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Research Article

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The Commissive Speech Acts Performed by Alma and Mirabel Madrigal in *Encanto* Movie (2021)

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Abstract

This study examines Alma and Mirabel Madrigal's uses of commissive speech acts in the Disney animated film *Encanto* (2021). Using a descriptive qualitative research method, the study discovers that there are 16 commissive acts uttered by Alma and Mirabel Madrigal. While there are acts of guarantee, promising, refusing, volunteering, threatening, and offering, the acts of guarantee are the type of commissives most frequently uttered, indicating Alma and Mirabel's commitment to future actions. Mirabel performs all of the commissive speech acts to demonstrate her importance and value in the Madrigal family and to communicate her ability to stand up for what she believes in.

Keywords: Encanto; movie; commissive speech act

1. Introduction

Encanto is a movie that revolves around the lives of tough women in a place called Encanto. This movie is produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios in 2021. Unlike other Disney movies, this movie centers around the life of Columbian women, and two characters who have huge impact on the movie are Alma and Mirabel Madrigal. Therefore, in this study, we chose the two female characters that significantly impacted the movie: Alma Madrigal and Mirabel Madrigal.

Alma is the head of the Madrigal family and the leader of the Encanto. She is a single mother who had to raise three children independently since her husband died on the battlefield. She raised her children well until she had many grandchildren, one of whom is Mirabel Madrigal. Alma must also keep the candle that is believed to be the source of the miracle that the Madrigal family possesses. If Alma fails to keep the candle, it will die, and all the gifts that the Madrigal family members own will be lost, which can be a disaster for the entire Encanto.

Mirabel Madrigal is a girl who is looking for her identity. She is faced with social pressures and differences between herself and her family. Mirabel is the only descendant of Madrigal who has no miracle. Then, she is underestimated by her family and the people of Encanto. In this movie, she tries to save Madrigal's gift and finds her miracle.

Alma and Mirabel perform various speech acts, including a commissive speech act. They perform a commissive speech act to convey their dedication, ambition, commitment, and capacity to exhibit their influence on the society around them. The commissives that Alma and Mirabel utter are studied within the pragmatic framework and are analyzed using Searle's speech acts theory. This theory is elaborated with Lakoff's language feature so as to make the analysis comprehensive.

Research on commissive speech acts is not new, none of which, however, studies commissive acts in the movie *Encanto* (2021). We have thus far discovered five (5) commissive studies on movies, two

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(2) studies on the commissive acts in debate speeches, one (1) commissive examination of songs, and two (2) studies investigating the movie *Encanto*.

Research on commissive speech acts in movies has been conducted by Ramadhan (2018), Kumalasari (2019), Devi (2020); Desica and Ambalegin (2021), and Wulandary (2021). All the studies use Searle's speech acts as the main theoretical framework. However, they differ from this study in that they do not focus on commissives used by female characters to assert their subjectivities.

Studies on commissive speech acts studies in debates are carried out by Husain et al. (2020) and Al-Bantany (2013), while commissive research of songs is conducted by Alam et al. (2019). Al-Bantany (2013) discusses the commissive acts uttered by Banten governor candidates and the politeness in speech acts. Husain et al. (2020) presents an analysis of the commissives uttered by presidential candidates and the function of the commissives to obtain votes for the candidates. Meanwhile, Alam et al. (2019) analyze commissive acts in Adele's songs.

Two studies focusing on the movie *Encanto* are conducted by Kurniasih and Multasih (2022) and Hastuti et al. (2022). They examine *Encanto* because the movie concerns family struggle and values. Also, *Encanto* presents an amazing visual art, rich in sounds and images that are used as tools to tell stories. Both studies use Searle's framework. Kurniasih and Multasih (2022) discuss the types of expressive acts in the movie, while Hastuti, et.al. (2022) analyze the directive speech acts.

This all suggests that there has never been a study of commissive speech acts in the movie *Encanto*. All research on commissives does not focus on women as the main characters and does not discuss how women use commissives to assert their subjectivities.

2. Methods

This study used referential and inferential research methods based on the qualitative-descriptive method. The data are the source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in an identifiable local context. The data of this study were utterances that contain commissive speech acts from the *Encanto* Movie. In doing this study, the data sources had taken from the *Encanto* movie as the primary data source. We also used the *Encanto* movie script as a secondary data source.

The referential and inferential methods were used to analyze the data in this study (Sudaryanto, 1993). The referential method is used to identify the unit of analysis based on its referent, concept, or meaning. The inferential method is a technical analysis method used to examine data by concluding the current information. After collecting data (utterance) from the primary data source and the secondary data source (transcript), I analyzed the utterance using Searle's theory which is supported by the description of each conversation context and elaborated with the language feature analysis.

3. Results

In this section, we identify the types of commissive acts performed by Mirabel and Alma using Searle's theory in *Encanto*. We separated and compared the analysis of commissive speech acts uttered by Mirabel Madrigal and Alma Madrigal to show that the characters have more influence using the commissive illocutionary acts. We conducted a detailed and elaborate analysis of the reasons for commissive acts. The result indicates that Alma and Mirabel Madrigal utter 16 commissive acts.

Type of Commissive Acts	The frequency of Commissive Acts		
	Alma Madrigal	Mirabel Madrigal	Σ
Promising	0	3	3
Threatening	0	1	1
Refusing	0	3	3
Offering	0	1	1
Guarantee	4	1	5
Volunteering	0	4	4
Total	4	12	16

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Table 2. Types and Frequency of Language Features

No	Type of Language Features	Σ
1.	Intensifier	2
2.	Empty Adjective	1
3.	Tag Question	0
4.	Super-polite form	2
5.	Hyper-correct grammar	0
6.	Emphatic Stress	3
7.	Lexical Hedges	1
	Total	9

4. Discussion

4.1 Alma Madrigal

Alma Madrigal plays an essential role in Encanto region. She is the leader of Encanto, a vibrant and enchanted place where the Madrigal family resides. Also, Alma is the head of the Madrigal family; the death of her husband years ago has made her a single parent on whose shoulder her family depends on. The result in *Figure 1* shows that Alma utters 4 commissive acts, consisting of one type of commissive act: guarantee.

4.1.1 Guarantee

Guarantee is used when the speaker will confidently do something to the hearer. It also means that the speaker gives a statement that makes the hearer believe something will happen. A guarantee is often delivered as an agreement that something will happen. The following utterances in the bold text are examples of guarantee acts performed by Alma Madrigal:

Datum 1 (03:12-03:20)

Alma	: "Tonight, this candle will give you your gift, mi vida. Strengthen our community,
	strengthen our home. Make your family proud."
Mirabel	: "Make my family proud."

The dialogue above takes place in Casita Hall, Madigal's house. The participants of the conversation are Alma and little Mirabel. At that time, the Madrigal family is holding Mirabel's gift ceremony. The ceremony gift is the event determining the miracle given to the descendants of Madrigal. The member of the Madrigal family who has reached five years old must follow the gift

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ceremony. In the event, the Madrigal family members must go to the second floor and be given magic candles. Then they will face the door that has been prepared for their room and receive a miracle through that door.

A fifth-year-old Mirabel also has to do it by herself. She is scared and nervous. She talks to her grandmother Alma that she needs to be more confident. That night, Alma says the word of guarantee to Mirabel *"Tonight, this candle will give you your gift, mi vida."* The bold text in the text above is Alma's Guarantee Act. A guarantee act is a firm declaration that the speaker confidently tells others something will happen.

That sentence is included in a guarantee act since Alma confidently tells Mirabel that the magic candle will give the miracle. Alma tells Mirabel that the candle always reveals a gift to the Madrigal family. The reason for the guarantee sentence is to convince Mirabel during the gift ceremony. Alma also advises calming Mirabel. After Mirabel had a miracle, she could make the Madrigal family proud and help the people of *Encanto*. In datum 1, there is an empty adjective in the words "*mi vida*". An empty adjective refers to an adjective that lacks precise or meaningful content. The phrase "*mi vida*" means that Alma shows an endearment to Mirabel, her granddaughter.

4.2 Mirabel Madrigal

Mirabel is the main character in the *Encanto* movie. She is one of the grandchildren of Alma Madrigal. Mirabel is the only descendant of Madrigal, who has no gift. The result in *Figure 2* shows that Mirabel utters 16 commissive acts. Mirabel Madrigal predominantly uses volunteering with four (4) utterances. Other types include promising with three (3) utterances, refusing with three (3) utterances, threatening with one (1) utterance, offering with one (1) utterance, and guaranteeing with one (1) utterance.

4.2.1 Volunteering

Volunteering provides one's time, skills, or resources to a cause or organization without expecting payment or other rewards. It is a selfless act that aims to give back to others or help those in need. The following utterances in the bold text are examples of volunteering acts performed by Mirabel:

Datum 2 (10:09-10:19)

Isabela lands next to Mirabel but does not see her as she turns and bumps into her, covering both in flowers. As they walk side-by-side, they can feel their friction. Mirabel tries to get the petals off of her. Isabela makes herself perfect.

Isabela	: "Uch, a little sisterly advice. You would not be in the way if you weren't always
	trying too hard."
Mirabel	: "Actually, Isa, this is called helping, and I'm not in the way you are."

The conversation takes place between Isabela and Mirabel inside Madrigal's house. Isabela and Mirabel have an intimate relationship since they are sisters. Isabela is Mirabel's older sister and can grow plants. At that time, the Madrigal family prepares a gift ceremony for Antonio. The entire Madrigal family performs their duties according to their strengths. Mirabel, the only Madrigal with no powers, tries to help according to her abilities. However, Isabela sees her pity and advises Mirabel to leave and give her duties to others. As can be seen from Datum 5, The topic of the dialogue above is Isabela's dislike of Mirabel's attempts to appear helpful in the Madrigal family.

Isabela thinks that Mirabel only makes the duties harder and more efficient. However, Mirabel casually said, "*Actually, Isa, this is called helping.*" This utterance indicates that Mirabel said she volunteered to help with the event. A volunteer act is a statement that the speaker is doing something

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without being asked. The bold text in Datum 5 is included in a volunteering act since Mirabel wants to help with Antonio's gift ceremony without being asked.

She also adds, "*I'm not in the way you are*," indicating that she does not interfere with Isabela's duty. The reason for the voluntary speech is to keep Isabela away, and Mirabel can help with the event according to her ability. Mirabel thinks that she should help even though she does not have a miracle. She only wants to help with her ordinary own powers. In this datum also included a super-polite form indicated in the phrase "*Actually, Isa,....*". Super-polite form refers to a formal and respectful form of language used in a certain cultural context. Mirabel adds the word "*actually*" to make her utterance more polite since Isabella is her older sister.

4.2.2 Promising

A promise is an agreement between two people in which one commits to doing or not doing something for the other. It is a verbal contract made for future actions. When making a promise, the speaker must deliberately intend to fulfill it. They must believe that the action they are promising is in the other person's best interest, have confidence in their ability to act, plan for future steps, and be ready to take necessary actions on behalf of the other person. The following utterances in the bold text are promising acts spoken by Mirabel:

Datum 3 (30:32-30:58)

Tears are welling up in Abuela's eyes now.

Alma : "Why is this happening? Please open my eyes. If the answer is here, help me find it. Help me protect our family. Help me save... our miracle."

Abuela turns and heads back into her room. We push in on Mirabel; if there is any doubt that she needs to act, it's gone. The cracks were real, she's not crazy, she needs to help Abuela, she needs to save the magic, save the family. Mirabel stares at the candle.

Mirabel : "I will save the miracle."

The participants of the dialogue above are Alma and Mirabel. This dialogue takes place in front of Alma's room. At this moment, Mirabel is searching about what is happening in her house. Mirabel is confused about the cracks she saw in Antonio's gift ceremony. Mirabel thinks about how the cracks could disappear just in a second. She is curious about this and decides to go to the place of the magical candle, Alma's room. While Mirabel passes through Alma's room, Mirabel hears Alma crying. Mirabel is curious about Alma's circumstances, walking closer to the bedroom window.

Mirabel sees Alma holding her tears while staring at Pedro's chatelaine. Alma says she needs Pedro's help to save the Madrigal's miracle. Mirabel assumes that Alma already knows about the cracks in their house. However, she pretends not to see since she does not want to worry everyone. Pedro is Alma's husband, who passed away during the war. Pedro sacrifices himself to save Alma, their triplets, and *Encanto* society. After Pedro dies, God gives Alma a magic candle to protect her children and the *Encanto* community. Then, the magical candle is always given as a miracle to the descendants of Madrigal except Mirabel.

After hearing about Alma's mourning, Mirabel thinks Alma, her family, and Encanto need her. She stares at the magic candle and says, "*I will save the miracle*." The bold text in Datum 9 indicates a promising act. A promise is a commitment statement that has a purpose to refrain from doing something for another person. The promise always makes another person achieve the benefit. In this situation, Mirabel thinks she is the only person who can save the Madrigal's miracle because no one knows about the cracks, and Alma decides to keep it for herself. It encourages Mirabel to utter that sentence. The bold text in Datum 9 is included in a promising act since Mirabel speaks promises to

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save the miracle and her family implicitly using the word "will." The bold text in Datum 12 is a promising act.

4.2.3 Refusing

Refusal is a typical negative response in everyday situations, such as declining invitations, requests, offers, or suggestions. Saying "no" is often more significant than giving an actual response. How refusal is expressed depends on cultural, linguistic, and ethnic values. The speaker and listener must understand the refusal's context, form, and purpose. These utterances in bold text are refusing acts spoken by Mirabel:

Datum 4 (17:48-17:55)

The House encourages Antonio, but he will not budge. Antonio turns to Mirabel, hand outstretched, asking for help. Mirabel looks to Alma, whose rules for tonight are clear, then back to Antonio, torn.

Mirabel	: "I can't."
Antonio	: "I need you."

Based on the conversation above, Mirabel and Antonio have a small discussion in the hall of Casita. Antonio is scared and nervous in this scene following the gift ceremony procession. Before the ceremony begins, Antonio also hides in Mirabel's room. Antonio is Mirabel's cousin and a member that follows the Madrigal family's gift ceremony. The ceremony must be followed by every Madrigal family when they are fifth years old. The procession of the gift ceremony starts with the descendants of Madrigal has to walk up the Casita stairs to the second floor. Casita is the name of the Madrigal magical house.

The second floor of Casita contains the magical rooms of each member of Madrigal. After they arrive on the second floor, Alma, the head of the family, gives the magic candle to them. Then, the magical candle will show their gift. All of the procession will be witnessed by *Encanto* society. Antonio feels very nervous since he has yet to perform in front of the public. He also feels scared that his gift does not work like Mirabel's. However, he has to follow the procession since everyone in *Encanto* is waiting for him.

He asks Mirabel to accompany him through the stairs and meets Alma, who brings the miracle candle to the second floor. Antonio thinks Mirabel can comfort his nervousness. Mirabel feels hesitant because the rules prohibit her from accompanying a person who follows the procession. Mirabel says with a sad look, *"I can't..."* as a form of refusal to Antonio. That bold text is a refusing act by Mirabel. Refusal is a typical negative response to someone's invitation, offer, suggestion, request, etc. The bold text in Datum 15 is included in a refusing act since Mirabel utters a negative response to Antonio. It also performs a rejection of a request from Antonio. The function of the refusing act sentence is to alleviate Mirabel's discomfort because the procession is usually carried out alone.

4.2.4 Threatening

A threat is a statement intended to punish or intimidate others. It is often used to coerce the listener into obeying the speaker's commands. Threats may be motivated by the speaker's dislike or resentment towards the listener, and the speaker may believe they can intimidate the listener through their words. Threats can be based on the perception of authority or control that the speaker has over the listener. The following utterance in the bold text is an example of a threatening act performed by Mirabel:

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Datum 5 (12:52-13:11)

Mirabel : "Everyone's looking for you. This present will self-destruct if you don't take it in three, two, one..."

Two tinny hands pop out from under the bed, grab the present, and disappear below. Smiling, Mirabel scootches under the bed and joins Antonio.

Mirabel: "Nervous? You have nothing to worry about. You're going to get your gift and
open that door... and it's gonna be the coolest ever. I know it."Antonio: "Mm-hmm."

This short conversation between Mirabel and Antonio takes place in Mirabel's room. Antonio is Mirabel's cousin who must follow the gift ceremony that day. Antonio is an animal lover in the Madrigal family. Before Antonio receives a gift from the magic candle, he sleeps with Mirabel. Everyone is looking for Antonio, but he is hiding in Mirabel's room because he fears his gift will not appear.

Mirabel enters her room and hears the sound of a knock under her bed. She knows that Antonio caused it. Mirabel says to Antonio that everyone in the house is looking for him. He knocks on the floor but does not exit under the bed. Then Mirabel takes a wrapping gift on the table and shakes it under the bed. She says, "*This present will self-destruct if you don't take it in three, two, one...*". The sentence that is uttered by Mirabel above is a threatening act. A threatening act is a statement that the speaker intends to punish the hearer. The speaker usually feels higher and superior rather than the hearer. Datum 14 is included in a threatening act since Mirabel wants Antonio to exit from under her bed.

The conversation in Datum 14 happens because Antonio doesn't want to follow the gift ceremony. Mirabel threatens Antonio by saying, *"This present will self-destruct if you don't take it in three, two, one..."*. The reason for the threatening act to Antonio is to follow the gift ceremony. She does not wish to make Alma mad at her again since she already burned her candle base and almost breaks the decoration.

4.2.5 Offering

An offer is an expression of willingness to provide a service or gift to someone. It is a way of saying that the speaker is ready to perform an act in the best interests of the listener or addressee. An offer is an act of generosity that can be made in various contexts, such as in business, social situations, or personal relationships. The offer may be made with or without the expectation of something in return, depending on the situation and the relationship between the parties involved. The following utterance in the bold text is an example of an offering act used by Mirabel:

Datum 6 (01:07:25-01:08:35)

Mirabel	: "Isa? Hey!" Mirabel continues through the room.
Mirabel	: "I know we've had our issues, but I'm ready to be your better sister. So we should just hug. Let's hug it out, Eh?"
Isabela	: "Hug it out?"

Based on the conversation above, Mirabel and Isabela engage in a small discussion in Isabela's room. Isabela is Mirabel's second older sister. Isabela is a descendant of Madrigal, who has a gift for growing plants. Before this conversation happens, Mirabel ruins Isabela's engagement with Mariano.

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Isabela is very angry about it and locks herself inside her room. At the same time, Mirabel receives a forecast from Bruno that she can save her family after she reconciles and hugs Isabela.

In the beginning, Mirabel refuses to reconcile with Isabela. However, finally, she agrees to apologize and reconcile with Isabela. Then, she enters Isabela's room and starts to talk with Isabela. Isabela has a large room with many flower types from around the world. Mirabel struggles to avoid prickly plants that are deliberately installed so that no one would enter Isabela's room. Mirabel asks Isabela to reconcile by saying, "*I know we've had our issues, but I'm ready to be your better sister: So we should just hug. Let's hug it out, Eh?*".

The bold text above is an offering act. An offer is an ability when we are prepared to do something for others. Offering also a willingness to do something that concerns acceptance from the hearer. The bold text in Datum 15 is included in an offering act since Mirabel utters a sentence offering a sign of peace. Mirabel wishes Isabela, "Let's hug it out," as a sign of her peace offer. But Isabela asked again with the same sentence, which meant that she did not immediately accept peace from Mirabel. This datum also contains a lexical hedge in the phrase "*So we should just hug*". Lexical hedger refers to a linguistic term that describes a word to express uncertainty, vagueness, or qualification in communication. It means that Mirabel uses it to make the offering act properly.

4.2.6 Guarantee

A guarantee is a strong statement in which the speaker confidently assures the audience that something will happen or be done. It is a declaration that something is genuine or will occur in the future. The following utterance in the bold text is an example of a guarantee act performed by Alma:

Datum 7 (53:23-53.59) Mirabel : "I'm not doing anything! It's Bruno's vision! It's..."

Abuela chases after Abuela Guzman and Mariano. She goes outside and tells the crowded people who want to celebrate Isabela and Mariano's engagement.

Alma

: "The magic is strong! EVERYTHING IS FINE! We are the Madrigals!"

The dialogue above happens between Alma and the crowded people in front of Madrigal's house. Before this conversation, The Madrigal family held Isabela and Mariano's engagement. All of the Madrigal family join the event. The event is done simply with dinner together in the dining room. At that time, everyone at the dining table is worried about Mirabel's forecast found in Bruno's room. The glass forecast portrays Mirabel and the broken house. It means that Mirabel connects with the cracks in their room—only Alma, Isabela, Mariano, and his mother do not know about this information.

They are having a conversation but also notice other people's different behavior in the dining room. Suddenly, cracks appear in the dining room. Mirabel quickly covers the cracks with her body and acts like nothing has happened. Her father also helps her to cover other cracks. Then, when Mariano makes the marriage proposal to Isabela, the cracks become more extensive and make everyone panic. Pepa, one of Mirabel's cousins, shouts that Mirabel's forecast causes it to be found in Bruno's room. Everyone knows about this, and the situation is very chaotic. Everyone in the dining room blames Mirabel since it is ruining Isabela's engagement. Mirabel defends herself and says that it is Bruno's vision.

The crowded people waiting outside to celebrate Isabela's engagement are also chaotic. Then, Alma says, "The magic is strong! EVERYTHING IS FINE! We are the Madrigals!". The bold text in

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Datum ... is a guarantee act. A guarantee act is a firm promise that something will happen. Alma uses the phrase "everything is fine" as an implicit statement that nothing has to be worried about the Madrigal family. The function of the guarantee act above is to assure the crowded people that the magic is safe and that everyone does not have to be worried about the situation in the Madrigal house.

5. Conclusion

The data analysis suggests that there are 26 commissive acts uttered by Alma and Mirabel Madrigal. Also, the analysis shows that all types of commissives are spoken by Alma and Mirabel in the movie *Encanto* (2021). There are three (3) promising, one (1) threatening, three (3) refusing, one (1) offering, five (5) guarantee, and four (4) volunteering. The most frequent commissive act performed by Alma and Mirabel is guarantee. Most of the guarantee acts are performed by Alma. Alma uses them to reassure Mirabel, who will do the gift ceremony. Mirabel also performs the guarantee acts to calm Antonio, who will follow the gift ceremony. Volunteering acts are the second most frequently performed. Mirabel performs all of the volunteering acts. She performs volunteering acts to promote her existence in the family. She wants to show her family that even though she has no miracle, she can help any family events with her ability. Mirabel uses volunteering acts to demonstrate her importance and value in the Madrigal family. Being the only Madrigal without a miracle, she needs to prove herself and show to her family that she can contribute to the family affairs. By showing her abilities and willingness to contribute, Mirabel demonstrates that she plays an essential role in the Madrigal-s.

The refusing acts are the third most frequent type of commissive used by Mirabel and Alma, with three (3) utterances. Mirabel is the only Madrigal who performs refusing acts, using them to demonstrate her ability to help and stand up for what she believes in. Her refusing acts show her family that she is willing to take a stand and refuse to accept ideas that she disagrees with. Despite her lack of a miracle, Mirabel's refusing acts show that she is a strong and capable member of the Madrigal family who is not afraid to speak her mind and take a stand for what she believes is right. Fourth, the promising acts are the third most frequent type of commissive used by Mirabel with two (2) utterances. Mirabel performs all of the promising acts. She performs them to express her seriousness in doing something. She mainly uses it to show her family that she wants to save the miracle of Madrigal.

Then, threatening acts and offering acts occupy the position of the last frequency of commissive that is found. Both threatening and offering have one (1) utterance, which Alma and Mirabel perform. Only Mirabel performs the threatening act and the offering act in this study. Mirabel used to make Antonio agree to follow the gift ceremony. Mirabel uses it to offer reconciliation with Isabela. Another reason she performs this is to apologize to Isabela since she ruined Isabela's engagement.

This analysis also indicates the language features in the commissive speech act used by Alma and Mirabel. The most frequent type of language feature is an empty adjective with three (3) utterances. Alma mostly used this language feature to make her statement stronger. The second frequent type is super-polite and intensifier. Mirabel also used these language features to strengthen her statement and show her politeness to older people. The last frequent types are empty adjectives and lexical hedgers. Alma used an empty adjective to show an endearment to Mirabel and Mirabel used lexical hedger to make her offering act properly.

In the context of Encanto, the characters Mirabel and Alma predominantly utilize guarantee acts as their most commonly used type of commissive speech acts. These guarantee acts serve the purpose of asserting their presence and committing to future actions. These commissive speech acts employ various language features to strengthen and clarify their statements. By showcasing these speech acts through the movie characters, movie makers and scenario writers can effectively deliver the movie's message to viewers, ensuring its successful communication.

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