

Exploring Speech Acts on Get to Know by English Academy Videos of Ruangguru YouTube Channel

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Keywords: <i>speech acts;</i> <i>digital learning;</i> <i>YouTube;</i> <i>pragmatics</i></p> <p>Article History Received: 2025-12-16 Reviewed: 2025-12-29 Accepted: 2026-01-11</p>  <p>Lisensi: cc-by-sa</p>	<p>The rapid development of information technology in Indonesia has fostered the growing use of digital platforms in language learning, particularly YouTube as a contextual and easily accessible audiovisual medium. This study aims to identify and analyze the types of speech acts, based on Searle's classification, in the "Get to Know" video series from the English Academy on the <i>Ruangguru</i> YouTube channel, and to examine their functions in supporting the effectiveness of digital learning. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study analyzed two purposively selected videos by transcribing instructors' utterances in full and systematically classifying them into representatives, directives, expressives, commissives, and declaratives. The findings reveal that representative speech acts dominate the videos (55 occurrences), functioning primarily to convey factual information and conceptual explanations. Directive speech acts (17 occurrences) provide instruction and motivation, whereas expressive speech acts (13 occurrences) build emotional rapport with the audience. Commissive and declarative speech acts were not identified. These findings indicate that the strategic use of speech acts enhances instructional communication, learner engagement, and motivation in video-based language learning. This study contributes to digital pragmatics by demonstrating how informative, persuasive, and expressive speech acts can be optimized in YouTube-based English language learning in Indonesia, and it offers practical implications for the design of digital educational content.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information technology in language education has driven a significant shift from conventional learning toward digital media-based instruction, particularly through the use of audiovisual platforms in online learning environments. In the context of language learning, digital video functions not only as a tool for delivering instructional content but also as a medium for instructional interaction that influences learners' engagement, autonomy, and comprehension. Previous studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between digital literacy competence and learning effectiveness, as well as the significant influence of independent learning on the efficacy of language acquisition (Farikah, 2021; Hasyim, 2018; Arsiyana et al., 2025). One of the most widely utilized platforms in this context is YouTube, due to its ability to present learning materials in a contextual, interactive, and multimodal manner. As education adapts to the digital era, YouTube has emerged not merely as an event-based medium but as an indispensable and highly effective resource that transforms student engagement in language learning through dynamic and visually rich content (Tawaqal & Rizqyan, 2023).

One prominent educational content source for English language learning on YouTube is Get to Know by English Academy, produced by *Ruangguru*. This program is designed as a video-based learning series characterized by concise, communicative delivery and orientation toward the needs of digital learners. However, the effectiveness of video-based learning is determined not solely by the quality of instructional materials or visual presentation, but also by the instructional

communication strategies employed by instructors to convey information, provide guidance, and foster learner engagement. A key strength of this program lies in its interactive delivery style and the adaptive use of speech acts that accommodate the needs of beginner to intermediate learners. In educational contexts, communication remains a fundamental element of the learning process (Mahdi, 2023). Therefore, analyzing speech acts in *Get to Know* by the English Academy is essential for identifying how utterances are employed to construct interaction, convey information, deliver instructions, and motivate viewers.

Speech act studies, particularly those based on Searle's classification, provide a relevant theoretical framework for such analysis. Searle categorizes speech acts into five types: representatives, directives, commissives, declaratives, and expressives (Indahsari, 2019). Previous studies have demonstrated that the effective use of speech acts by instructors enhances the clarity of material delivery, promotes increased learner participation, and improves comprehension in language learning, both in offline and online settings (Rachmawati et al., 2022; Sari et al., 2025). Nevertheless, most of these studies have focused on formal classroom interactions, synchronous learning environments, or teacher–student communication within conventional educational institutions.

To date, empirical research that specifically examines the use of speech acts in YouTube-based edutech learning content, particularly structured instructional videos produced by major educational platforms such as *Ruangguru*, remains limited. There is still a lack of studies investigating how different types of speech acts are systematically employed in digital learning videos, how their pragmatic functions operate within one-way instructional interactions, and how they contribute to the effectiveness of online English language learning. This gap highlights the need for more focused pragmatic studies on instructional discourse in video-based digital learning media.

Based on this background, the present study aims to identify the types of speech acts used in *Get to Know* by English Academy videos, as classified by John R. Searle, and to analyze their communicative functions in supporting digital English language learning. This study is expected to contribute theoretically by enriching pragmatic studies, particularly through the application of speech act theory in the analysis of instructional discourse in video-based digital learning media. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for educators and edutech content developers in designing more communicative, effective, and learner-engagement-oriented instructional communication strategies for YouTube-based English language learning.

METHODE

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the use of speech acts in digital learning content from the *Get to Know* by English Academy series on *Ruangguru's* YouTube channel. This approach is selected because the study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the pragmatic functions of instructors' utterances within video-based language learning contexts, rather than to measure quantitative aspects alone. The research data consist of verbal utterances produced by the instructors, with video learning materials from the series serving as the primary data source. The selection of the *Get to Know* by English Academy series is based on the premise that it is a structured edutech product specifically designed for English language learning and produced by a central digital education platform in Indonesia, making it a relevant object for analysis within digital instructional discourse.

The research sample is purposively selected based on several criteria: the videos must have a clear instructional focus, sufficient duration to allow the emergence of diverse speech acts, consistent use of verbal interaction by the instructor, and adequate audiovisual quality to ensure accurate transcription. These criteria are intended to guarantee the relevance of the data and the adequacy of the pragmatic context for analysis. Data collection is conducted through non-participant observation, involving repeated viewing of the videos and the production of complete transcripts of all instructor utterances. Data analysis is conducted in several stages, classifying utterances according to John R. Searle's speech act theory into five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. Each utterance is then analyzed in its context to determine its communicative function in the learning process. The classification results are organized into analytical matrices to identify patterns in speech-act use systematically. Data

validity is ensured through theoretical validation by consistently referring to Searle's speech act framework, as well as through ongoing observation, including repeated review of transcripts and analytical results, to maintain interpretive consistency. All research procedures are conducted systematically to ensure that the findings are methodologically sound and academically accountable.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the two videos in the Get to Know by English Academy series indicates that the instructor's utterances are predominantly characterized by representative speech acts, which are primarily associated with explaining instructional material and delivering information. According to Olivares-De la Fuente et al. (2025), YouTube is widely used in higher education to deliver and reinforce educational content, functioning effectively as a one-way communication channel from instructors to students, particularly in contexts with limited real-time interaction. The findings of this study reinforce this argument by demonstrating that the dominance of representative speech acts is a pragmatic consequence of video-based instructional design that positions the instructor as the primary source of knowledge and the audience as information recipients. However, this study goes further by revealing that such dominance is not merely a technical phenomenon, but rather a deliberate communicative strategy that consciously shapes an information-oriented learning framework, in which learning effectiveness is highly dependent on the clarity, credibility, and systematic organization of the instructor's utterances.

Furthermore, the pattern of speech-act usage indicates that the instructor does not focus solely on delivering English-language content but also seeks to foster interpersonal closeness with viewers through persuasive, educational, and expressive speech strategies. This suggests that although communication in the videos is predominantly one-way, relational dimensions are still actively constructed through the strategic selection of particular speech acts. The coding of all utterances produced three categories, namely:

- Representatives, the point or purpose of the members of the representative class is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition. Sari (2019) explains that "representative speech acts are speech acts which represent what the speaker believes and does not believe" (p. 19).
- Directives, the illocutionary point of these consists in the fact that they are attempts (of varying degrees, and hence, more precisely, they are determinants of the determinable, which includes attempting) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. Click or tap here to enter text.
- Expressives, the illocutionary point of this class is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content (Searle, 1976).

Table 1. Frequency of Speech Acts in video 1 and video 2

No.	Classification of Searle's Speech Acts	Frequency		Total
		Video 1	Video 2	
1.	Representative	22	33	55
2.	Directive	10	7	17
3.	Expressive	4	9	13

Based on the frequency data, representative speech acts constitute the most dominant category in the Get to Know by English Academy video series, followed by directive and expressive speech acts.

(1) *Representatives*. In this study, the instructor employs representative speech acts most frequently. All informational segments across both videos exhibit illocutionary acts, including stating facts, providing explanations, offering reasons, presenting evidence, and conveying objective information. The dominance of representative speech acts indicates that instructional communication strategies in digital learning videos are highly dependent on epistemic authority and informational clarity. This dominance reflects an instructional orientation in which

knowledge transmission and content accuracy are central to the learning process. The following excerpt serves as an example of an instructor's utterance containing representative speech acts drawn from the two videos in the Get to Know by English Academy series, namely the first video entitled Get to Know: Why You Should Learn English? and the second video entitled Get to Know: Top 5 Universities in the USA.

Table 2. Representative Speech Acts and Their Functions in the Instructional Videos

Sentence	Function	Explanation
English is the most used language in the world. Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [00:40-00:43]	Stating Fact	This statement constitutes a factual claim regarding the global use of the English language. In other words, English is not merely a local language but a global language employed for communication across countries and cultures. This claim can be substantiated with empirical evidence, such as the number of speakers, its use in business, media, and education. Therefore, this assertion is not an opinion or conjecture, but information that can be measured and whose accuracy can be objectively verified.
In addition, by mastering English, you do not have to rely on translations or subtitles when reading books, listening to songs, or even watching your favorite movies and TV shows. Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [02:35-02:46]	Explaining	This utterance serves as an additional elaboration on the use of the English language. This instructor explained that proficiency in English not only facilitates communication but also broadens learning experiences, entertainment, opportunities, and direct access to global information.
For example, Brewster Kahle, the founder of the web traffic measurement site Alexa, and Belva Devara, the founder and CEO of <i>Ruangguru</i> . Video 2: Get To Know: TOP 5 University in the U.S.A [00:20-00:30]	Presenting Evidence	The achievements of Brewster Kahle and Belva DeVara provide concrete evidence that MIT alums can generate innovations and lead major organizations in both technology and education, thereby reinforcing MIT's reputation as an institution that produces global leaders and innovators.
Over the past few years, the USA has dominated the education world by being the most popular university destination for students from all over the world. Video 2: Get To Know: TOP 5 University in the U.S.A [01:30-01:39]	Delivering Objective Information	This claim constitutes factual information regarding global education, as it can be substantiated through statistics on international students, university rankings, and official reports from higher education institutions.

(2) *Declaratives*. Directive speech acts constitute the second most frequent category, with 17 occurrences across the two videos in the series: 10 in the first and 7 in the second. In both videos, directives function to guide, invite, motivate, and Influence viewers' behavior. The identified directive forms are not treated as rigid imperatives; instead, they are primarily conveyed through persuasive invitations and rhetorical questions.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research by (Koh & Daniel, 2022), which emphasizes that the use of explicit, well-directed speech acts is crucial to maintaining the effectiveness of online learning. However, in educational videos, directive speech acts are typically expressed more implicitly and persuasively, reflecting an adaptation to the heterogeneous and autonomous nature of digital audiences. Examples of directive speech acts identified in this study are presented in the table below.

Table 3. Declaratives Speech Acts and Their Functions in the Instructional Videos

Sentence	Function	Explanation
Who wants to study in this campus? Raise your hand!	Guiding	This utterance directs the listener to perform a specific action. By providing the instruction "Raise your hand!", the

Video 2: Get To Know: TOP 5 University in the U.S.A [03:25-03:28]		utterance functions as guidance that directly prompts the listener to respond to the instructor's request.
Let's practice and learn together.	Inviting	This utterance encourages the listener to act; however, its form and purpose are oriented toward inviting the listener to participate in an activity together with the speaker. The use of the expression "Let's" not only provides an instruction but also invites the listener to take part in a shared activity with the speaker.
Video 2: Get To Know: TOP 5 University in the U.S.A [05:30-05:31]		
So, what are you waiting for?	Motivating	This interrogative sentence is not intended to elicit an answer; instead, it functions as a rhetorical question designed to encourage the listener to take an action. Moreover, because it is delivered as a rhetorical question that provides psychological encouragement, this directive utterance serves a motivational function, prompting the listener to act immediately. It also conveys an implicit message from the instructor, indicating confidence that the listener is capable, prepared, and able to carry out the requested or instructed action.
Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [04:50-04:51]		
Here are the reasons why you should learn English.	Influencing	The sentence uttered by the instructor attempts to guide the listener toward adopting a particular attitude or making a specific decision, namely, learning English. However, the strategy employed is not a direct command; instead, it provides reasons intended to Influence the listener's thinking, and this cognitive Influence may shape the actions the listener chooses to take in the future.
Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [00:34-00:37]		

(3) *Expressives*. In this study, expressives speech acts were the least frequently used by the instructor across both videos, with a total of 13 occurrences. The majority of these expressives acts were employed to convey admiration, appreciation, agreement, and personal feelings. The following are examples of utterances produced by the instructor that contain expressives speech acts:

Table 4. Expressive Speech Acts and Their Functions in the Instructional Videos

Sentence	Function	Explanation
Thank you so much for watching Get to Know. Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [05:09-05:11]	Appreciation	This utterance reflects the instructor's acknowledgment of the audience's participation, as the speaker explicitly appreciates the audience's effort in taking the time to watch the content. Through this expression, the speaker acknowledges the audience's engagement and establishes an interpersonal connection by expressing appreciation for their involvement.
Honestly, it's nice to make friends with people from all over the world. Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [01:39-01:43]	Personal Feeling	Through this utterance, the instructor conveys an emotional response to a particular experience, expressing that forming friendships with people from various countries is enjoyable for her. This expression does not serve the purpose of giving instructions or delivering factual information; instead, it functions to reveal the speaker's personal emotions arising from her social experience.
How incredible is that? Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [01:39-01:41]	Amazement	The speaker uses this expression to convey admiration for the achievements of MIT alums in technology and academia. The rhetorical question is not intended to elicit an answer; rather, it serves to emphasize the speaker's level of admiration for the subject being discussed.
Well, if I mention Harvard University, I bet you're already amazed, right? Video 1: Get To Know: Why You Should Learn English?? [02:32-02:37]	Agreement	The speaker expresses an attitude and response toward a shared assumption constructed with the audience. The speaker attempts to affirm a common perspective with the listeners regarding Harvard's reputation as a prestigious university, which, when mentioned. Typically evokes admiration due to its high level of recognition and strong institutional reputation.

The Absence of Commissive and Declarative Speech Acts

The speech act analysis of the two videos reveals the dominance of representative, directive, and expressive speech acts, while commissive and declarative speech acts are absent. Commissive speech acts are not employed because the speaker does not make promises or commitments, but instead focuses on conveying information and providing motivation. As defined by Searle (1976), commissives are illocutionary acts whose point is to commit the speaker, to varying degrees, to a future course of action. Declarative speech acts are likewise absent, as the videos are situated in an educational and informal context that does not involve changes in institutional status or the enactment of formal decisions. Declarations, according to Searle, are characterized by the fact that their successful performance brings about a correspondence between the propositional content and reality, such that the utterance itself guarantees the alignment of words and the world.

These findings indicate that the communication strategy employed in the videos prioritizes the delivery of factual information and persuasive invitations, thereby producing content that effectively fosters motivation, engagement, and a sense of closeness with the audience. From a critical perspective, the absence of commissive and declarative speech acts suggests that digital learning communication tends to privilege informative and persuasive functions over institutional ones. This absence also highlights the limitations of YouTube's one-way communication model in fostering long-term commitment, in contrast to the more dynamic interactions characteristic of face-to-face learning environments. Within this context, the novelty of the present study lies not only in the instructional content analyzed but also in its examination of how persuasive strategies are functionally integrated to compensate for the constraints of instructional video content, thereby enhancing learning retention.

The Functions of Speech Acts in Digital Content

The findings of this study indicate that the use of speech acts in the Get to Know content by English Academy on the *Ruangguru* YouTube channel is predominantly characterized by representative speech acts, with a total of 55 occurrences, which simultaneously constitute the defining feature of video-based educational content. This dominance reflects a strong alignment between the speech act patterns employed and the instructional objectives of Get to Know by English Academy, which focus on delivering factual information, explaining concepts, and providing objective knowledge to the audience, such as reasons for learning English and academic facts about world-renowned universities. Moreover, this dominance is reinforced by YouTube's one-way communication model, in which instructors serve as the primary sources of knowledge. At the same time, audiences are the recipients of information. These findings are consistent with previous research by Chen et al. (2023), which demonstrates that more than half of influencer marketing videos on YouTube consist of assertive acts, indicating that such videos are predominantly informative by offering viewers more detailed information about the promoted products and brands. Accordingly, the discourse structure in these videos primarily serves to deliver accurate, systematic, and comprehensive information, ensuring that audiences gain a correct and holistic understanding of the material presented.

Furthermore, directive speech acts were consistently identified in both videos, with a total of 17 occurrences. In these videos, directives take the form of learning invitations, encouragement to participate in programs, and instructions to take action, such as registering for English Academy or practicing together. Although their frequency is lower than that of representative speech acts, directives play a crucial role in enhancing audience engagement and influencing learning behaviour. This finding aligns with previous research by Manoqaran & Ramalingam (2025), which emphasizes that directive speech acts are essential in daily teaching and learning activities, particularly in online education, where clear and precise instructions are vital for effective communication. This indicates that instructional video content is not merely informative but also incorporates elements of pedagogical persuasion, whereby instructors pragmatically employ directive speech acts to guide audience interaction and encourage active engagement. As noted by Sari et al. (2025), directives help manage learning activities, expressives build rapport, and representatives facilitate knowledge transmission. Consequently, directive speech acts complement the informative role of representative speech acts by subtly guiding audience

responses while simultaneously fostering engagement and commitment to learning within a video-based distance-learning ecosystem.

In addition, the speech acts in the two videos take the form of expressions of appreciation, admiration, and personal feelings, which help create a friendly communicative atmosphere and reduce social distance between the instructor and the digital audience. Although expressive speech acts occur less frequently than representative and directive acts, with 13 occurrences, they nonetheless play an important role in fostering emotional closeness and reducing social distance in digital learning contexts. This finding is consistent with Darong & Neldis (2023), who report a relatively low frequency of expressive speech acts in digital videos, as expressives are less commonly used to convey psychological states than other illocutionary acts.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings suggest that the effectiveness of instructional videos can be enhanced when content development is not solely oriented toward information transfer but also integrates directive and expressive speech acts as strategies to promote motivation, engagement, and the sustainability of online learning. This underscores that effective digital learning is determined by a synergistic combination of instructional content and the pragmatic design of instructional discourse.

CONCLUSION

This study identifies that representative, directive, and expressive speech acts constitute the dominant types in the Get to Know series from the English Academy on the *Ruangguru* YouTube channel. The dominance of representative speech acts indicates that the delivery of factual information and conceptual explanations underpins video-based English language learning. Meanwhile, directive speech acts serve as a pragmatic strategy to encourage audience engagement and motivation, and expressive speech acts foster emotional closeness between the instructor and viewers, despite the one-way nature of the communication. These findings underscore that the effectiveness of digital learning is determined not only by the instructional content itself but also by the pragmatic design of instructional discourse. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of Searle's speech act theory by extending its application to the context of audiovisual education and digital pragmatics, particularly on YouTube as a platform characterized by one-way communication. The findings demonstrate that the limitations of direct interaction in online learning environments can be mitigated through persuasively and relationally designed speech-act strategies. Practically, these results may serve as a reference for digital educators and content developers in designing instructional videos that are not only informative but also capable of enhancing audience engagement, motivation, and learning retention.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the data are limited to two videos from a single instructional series; therefore, the findings cannot yet be generalized to all educational content on YouTube or other digital platforms. Second, the study analyzes the pragmatic functions of instructional utterances without directly measuring their impact on learning outcomes or audience comprehension. Third, the analysis is confined to the instructor's speech, without empirically examining audience responses or interpretations. In light of these limitations, future research is recommended to include a broader dataset encompassing various types of educational content and different digital platforms. Moreover, subsequent studies may integrate pragmatic analysis with quantitative or experimental methods to measure the effects of speech acts on learning outcomes, motivation, and student engagement. Investigating audience perceptions of instructors' speech-act strategies also represents an important avenue for further research to enrich understanding of the effectiveness of digital learning in the Indonesian context.

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