

## *RESEARCH*

# **Speech Acts in Patriotic Songs Composed by Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha**

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### **Abstract**

The current study aims to analyze and identify the use of illocutionary speech acts in patriotic songs penned by Thailand's 29<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister and former commander of the Royal Thai Army, General Prayuth Chan-ocha. The junta chief seized power on May 22, 2014, after months of violent street protests against the elected government of the former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. During his five-year term as the premier, a total of his ten songs were released as a communication channel between him and all people in the nation. The descriptive qualitative research approach is employed to analyze the speech act types and their functional aspects found in the songs. The quantitative approach is applied to investigate which speech act type is dominantly used. The study is conducted on the lyrics in the English versions of General Prayut's six selected ballads. In analyzing the data, the speech act theory based on the illocutionary act of John Searle is used from a pragmatic framework. From the total of 90 utterances covered in the study, the findings show that four types of the acts are used in the songs. They are representative (assertive), directive, commissive and expressive acts. Only the declarative speech act is not found. Representatives are mostly used in the songs, followed by directives, commissives and expressives. According to the research findings, the functional aspects of stating, asserting, and describing are found in representatives; ordering, requesting, persuading, questioning, and prohibiting in directives; promising, vowing, and offering in commissives, and lastly expressing love, determination, desire, hope, and tiredness are revealed in expressives.

**Keywords:** Speech acts, Types, Illocutionary act, Patriotic songs

## Introduction

The Speech Acts taxonomy was introduced by John Langshaw Austin in his book *How to Do Things with Words* in 1962 and later developed by the American leading philosopher John Rogers Searle who started with a question ‘How do words relate to the world?’ in his book *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* in 1969. The speech acts, language acts, or linguistic acts highlight that information expressed by someone can state actions as supported by Yule (1996: 47) that “...people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they perform actions via those utterances. The speech act theory is one of fundamental areas of pragmatic study. As defined by Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader), adding that it is the study of meaning and context. The contexts are considered to be influential in communication process. A listener or a reader can interpret messages with their pragmatic understanding from words, phrases or sentences according to the contribution of contexts. Additionally, Taavitsainen and Jucker (2008: 5) claimed that “meaning-making processes are sensitive to context and the meaning of an utterance may be completely different in different contexts [...]”

Austin (1962: 108) classified speech acts into three groups, namely locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts and defined them as follows:

I) A locutionary act is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense; in short, the presentation of the actual words

II) An illocutionary act refers to utterances which have a certain (conventional) force such as informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, etc.; in short, the intention behind the words

III) A perlocutionary act relates to what we achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, surprising or misleading; in short, the following effect of the illocution on the feelings or thoughts of the hearer.

Searle (1969: 23-24) focused on Austin’s illocutionary force of speech acts and elaborated how English verbs can differently denote this kind of acts. He gave some examples of illocutionary verbs such as state, describe, assert, warn, remark, comment, command, order, request, criticize, apologize, censure, approve, welcome, promise, object, demand, and argue. He added that such acts are the notion of the consequences or effects on the actions, thoughts, or beliefs, etc. of the hearers. In other words, purposes and intentions of the speakers are also included in each utterance and are presented both directly and indirectly.

As suggested by van Dijk (2009: 13), the study of speech acts relates to the “action” dimension of utterances by adding “illocutionary meaning” particularly in specific situations as social acts. The illocutionary act is performed for some communicative purposes and is generally considered as the illocutionary force of the utterance (Yule, 1996). Additionally, the focus on utterances as social acts and their situational conditions is an important step in the direction of a broader concept of language use (van Dijk, 2009: 14). This can shed light on the ways people use language in social situations that are related to the way the language is interpreted. The understanding of speech act theory can help analyze utterances from the perspective of their functions rather than forms. The communication process will be considered successful if a hearer can understand the message performed by a speaker in the right way. The uses of speech acts are not only found in spoken language but in other written forms of language use in people's daily lives.

Many studies of speech acts particularly focus on songs (Gozali, 2015; Tambunan, Sitinjak, Purba, Lubis & Pramuniati, 2018; อัจฉราพร ไกรบุตร และวิไลศักดิ์ กิ่งคำ, 2559; สันติ ทิพนา, 2561). It is noticeable that songs commonly include the use of illocutionary acts. Linguistic features and word choices are constructed to convey facts and actual meanings of each song. The songs do not contribute only literal meanings but also require a deep interpretation of the lyrics in context. Each listener can distinctively imply meanings through the use of language in lyrics based on their pragmatic perspectives. Furthermore, the use of language as a means of communication can influence the expression of people's feelings, purposes or even intentions during a certain period of time. People can reflect their psychological needs with intended messages through the lyrics in different situations. Songs are thus a specific device to voice messages from a song composer to listeners especially in patriotic songs. Words and phrases are chosen to generate the national perception of the public in various dimensions through lyrics and music.

A catchy hook of the first song ‘Returning Happiness to the People’ mainly composed by Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha, who took absolute power in the coup in May 2014, became familiar to all people in the country. The song was broadcast widely and repeatedly on radio and television, particularly on the monologue TV program ‘Returning Happiness to the People’, the program which had the same title as the song and was aired on all major TV channels during prime time on Friday nights. It was a main communicative channel of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha to directly inform policies and what his government had accomplished. The hook of this song is short and straightforward so it is easy

for the people to memorize. Consequently, this made the song well-known. The song was released one month after the coup to foster reconciliation among people with his commitment to restore electoral democracy and peace to the public. The junta chairman assured that the military takeover was done to fix the country's chronic political conflicts and to reform the nation before the next election could take place. Later, the premier penned nine more songs to express his purposive attitudes and important messages to the public during the five-year term of his cabinet in the irregular political situations. As quoted from his interview published on the website *Time Magazine* (Cambell, 2018) on June 21, 2018, “[m]y songs may not be beautiful, but it’s a way to help me express my thoughts and communicate with the people,” and “Thai people love poetry.”

Thai Prime Minister’s songs translated to the English versions were therefore the main sources of data to be analyzed by using Searle’s speech acts as the main theoretical framework. All five types of illocutionary speech acts were studied. The lyrics as research documentation were examined, classified, and concluded during the research process. The findings could uncover the message sender’s intentions from the linguistic properties associated with the lyrics. Furthermore, enriching the knowledge of illocutionary speech acts is to provide deeper insights and understandings in learning English.

### **Thailand’s Political Background before Prayuth Chan-ocha’s Military Junta Government**

On May 22, 2014, Commander of the Royal Thai Army Chief Prayut Chan-ocha launched a coup d’état following prolonged six-month mass violent street protests against the elected government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. It was the country’s 12th successful coup. After the general election in 2011, Yingluck Shinawatra from the Pheu Thai Party won and became Thailand’s 28th Prime Minister. She is Thailand’s first female premier and the youngest sister of the 23rd Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who is a millionaire tycoon and later an overseas exile since he was allegedly convicted in corruption and abuse of power after a 2006 coup led by General Sonthi Boonyaratglin.

Yingluck, who was forced out from her office in 2014, was accused of mismanagement of the rice subsidy scheme. She fled the country shortly before the verdict was read. When she served as the country’s Prime Minister, anti-government protests took place. The People’s Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) was formed and was led by the former Democrat Party member, Suthep Thaugsuban, who later became a key leader of the Action Coalition for Thailand Party in the 2019 general election, to protest against the elected

government of Yingluck Shinawatra. Pro-government groups, particularly the United Front of Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), held mass rallies in response. The existing situation led to a deeper turning point in the contrasting politics among people as clearly seen from different color-coded protesters. The pro-Yingluck side or Shinawatra family supporters known as 'Red shirts' wore red while the opponents known as 'Yellow shirts' wore yellow. In 2014, widespread violence mainly took place in Bangkok, resulting in a number of deaths and injuries. This has driven an ongoing rise in political instability nationwide.

This political crisis from street demonstrations in 2014 ended with a political change led by the military government of General Prayut Chan-ocha. The country was under the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) and any political activities were thus restricted. The martial law was drafted by a committee selected by the junta-led administration and had been declared across the country. As the head of the self-proclaimed NCPO, the premier could exercise Section 44 which was heavily criticized for its absolute power in running the country. The people were strictly banned to join all political activities, including gatherings of five or more people. Therefore, no conflicts took place in a paralyzing political showdown even between the Red shirts and the Yellow shirts. The premier, also the head of the junta, assured the public that the seizure of power was temporary and democratic government would be returned to them soon. However, there were an increasing number of people who voiced that they wanted to get a democratically elected government, claiming that the nearly five years of the junta government stayed in power was too long.

March 24, 2019 was finally set to be the election day and thus released the freezing of political activities in Thailand. It is the country's first post-coup election where Thai people seemed to be divided into two sides: the pro-military and the pro-democracy. Finally, General Prayut Chan-ocha from the Palang Pracharath Party became the Prime Minister for the second term and led the coalition government with other political parties.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study is aimed to analyze and identify the use of speech acts found in the Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha's songs through the pragmatic framework. The project was carried out based on the speech acts theory of Searle and focused on only the classification of illocutionary acts adapted from Austin's five basic acts of verdictive, expositive, exercitive, behabitive, and commissive. As newly categorized by Searle (1969; 1979), five categories of speech acts were presented as follows:

**I. Representatives** (or Assertives): The purpose of these acts is to commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition or to tell people how things are. This kind of act relates to the assessment of something as true or false. Searle suggested the direction of fit between the propositional content and the reality in this class as words-to-the-world. Some verbs denoting the representative act are *complain, conclude, boast, describe, identify, state, predict, etc.*

**Example:**

I state that it is raining.

I predict he will come.

**II. Directives:** This kind of acts illustrate that the speaker gets the hearer to commit himself/herself to do some future course of action. The direction of fit is world-to-words and the sincerity condition is 'want'. Some examples of verbs are *order, command, request, ask, permit, advise, etc.*

**Example:**

I order you to leave.

I invite you to do it.

I insist that you do it.

**III. Commissives:** Compared to the basic notion of directive acts in terms of the direction of fit, the commissive act is in the same condition. The latter, however, shows that the speaker commits himself/herself to do some future course of action and the sincerity condition is 'intention'. The verb *promise* and *request* are examples that represent the commissive act.

**Example:**

I promise to pay you the money.

I vow to get revenge.

**IV. Expressives:** The purpose of this category is to express the psychological states of something, such as feelings and attitudes. There is no direction of fit in this category. Some expressive verbs are *thank, congratulate, apologize, welcome, etc.*

**Example:**

I apologize for stepping on your toe.

I congratulate you on winning the race.

I thank you for giving me the money.

**V. Declarations:** This act causes changes through utterances. The direction of fit is both words-to-world and world-to-words since the performance of a declaration results in a fit by its very successful performance. The related verbs are *resign, fire, appoint*, etc.

**Example:**

I now pronounce you man and wife.

I appoint you chairman.

War is hereby declared.

You're fired.

However, as Searle suggested, it is necessary to carefully distinguish a taxonomy of illocutionary acts from one of the illocutionary verbs. In other words, a message cannot be certainly identified in what particular speech act it belongs to if considering only the verbs commonly denoting its corresponding type. For example, some illocutionary verbs cannot belong to the same illocutionary acts; certain verbs can take different illocutionary points in different utterances. Searle's examples of using the verb 'warn' and 'advise' can support his explanation as follows:

Directives: I **warn** you to stay away from my wife!

Representatives: I **warn** you that the bull is about to charge.

Directives: I **advise** you to leave.

Representatives: Passengers are hereby **advised** that the train will be late.

As mentioned above, some verbs can typically mark the types of speech acts in both spoken and written communication. The changes of grammatical structures and lexical uses in messages, however, can conversely present various categories of the acts. Also, not only some verbs as context clues can hint the illocutionary classes of acts, but some modal verbs, adjectives, adverbs and other forms in language are also additional components in considering what speech act types are used. As a result, a reader or message receiver needs to carefully interpret each message in context to understand the specific information from the message sender.

## Research Questions

What are the illocutionary speech acts found in Thailand's Prime Minister's songs translated in the English version?

1. What type of illocutionary act is mostly used in the lyrics?
2. What functional aspects can be found from the lyrics?

## Research Method

This study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches in the research process to explore the use of speech acts related to the three research questions above.

### Data Collection

The purpose of this study is to find out the types of speech acts and their functional aspects found in the songs of the Thailand's premier. The ten patriotic songs penned by Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha are 'Returning Happiness to the People' (2014), 'Because You Are Thailand' (2015), 'Hope and Faith' (2016), 'Bridge' (2017), 'Diamond Heart' (2018), 'Fight for the Nation' (2018), 'In Memory' (2019), 'New Day' (2019), 'Friendship' (2019) and 'Thai Is Thai March' (2019).

Purposive sampling method is employed when choosing members of population to be analyzed in this study. The criteria for selecting songs are that only one song per year is selected as the key data. If there are more than one song in the same year, only the first one is chosen. Also, if the first song has no English version, the second one is opted instead, as shown in 2019, the researcher replaced the song 'In Memory' with 'New Day'. Only six songs are finally selected as the main data for analysis. They are 'Returning Happiness to the People', 'Because You Are Thailand', 'Hope and Faith', 'Bridge', 'Diamond Heart', and 'New Day'. The translated English lyrics of all six songs are taken from [www.khaosodenglish.com](http://www.khaosodenglish.com). The number of songs is reasonably enough to achieve research objectives. The mass-oriented newspaper *Khaosod* has been well-known and a lot of readers have accessed this English daily online website.

### Data Analysis

As the study was mainly qualitative, the quantitative analysis performed in this study included only some basic statistical features by counting the frequencies of the occurrence of each sub-category as representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations of

Searle's speech act taxonomy. The quantitative research results were presented in tables to describe the use of illocutionary speech acts in the English translated lyrics of Prime Minister Prayut Cha-ocha's six patriotic songs.

The qualitative method was applied to identify the existence of all speech acts in the songs. The data was carefully noted, analyzed, and classified. The speech acts theory of Searle is mainly focused on during the analysis process. Moreover, some previous findings of related areas (Qadir & Riloff, 2011; Ilyas & Khushi, 2012; Isnawati, Anam & Diana, 2015; Tunde, 2016; Widya, 2017; Rahayu, Arifin & Ariani, 2018) were used as guidelines before conducting the research. The researcher not only focused on the analysis of speech acts used in songs, but other various sources, such as Christian prayers, message board post, classroom language, movies and etc., were also emphasized to acquire the variety of relevant examples. This can possibly help support the researcher's decision on the types of speech acts used in this study. Furthermore, the analysis process was repeatedly performed to ensure the trustworthiness of the research findings. The researcher verified whether there were any other possibilities of other findings, if so, the new results were noted. The final conclusions were then drawn when the consistency of the study could be confirmed.

## Results

The research results illustrate the classification of the illocutionary speech acts used in the six songs of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha. The English translated lyrics are labeled with different kinds of speech acts. Only declarations speech act is not found in the songs. Each song is identified to demonstrate the frequency of each speech act type. Furthermore, functional aspects found in all songs are categorized and presented as follows:

**Table 1:** The Distribution of Speech Acts Types Found in Prime Minister Prayut' Six songs

Speech Act Types	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Representatives (Assertives)	33	36.66
Directives	31	34.44
Commissives	16	17.77
Expressives	10	11.11
Declarations	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

As Table 1 shows, the total number of all utterances that performed speech acts is 90. The representative speech act is dominantly found in the construction of the lyrics, comprising 36.66% of the speech act sample, followed by the directive speech act at 34.44%. The percentage of 17.77% represents the use of the commissive speech act while 11.11% of the expressive speech act is found. There is no occurrence of the declaration speech act in all six songs.

**Table 2:** The Distribution of Speech Acts Types Found in Each Song

Song Titles	Representatives		Directives		Commissives		Expressives		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Returning Happiness to the People (2014)	9	36	7	28	8	32	1	4	<b>25</b>
Because You Are Thailand (2015)	6	40	3	20	3	20	3	20	<b>15</b>
Hope and Faith (2016)	3	37.5	5	62.5	-	-	-	-	<b>8</b>
Bridge (2017)	4	25	3	18.75	5	31.25	4	25	<b>16</b>
Diamond Heart (2018)	7	46.66	7	46.66	-	-	1	6.66	<b>15</b>
New Day (2019)	4	36.36	6	54.54	-	-	1	9.09	<b>11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>31</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>10</b>		

Based on the results in Table 2 above, the representative speech act is mostly found with the percentage of 36% in the first song ‘Returning Happiness to the People’, and 40% in the song ‘Because You Are Thailand’. The directives were the highest speech act used at 62.5% in the song ‘Hope and Faith’ and at 54.54% in the song ‘New Day’. The representative and directive speech acts share the same frequency of 46.66% in the song ‘Diamond Heart’. The highest number of 31.25 % highlights the commissive speech act used in the song ‘Bridge’.

**Table 3:** The Distribution of Functional Aspects Found in the Songs

Speech Act Types	Functions	F	%
Representatives	stating	15	16.66
	asserting	13	14.44
	describing	5	5.55

Directives	ordering	13	14.44
	requesting	7	7.77
	persuading	5	5.55
	questioning	3	3.33
	prohibiting	3	3.33
Commissives	promising	8	8.88
	vowing	6	6.66
	offering	2	2.22
Expressives	expressing love	5	5.55
	expressing determination	2	2.22
	expressing hope	1	1.11
	expressing desire	1	1.11
	expressing tiredness	1	1.11
<b>Total</b>		<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results of Table 3 indicate 16 functions of all speech acts found in this study. There are three functions of representatives: stating (16.66%), asserting (14.44%) and describing (5.55%). Five language functions of ordering (14.44%), requesting (7.77%), persuading (5.55%), questioning (3.33%) and prohibiting (3.33%) belong to directives. Promising (8.88%), vowing (6.66%) and offering (2.22%) functions in commissives. In expressives, there are five functional aspects of expressing feelings: love (5.55%), determination (2.22%), hope (1.11%), desire (1.11%) and tiredness (1.11%). Among all functional aspects, the function of stating (facts and attitudes) ranks the highest number, followed by asserting and ordering.

Four types of speech acts are found in the study. They are representatives, directives, commissives, and expressives. Some examples of each type of speech acts are shown as follows:

### **I. Representatives**

This class relates to the psychological state of a speaker or writer's belief in something. Representatives carry the property of a statement of being either true or false and the speaker commits himself/herself to the truth of the expressed proposition. Based on the

findings, stating (facts and attitudes), asserting, and describing are found as the main functions of representatives.

### **Example 1**

*Today the nation is facing menacing danger*

*The flames are rising*

(From 'Returning Happiness to the People')

The utterances here are supposed to fit the world. The representative act is assessable in terms of the true or false dimension. The psychological state expressed is that of the composer's own belief. The utterances perform the act of describing; the premier expresses his attitudes about how the political situation of the country is. The word 'flames' here is used to symbolize the ongoing irregular situation of the nation.

### **Example 2**

But if all of us join hands and souls

*The day that we hope for won't be too far for our Thailand*

(From 'Because You Are Thailand')

The representative speech act is used to label the sentence "[t]he day that we hope for won't be too far for our Thailand." The writer commits himself to the notion which comes from his own belief. It shows an expectation of what can happen in a better way. The modal verb 'will' in this sentence relates to the future time. The political situation in the country may possibly be either better or worse. The song writer explicitly expresses his belief with the act of assertion, assuring the people that the irregular political situation will become normal soon if the public cooperates with the government.

## **II. Directives**

The directive act relates to the message sender's desire to get the addressee to perform an action. The addresser wants the change of the world via his/her utterances. Sentences that end with question marks or begins with a question word mostly belong to the directive speech acts. However, sentences including some modal verbs like 'must' or 'has/have to' can also indicate the presence of the use of the directive speech act. Five functional aspects are found in the illocutionary directives in this study; they are ordering, requesting, persuading, prohibiting and questioning.

### **Example 1**

To bring back love, *how long will it take?*

*Please, will you wait?*

(From 'Returning Happiness to the People')

The directive act represents the world-fit-the-word concept with the sincerity condition of 'wish', 'want', 'need' and 'desire'. In other words, this kind of act illustrates what a speaker/writer wants someone to do or to make the world fit the words. The directive speech act is performed in the question "how long will it take?". The use of a question mark can be one feature representing the directive speech act. This sentence is stated as a question. Actually, the premier himself knows well that solving the political problem is likely to not be easy and it may take a long time to finish. In the second sentence, the act outlines its main character by starting with the adverb 'please' to make a polite request in an interrogative form "Please, will you wait?". Although the writer used an interrogative by using the modal verb 'will' and a question mark, it is not considered a question but a request. The premier needed the people to be patient and allow his government lead the country until the conflicts among the people disappear.

**Example 2**

*Let us fix the disappointing past,*

A day where we have to combine our powers,

(From 'New Day')

The sentence form of "Let us be the ones who step in" has the force of polite imperative as showed by using the verb 'let' followed by the object pronoun 'us' and an infinitive. The object pronoun 'us' refers to only the military government and the Prime Minister to perform the action of the verb 'fix'. This utterance is used to perform the act of requesting by asking for a chance from the public to permit or allow his government to take part in solving the political conflict of the country.

**Example 3**

*let's hold hands and go forward together*

(From 'Diamond Heart')

In contrast, the word 'us' in *let's hold hands and go forward together* conveys a distinct meaning. The word '**us**' in this sentence is in the contraction form '**s**'. This utterance shows the function of persuading instead. The writer proposes the people to cooperate with his team. In other words, the public are needed to get involved in overcoming the crisis together.

**Example 4**

*But if all of us join hands and souls*

The day that we hope for won't be too far for our Thailand

(From Because You Are Thailand)

The first clause can show that the premier needs the cooperation of the people. The object pronoun ‘*us*’ is used to show that he wants all people to join him in returning peace to the country. The directive act in this sentence is used to challenge the people to cooperate and make the hearers understand the core of the message, contributing to the function of persuading.

#### **Example 5**

*Combine our powers to get through this, for Thainess*

Two hands, one heart of all the nation’s Thais

In this sentence, the premier tries to direct Thais to do something through his words. This is in the imperative form of giving an order. The function of ordering is produced under the illocutionary directive speech act.

#### **Example 6**

*Don’t lose heart,*

because I never give up,

My two hands won’t let you go,

(From ‘Bridge’)

This sentence begins with a negative imperative by using ‘[d]on’t’ and the base infinitive of the verb to order and tell someone not to do something. This thus meets the characteristics of the speech act of directives and shows the function of prohibiting.

### **III. Commissives**

The writer commits himself/herself to future actions, expressing his/her intention to match the world of the words. One characteristic of the commissive speech act is using the modal verb ‘will’ and the present progressive form to represent the future time. Additionally, the use of the first-person subject pronouns ‘I’ or ‘we’ and the object pronoun ‘me’ or ‘us’ can correspond to the commissives. The functions of promising, vowing, and offering belong to the commissive speech act as found in this study.

#### **Example 1**

*We offer to fight the danger*

*Lives of soldiers will not surrender*

*This is our promise*

(From ‘Returning Happiness to the People’)

The commissive act is visible in which the premier commits himself to some future actions in these three sentences but they present different functions of commissives. As a performative verb, the word 'offer' in the first sentence "[w]e offer to fight the danger" can characterize the speech act of commissives by showing a function of offering. He volunteered to lead the country. As a former army chief, he gives a promise to willingly fight for the country. The modal verb 'will' in "[l]ives of soldiers will not surrender" can present his intention to run the country. As the leader of the military government, he tries to keep his word in ruling the country as he promised. Recovering the political situation in the nation is not easy, but he intends to do his best together with his team to help move the country forward. The speech act of promising is presented in this sentence. The last sentence "[t]his is our promise" presents the function of vowing. The premier's main purpose is to fulfill his promise and to confirm the people that he intends to get the country to be in a regular situation soon.

#### **Example 2**

Don't lose heart, because I never give up,

*My two hands won't let you go,*

(From 'Bridge')

The lyric, "My two hands won't let you go", shows the function of promising. The premier has a strong intention to solve the problems in the country. This comes from his promise given to the people earlier.

**IV. Expressives** is the speech act of expressing psychological condition or feelings of a speaker or a writer. With respect to the research results, there are five functions to show the premier's feeling: love, determination, hope, desire, and tiredness.

#### **Example 1**

Life is not permanent,

but the country must always live on

*I want to see you recover and be bright again*

*As long as I still breathe, I will not be daunted by any obstacles*

(From 'Because You Are Thailand')

The word 'want' as a signal clue in "I want to see you recover and be bright again", represents the use of expressives. This reveals the writer's wish for the betterment of the country, leading the people to overcome the political conflicts. Likewise, the sentence "[a]s long as I still breathe, I will not be daunted by any obstacles" confirms that nothing can

discourage the government leader. He is still determined in his administrative role. Interestingly, the writer uses the subject 'you' to refer to 'Thailand' in the song's title, 'Because You Are Thailand', to express how he feels about the country.

### **Example 2**

*A hope for a refreshed nation,*

*A hope for all Thais to be happy and content,*

*The hope in my heart, sent to every heart,*

The utterances here can be inferred to the expressive speech act with the function of expressing hope. The writer expresses his hope to all people in the country. He wishes for the country to be more peaceful and the people can live in their motherland with happiness.

## **Discussion**

The research results can conclude that sixteen functional aspects are found and the representative speech act of stating is the most frequently used in Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha's six songs. Four types of speech acts are found in the songs: representatives, directives, commissives and expressives. Representatives prove the dominant form among the five types of illocutionary act. The result also demonstrates that there are no occurrences in the class of declarations and this is in accordance with the study of Cahyono, (2013), อัจฉราพร ไกรบุตรและวิไลศักดิ์ กิ่งคำ, (2559), and สันติ ทิพนา, (2561). Cahyono (2013) studied the illocutionary acts on imperative sentences in the songs of Mr.Big Album. อัจฉราพร ไกรบุตร and วิไลศักดิ์ กิ่งคำ (2559) classified speech acts in patriotic songs while สันติ ทิพนา (2561) focused the use of speech acts in Thai E-san country songs of Jintara Poonlab. Although each song yields different tones, feelings and contents, the songs share the same illocutionary force of speech acts. No utterances used in these songs bring about any changes to the state of affairs they refer to.

Form the pragmatic view, the lack of the declaration speech act in the songs mentioned above can result from several reasons. The declaration speech act is normally used in case of the state of affairs, and immediately changes the world via utterances in accord with the proposition of the declaration, for example firing, marrying, nominating, appointing and sentencing. The messages conveyed from this act as mentioned above are considered important. Although patriotic songs are not mainly used to entertain people, it is improper to use this kind of song to announce or inform certain significant topics to the public. Instead, there is a better communicative channel between the premier and the people. As the head of

the government with absolute power, the Prime Minister can make use of the weekly televised TV program, 'Returning Happiness to the People', and directly interact with the people in a more formal way. His direct interaction with the public on screen may be more advantageous and possibly yield more benefits when comparing to the use of his songs.

According to the results, representatives are the speech act type mostly found in the songs. The representative act is used to state facts and attitudes about the ongoing political situation that the song writer really believes. As the junta government leader, the premier led his team to tackle the political problems of the nation with his promises and commitments. He tried to convince the people that he got involved in the politics with good intention, assuring that he would restore reconciliation to the people as soon as possible. He knew that his seizure of power was not acceptable by the majority of people so he made use of his songs to continuously communicate with them. The facts and situations stated by the premier might help raise more public acceptance in his government. Therefore, his lyrics clearly present the language functions of stating and asserting, especially in the first song 'Returning Happiness to the People' which was released one month after the coup d'état.

After launching the military coup against the democratically elected government in 2014, the premier confronted a lot of chronic political problems of the country. However, he knew that his government could not run the country in the irregular situation alone. All people in the country were needed to take part in the political reforms. Support and cooperation from the public were needed to recover the country together. Therefore, the functions of directives' ordering, requesting and persuading are mostly shown in the songs. The function of ordering proves dominant. As the government leader, he could direct the people to follow his orders or instructions, particularly in such irregular situations. In reality, what he directed the people to do did not bring about violence but he tried to promote love of the nation among all people as shown in the song "New Day" and "This land, this home, we must love the country, Keep it and conserve it, with all Thais' hearts....Don't let anyone come in and hurt Thailand". In addition, the function of ordering in his songs can reflect the Prime Minister's effort to encourage the people to help return peace and reconciliation to the country. That is why the frequency of directives employed in the Prime Minister's songs is slightly different from representatives.

The high frequency of using representatives' stating and asserting and directives' ordering can explain that the premier, former Army Commander in Chief, wants to show what the people should do in such situations and assures them how better the country can be if they follow his instructions. This likely affects the disappearance of the commissive speech

act in the songs released in 2016, 2018 and 2019. In the first song 'Returning Happiness to the People', commissives rank the second, following with the representative act. The premier volunteered to run the country so he fully expresses commitments and promises to trust the public.

Interestingly, the change of certain syntactical components in sentences can affect the speech act types. As mentioned above, the use of 'Let's' and 'Let us' cannot mark the same language functions. This can prove that only a little change of the contraction form can transform the illocutionary speech acts. The addition of some modal verbs can also be relevant to the speech act categories.

## **Conclusion**

The findings showed that there is a relationship between a verb and the classification of speech act used in the songs. However, some performative verbs do not explicitly convey the kind of speech act being performed. In addition, some adjectives and other English grammatical aspects can sometimes change speech act types. The theory is associated with the information in which words are represented. However, actions are also included through the use of the utterances. Speakers and writers can express their intention through both verbal and non-verbal messages. Listeners and readers interpret the given information, using their own linguistic and pragmatic abilities to understand the messages in both direct and indirect ways.

Speech act theory plays a crucial role in people's daily lives. It is considered a basis of daily communication. Therefore, the study of illocutionary speech acts should be unavoidably adopted in the teaching and learning of the English language especially in EFL classes. English teachers may introduce the speech act theory and its functional aspects. The students should be encouraged to practice communicating with their teachers and classmates through different forms in a real situation. A small talk, conversation and discussion may be set as face-to-face communication methods both directly and indirectly. Raising understanding of speech acts can help EFL students to have deep insight and awareness in the language use; this can improve both receptive and productive English skills. Moreover, they can find socially appropriate language forms and respond to any interactions with other people if they can understand the speech act theory. Making use of the speech act theory can help improve not only their English skills but other languages they are interested in from this time forth.

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## Appendix

### 1. Returning Happiness to the People (2014)

The day the nation, the King, and the mass of people live without danger  
 We offer to guard and protect you with our hearts  
     This is our promise  
 Today the nation is facing menacing danger  
     The flames are rising  
 Let us be the ones who step in, before it is too late  
 To bring back love, how long will it take?  
     Please, will you wait?  
     We will move beyond disputes  
     We will do what we promised.  
 We are asking for a little more time.  
     And the beautiful land will return  
     We will do with sincerity  
 All we ask of you is to trust and have faith in us  
     The land will be good soon  
 Let us return happiness to you, the people  
     Today, we will be tired, we know  
     We offer to fight the danger  
 Lives of soldiers will not surrender  
     This is our promise  
 Today the nation is facing menacing danger.  
     The flames are rising

Let us be the ones who step in, before it is too late  
The land will be good soon  
Happiness will return to Thailand

## **2. Because You Are Thailand (2015)**

The life that I was born into, you are what I uphold  
I love you and bond with you more than anything  
Because you are Thailand  
I will not let anyone destroy you  
Life is not permanent,  
but the country must always live on  
I want to see you recover and be bright again  
As long as I still breathe, I will not be daunted by any obstacles  
If there are only two hands and one soul  
The power won't be enough to make dreams come true  
But if all of us join hands and souls  
The day that we hope for won't be too far for our Thailand  
If there are only two hands and one soul  
The power won't be enough to make dreams come true  
But if all of us join hands and souls  
The day that we hope for won't be too far for our Thailand  
Stride toward a great hope  
I will return happiness to all of you

## **3. Hope and Faith (2016)**

Hope and faith create great power  
Holding hands and hearts, walking forward towards the destination  
Don't give up or be shaken, though tragedies obstruct us like thorns  
Combine our powers to get through this, for Thainess  
Two hands, one heart of all the nation's Thais (repeated)  
Let's hold hands and declare our nation glorious eternal!  
Just be honest, just be united, steadfast in goodness forever (repeated)  
Just have faith, just have strength in your heart

What you hope for will come true

#### **4. Bridge (2017)**

(Verse 1) It might've been a while since I've been fighting for you,

The land I love so strongly.

How long it is, I persevere in heart,

When I face a rapid river, great obstacles,

How do I get you through tragedies?

(Bridge) Don't lose heart, because I never give up,

My two hands won't let you go,

Don't be shaken, I'm asking you.

(Chorus) I'm ready to be the bridge for you to cross,

I'll take you to the destination you're dreaming of, like I intend to,

I'm ready to be the bridge for you to cross into cool and fresh comfort,

That day isn't far off,

What we dreamed of will come true.

(Verse 2) What I promised on that day,

I've been fighting for it with my heart,

Every time I fall, I get up again,

I was born to live for you, my treasured land,

I'll repay you and fight for you until I die.

(Bridge)

(Chorus)

#### **5. Diamond Heart (2018)**

(Verse 1) How many years have we gone through together?

There are always new problems,

You are the inspiration that makes me fight for you,

Did you know your smile is my happiness?

(Bridge) No matter how tired or difficult,

let's hold hands and go forward together,

Stable, ready, unrelenting faith.

(Chorus) Make your heart a real diamond, unrelenting,

Side by side today together,  
obstacles mean nothing,  
The lessons we learn are new every day,  
We have to build our hearts' dream together so it's resilient.  
(Verse 2) The more the sky roars, the more our hearts move forward,  
Good hearts never relent,  
The strong who fall into waters or fires aren't troubled,  
We'll avoid them as long as we have goodness.  
(Repeat Bridge, Chorus, Bridge, Chorus x2)

### **6. New Day (2019)**

Dreaming and waiting for a new day to arrive,  
To engrave upon the pages of Thai history,  
Towards democracy,  
For all Thais.  
A hope for a refreshed nation,  
A hope for all Thais to be happy and content,  
The hope in my heart, sent to every heart,  
So we can all know that Thailand is never hopeless.  
(Chorus) Thailand's new day is coming to refresh our hearts,  
Let us fix the disappointing past,  
A day where we have to combine our powers,  
Don't let anyone come in and hurt Thailand.  
(Refrain) Thailand's new day will be bright and shining,  
When all of us do our duties proudly,  
This land, this home, we must love the country,  
Keep it and conserve it, with all Thais' hearts.  
(Repeat chorus and refrain twice)