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Illocutionary Acts in Youtube Tarot Reading: A Pragmatic Perspective

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ABSTRACT: This study examines tarot reading on the YouTube platform from a pragmatic perspective. The primary focus of this research is to identify the illocutionary forces used by tarot readers in constructing interpretative reading in the digital space. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected from five tarot reading videos using the non-participatory observation technique and note-taking. Data analysis was conducted using the pragmatic identity method, integrating Searle's speech act theory, Searle's classification of speech acts, and Leech's concepts of mode and dictum while considering prosodic consideration (intonation and stress). The results show that: (1) Speech acts are dominated by direct literal speech in short-duration content (Shorts) to build urgency, while indirect speech is utilized in psychological themes to maintain interpersonal relationships; (2) Illocutionary force moves systematically from representatives for validation, expressive for emotional affirmation through the Pollyanna Effect, to directives as the ultimate goal to influence audience behaviour; (3) Prosodic elements, such as falling intonation, serve to provide authoritative emphasis, while rising intonation builds emotional expectation. The conclusion of this study confirms that tarot reading on YouTube is not merely a spiritual practice but a persuasive communication strategy that utilizes linguistic structures and vocal performance to manage speaker intentionality in digital media.

KEYWORDS: Pragmatics, Tarot Reading, Speech Acts, Illocutionary Force, YouTube, Pollyanna Effect.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tarot is a set of cards containing symbols and archetypes that function as a medium of meaning-making in various contexts of life. As a symbolic object, tarot does not carry a single fixed meaning; rather, it forms a network of interpretations constructed into narratives depending on the context of the reading. In practice, tarot interpretation is not merely a process of translating symbols, but also a communicative interaction in which language plays a central role. Tarot readers position themselves as facilitators who construct interpretative narratives that are both narrative and interpersonal in nature to convey messages to their audience.

Along with digital transformation, tarot reading practices have shifted from face-to-face sessions to social media platforms, particularly YouTube. The phenomenon of YouTube tarot readings has created a space for mass communication in which tarot readers reach broad audiences through video content. In this context, tarot reading becomes highly dependent on linguistic strategies, as readers must manage messages that are suggestive and persuasive in nature. From a pragmatic perspective, every utterance within tarot narratives constitutes an action (speech act) that carries specific social intentions and effects (Yule, 1996). The meaning of an utterance is determined not only by its grammatical form (mode), but also by its propositional content (dictum) and the communicative force underlying it (illocutionary force).

Studies on speech acts have been widely conducted across various domains. Several studies have focused on the complexity of meaning in traditional interactions (Netra, 2024), while others have examined speech acts in digital transactional services (Risnawati et al., 2025) and entertainment discourse on YouTube (Putri et al., 2020; Sofyan et al., 2022). Furthermore, studies by Michael (2021) and Toyosi (2025) have explored the spiritual domain by analysing how religious messages and prophecies are strategically employed to influence audiences. However, a research gap remains, as these studies generally focus on identifying illocutionary types independently and have not explicitly integrated the interaction between mode, dictum, and illocutionary force within a unified analytical framework, particularly in interpretative tarot narratives.

In addition, a unique phenomenon can be observed in YouTube tarot readings, namely the tendency to reconstruct negative card meanings into optimistic and reassuring messages. The phenomenon is closely related to the Pollyanna Effect, which refers to the human tendency to use positive expressions in communication (Boucher & Osgood, 1969). In pragmatic contexts, this strategy is employed to establish strong interpersonal relationships with digital audiences. Nevertheless, in-depth analyses of how the Pollyanna Effect influences the selection of mode and dictum in YouTube tarot narratives remain very limited.

Based on the background, the present study aims to investigate the linguistic mechanisms employed in digital tarot practices. The study focuses on two main research questions: (1) how the speech acts are manifested in tarot readings on YouTube; and (2)

what types of illocutionary force are reflected in reading by employing a qualitative approach alongside Searle's speech act theory and Leech (1983) concept of mode and dictum, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of pragmatic studies, particularly in understanding how speaker intentionality is managed within digital spiritual-interpretative spaces.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in pragmatic theory, which views language as a form of social action carrying intentions and effects. The primary theoretical foundation of this research is speech act theory, first introduced by J. L. Austin (1962), who argued that language functions not only to describe reality (constative utterances) but also to perform actions (performative utterances). Austin distinguished three levels of action within an utterance: the locutionary act (the structural meaning of the utterance), the illocutionary act (the action performed through the utterance), and the perlocutionary act (the effect produced on the listener). This theory was later systematized by John Searle (1969), who emphasized that the essence of communication lies in illocutionary force. Searle classified illocutionary acts into five principal categories: representative/assertive, which express beliefs or statements of fact; directive, which aim to influence the hearer's actions; commissive, which express future commitments; expressive, which convey feelings or psychological states; and declaratives, which alter social status or reality.

Illocutionary force can be understood more comprehensively through the integration of the concepts of mode and dictum. Mode refers to the formal grammatical structure of a sentence such as declarative, interrogative, and imperative forms, which signals the speaker's attitude toward the content of the utterance (Verhaar, 1996; Alwi et al., 2010). Meanwhile, dictum refers to the propositional content or the fundamental intention embedded in a speech act, such as I state something, I question something, or I want you to do something (Wijana, 1996; Rahardi, 2005). The relationship between mode and dictum constructs utterance meaning, either directly or indirectly. In the context of tarot reading, for instance, a declarative mode may function not merely to convey information, but pragmatically to carry a directive illocutionary force in the form of advice or motivation, depending on the communicative context and the speaker's intentionality.

In addition, the analysis of meaning in this study also considers the phenomenon of the Pollyanna Principle. From a psycholinguistic perspective, this concept refers to the universal human tendency to use and respond to positive words more frequently than negative words (Boucher & Osgood, 1969). In YouTube tarot reading practices, the Pollyanna Effect manifests in the way tarot readers reconstruct negatively connoted card symbols into narratives filled with hope and optimism. Therefore, this theoretical framework provides a comprehensive analytical basis for examining how tarot readers manage linguistic structures (mode and dictum) and communicative intentions (illocutionary force) to construct suggestive interactions within digital space.

III. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to examine in depth the pragmatic phenomena embedded in interpretative tarot narratives within digital spaces. The data consisted of verbal utterances taken from YouTube videos produced by five tarot readers selected through purposive sampling based on their popularity and the persuasive characteristics of their language use. The title and link of those data sources were; *A Message Meant to Find You Regarding Your Career* (https://youtube.com/shorts/O1VKGz8Xd_Y?si=a3vK_HFfwQzeKpoB) as Data 1, *You NEED to Hear This Message*🌙 (https://youtube.com/shorts/P75Ko_g_CnE?si=cJ99f6VYLkBZXF9P) as Data 2, *You Better Be Ready!!!* (https://youtube.com/shorts/tFzAMBVQu4E?si=sOwjABMyrdnNdSUd) as Data 3, *You're Meant to Hear This!* (https://youtube.com/shorts/It6Kcp9fXpI?si=0tSKLZo_oi-0wACm) as Data 4, *Little Tarot Message* 💞 *"A Major Ending, Changing Course, New Optimism* (https://youtube.com/shorts/CqxWWDS71X8?si=2My-NRzL44D9gKat) as Data 5. Data were collected using the non-participatory observation method and note-taking techniques, beginning with the transcription of spoken data into written form and followed by accuracy verification through automatic captioning features (Sudaryanto, 2015).

The data were analysed using the pragmatic identity method through the determining element sorting technique, which was conducted in two main stages. First, utterance meanings were identified based on the theory proposed by Wijana (1996) by integrating aspects of mode, dictum, and phonological elements such as intonation and stress. Second, illocutionary forces were classified using Searle (1975) taxonomy to reveal the speakers' communicative intentions, including representative/ assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative acts. To maintain interpretative objectivity, data validity was ensured through theoretical triangulation by relating the findings to various relevant pragmatic perspectives.

IV. ANALYSIS

All title and author details must be in single-column format and must be centred. This section presents several data excerpts analysed in the study. Each dataset was taken from the same YouTube video and consists of several utterances produced by the tarot reader. The analysis focuses on identifying the meanings of the utterances through the interaction between mode and dictum, as well as examining the illocutionary forces reflected in the reading.

A. Data 1

Table 1. Classification of Utterance Meanings in Data 1: Suggestive-Motivational Strategy (Career)

No.	Utterance	Mode	Speech Act
1	If THIS VIDEO popped up for you ↑ this is going to be A MESSAGE that was MEANT TO FIND YOU ↑ regarding YOUR CAREER ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
2	We have THE SUN ↑ coming out FOR YOU ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
3	This is a TIME ↑ to focus ON CONFIDENCE ↑ to STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT ↓	Declarative	Indirect Non-Literal Speech Act
4	The SUN is associated with the zodiac sign of LEO ↑, which is all about OWNING THE SPOTLIGHT ↑, stepping up INTO YOUR RADIANCE ↑, letting go of THE FEAR OF BEING SEEN ↓	Declarative	Direct Non-Literal Speech Act
5	SOMETIMES we don't STEP UP ↑, into the position that we really want to, or we don't TAKE ACTION in the direction that we need to ↑, because we either FEAR BEING SEEN or we don't have that CONFIDENCE ↑, or we don't feel WORTHY of it ↓.	Declarative	Direct Non-Literal Speech Act
6	This is YOUR SIGN ↑ that you are SO WORTHY of it ↓	Declarative	Direct Non-Literal Speech Act
7	This is YOUR SIGN ↑ to STEP UP into that SPOTLIGHT ↑ and let go of THE FEAR OF BEING SEEN ↑ and START SAYING YES to the OPPORTUNITIES that come your way ↑ and start saying yes to the things that you want and start TAKING ACTION towards them NOW ↓	Declarative	Indirect Non-Literal Speech Act

Based on the findings, all utterances in Data 1 (1.1–1.7) are delivered in the declarative mode. In terms of dictum, the speaker consistently performs statements (I state something). Pragmatically, the use of declarative constructions functions as a direct speech strategy. The speaker avoids imperative mode, so that the instructions conveyed do not appear coercive or overly commanding.

The realization of meaning is further reinforced through prosodic elements, particularly intonation and stress. A consistent pattern can be identified:

1. Rising Intonation: This occurs in key phrases such as "THIS VIDEO" (1.1), "THE SUN" (1.2), and "CONFIDENCE" (1.3). Phonetically, rising intonation functions to build expectation, attract attention, and create emotional escalation.
2. Falling Intonation: This appears in finalizing expressions such as "YOUR CAREER" (1.1), "WORTHY" (1.6), and "NOW" (1.7). Falling intonation produces effects of certainty, validation, and authority.

Based on the classification of meaning proposed by Wijana (1996), Data 1 is dominated by Indirect Literal Speech Acts in the initial claims and Indirect Non-Literal Speech Acts in the interpretative sections employing metaphors such as "spotlight" and "radiance." The use of metaphor enriches the reading and softens the delivery of directive-oriented messages.

The discrepancy between grammatical mode (declarative) and pragmatic function ultimately leads to systematic illocutionary forces. Based on Searle (1975) taxonomy, the illocutionary force in Data 1 progresses through three principal phases:

1. Legitimization Phase (Representative)
   In utterances 1.1, 1.2, and 1.6, the speaker performs the functions of claiming and asserting. Expressions such as "Meant to find you" and "This is your sign" function to establish authority by presenting the message as a valid truth for the audience. This phase serves as the foundation that encourages the audience to accept subsequent interpretations.
2. Interpretation and Affirmation Phase (Representative & Expressive)
   In utterances 1.4 and 1.5, the speaker performs descriptive functions. At this stage, the Pollyanna Principle operates explicitly; the speaker acknowledges the audience's obstacles (fear and lack of confidence) but immediately neutralizes them through positive affirmations by portraying the audience as someone "so worthy." This strategy is intended to establish emotional and affective closeness with the audience.
3. Activation Phase (Directive)
   In utterances 1.3 and 1.7, strong directive force emerges through the functions of advising, encouraging, and commanding. Although these functions are embedded within declarative sentences, the emphasis on the words "START" and "NOW," combined with falling intonation, indicates a high degree of urgency. The speaker no longer merely predicts future events but actively directs the audience toward concrete action.

The findings demonstrate that within YouTube tarot reading, there is a synergy between formal linguistic structures and pragmatic objectives. Declarative mode is employed as an interpersonal instrument to maintain audience comfort by avoiding overtly dictating expressions, while directive illocutionary force is effectively conveyed through intonation and metaphorical language. This pattern reinforces digital tarot reading as a form of motivational-persuasive discourse that utilizes the symbolic legitimacy of

tarot cards to subtly influence audience behaviour.

B. Data 2

Table 2. Classification of Utterance Meanings in Data 2: Authoritative-Protective Strategy (Karma and Conflict)

No.	Utterance	Mode	Speech Act
1	This is A MESSAGE form SPIRIT ↑ meant for WHOEVER finds THIS VIDEO ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
2	If you've been HURT by SOMEONE ↓ or some PEOPLE in the PAST ↓, know that THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE is turning in YOUR FAVOUR ↓	Declarative	Direct Non-Literal Speech Act
3	These PEOPLE ↓ will get their KARMA ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
4	All you have to DO is NOT to RESPOND to their NEGATIVITY ↓	Declarative	Indirect Literal Speech Act
5	Your SPIRIT GUIDES want to TELL YOU ↑: DO NOT ENGAGE in their DRAMA ↓, no matter WHAT they SAY ↑ because ENOUGH is ENOUGH ↓	Imperative	Direct Literal Speech Act
6	By NOT INTERACTING with their DRAMA ↑, you actually SEND them a MESSAGE ↑ that you KNOW YOUR WORTH ↑ and that you're NO LONGER INTERESTED ↓	Declarative	Indirect Literal Speech Act
7	CUT THEM OFF ↑ for a more A PEACEFUL LIFE ↓ because this PERSON or PEOPLE THRIVE in CHAOS ↑, and you DON'T WANT that in your LIFE ↓	Imperative	Direct Literal Speech Act
8	You're DESTINED for A GREATER PURPOSE ↑, and they ONLY want to LIMIT your JOURNEY ↑ in creating A HAPPY LIFE for YOURSELF ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act

Data 2 focuses on the themes of spiritual justice and self-protection. Unlike Data 1, which is predominantly persuasive and motivational, Data 2 demonstrates the use of language that is more authoritative and directive in nature.

Based on the formal analysis, Data 2 is dominated by Direct Literal Speech Acts. The speaker frequently employs declarative and imperative modes whose meanings correspond directly with their grammatical structures.

1. Authority through Falling Intonation (↓)

Unlike Data 1, which extensively utilized rising intonation to build expectation, Data 2 is dominated by falling intonation (↓) in key expressions such as SPIRIT, KARMA, NEGATIVITY, and DRAMA. This falling intonation creates effects of finality, certainty of universal justice, and unquestionable spiritual authority.

2. Mode and Dictum

The speaker employs declarative mode to establish realities (for example, statements regarding karma) and imperative mode to deliver firm instructions ("Cut them off," "Do not engage"). The dictums consistently alternate between factual assertions (I state something) and calls for action (I want you to do something).

The illocutionary force in Data 2 develops dynamically from information delivery toward explicit commands:

1. Legitimization and Prediction Stage (Representative)

The speaker begins by performing the functions of claiming and asserting the spiritual origin of the message ("from Spirit") (Utterance 1). Subsequently, the speaker performs predictive acts through the symbols of the Wheel of Fortune and karma (Utterances 2 & 3). Pragmatically, these representative illocutionary acts function as psychological validation, allowing the audience to feel that their emotional suffering has been acknowledged before receiving subsequent instructions.

2. Instruction and Prohibition Stage (Directive)

This constitutes the most dominant phase in Data 2. The speaker performs the functions of advising, directing, and prohibiting (Utterances 4, 5, and 6). The invocation of the authority of "Spirit Guides" (Utterance 5) strengthens the commanding force of the utterances, transforming suggestions into spiritual instructions that are presented as obligatory.

3. Reinforcement and Validation Stage (Directive & Representative)

In the final section (Utterances 7 & 8), the speaker provides encouragement by framing the act of severing relationships (cut off) as a pathway toward a "peaceful life." At this stage, the Pollyanna Principle operates through the reframing of firm and restrictive actions as expressions of self-worth awareness ("know your worth") and alignment with a greater destiny ("greater purpose").

The findings indicate that Data 2 employs a strategy of "Spiritual Authority as the Basis of Instruction." The use of direct speech acts and firm falling intonation constructs the speaker's image as an intermediary of absolute spiritual messages. Whereas Data 1 primarily seeks to "invite" the audience, Data 2 tends to "guide and protect" them from negative situations through protective and

authoritative commands.

C. Data 3: A Message Meant to Find You Regarding Your Career

Table 3. Classification of Utterance Meanings in Data 3: A Message Meant to Find You Regarding Your Career

No.	Utterance	Mode	Speech Act
1	Oh My GOD ↑, You BETTER be READY ↑ what I'm SEEING for YOU ↑ is honestly HUGE ↓ so if this RESONATES with you ↑ comment down BELOW ↓, I am READY ↓ and also don't forget to LIKE the READING ↓ and FOLLOW or SUBSCRIBE ↓.	Declarative, Imperative	Direct Literal Speech Act
2	OKAY ↑ are you READY ↑ FAST PACED MOVEMENT is coming your WAY ↓ even as I'm SPEAKING ↓	Interrogative, Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
3	I'm going so FAST ↑ because there is so MUCH ↑ that's going to HAPPEN ↓ the FOOL ↓ is very ABRUPT ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
4	It's very SUDDEN ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
5	It's very QUICK ENERGY that comes IN ↓ FIRST and FOREMOST ↓ there's going to be a PERSON here ↑ that really CONFESSES that they LIKE you ↓ they ADMIRE you ↓ and they want to see where THINGS can GO between you BOTH ↓ the OTHER THING I'm also SEEING ↑ is a lot of LOYALTY here form FRIENDSHIPS ↓ that is going to start BUILDING ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
6	I also see BETTERMENT of RELATIONSHIPS in FAMILY ↓ and also with FRIENDSHIPS ↓ and also see a new WORK OPPORTUNITY ↑ that allows you to sort of set OFF in that DIRECTION ↓ towards more STABILITY and SUCCESS ↓ and so if this RESONATES with you ↑ comment down BELOW ↓, I am READY ↓ and don't forget to FOLLOW↓	Declarative, Imperative	Direct Literal Speech Act

Data 3 represents a tarot reading narrative characterized by a very rapid speaking tempo (fast-paced) and highly energetic delivery. Unlike Data 1, which is primarily suggestive, or Data 2, which is authoritative and protective, Data 3 highlights an "Interactive-Urgent" strategy aimed at generating enthusiasm while simultaneously optimizing digital audience engagement.

Based on the formal analysis, Data 3 is dominated by Direct Literal Speech Acts. The speaker conveys messages explicitly through a combination of declarative, interrogative, and imperative modes without relying heavily on deviations in meaning.

1. Prosodic Dynamics (Intonation and Stress)

   The speaker consistently employs rising intonation (↑) in opening expressions such as "Oh My GOD ↑" and "You BETTER be READY ↑," as well as during informational transitions such as "PERSON here ↑" and "SEEING ↑." These prosodic features function to build hype, attract attention, and create anticipatory effects. In contrast, falling intonation (↓) is firmly applied at the end of predictive statements such as "HUGE ↓," "ABRUPT ↓," and "SUCCESS ↓" to convey certainty and finality regarding the promised outcomes.

2. Mode and Dictum

   Data 3 demonstrates highly dynamic variations of mode. Interrogative mode ("Are you ready?") is employed not to seek information, but rather as a tool for emotional engagement. Imperative mode ("Comment," "Like," "Follow") appears explicitly to direct audience behaviour. The dictums consistently align between informational statements (I state something) and direct commands (I want you to do something).

3. Utterance Meaning

   Direct Literal Speech Acts are particularly dominant due to the characteristics of short-form video content (YouTube Shorts), which demands rapid and easily digestible message delivery. Metaphorical expressions appear only minimally, such as in the personification of The Fool card as "quick energy," yet these metaphors remain within a semantic framework that can be immediately understood by the audience.

The illocutionary force in Data 3 demonstrates a highly dynamic synergy between informative-predictive functions, emotional intensification, and audience mobilization:

1. Representative Force (Prediction Phase)

   The speaker performs the functions of predicting, stating, and describing. Expressions such as "There's going to be..." and "I see..." indicate the speaker's strong confidence in the card interpretation. Through the Pollyanna Principle, the speaker reframes the sudden energy associated with The Fool card into a sequence of positive events, such as romantic confessions and new job opportunities, to maintain audience optimism.

2. Expressive Force (Emotional Intensification Phase)

Expressive illocutionary acts function as amplifiers of audience attraction through the expression of excitement. Emotional expressions such as "Oh My God" and intensifiers such as "honestly huge" are used to display surprise and emotional involvement on the part of the speaker. Pragmatically, this strategy aims to transfer positive emotional energy to the audience so that they perceive the message as personally significant.

3. Directive Force (Digital Mobilization Phase)

Unlike the previous datasets, directive force in Data 3 emerges aggressively through the functions of commanding, requesting, and inviting. The speaker utilizes the urgency of the prediction as an exchange mechanism to encourage explicit digital interactions, such as "comment down below" and "don't forget to follow."

Data 3 applies an "Interactive-Urgent" strategy through a linear speech pattern that begins with representative acts (delivering predictions), is reinforced by expressive acts (emotional intensification), and concludes with directive acts (encouraging action). These findings demonstrate that tarot reading on YouTube has evolved into a complex form of digital communication in which symbolic interpretation is integrated with audience-interaction strategies to increase engagement on the platform.

D. Data 4

Table 4. Classification of Utterance Meanings in Data 4: Validative-Amplificatory Strategy (Luck and Abundance)

No.	Utterance	Mode	Speech Act
1	If you SEE this NOW ↑ this is a MESSAGE that you are MEANT to hear right NOW ↓ so you've got the NINE OF WANDS ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
2	You've got the TWO OF CUPS ↓ and you've got TEN OF PENTACLES ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
3	Why don't we take ANOTHER ONE ↑	Interrogative	Indirect Literal Speech Act
4	The ACE OF PENTACLES ↓ and this one is STICKING OUT ↑ whoo a LOT ↓ today the PAGE OF SWORDS ↓ and The WHEEL OF FORTUNE ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
5	What am I SEEING for you ↑ someone that you don't KNOW ↑ will get in TOUCH with you ↓ and will give a HUGE OFFER ↓ that will feel very FORTUNATE to have ↓ and I mean BIG ↓ the TEN OF PENTACLES shows that this is making you CLIMB very QUICKLY ↓ towards great ABUNDANCE ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
6	I LOVE this for you ↑ because with the NINE OF WANDS ↓ it shows that you've been STANDING there so POWERFULLY ↓ and not only that ↑ you will have great FUN and RELATIONSHIP with this PERSON ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act

Data 4 centers on the themes of material abundance and extraordinary fortune. This narrative demonstrates the speaker's strategy in constructing the legitimacy of "destiny" combined with a sequence of highly positive predictions through straightforward language use, reflecting the operation of the Pollyanna Principle.

Overall, Data 4 is dominated by Direct Literal Speech Acts. The speaker conveys messages explicitly through declarative and interrogative modes without employing complex lexical deviations.

1. Destiny Validation through Prosody

The speaker employs rising intonation (↑) in the opening expression ("If you SEE this NOW ↑") to capture and secure audience attention. This is immediately finalized with falling intonation (↓) in the phrase "MEANT to hear ↓," which pragmatically imposes a sense of destiny upon the message. Strong stress on card names such as NINE OF WANDS and TEN OF PENTACLES reinforces the physical presence of the cards as concrete evidence supporting the reading.

2. Mode and Dictum

The narrative is predominantly constructed through declarative mode functioning to report the outcomes of the cards. However, in point 4.3, the speaker employs interrogative mode ("Why don't we take ANOTHER ONE ↑"). In terms of dictum, this is formally a question; pragmatically, however, it functions as an Indirect Literal Speech Act intended to invite the audience into deeper engagement with the reading process through an inclusive communicative style.

Analysis of Illocutionary Force (Communicative Intention)

The illocutionary force in Data 4 demonstrates the dominance of representative functions reinforced by expressive elements:

1. Representative Force (Initiation and Prediction Phase)

The speaker performs the function of claiming spiritual authority through statements suggesting that the video is "destined" for the audience. Subsequently, highly dominant predictive functions emerge through materialistic symbols associated with the Pentacles suit. The speaker reframes the Nine of Wands card which conventionally symbolizes exhaustion or endurance into a

symbol of strength and resilience ("standing so powerfully").

2. Expressive-Validative Force (Reinforcement Phase)
   Expressive illocutionary acts emerge strongly through the functions of expressing approval and excitement in utterances such as "whoo" and "I LOVE this for you." These speech acts establish emotional alignment with the audience, making them feel validated and emotionally supported in their imagined journey toward success.
3. Directive Force (Interaction Phase)
   Although not dominant, the function of inviting appears as a strategy to create the impression of pseudo-interaction between speaker and audience, thereby making the reading process feel collaborative and participatory.

The findings indicate that Data 4 applies a strategy of "Destiny and Abundance Amplification." The use of direct speech acts combined with authoritative falling intonation constructs the speaker as a witness to the audience's favourable destiny. The firmness in mentioning specific numbers and tarot cards (TLL), combined with overt positive emotional expressions (expressive acts), demonstrates that in narratives centred on major fortune and prosperity, tarot readers tend to communicate directly to eliminate audience doubt and maximize the effect of positive suggestion through the Pollyanna Effect.

E. Data 5

Table 5. Classification of Utterance Meanings in Data 5: Reflective-Transformative Strategy (Crisis and Reframing)

No.	Utterance	Mode	Speech Act
1	HELLO EVERYONE, ↑ and WELCOME ↓ to the little TAROT VIBE ↓ of the DAY ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
2	Let's SEE ↑ what we have for TODAY ↓	Inclusive Imperative	Direct Literal Speech Act
3	We have the ORACLE CARD ↓ of TAKING STEPS ↓ this is an INTENTION ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
4	We have the TOWER ↓, CHANGE ↓, significant CHANGE ↓ can be linked with TRUTH ↓, REVELATION ↓ an EVENT ↓ that HAPPENS ↓ that tears down the OLD ↓ brings INSTABILITY ↓ in its WAKE ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
5	It can be based on TRUTH REVELATION ↓ like I've SAID ↓ but it can link with ENDINGS ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
6	The TWO OF SWORDS ↓ what to DO ↑ a DIFFICULT DECISION ↓ not sure which WAY↓ to GO ↓ don't this WAY↑, that WAY ↑ but really deep DOWN↓ in that INTUITION ↓ with TWO OF SWORDS we already KNOW ↓ what we need to DO ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
7	With the SIX OF CUPS ↓, a SOUL CONNECTION ↓ somebody who you have HISTORY ↓ with, NOSTALGIA ↓ with it looks like it's about DRAWING IN THE LINE ↓ under a SITUATION again ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
8	The TEN OF SWORDS ↓ can be a PAINFUL ENDING ↓ but that's where we see the NEW LIGHT ↑ which might indicate you've been HURT ↓ before ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act
9	The THREE OF WANDS ↓ turning your BACK ↓ and feeling OPTIMISTIC ↑ a new DIRECTION ↓ you're moving IN ↓ that is what I have for the DAY ↓	Declarative	Direct Literal Speech Act

Data 5 represents a daily tarot narrative centered on the process of transition from crisis toward a new phase of optimism. The following analysis reveals how the speaker manages emotionally "heavy" messages through stable and transformative linguistic strategies.

Based on the formal analysis, Data 5 consistently employs Direct Literal Speech Acts throughout all utterances (5.1–5.9). The speaker conveys interpretations explicitly without significant deviation from lexical meaning.

1. Stability through Falling Intonation (↓)
   The speaker predominantly employs falling intonation (↓) on emotionally charged expressions such as PAINFUL ENDING, HURT, and TOWER. Pragmatically, this pattern functions to create a sense of calmness; although the messages conveyed are negative in nature, the speaker presents them as stable realities rather than as threats.
2. Positive Transition through Rising Intonation (↑)
   Rising intonation (↑) is strategically used on future-oriented expressions such as NEW LIGHT and OPTIMISTIC. This signals a semantic shift toward hope and renewal, producing an emotionally relieving effect following the preceding narrative of pain and crisis.
3. Mode and Dictum
   The dataset is dominated by declarative mode functioning to report tarot card interpretations. The dictums primarily consist of

factual statements (I state something) combined with attempts to cultivate the audience's self-awareness.

The illocutionary force in Data 5 is predominantly representative, integrated with expressive and inclusive directive functions:

1. Expressive and Inclusive Directive Force (Initiation Phase)
   In the opening section (5.1 and 5.2), the speaker performs the functions of greeting and inviting. The use of the inclusive expression "Let's" creates a collaborative interaction, positioning the speaker as a companion accompanying the audience through the reading process.
2. Representative-Descriptive Force (Crisis and Reflection Phase)
   The function of describing dominates the narrative of crisis, beginning with The Tower card and culminating in the painful ending symbolized by the Ten of Swords. The speaker employs representative illocutionary acts to validate the audience's suffering as an acknowledged reality.
3. Implementation of the Pollyanna Principle (Transformation Phase)
   The speaker performs predictive acts regarding the emergence of "NEW LIGHT" and "OPTIMISTIC" outcomes. Through these assertive-predictive illocutionary acts, the Pollyanna Effect operates by reconstructing crisis into revelation and new direction, ensuring that the audience concludes the session with a sense of empowerment.

The findings indicate that Data 5 applies a "Reflective-Transformative" strategy. The use of Direct Literal Speech Acts (TLL) provides clarity of information, while the stable prosodic arrangement (falling intonation) and the selection of highly meaningful lexical items such as Truth and Intuition function as instruments of psychological reassurance. In this context, the speaker does not merely interpret tarot cards, but also acts as an intermediary who transforms crisis into enlightenment through strong spiritual and emotional validation

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of five datasets of tarot reading on YouTube, this study draws several major conclusions regarding the linguistic dynamics of digital tarot practices:

The utterances meaning in tarot reading is determined not only by syntactic structure (mode) and propositional content (dictum), but also significantly influenced by prosodic aspects such as intonation and stress. Various speech strategies were identified throughout the data. The findings reveal that direct literal speech acts constitute the dominant speech strategy across the data, reflecting the need for clarity, immediacy, and accessibility in short-form content (YouTube Shorts). Meanwhile, indirect non-literal speech acts are employed selectively, particularly when tarot readers deliver advice, encouragement, or self-reflective messages intended to maintain audience comfort and interpersonal closeness.

The illocutionary forces identified in the reading systematically progress from representative acts (situation validation) to expressive acts (emotional affirmation), and finally to directive acts (encouraging audience action). The speakers consistently implement the Pollyanna Principle by reconstructing negatively connoted tarot symbols into hopeful and optimistic narratives through persuasive lexical choices and prosodic patterns. The analysis also highlights the operation of the Pollyanna Principle, whereby potentially negative tarot symbols are consistently reframed into hopeful and empowering narratives. Consequently, YouTube tarot reading can be understood not merely as a spiritual interpretative practice but as a form of strategic digital communication that integrates speech acts, prosodic performance, and positive framing to influence audience perception, emotion, and behaviour.

Tarot reading on YouTube have evolved from purely spiritual practices into forms of strategic digital communication. The use of suprasegmental features, particularly rising and falling intonation, alongside metaphorical expressions, functions to transform tarot interpretation into a psychological instrument capable of influencing audience mindset and behaviour, including encouraging digital engagement practices such as commenting, liking, and following content creators.

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