how illocutionary acts function in a goal oriented, high pressure, and relational environment. As the sole focus of this analysis, Cyrus allows for a concentrated examination of how a single character's speech act choices construct leadership, authority, and interpersonal dynamics across an entire cinematic narrative.

This study therefore aims to analyze the types and functions of illocutionary acts used by Cyrus in *Lift* (2024) based on Searle's (1979) classification of speech acts. By focusing on a single strategic leader within a heist narrative, this study contributes to the existing literature on pragmatics and film discourse analysis, providing insights into how illocutionary acts function as instruments of leadership, coordination, persuasion, and interpersonal management in contemporary cinematic communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pragmatics is the study of meaning in context, concerned with how language users interpret and convey intended meanings beyond the literal content of utterances. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics addresses speaker meaning, contextual meaning, and the way in which more is communicated than what is explicitly stated. Similarly, Levinson (1983) defines pragmatics as the study of the relationship between language and context that is essential for understanding language use. Verschueren (1999) further emphasizes that pragmatics examines how speakers make linguistic choices in response to social, cognitive, and communicative

demands. Through pragmatic analysis, researchers can examine how speakers deploy language strategically to achieve particular communicative goals in specific interactional contexts.

One of the foundational concepts in pragmatics is Speech Act Theory, first introduced by Austin (1962) in his influential work *How to Do Things with Words*. Austin argued that utterances do not merely convey information but also constitute actions in themselves. He proposed a tripartite distinction between levels of speech acts: the locutionary act, which refers to the literal semantic meaning of an utterance; the illocutionary act, which refers to the communicative function or intention embedded in the utterance; and the perlocutionary act, which concerns the effect produced in the hearer as a consequence of the utterance. Of these three levels, the illocutionary act is the most analytically significant for pragmatic research because it captures the speaker's intended communicative purpose.

Austin's foundational theory was substantially refined and systematized by Searle (1979) in his work *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Searle focused specifically on the classification of illocutionary acts and proposed a comprehensive taxonomy of five categories based on their illocutionary purpose, direction of fit between words and world, and psychological state expressed by the speaker. These five categories are representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives, each of which is described below.

Representatives

Representatives, also referred to as assertives in some of Searle's earlier work, are speech acts that commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition. Through these utterances, speakers express beliefs, describe situations, report facts, or provide information about the world as they understand it. According to Searle (1979), the direction of fit for representatives is words to world, meaning the utterance aims to accurately describe an existing state of affairs. Sub functions within this category include stating, claiming, reporting, describing, asserting, informing, and concluding. For example, the utterance "It is raining outside" exemplifies a representative because the speaker asserts a factual state and commits to its truth. Representatives establish what the speaker believes or knows, thereby serving as the primary mechanism through which shared understanding is built in communication.

Directives

Directives are speech acts used by speakers to attempt to get the hearer to perform an

action or adopt a particular course of behavior. Searle (1979) explains that the direction of fit for directives is world-to-words, meaning the speaker aims to alter the world through the hearer's actions. This category encompasses a wide range of communicative functions including commanding, requesting, advising, suggesting, inviting, questioning, and warning. The strength or force of the directive can vary considerably, from a polite and tentative request to a direct and authoritative command, but all directive acts share the fundamental goal of influencing the hearer's behavior. Directives are particularly important in contexts that require coordination, cooperation, or compliance, such as workplace settings, institutional interactions, and the kind of goal oriented team communication depicted in heist narratives.

Commissives

Commissives are speech acts that commit the speaker to a future course of action. According to Searle (1979), the direction of fit for commissives, like directives, is world to words, but the agent responsible for changing the world is the speaker rather than the hearer. Through commissive speech acts, speakers accept an obligation or express an intention to perform a particular action in the future. Sub functions include promising, offering, vowing, guaranteeing, threatening, and refusing. For example, the utterance "I will call you later" is a commissive because the speaker commits to a future action. Commissives play an important role in establishing obligations, building relational trust, and managing expectations between interlocutors.

Expressives

Expressives are speech acts that convey the speaker's psychological state, feelings, or attitudes toward a particular situation or event. Searle (1979) notes that expressives have no direction of fit between words and world; rather, their function is to give voice to the speaker's inner emotional or evaluative state in response to a presupposed state of affairs. Sub functions include thanking, apologizing, praising, congratulating, welcoming, expressing sympathy, and condoling. Unlike representatives, expressives do not describe the world, and unlike directives or commissives, they do not seek to change it; their sole purpose is to express how the speaker feels. The utterance "I'm sorry for being late" exemplifies an expressive, as the speaker conveys a psychological state of regret. Expressives are fundamental to maintaining social relationships, acknowledging the emotional dimensions of interactions, and expressing empathy.

Declaratives

Declaratives are speech acts that bring about an immediate change in institutional or social reality through the very act of their utterance. According to Searle (1979), declaratives are unique in having a double direction of fit: the utterance simultaneously conforms to the world and changes it. However, declaratives presuppose recognized institutional authority and appropriate contextual circumstances in order to be felicitous. Examples include a judge pronouncing a sentence, an official declaring war, a priest pronouncing a couple husband and wife, or a chairperson adjourning a meeting. The utterance itself transforms the social or institutional reality, provided that the speaker has the authority and the circumstances meet the required conditions. This requirement for institutional authority distinguishes declaratives from all other categories and makes them relatively rare in everyday or informal communicative contexts.

Speech act analysis has been widely and productively applied in film studies because cinematic dialogue reflects contextualized, interactionally grounded language use. Characters in films employ speech acts to express intentions, negotiate relationships, influence other characters, and advance the narrative (Kozloff, 2000; Bednarek, 2010). Pavesi and Formentelli (2023) argue that film dialogue constitutes a distinct pragmatic register with its own conventions and constraints, shaped by the dual demands of representing naturalistic communication and serving the narrative economy of the screenplay. In the specific context of *Lift* (2024), Cyrus's utterances offer a rich corpus of data for examining how illocutionary acts function as instruments of leadership, coordination, persuasion, and interpersonal management within a high-risk, goal-oriented heist operation

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the illocutionary acts used by Cyrus in the film *Lift* (2024). According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research focuses on exploring and understanding the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to social and human phenomena. The descriptive approach was selected because the study aimed to identify, classify, and describe the types and functions of illocutionary acts found in the character's utterances, rather than to measure or quantify linguistic phenomena through statistical procedures.

The data source of this study was the dialogue produced by Cyrus, the main character in

Lift (2024). The data consisted of utterances containing illocutionary force produced by Cyrus throughout the film. The primary data source was the film itself, accessed via Netflix, supplemented by the published film transcript available at <https://scrapsfromtheloft.com>. The researcher obtained the data by watching the film repeatedly, reading the transcript, and systematically identifying utterances that carried illocutionary force according to Searle's Speech Act Theory.

Data collection was conducted through documentation and note-taking techniques. The process involved three stages. First, the researcher watched the film multiple times to develop a thorough understanding of the context of each scene and the interpersonal dynamics between characters. Second, the researcher transcribed and systematically examined all of Cyrus's utterances, selecting those that could be classified as illocutionary acts based on their communicative function within the scene. Third, the selected utterances were organized into 20 data points representing the most analytically significant communicative events in the film. Only Cyrus's utterances were included in the analysis, as the study focuses exclusively on his communicative behavior as the team leader.

The data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis procedure. The analysis involved four steps: (1) identifying the utterances and their immediate conversational context; (2) determining their contextual and illocutionary meanings by considering the situational context, the relationship between the participants, and Cyrus's communicative intention; (3) classifying the utterances according to Searle's (1979) five-category taxonomy of illocutionary acts; and (4) interpreting and describing the communicative functions of each speech act type within the interaction. The findings were then presented descriptively in the form of dialogue excerpts with accompanying contextual analysis, in order to explain how Cyrus employed different types of illocutionary acts and how these acts contributed to his communication, leadership, persuasion, and coordination throughout the film. To ensure analytical consistency, all classification decisions were grounded in both the surface form of the utterance and its contextual illocutionary force, as recommended by Searle (1979) and Yule (1996).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis identified 43 utterances containing illocutionary acts produced by Cyrus across 20 data points in the film *Lift* (2024). Based on Searle's (1979) classification, four types of illocutionary acts were found: representatives, directives, commissives, and expressives. No

declarative speech acts were identified in the data. The analysis proceeds by examining each utterance in terms of its illocutionary force, situational context, participant relationships, and intended communicative effect on the hearer. Data are presented sequentially in the form of dialogue excerpts followed by contextual classification and functional analysis, with primary focus on utterances that carry significant pragmatic meaning within the interaction. The overall distribution of speech act types is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of Illocutionary Acts Used by Cyrus in *Lift* (2024)

No.	Type of Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Representatives	17	39.53%
2.	Directives	18	41.86%
3.	Commissives	3	6.98%
4.	Expressives	5	11.63%
5.	Declaratives	0	0%
Total		43	100%

The findings indicate that directive speech acts are the most dominant category, followed closely by representatives. Together, these two categories account for 81.39% of all illocutionary acts identified, confirming that Cyrus's communicative behavior is primarily oriented toward operational coordination, information management, and the execution of the heist mission. The following section presents the analysis of selected data points organized according to Searle's (1979) categories.

Data 1

Context: Cyrus is negotiating the terms of the mission with Abby, an Interpol agent who has recruited his team for the heist. He is explaining why he distrusts Interpol's intentions and establishing the conditions under which he is willing to participate.

"I know how these things work." (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as a **representative speech act** according to Searle (1979), functioning as a statement of knowledge and expertise. Representatives commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition, and in this case Cyrus asserts a belief he holds about the operational realities of working with institutional bodies such as Interpol. By presenting his understanding as established fact rather than speculation, he performs the dual communicative function of establishing personal credibility and providing a rational foundation for the concerns he

subsequently raises. The assertion of experiential knowledge is a characteristic feature of representative speech acts used for persuasive purposes, where the speaker's authority to make the claim derives from the claim's plausibility rather than from institutional position.

Data 2

Context: Continuing his negotiation with Abby, Cyrus is arguing that she must be an active participant in the operation rather than remaining on the sidelines. He presents a conditional argument to persuade her that her direct involvement is necessary to protect the team.

"But if you're with us, they can't do that." (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as a **directive speech act** according to Searle (1979), functioning as an indirect suggestion or persuasion. While the surface form of the utterance is declarative, its illocutionary force is clearly directive: by presenting a beneficial conditional outcome, Cyrus is attempting to influence Abby's future behavior and secure her commitment to active participation. This indirect strategy presenting a consequence rather than issuing a command is a common and effective politeness strategy that frames the directive as a logical inference rather than a demand, thereby reducing the face threat associated with a more direct request. The use of indirectness here reflects Cyrus's awareness of the power dynamics of the interaction and his preference for strategic persuasion over direct coercion.

Data 3

Context: After a period of deliberation, Cyrus agrees to participate in the mission but establishes a key condition. He makes clear to Abby that the team's involvement is contingent on his discussion with them first, and frames their participation as an act of personal commitment.

"I will talk to my team, but understand that if we do this, we're doing it for you." (Cyrus)

This utterance contains two distinct illocutionary acts. The first clause, "I will talk to my team," is classified as a **commissive speech act** functioning as a promise of consideration. Searle (1979) defines commissives as speech acts that commit the speaker to a future course of action, and here Cyrus explicitly commits to consulting his team before making a final decision,

thereby assuming an obligation to the hearer. The second clause, “understand that if we do this, we’re doing it for you,” functions as a **directive**, specifically as an indirect command framed as an appeal to understanding. By instructing Abby to “understand” the motivation behind the team’s potential participation, Cyrus is simultaneously establishing the terms of their involvement and asserting a moral claim over the interaction.

Data 4

Context: At the conclusion of the film, after Abby has resigned from Interpol and decided to join Cyrus’s team, Cyrus formally welcomes her into the group. This moment marks the resolution of the relational arc between the two characters.

“Welcome to the team, Agent Gladwell.” (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as an **expressive speech act** according to Searle (1979), functioning as welcoming. Expressives convey the speaker’s psychological state or attitude toward a particular situation, and in this case Cyrus expresses a genuinely positive and inclusive attitude toward Abby’s entry into the team. The choice to address her formally as “Agent Gladwell” rather than by her first name at this moment is noteworthy: by invoking her professional title, Cyrus simultaneously honors her background and identity while symbolically inviting her to move beyond it into a new context. This utterance functions not only as an interpersonal expressive but also as a narrative closure device, formally marking the end of the film’s relational and professional arc.

Data 5

Context: Following the completion of the auction scene, Cyrus has successfully bid on an NFT and his team has created a distraction. When a security officer attempts to escort them out, Cyrus refuses to leave without receiving what he has paid for.

“I just spent \$20 million.” (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as a **representative speech act** functioning as a statement of fact. According to Searle (1979), representatives commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition, and here Cyrus presents a verifiable financial fact as the basis for his refusal to comply with the security officer’s request. By invoking the magnitude of his financial

expenditure, he constructs a logical and social justification for his subsequent demand, making it difficult for the hearer to dismiss his position without also dismissing the financial reality he has stated. This use of a representative to provide a foundation for a following directive is a characteristic multi act communicative strategy in which different speech act types work in sequence to achieve a single persuasive goal.

Data 6

Context: After winning the auction bid, Cyrus needs to move quickly to execute the next stage of the plan. He directs N8, the artist whose NFT he has just purchased, to follow him away from the auction floor.

“Follow me.” (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as a **directive speech act** according to Searle (1979), functioning as a command. The bare imperative form of the utterance with no hedging, no politeness marker, and no explanatory rationale signals that the speaker expects immediate and unconditional compliance from the hearer. This directness is appropriate to the urgency of the situation and consistent with Cyrus’s role as the operational leader, whose authority within the team context is understood and accepted by those around him. Commands of this type, as Searle (1979) notes, presuppose a social or contextual relationship in which the speaker has the right or authority to direct the hearer’s actions.

Data 7

Context: Cyrus learns that the mission must be completed within a much shorter time frame than originally presented by Abby. Assessing the risks as unacceptably high given the constraints, he announces his decision to withdraw from the operation.

“I’m sorry, Abby. I’m out.” (Cyrus)

This utterance contains two distinct illocutionary acts. The expression “I’m sorry” is classified as an **expressive speech act** functioning as an apology. Searle (1979) defines expressives as speech acts that convey the speaker’s psychological state, and here Cyrus expresses genuine regret at the necessity of his decision, acknowledging the impact it will have on Abby while maintaining the decision itself. The expression “I’m out,” in contrast, is

classified as a **commissive speech act** functioning as a refusal or declaration of withdrawal. By stating this explicitly in the first person, Cyrus commits unambiguously to the future course of non-participation, making the withdrawal definitive and not open to further negotiation. The pairing of an expressive apology with a commissive refusal is a communicative strategy that softens the relational impact of a difficult decision without diminishing the decisiveness of the commitment.

Data 8

Context: After Huxley challenges Cyrus's right to withdraw from the mission, suggesting that participation is not optional, Cyrus defends the voluntary nature of his original agreement and asserts his right to change his mind based on changed circumstances.

"It was when I opted in." (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as a **representative speech act** functioning as a justification or assertion. Cyrus uses this statement to assert a belief about the original terms of his participation, namely that it was always voluntary and conditional. By framing this as a factual claim about a past state of affairs, he positions his withdrawal not as a breach of obligation but as a legitimate exercise of the discretion that was always implicit in the arrangement. This representative functions strategically in the interaction: by grounding his position in an asserted past fact, Cyrus makes his argument more difficult to refute and simultaneously reframes Huxley's challenge as a misrepresentation of the original agreement.

Data 9

Context: During a conversation in which Cyrus is explaining his suitability for the mission to Abby and the Interpol team, he draws attention to an aspect of his public profile that makes him an advantageous choice for the operation.

"No one's expecting anything from Cyrus Whitaker." (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as a **representative speech act** according to Searle (1979), functioning as a statement of self-assessment. By asserting that others hold no expectations of him, Cyrus presents a factual evaluation of his social standing and perceived threat level as he understands it. The use of the third person to refer to himself "Cyrus Whitaker" rather than

“me” is a rhetorical device that objectifies the claim, giving it the character of a generally known fact rather than a personal opinion, and thereby enhancing its persuasive credibility. This representative functions as an argument for his selection, positioning his low profile as a strategic asset for the mission.

Data 10

Context: In a conversation with Abby, after she has explained why she selected Cyrus for the mission, Cyrus responds to her reasoning with an evaluative comment that simultaneously acknowledges her judgment and positions himself favorably within the interaction.

“Made you a brilliant choice.” (Cyrus)

The utterance is classified as an **expressive speech act** according to Searle (1979), functioning as a compliment. Expressives convey the speaker’s psychological state or evaluative attitude toward a situation, person, or action, and here Cyrus expresses a positive judgment of Abby’s decision making. Rather than simply providing information or directing an action, the utterance communicates approval and admiration. The conciseness of the expression three words without a subject gives it a casual, self assured quality that is consistent with Cyrus’s established communication style throughout the film. Functionally, the compliment serves to validate Abby, build rapport, and set a positive relational tone for the collaborative interaction to follow.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the types and functions of illocutionary acts used by Cyrus in the film *Lift* (2024) based on Searle’s (1979) Speech Act Theory. A total of 43 illocutionary act tokens were identified from 20 data points and classified into four of Searle’s five categories.

Directives constitute the most dominant type (18 utterances, 41.86%), realized through commanding, requesting, questioning, suggesting, warning, and indirect ordering. This dominance reflects Cyrus’s role as the operational leader of the heist team, who consistently uses language to direct actions, coordinate tasks, and manage the behavior of other characters. Representatives are the second most frequent type (17 utterances, 39.53%), realized through stating facts, asserting knowledge, evaluating risks, justifying decisions, and informing. Their high frequency reflects the information intensive demands of heist narratives, in which shared situational awareness is a prerequisite for coordinated action. Expressives appear in 5

utterances (11.63%), realized through praising, apologizing, expressing emotional concern, and welcoming, demonstrating Cyrus's capacity for emotional intelligence and his commitment to maintaining team cohesion under pressure. Commissives are the least frequent type (3 utterances, 6.98%), realized through offering and refusing, consistent with Cyrus's communicative preference for immediate coordination over explicit long term commitment. Declaratives were absent from all data, consistent with Searle's (1979) theoretical requirement that declaratives presuppose institutional authority, which Cyrus as the leader of an informal team does not possess.

Functionally, Cyrus's illocutionary acts serve four interconnected communicative purposes: (1) operational coordination and control, through directives and representatives that manage tasks and maintain shared situational awareness; (2) strategic persuasion and negotiation, through multi-act communicative strategies that combine different speech act types to overcome resistance and secure cooperation; (3) relational management and team cohesion, through expressive acts that sustain morale, acknowledge emotional states, and reinforce interpersonal bonds under pressure; and (4) identity and narrative construction, through selected utterances that function as devices for character construction and narrative development. Overall, Cyrus's communicative behavior is strategic and contextually adaptive, with language functioning simultaneously as an instrument of leadership, coordination, and character construction in *Lift* (2024).

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