

**Stylistic Realization of Illocutionary Acts in *Deadpool & Wolverine*:
A Pragma-Stylistics Analysis**

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Abstract

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Language not only communicates information but also carries out social actions. Nevertheless, speech act theory has largely overlooked the role of stylistic decisions in influencing illocutionary purposes. The current research explores the stylistic expression of illocutionary acts in the action-comedy movie *Deadpool & Wolverine* (2024) focuses on sarcasm, hyperbole, and irony as essential linguistic tools. Utilizing Searle's (1975) classification of illocutionary acts alongside Leech and Short's (2007) pragma-stylistics framework, a total of 328 utterances were identified to include illocutionary acts, and 14 utterances were chosen deliberately for comprehensive pragma-stylistic examination. The analysis was conducted in three phases: illocutionary categorization, stylistic recognition, and pragma-stylistics analysis. The findings indicate that all five types of illocutionary acts, representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives are expressed through stylistic devices that enhance, weaken, or reshape their communicative roles. *Wolverine's* dialogue is stylistically understated and straightforward in its propositions, while *Deadpool's* speech is stylistically intricate characterized by sarcasm, exaggeration, and irony. These findings indicate that stylistic form cannot be separated from illocutionary function. The study enhances pragma-stylistics by showing that action-comedy movies provide a vibrant setting for investigating how film dialogue generates meaning through the interaction of speech acts and stylistic structure.

Kata Kunci:

Deadpool & Wolverine
(2024), *tindak ilokusi,*
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Short

Abstrak

Bahasa tidak hanya mengkomunikasikan informasi tetapi juga melakukan tindakan sosial. Namun demikian, teori tindak tutur sebagian besar mengabaikan peran keputusan stilistik dalam memengaruhi tujuan ilokusi. Penelitian saat ini mengeksplorasi ekspresi stilistik dari

tindak ilokusi dalam film aksi-komedi *Deadpool & Wolverine* (2024) yang berfokus pada sarkasme, hiperbola, dan ironi sebagai alat linguistik penting. Dengan menggunakan klasifikasi tindak ilokusi Searle (1975) bersama dengan kerangka kerja pragma-stilistik Leech dan Short (2007), total 328 ujaran diidentifikasi mengandung tindak ilokusi, dan 14 ujaran dipilih secara sengaja untuk pemeriksaan pragma-stilistik yang komprehensif. Penilaian dilakukan dalam tiga fase: kategorisasi ilokusi, pengenalan stilistik, dan analisis pragma-stilistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kelima jenis tindakan ilokusi, yaitu representatif, direktif, komisif, ekspresif, dan deklaratif, diekspresikan melalui perangkat stilistik yang meningkatkan, melemahkan, atau membentuk kembali peran komunikatifnya. Ucapan *Wolverine* secara stilistik bersifat sederhana dan lugas dalam proposisinya, sedangkan ucapan *Deadpool* secara stilistik rumit, ditandai dengan sarkasme, hiperbola, dan ironi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa bentuk stilistik tidak dapat dipisahkan dari fungsi ilokusi. Penelitian ini meningkatkan pragma-stilistika dengan menunjukkan bahwa film aksi-komedi menyediakan latar yang dinamis untuk menyelidiki bagaimana dialog film menghasilkan makna melalui interaksi tindakan ucapan dan struktur stilistik.

INTRODUCTION

Language does more than deliver information. When people speak, they also perform social actions such as making promises, giving commands, and expressing feelings (Austin, 1962). In daily interaction, language helps humans build relationships, shape identity, and negotiate meaning through shared knowledge of codes and context (Yule, 1996) (Ekoro & Gunn, 2021). However, communication does not always go smoothly. Misunderstandings often happen when listeners fail to catch implied meanings beyond literal expressions (Tsvetkova, 2022). According to Grice (1975), meaning in communication is frequently conveyed through implicature rather than explicit content, requiring hearers to infer speaker intentions based on context and shared assumptions. When such inferential processes fail, communication breakdown becomes inevitable.

Understanding how meaning is conveyed beyond the literal meaning of words is the core of pragmatics, a branch of linguistics that explores how people use language to achieve specific social functions in different contexts, emphasizing the relationship between language, context, and participants in communication (Verschueren, 1999). Pragmatics not only focuses on what is said, but on how and why something is said in a specific context, taking into account the relationships between speakers, their goals or intentions, and the cultural or social factors. Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), as example, tells that communication often relies on the assumption that speakers will provide information that is relevant, clear, and sufficient, and that listeners will use contextual knowledge to conclude the speaker's intended meaning.

One of the key frameworks in pragmatics is speech act theory, introduced by Austin (1962) in *How to Do Things with Words* and later developed by Searle (1975), which explains that every utterance works on three levels: the locutionary act (literal meaning), the illocutionary act (speaker intention), and the perlocutionary act (effect on the listener). This theory also highlights that speech acts are context-dependent, which means their understanding differs based on social and cultural backgrounds (Kabalmay & Susanto, 2025). Within these, the illocutionary act has been the main focus in pragmatic studies because it catches the communicative purpose of speech (Yule, 1996). (Thomas, 1995) emphasizes that illocutionary force is key to successful communication because it reflects what speakers intend to achieve through language, not only what they say. Without recognizing this force, utterances may be misinterpreted despite being grammatically clear. Searle (1975) grouped illocutionary acts into five types: representatives, which commit the speaker to the truth of something; directives, which try to get the hearer to do something; commissives, which commit the speaker to a future action; expressives, which convey the speaker's feelings; and declarations, which bring about a change in reality through the act of speaking. This classification is a widely used reference in pragmatics and has been applied across literary and cinematic contexts (AL Anssari & Hadi, 2021) (Widyawanti et al., 2024)

While speech act theory effectively identifies what speakers intend to do, it does not fully take into account how those intentions are realized through linguistic form. The same illocutionary act can be expressed in multiple ways, ranging from direct statements to indirect and stylistically marked expressions, producing different communicative effects. As Mey (1994) argues, pragmatic analysis must take into account how utterances are actually formulated in context, since meaning is shaped not only by intention but also by the specific linguistic choices made by speakers. This limitation highlights the importance of stylistics, which examines how linguistic choices are strategically used to create particular expressive and rhetorical effects. As Simpson (2004) mentions, stylistics works at the intersection of linguistics and literary analysis, providing tools to explore how language shapes meaning, tone, and characterization.

The integration of pragmatics and stylistics results in pragma-stylistics, a framework that examines both the illocutionary intentions behind utterances and the specific language forms used to carry them out. Leech and Short (2007) insist that the pragmatic force of an utterance can be inseparable from its form, because the way something is said directly shapes how its meaning is understood and received. Within this framework, the stylistic form through which an illocutionary act is performed becomes just as analytically important as the act itself. This integration allows for a more comprehensive analysis of how meaning is constructed through both intention and form.

Three stylistic devices are especially relevant to this study. The first one is sarcasm, a form of irony where the speaker says the opposite of what they actually mean, usually with a mocking or critical tone (Leech and Short, 2007). The second is hyperbole, which involves deliberate overstatement for expressive or rhetorical effect rather than literal truth; Musolff (2021) shows that hyperbole functions as a powerful pragmatic tool that increases emotional force and persuasive impact in discourse. The third is irony, which refers to any utterance where there is a gap between what is literally said and what is actually meant (Leech and Short, 2007). Salman & Nasser (2025) argues that irony should be understood as a socially constituted speech action whose meaning depends on shared contextual

understanding between speaker and listener. These three devices are not just stylistic ornaments. They are functional tools that allow speakers to perform illocutionary acts in indirect and layered ways, which is precisely the kind of connection pragma-stylistics is designed to explore.

Pragma-stylistics has been applied to a growing range of communicative contexts. In media language, Mehreen et al. (2021) examined newspaper headlines and found that features such as implicature, presupposition, and illocutionary acts work together to guide how readers construct meaning from compressed text. In dramatic dialogue, Hama (2018) applied a pragmatic-stylistic approach to Suzan-Lori Parks's *Topdog/Underdog* and demonstrated that the struggle for dominance between characters is reflected in their use of pragmatic and stylistic devices throughout the interaction, highlighting how these dynamics are not fixed but shift across the dialogue. In film discourse, Schubert (2025) studied Scorsese's gangster films and found that mob bosses consistently use stylistic devices such as euphemisms, metaphors, and epistemic modals to perform indirect speech acts, including threats and orders. Schubert argues that stylistic form and illocutionary function are inseparable in cinematic dialogue, and that a purely pragmatic approach without attention to stylistic realization would fail to capture how meaning is constructed in film. These studies collectively demonstrate the analytical value of pragma-stylistics across different communicative contexts.

According to Kačmárová (2015) film dialogue, even though scripted, reflects patterned language use that can be systematically analysed to reveal pragmatic and stylistic features similar to those found in natural conversation. However, existing research in film has widely focused on serious, realistic, or crime genres, where the relationship between intention and expression tends to be relatively direct. In contrast, action-comedy films rely so much on indirect and stylized language. Characters regularly use sarcasm, hyperbole, and irony not as occasional features but as main modes of interaction. A single utterance may carry multiple illocutionary functions, and indirect expressions often perform more communicative work than direct speech. To date, no study has specifically applied

a pragma-stylistics approach to the action-comedy genre, indicating a clear gap in the literature.

This study analyses the 2024 Marvel Studios film *Deadpool & Wolverine* to address this gap. As one of the highest-grossing films of 2024, it represents a prominent example of the action-comedy genre. More importantly, the film features sustained dialogue between two characters with sharply contrasting communicative styles. Deadpool's speech is characterized by sarcasm, hyperbole, meta-humour, and verbal play, while Wolverine's responses are terse and propositionally direct. This contrast is not merely comedic; it carries significant linguistic implications because it creates a sustained tension between illocutionary intent and stylistic realization throughout the film's dialogue. Furthermore, the film's integration of humour, emotional depth, and meta-generic self-awareness allows language to perform multiple functions simultaneously, including constructing character identity, negotiating interpersonal relationships, and conveying implicit meaning. Although previous studies have examined speech acts or stylistic features separately, limited attention has been given to the pragma-stylistics interaction between illocutionary force and stylistic devices within the action-comedy genre, particularly in films that rely heavily on indirect and meta-humorous communication. Therefore, *Deadpool & Wolverine* provides a productive context for exploring how pragmatic meaning and stylistic expression operate together in cinematic dialogue.

Accordingly, this study addresses two research questions: (1) What types of illocutionary acts are performed by the characters in *Deadpool & Wolverine* (2024)? (2) How are these illocutionary acts stylistically realized through sarcasm, hyperbole, and irony, and in what ways do these stylistic realizations reflect character identity and narrative development? This study aims to (1) identify and classify illocutionary acts using Searle's (1975) taxonomy, and (2) examine the stylistic realization of those acts through the pragma-stylistics framework of Leech and Short (2007). The analysis focuses on utterances that most clearly illustrate the complex interplay between illocutionary function and stylistic form. This study contributes to pragma-stylistics research by extending its application to the action-

comedy genre and provides a framework for understanding how indirect and stylized cinematic language simultaneously shapes character, propels narrative, and fulfils communicative functions.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine how illocutionary acts are stylistically realized in the dialogue of *Deadpool & Wolverine* (2024), directed by Shawn Levy. This approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to interpret the relationship between pragmatic intention and stylistic form rather than to measure linguistic features statistically (Creswell, 2014). The study focused on the stylistic realization of illocutionary acts in cinematic dialogue, particularly through the contrasting communicative styles of *Deadpool* and *Wolverine*.

The data were collected by transcribing the spoken English-language dialogue from the film and manually checking the transcription against the audio to ensure accuracy. In the initial coding stage, a total of 328 utterances containing illocutionary acts were identified from the dialogues of all characters in the film based on Searle's (1975) taxonomy, which consists of representatives, directives, commissive, expressive, and declaratives. From these data, 14 utterances were purposively selected for in-depth pragma-stylistics analysis because they most clearly represent the contrasting communicative styles of *Deadpool* and *Wolverine*. These selected utterances consist of dialogues involving *Deadpool* and *Wolverine* and were analysed in relation to sarcasm, hyperbole, and irony. The remaining 314 utterances were used to establish the overall distribution of illocutionary acts and to provide contextual support, but they were not discussed in detail in the findings.

The selection of the 14 utterances was based on several criteria. First, each utterance had to contain an identifiable illocutionary act. Second, the utterance had to involve *Deadpool* and/or *Wolverine* because the study focuses on the contrast between their communicative styles. Third, the utterance had to contain at least one of the stylistic devices examined in this study, namely sarcasm, hyperbole, or irony. Sarcasm was defined as an utterance in which the speaker conveys a meaning that

contrasts with the literal wording, usually to create mocking, critical, or humorous effects. Hyperbole was defined as deliberate exaggeration used to intensify meaning, emotion, or emphasis. Irony was defined as a contrast between the literal meaning of an utterance and the meaning implied by its context. Utterances that did not contain a clear illocutionary act, did not involve the relevant stylistic devices, or did not contribute directly to the pragma-stylistics comparison between Deadpool and Wolverine were not selected for in-depth analysis.

The analysis was conducted in three stages. First, each of the 328 utterances was classified according to its dominant illocutionary function using Searle's (1975) taxonomy. Second, the 14 selected utterances were examined to identify the presence of sarcasm, hyperbole, and/or irony based on the operational definitions used in this study and Leech and Short's (2007) pragma-stylistics framework. Third, the analysis interpreted how the stylistic device strengthened, subverted, or reframed the illocutionary function of each selected utterance. Through this process, the study examined not only what communicative act was performed, but also how stylistic form shaped the force and interpretation of that act.

To reduce subjective interpretation, the analysis was conducted collaboratively by the three researchers. Each selected utterance was discussed by considering its dialogue context, dominant illocutionary function, and stylistic realization. The preliminary coding was then reviewed by a Stylistics lecturer, who provided feedback on the appropriateness of the illocutionary and stylistic classifications. When uncertainty or disagreement occurred, the researchers revised the coding through further discussion by referring back to Searle's (1975) taxonomy, (Leech & Short, 2007) pragma-stylistics framework, and the broader dialogue context. This collaborative procedure was designed to strengthen the credibility and consistency of the analysis by grounding all coding decisions in theoretical frameworks, contextual evidence, and expert feedback, rather than relying on individual interpretation alone.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section demonstrates a pragma-stylistics analysis of illocutionary acts in *Deadpool & Wolverine* (2024), showing on two complementary theoretical frameworks. Searle's (1975) Taxonomy of illocutionary acts (representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives) provides the pragmatic foundation to identify the communicative function of each utterance. This classification is then expanded through the stylistic framework of Leech and Short (2007), which examines how specific linguistic choices, especially sarcasm, hyperbole, and irony, shape meaning beyond its literal or functional surface.

Table 1. Illocutionary Acts in the *Deadpool & Wolverine* Movie

No.	Illocutionary Acts Type	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Representatives	127	38.7%
2.	Directives	103	31.4%
3.	Expressives	58	17.7%
4.	Commissives	35	10.7%
5.	Declaratives	5	1.5%
Total		328	100%

Table 1 presents the distribution of illocutionary acts identified in the dialogue of *Deadpool & Wolverine* based on Searle's (1975) taxonomy. A total of 328 utterances were analysed, with representatives emerging as the most dominant type (127 occurrences or 38.7%), followed by directives (103 or 31.4%). Expressive acts accounted for 58 instances (17.7%), while commissive appeared less frequently (35 or 10.7%). Declaratives were the least common, with only 5 occurrences (1.5%). This distribution indicates that the dialogue is primarily oriented toward conveying information and directing actions, which reflects the dynamic and interaction-driven nature of the film's discourse.

The main argument of this analysis is that illocutionary acts in this film are not presented in neutral or transparent language. Instead, they are consistently realized through stylistic devices that strengthen, weaken, or reframe their communicative goals. This pattern is particularly evident in *Deadpool's* speech, which demonstrates high stylistic density through the repeated use of rhetorical and figurative devices within a single utterance, producing layered meaning. *Wolverine's* speech, however, demonstrates stylistic restraint by preferring

directness and propositional clarity. The interaction between these two patterns contributes significantly to the film's humor, dramatic tension, and character development. The following sections examine how each type of illocutionary act is stylistically realized, beginning with representative acts as the most dominant category to further explain this pattern.

1. Representative Acts: Irony and the Destabilization of Truth

In Searle's (1975) framework, representative acts commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition. They include assertions, descriptions, and claims, all of which are evaluated against a standard of sincerity and factual accuracy. In *Deadpool & Wolverine*. However, the data reveal that representative acts are frequently destabilized through irony and hyperbole, particularly in *Deadpool's* dialogue, so that their truth-claiming function becomes stylistically complicated. Consider the following utterance:

Deadpool: "There are 206 bones in the human body. 207 if I'm watching Gossip Girl."

The first clause is a direct representative act: it maintains a factual proposition about human anatomy. The illocutionary force here is clearly informative, and the utterance would normally be analyzed purely on its truth value. However, the second clause immediately presents hyperbole as a figure of speech that, as Leech and Short (2007) describe, involves a conscious overstatement for rhetorical effect, purposely creating emphasis or humor. The overstatement does not erase the representative function of the first clause. Instead, it reframes the entire utterance, shifting what began as an informative statement into a comedic performance. The comedic effect is strengthened by the abrupt shift from scientific language to sexually suggestive humor. This contrast between formal and informal registers creates incongruity, which becomes central to the utterance's humorous impact. This is a key pragma-stylistics dynamic, the illocutionary act remains representative at the functional level, but its stylistic realization adds a secondary layer of meaning that changes how the utterance is received and interpreted.

A similar phenomenon appears in:

Deadpool: "We were just talking here."

The utterance occurs during a tense confrontation where Deadpool continues to provoke Cassandra Nova despite repeated warnings from Wolverine and Johnny Storm. Referring to the situation as "just talking" minimizes the hostility and danger of the interaction, creating situational irony through the contrast between the actual tension of the scene and Deadpool's casual description of it.

Structurally, this is also a representative act, a claim about what was happening. Though in context, the utterance functions through situational irony, where there is a sharp inconsistency between what the words literally say and what the actual situation implies. Leech and Short (2007) identify irony as a mode where the speaker's real communicative goal is the opposite of, or at least significantly different from, the surface meaning of the utterance. Here, Deadpool's claim of simply "talking" in a clearly tense or chaotic moment implies dismissiveness and sarcasm rather than sincerity. The representative act, though, functions on two levels simultaneously; it makes a surface claim while implying an entirely different attitude toward that claim.

In contrast, Wolverine's representative acts are widely stylistically unmarked. They prioritize propositional content over rhetorical performance, consistent with what Leech and Short (2007) describe as a plain or low-deviation style, where linguistic choices are minimized and meaning remains literal. This stylistic contrast between the two characters is important over the level of individual utterances. It represents and consistently strengthens their contrasting identities: Deadpool as linguistically excessive, performative, and self-aware, while Wolverine as disciplined, restrained, and action-oriented.

Another representative act appears through Deadpool's exaggerated claim about his own identity:

Deadpool: "I'm Marvel Jesus."

This utterance functions as a representative act because Deadpool presents an exaggerated claim about his own identity and importance. However, the statement is delivered through hyperbolic self-characterization rather than literal assertion. The humor emerges from the absurd comparison between the speaker and a religious figure, reinforcing Deadpool's self-aware and parodic style of communication. The utterance further reinforces the tendency of Deadpool's representative acts to rely on exaggeration, irony, and performative self-characterization rather than straightforward factual assertion.

2. Directive Acts: Sarcasm, Authority, and Interpersonal Force

According to Searle's (1975) taxonomy, directive acts are when the speaker tries to get the listener to do something. Commands, requests, instructions, and warnings are all examples of illocutionary force. This is because the speaker wants to change the listener's behaviour. In the movie, the two characters use very different stylistic strategies to carry out directive acts, which has a big effect on how they interact with each other. Deadpool's directive in the following utterance is illustrative:

Deadpool: "Don't just stand there, you ape. Give me a hand up."

Deadpool says this utterance during a tense interaction marked by anger and emotional aggression. At its core, this is a command: the speaker is telling the listener to do something. The addition of the address term "you ape," on the other hand, adds what Leech and Short (2007) call affective stylistic deviation, which is language that shows how the speaker feels about other people instead of just giving information. The directive's sarcastic insult has two effects. It makes the command less harsh by using humor, which lowers the social cost of giving a direct order. At the same time, it strengthens Deadpool's position in the interaction, showing the power dynamic in a disrespectful and over-the-top way that is typical of the character. So, the directive is not only useful, but it also has social and rhetorical meaning. While the utterance primarily functions as a directive act, the use of the insulting expression "you ape" also adds an expressive element that reflects Deadpool's irritation and sarcastic attitude toward the listener.

This pattern is reinforced in:

Deadpool: "Get my country's name out of your fucking mouth. Gimme that."

Deadpool says this command during a tense argument filled with anger and emotional aggression. In this case, swearing and strong language are examples of what Leech and Short (2007) call emphatic stylistic marking, which means that word choices make emotions stronger and show how the speaker feels. Rather than weakening the directive force, the profanity intensifies the emotional aggression of the command and reinforces the speaker's personal involvement in the interaction. In this case, profanity serves not only as a sign of register deviation but also as an affective intensifier that makes the directive's illocutionary force stronger.

Wolverine's directives stand in sharp contrast:

Wolverine: "Take it off."

Wolverine: "Shut up."

Wolverine says these utterances in two different scenes, but both perform the same illocutionary function, namely giving direct commands that require immediate compliance. In one scene, he says, *"Take it off,"* while in another separate scene he says, *"Shut up."* Although the contexts are different, both utterances are used to control the actions of others and therefore belong to the same directive illocutionary category. These statements have very little syntax and no figurative or emotional language at all. There is no irony, no overstatement, and no embellishment of relationships. Leech and Short (2007) say that this kind of low stylistic variation puts communicative efficiency first and shows authority through restraint instead of excess. The shortness of these orders is a stylistic choice that shows urgency and certainty, which fits Wolverine's practical and no-nonsense personality.

The difference in how the two characters give orders shows a bigger pragma-stylistics principle: the same illocutionary act can be done in very different ways, and those differences in style have a lot of meaning for people and characters. Deadpool's orders are funny and give orders, while Wolverine's orders are serious and end things.

3. Commissive Acts: Ironic Inversion and the Subversion of Commitment

Commissive acts bind the speaker to a subsequent action (Searle, 1975). They consist of threats, offers, promises, and refusals. What makes them unique is that they tie what the speaker will do in the future to what they say. In *Deadpool & Wolverine*, commissive acts are especially intriguing due to their frequent ironic inversion, wherein the traditional social interpretation of commitment is intentionally undermined through stylistic manipulation.

The most striking example is:

Deadpool: "I promise I will kill you first."

Deadpool says this during a tense interaction where the characters exchange threats and aggressive remarks in a humorous and exaggerated way. This is a commissive act because the speaker uses the performative verb "promise" to make a clear commitment to do something in the future. The content of the commitment that is killing the listener, contrasts with the socially positive association usually attached to promises. Leech and Short (2007) characterize this type of maneuver as a semantic reversal, wherein the anticipated social significance of a speech act is intentionally contradicted. Although the speaker explicitly uses the word "promise," the utterance functions more as a threat because the commitment involves future harm rather than reassurance or goodwill. It is darkly funny because it uses the difference between the usual way of making a promise and the unusual way it is used to deliver.

A gentler but equally revealing example is:

Deadpool: "I'll see myself out."

Deadpool says this after creating a tense and awkward situation, but he responds to it with an unexpectedly calm and polite expression. This saying uses ironic understatement. The phrase suggests a calm, polite, and voluntary departure, but it usually happens in situations that are anything but calm. Leech and Short (2007) say that saying less than is meant to imply more is a way to make people laugh. In this case, the calm tone of the phrase doesn't match the situation, which makes it funny. Deadpool's use of this phrase shows that he often makes light of serious or chaotic situations by turning them into a casual comment.

Wolverine's commissive acts, by contrast, are stylistically unambiguous:

Wolverine: "I'll do it."

Wolverine delivers this utterance while expressing commitment in a brief and serious manner. There is no irony, no exaggeration, and no stylistic deviation in this direct, honest committal. Its simplicity shows real dedication and moral seriousness, which fits with Wolverine's role in the story as a reluctant but ultimately dependable hero. Deadpool's commissives subvert commitment, while Wolverine's affirm it.

4. Expressive Acts: Hyperbole, Repetition, and Performed Emotion

Expressive acts show how the speaker feels about a situation (Searle, 1975). They encompass manifestations of joy, astonishment, gratitude, remorse, and esteem. In *Deadpool & Wolverine*, expressive acts are some of the most stylistically complex, especially in Deadpool's speech, where they are always shown through exaggeration and repetition.

The following example is typical:

Deadpool: "Oh my God. Oh my God, he's going to say it!"

Leech and Short (2007) say that the repeated use of the phrase "Oh my God" is an example of stylistic repetition, which is a way to make rhythm more intense and emotions stronger. In this statement, the repetition does more than just show surprise; it also acts it out, turning the expressive act into a performance. The exaggeration turns what could have been a short and unremarkable emotional response into a funny and character-building moment. This fits with the general pattern of Deadpool's speech, where he rarely tones down his emotions and almost always makes them sound more dramatic.

The utterance:

Deadpool: "I'm a huge fan."

Deadpool says this utterance in a situation where it is unclear whether he is being genuinely admiring or sarcastic. It shows a different side of expressive complexity. This statement can be taken as either genuine praise or sarcastic praise, depending on the situation. Leech and Short (2007) call this a "pragmatic

ambivalence" that shows a willingness to see things in different ways. The ambiguity is itself expressive, showing how Deadpool often makes himself and the people he talks to unsure of how sincere his emotional responses are.

In contrast, expressive actions from supporting or secondary characters in the film are usually more conventional in style. They serve as moments of emotional clarity and stability in a story that is otherwise full of rhetorical excess.

5. Declarative Acts: Hyperbolic Identity and Institutional Authority

Declarative acts effectuate transformations in social reality via the utterance itself (Searle, 1975). They are some of the most powerful illocutionary acts because doing them is what they do: in the right social or institutional setting, saying something is truly makes it true.

Declarative acts such as:

Officer: "You are under arrest."

This utterance is spoken in a formal situation where the speaker has institutional authority over the listener. It is given in a simple, unmarked way that stresses the authority of institutions and the legitimacy of society. There is no figurative language, no deviation, and no irony. Searle (1975) says that declaratives are acts whose felicity depends on the speaker's social or institutional position. This is what he means when he says that the utterance depends entirely on its social and institutional context for its force. The stylistic neutrality of such utterances is significant; it conveys that the authority behind the statement necessitates no rhetorical embellishment.

CONCLUSION

This study analysed the stylistic realization of illocutionary acts in the dialogue of Deadpool & Wolverine (2024). The research is motivated by two questions, what types of illocutionary acts are performed in the dialogues of Deadpool and Wolverine, and how these illocutionary acts are realized in a stylistic manner to reflect character construction and narrative development.

The selected dialogues were analysed by identifying all five types of illocutionary acts proposed by Searle (1975): representatives, directives, commissive, expressive and declaratives. The term “representatives” is used consistently in this paper to refer to utterances that commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition. Representatives were used to report facts, make claims, or describe situations; directives were used to request, command, or instruct the hearer to do something; commissive expressed the speaker’s commitment to future actions, such as promises or threats; expressive expressed psychological or emotional states; and declaratives were used to perform acts that produce changes in social or institutional reality. The presence of all five categories shows that the conversation in *Deadpool & Wolverine* has many other communicative purposes than just information.

The analysis of the second research question revealed that these illocutionary acts are always shown through three stylistic devices: sarcasm, hyperbole, and irony. The particular device used directly affects the way each act represents character identity and advances the narrative. *Deadpool*’s speech is hyperbolic, making truthful claims funny through performance; it is sarcastic, both commanding and entertaining; it is ironic, going against traditional commitment in commissive; it is hyperbolic and repetitive in expressive, turning emotion into a theatrical display; it is hyperbolic self-comparison in declaratives, making fun of both identity and genre. *Wolverine*, on the contrary, speaks with a stylistically limited voice in all sorts of actions. His grammar is simple and his language unmarked, conveying authority, honesty, and moral seriousness. It’s not a coincidence that *Deadpool*’s style is dense and *Wolverine*’s is simple. It’s the main way their personalities are built and their relationship evolves over the course of the movie.

The results, in theory, suggest that pragmatic classification is not enough to fully account for the meaning-making in cinematic dialogue. Stylistic form is not distinct from illocutionary function, but rather it contributes to the construction and interpretation of illocutionary force. Hence pragma-stylistics offers a useful framework to study the connection of communicative intention and stylistic realization. However, the current study is limited to selected utterances in one film,

Deadpool & Wolverine (2024), meaning the results are not generalizable to all action-comedy films. A similar approach could be applied to a wider range of action-comedy films and/or to the availability of dubbed and subtitled versions in order to explore the negotiation of stylistic force across languages and cultures.

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