

Illocutionary Forces in BPO Discourse: Identifying Speech Acts of Call Center Agents in Technical Service Interactions

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on the types of speech acts produced by the call center agents during their phone conversations with customers. This study belongs to the type of descriptive-qualitative research. The data were taken from the utterances from 10 male and 10 female call center agents in the call center industry in the Philippines. To analyze the data based on Searle's (1969) speech acts theory, the study classified the illocutionary acts into the following four major categories: directives (requesting, asking, suggesting, and advising), assertives (stating, informing, explaining, affirming, and responding), commissives (offering and agreeing), and expressives (thanking, apologizing, greeting, welcoming, and commending).

These findings stress the instrumental use of language in accomplishing technical tasks while also maintaining professional relationships in the outsourcing environment's high-pressure context.

Keywords: *Speech Acts, Searle's Taxonomy, Call Center Agents, Applied Linguistics, BPO*

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary corporate environments, utterances are the primary means of reaching a service level agreement between the service provider and the customer. In the BPO industry, the utterances are essential because the agents, who provide technical support and engage with customers, are the initial points of contact in the time-critical environment. Most of these exchanges are not about transferring information; they accomplish certain outcomes, such as fixing a broken device or confirming an account. Here, language is not used mainly for information transfer, but is instead "doing things" with language. This means that being successful in this transaction relies heavily on one being capable of using speech acts correctly (Searle, 1969). Within this sector, communication is a manifestation of professional identity and a signal of trust that distinguishes one service provider against competitors in a globalized market place (Wheeler, 2010).

While the BPO industry is one of the biggest contributors to the economy and labor market, it is challenged with language subtlety and high customer expectations (Santiago, 2023). When trained to speak in English, they may not have sufficient knowledge about the impact of different speech acts on the flow and outcome of a call. But little is known about the extent to which such acts are employed in the Filipino

BPO context (Tauqir & Alvi, 2021) or their effects on the overall performance of technical support (Bilgin, 2018).

Likewise, socio-linguistic variables can determine the outcome of an interaction, as a speaker's choice of utterance to issue a directive or apology can either ease an interaction or estrange a caller based on the perceived politeness or clarity of the speech act offered (Santos & Garcia, 2019). Although there is research on the organizational and psychological stressors faced by call center employees, less attention has been devoted to the linguistic "tricks" and underlying realistic structures they employ. Thus, the purpose of the study is to find out which of the five speech acts of the linguistic categories are most used by the service center agents in closing the divide between technical knowledge and communicative competence. The five speech acts are directives, assertives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.

Extending the Speech Act Theory of John Searle (1969, 1979), the research improves our understanding of how utterances can be understood based on their illocutionary force. It shows that directives (requests, suggestions) seek to get an agent to do something, assertives (statements, affirmations) convey information, commissives (promises, offers) seek to create a commitment, and expressives (apologies, thanks) aim to modify the psychological state of customers. Thus, through identifying these patterns, the study can highlight some of how language is exploited to engage attention and resolve conflict.

The study situates itself within SDG 4 (Quality Education) as an advocate of the importance of specialized language and communicative competence in developing the high-level communication skills required in the global digital economy. It also aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) as a proponent of high-quality communication standards to drive superior job performance, sustain industries within the BPO sector, and build a global workforce. In this study, however, only 20 call recording transcripts in a call center based in the Philippines were used and the scope of analysis was limited to only the illocutionary acts of the agents excluding the prosodic features and customers' responses.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research was utilized in this study, using textual analysis to examine the language and pragmatic functions in professional call center agent interactions. This practice allows for a micro-level understanding of language and the examination of the communicative intentions and social interactions embedded within a professional space (Belsey, 2014). Applying Searle's (1969) interpretive framework for speech acts, this study seeks to understand how meaning is made and actions are performed through these short but impactful oral-to-written texts. Reflexivity is used to improve transparency and show trustworthiness (Wilson, Janes, & Williams, 2022) and to signal that subjective interpretation is an accepted part of applied linguistics research (Wilson, Janes, & Williams, 2022).

Data were taken from the recorded and transcribed call logs of a BPO company in the Philippines. The 20 call recording samples were selected to represent a balanced gender distribution, consisting of 10 male and 10 female agents. These samples capture naturalistic data from agents providing technical support for networking hardware, such as routers, expanders, and hubs, which were a primary focus of service interactions during the data-collection period. Data from each recording were carefully transcribed into a written corpus for linguistic coding.

Data collection and analysis were done systematically. After securing the consent of the research chairperson, the faculty adviser, and the panel members, the transcripts were analyzed, and the specific speech acts identified and classified. According to Searle's (1979) taxonomy, linguistic units and concepts were categorized and clustered into directives, assertives, commissives, and expressives to ensure that the findings would be sufficiently strong for the thematic analysis (with a data trail presented in tabular form). Using the categorized data and the analysis as a basis, the findings were validated to ensure the accuracy of the illocutionary force identified in each utterance.

Throughout the study, ethical issues were considered. The researcher sought approval from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the proper permissions from the graduate school committee to maintain objectivity and transparency at all times. Although the research followed the principle of sensitivity to the object of study (Mertens, 2018), the study was conducted professionally, responsibly, and objectively, without infringing on the privacy of the individual agents or the proprietary interests of the company. The analysis focused on public-facing professional language data rather than the personal identities of the subjects. In accordance with the principles of research integrity (Resnik, 2015), every effort was made to avoid plagiarism, fabrication, or data falsification.

RESULTS

Speech Acts Used by the Call Center Agents

In this research, the utterances were analyzed using John Searle's speech act theory, focusing solely on illocutionary acts. The data were presented using one particular code. Code 1.1 means the first utterance from the first transcription; code 2.1 means the first utterance from the second transcription, and so on. The italic words refer to the utterances analyzed. Furthermore, the analysis is presented as follows.

Agent	Is this your first time to call (Brand), Sir? (1.1)
Customer	Yes
Agent	Can I have your first name, please? (1.2)
Customer	John.
Agent	How about your last name, John?(1.3)
Customer	Xxxxxxxx. X-X-X-X-X-X-X-
X.Agent	Alright. (1.4)

(Transcript)
From Male Agent 2

At the onset of the call, the call center agent must have gathered the needed information from their callers. Transcript 1 involved a conversation between a call center agent and the customer when the call came in. Line 1.1 "*Is this your first time to call (Brand), Sir?*" is a direct speech act. The call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. The call center agent asks the customer directly in the second person, using the pronoun you, but the utterance remains polite because the agent addresses the customer with an honorific title, *Sir*. In the call center industry, using an honorific title, such as Sir/Ma'am, to customers is a sign of politeness.

Then, line 1.2 consisted of the call center agent's utterances after the customer answered his first question. "*Can I have your first name, please.*" in the call center agent's utterances is a modal interrogative form using the modal verb *can*. In line 1.2, the call center agent used the token *please* in his utterance, which is a linguistic marker in making a request, because getting information from the customer is the call center agent's right to request, thus the utterance is a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

Then, line 1.3 is a responding question after the call center agent fulfilled his second query.

Moreover, line 1.4 is the call center agent's response when the customer answers his third question. *Alright* in line 1.4 is a free-standing response token used and relied on by speakers to display numerous orientations to what was taken to be meaningful in prior talk, *alright* can be understood as locally occasioned resources available to participants for achieving specific and relevant tasks. Hence, line 1.4 is an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth from the customer's statement.

Customer	Uhm, I purchased the (Brand) wireless router today and when I went to configure it, I cannot hit the save settings, and said configure it and now it's asking for a username and password, but I haven't yet set-up for my device.
Agent	<i>Oh, okay. [And</i>
Customer	<i>So]</i> ah like, it won't let me go back to the set-up page to actually set-

Agent	up, it trying me to connect to wireless access. <i>Okay. No worries. (2.1)</i>
Customer	<i>Can you try to login using the username admin, A-D-M-I-N, and no password. (2.2) Have you tried it to do so?</i> No. Oh, I just did. Okay. It worked. (laugh)

(Transcript 2)
From Male Agent 1

"*Okay. No worries*" in line 2.1 is a clustered speech act (there are two speech acts in one utterance). After the call center agent understood the customer's issue, the agent responded quickly, "Okay," which confirmed. It signals adequate receipt of the customer's information. According to Beach (1993), *okay* is an acknowledgment token (e.g., confirmation) of what the prior speaker's utterance was taken to project. Then, it follows with an assurance statement to make the customer feel that he is more than willing to assist her. It means that the call center agent has already committed himself to perform a future act. Thus, the utterance is a representative-commissive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the customer's statement.

Then, the call center agent uttered "*can you try to login using the username admin, A-D-M-I-N, and no password.*" Krolak & Rudnicka (2006) claimed that the mere choice of the second person singular form of the verb signals some degree of intimacy between the interlocutors. Therefore, the utterance formulated in such a context is fairly direct. Moreover, according to Searle, requests are included within directives; therefore, line 2.2 is an example of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. It is noticeable that the construction is in an interrogative form. Searle added that questions are a kind of request: *To question is to request the hearer to state what the speaker wants to know.*

Agent	<i>And can I have your email address, please, Sir, please? (3.1)</i>
Customer	<i>Aaah Wait. I don't think I can give you my email address for you to give me a customer support.</i>
Agent	<i>Uhm. Not necessarily Sir. (3.2)</i>
	<i>What is this, uh, camera, brand new, Sir? (3.3) Yes.</i>
Customer	<i>Awe, okay okay. Aaah... (3.4)</i>
Agent	<i>No need for the email, Sir, and (pause) (3.5)</i>
	<i>and so okay, Sir, can I have the serial number of the (Brand) camera? (3.6)</i>
Customer	<i>Aaah... that would be KVK...Y1...BA...00...6469.</i>
Agent	<i>Thank you, Sir. (3.7)</i>

(Transcript 3)
From Female Agent 1

In a call center, agents follow call scripts to reduce the risk of being sidetracked (Olivera, 2012). In the transcript, line 3.1, the call center agent asked for the customer's email address so she could create a profile for the customer. The agent's utterance poses the request in the form of a model question *Can I...* and she used *please*, " which is a very common discourse marker in making a request. Thus, the utterance is an example of a directive speech act, since the call center agent is trying to get the customer to do something.

To avoid conflict, the call center agent's utterance in line 3.2 is the response to the customer's refusal, an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition. Then, she diverted the attention of the customer by asking about the products information as can be seen in line 3.3, "What is this, uh, camera, brand new?", she uses a (wh-) question, thereupon, the utterance is a directive speech act by reason of the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

In line 3.4, she used okay, okay. that serves as an understanding token, a confirmation of comprehension, from the customer response, in which the okay is in

line 3.6 serves as a readiness token to initiate and manage such actions as closing preceding topics and moving on to the next topics, for her next statement. Then she repeated herself in informing the customer in line 3.5, "No need for the email, Sir", an assertive speech act due to the call center agent being committed to the truth of the proposition, which is to gain trust from her customer. Then she continued by asking another request, which is related to the product, "can I have the serial number of the (Brand) camera" in line 3.6, a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

From her utterances, it is easily noticed that she uses 'Sir' numerous times. According to Lorimer (1999), Bennington et al. (2000), Career Services (2001), cited in White (2003), this is customary in a call center because it shows respect to customers.

Then the line 3.7 is an expressive speech act because the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs. After she received the information, she explicitly uttered that explicit illocutionary force indicating device to show her gratitude.

Agent	<i>Ma'am, I was able to pull up a record under Francis Xxxxxxxx?</i>
Customer	(4.1) Yes. Yes.
Agent	<i>How are you related with Francis, Ma'am?</i> (4.2)
Customer	I'm sorry?
Agent	<i>How are you related with Francis?</i> (4.3) I
Customer	am Francis...I am Francis.
Agent	<i>Oh. I'm so sorry for that one, Ma'am.</i> (4.4)

(Transcript 4)
From Male Agent 7

Here is an example of a speech act showing assertion. *I was able to pull up a record under Francis Woodward*, in line 4.1, which states a fact on the information that the customer provided to the call center agent, he could see on the database under whose account it was. In this way, the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition, since he informs the customer of something, especially in an official capacity.

Since the caller was a woman, the agent addressed the customer *Ma'am*, and proceeded by authenticating the account by asking the caller, "*How are you related with Francis*," in line 4.2. However, the agent repeated the same question since the customer was not able to catch it or asked indirectly the agent to repeat the question. Thus, lines 4.2 and 4.3 are examples of an interrogative act, which falls under directive speech acts, since the call center agent asks the customer to do something.

However, when the customer clarified that her name is Francis, the owner of the account, the call center agent admitted his mistake and sincerely asked for an apology as can be seen in his utterance, *Oh, I'm so sorry for that one, Ma'am*. Thus, line 4.4 is an expressive act, as the call center agent expresses an attitude toward a state of affairs.

Agent	<i>What is your issue today?</i> (5.1)
Customer	Uhm I'm calling. I need some assistance with getting my wireless...uhm...back online, there's some reason it got offline.
Agent	<i>Okay.</i> (5.2)
Customer	If I can just get a little help with that?
Agent	<i>What is the model of your router, uh, Wanda?</i> (5.3)
Customer	Uhm, it is DIR 615.
Agent	<i>Okay.</i> (5.4)
Customer	<i>Who's your Service Provider?</i> (5.5)
Agent	Uhm, (ISP).
Agent	<i>Okay, (ISP).</i> (5.6)
Customer	<i>So what is the brand of your (ISP) modem?</i> (5.7)
Agent	Ah, Arris? A-R-R-I-S.
Agent	<i>Okay.</i> (5.8)

Customer	<i>So uhm, okay, so, what computer do you have right now? (5.9)</i>
Agent	Right now I'm on a (pause) on a wired, uhm desktop, and I'm trying to...make sure that you know uhm...my security and everything is setup, so that my laptop, and my Bluewave wireless can get, you know connection. <i>Okay. (5.10)</i>
Customer	<i>So uhm...Okay So, do you have uhm, where is your desktop connected right now? (5.11)</i>
Agent	It's connected straight. I didn't connect anything. It's connected to the desktop that I'm sitting in to it. It's connected to the, uhm, wireless as well as the uh modem. <i>Okay. (5.12)</i>
Customer	<i>So can you try to pull up our website? (5.13)</i> Yeah.
Agent	I got the website up. <i>Okay. (5.14)</i>
Customer	<i>Do you have Internet on your desktop? (5.15)</i> Yes.

(Transcript 5)
From Male Agent 10

In this transcript, the conversation begins with the utterance “*What is your issue today?*” This is a common speech act in a call center agent-customer dialogue where the agent wants to know what service the customer is seeking. The utterance in line 5.3 has the same intention, but the agent was seeking an instruction from the customer. Both utterances are in the form of interrogatives, which are directive speech acts used to ask, as in the call center agent telling the customer he would like the customer to do something.

There are also other interrogative forms in this transcript however, the utterances are requesting for information such as “*What is the model of your router, uh, Wanda?*” (5.3), “*Who’s your Service Provider?*” (3.5), “*So what is the brand of your (ISP) modem?*” (5.7), “*what computer do you have right now?*” (5.9), “*do you have uhm, where is your desktop connected right now?*” (5.11) and “*Do you have Internet on your desktop?*” (5.15). Though the utterances here are requesting for specific information from the customer which is different from the direct request but all of the mentioned utterances are examples of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. Moreover, the customer accurately recognizes what the call center agent means.

It is noticeable as well in the call center agents' overuse of the word *okay*. *Okay* is one of the most common phrases in a call center agent-customer conversation. The *okays* in this transcript were the agent's responses or acknowledgment tokens, indicating that the agent was following the customer's conversation. Thus, *okays* are utterances that belong to assertive speech acts.

Moreover, another utterance prevalent in the call center agent's speech is the discourse marker 'so'. As can be seen on lines 5.7, 5.9, 5.11, and 5.13, *so* has been added as the initial utterance on his directives since it indicates an initiation of a new goal or a new topic, such as “*So what is the brand of your (ISP) modem?*”.

Agent *You already reset the router, Sir John?* (6.1)
Customer We- well I mean I just, Yes I went ahead and pushed it in, trying to put ah my own say
 ah- I had put a password before in which I didn't like it, I mean I am using a pass and I
 didn't like, so I was trying do one that I could understand, and remember better, I guess,
 I messed everything up.
Agent *Okay.* (6.2)
 Well, supposedly, Sir John, just in case in the future, you don't need to reset your
 the router, if you just change the password, but anyway- (6.3)
Customer But the problem w- the problem when I put in the password, the old password, it
 wouldn't work. It just kept saying. It wasn't right. [I couldn't figure.
Agent *I] see.* (6.4)
 When you try to log in to the router, is that correct, Sir? (6.5)
Customer Yes, Sir.
Agent *I see.* (6.6)
 Okay. (6.7)
 Well. no worry. Let me walk, let me walk you through on how to do this
 manually, Sir John. (6.8)

(Transcript 6)
From Male Agent 9

An example of a directive speech act is the utterance in line 6.1, “*You already reset the router, Sir John?*” The utterance sounds like a confirmation of the customer's previous statement; however, since it takes the form of an interrogative, it is a request for information from the customer, and the customer is bound to respond. More so, this type of speech act in line 6.1 is also similar to line 6.5 “*When you try to log in to the router, is that correct, Sir?*” in view of the call center agent tells the customer that he would like the customer to do something.

Then, “*okay*” was used to acknowledge the customer's response. Thus, line 6.2/6.6 is an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition. Then he continued by making a proposal about the future in line 6.3 as seen in his utterance “*just in case in the future, you don't need to reset your the router, if you just change the password.*” The utterance is an example of a directive speech act, since he advised the customer that there was no need to reset the router to its default settings after the customer had just attempted to change the password. The call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. Furthermore, the customer does not necessarily seek any further comprehension.

It is also noticeable in this transcript that the utterance *I see* in lines 6.4 and 6.6. This can be an expression; however, the call center agent uses it as an acknowledgment token, indicating that the agent is following the customer's conversation. Thus, this utterance is an example of a representative speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition.

Likewise, since the call center agent was able to verify the issue properly, he then committed himself by proposing a future action that he can undertake for the customer's benefit as can be seen in his utterance, “*Well. no worry. Let me walk, let me walk you through on how to do this manually, Sir John.*” Thus, the utterance is an example of a commissive speech act because the call center agent commits to a

future action. More so, what makes the commissiveness so strong is the phrase *no worry* which is composed of promising and advising at the sentence level.

- Customer Well, (sighs) I'm not sure what's going on. I've installed it several times, and reset it, and try again to install it. And uh I think I'm doing everything right, but when I try to use my uh my Galaxy tablet, it's- when it goes, it had uh...it authenticates and it goes to save and secure, it authenticates and it goes save and secure, and then finally it goes to authentication error, and it says wrong password.
Okay. (7.1)
So basically the main reason, Sir, is you wanted to connect your tablet wirelessly to the router. Is that right? (7.2)
- Agent Right.
And uh, aside from the tablet, do you have any computer that is already working?(7.3) Aaah yeah. I have my regular computer. It's working.
Ah okay. (7.4)
- Customer *'Coz for the tablet, Sir, we n- (pause) we need to figure out if you have the right password security key, and if you have the right one, we might need to*
- Agent *check the kind of security that you've created, 'coz it might not be compatible with the*
- Customer *[tablet. (7.5)*
- Agent *Oh].*
So, we are going to work on your main computer first. (7.6)
So let's go to that computer, please? (7.7) Okay.

(Transcript 7)
From Female Agent 7

The researcher had already mentioned the acknowledgement token, which is an example of an assertive act, such as 'okay,' in the view of the call center agent, who is committed to the truth of the proposition in lines 7.1 and 7.4.

For the call center agent to assist the customer accurately, he/she should ask questions related to the issue; these questions can be a (wh-) question, a (Y-N) question/closed-ended question. Thus, lines 7.2 and 7.3 are examples of directive speech acts, since the call center agent tells the customer what she would like the customer to do.

Furthermore, in the call center industry, agents usually make requests to customers in the form of imperatives, and more often use the illocutionary marker 'please,' which is very common among call center agents to express politeness. And to make the customer feel that the call center agent valued their time and presence, whenever they provide instructions, they usually say, "Let's." Therefore, lines 7.6 and 7.7 are examples of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

Going back to transcription 7, the call center agent constantly used the modal *might* in her assertion in line 7.5. This type of utterance is customarily employed to a probability, which may or may not prove correct. And when the customer recognizes the call center agent's statement, she continues to make a

proposal, as seen in line 7.6, which can be categorized as a commissive speech act because the call center agent is committed to some future action.

Agent *So how may I help you today, Sir?* (8.1)
Customer Oh. I came back this weekend. I went to get in uhm the Internet. And my router wouldn't working. I can plug my computer directly into my modem so I can get online that way.
Uhm, I booted everything twice, three, four, you know, all different configurations of rebooting it, it didn't work. The uhm – the Internet light, the WAN light, does not light up, uh the (Model). And the odd thing is that all four of the computer connection lights are [blinking

Agent Oh].
Customer I think that's probably a code for something. But nowhere it connect me to that code means.
Agent *Oh lemme just verify Sir that your concern here is that you have lost on the Internet connection with the (Model) router where everything seems to be working fine on your (ISP Brand) modem and right now, the world or the globe light on the router is currently not lit and all those LAN uh indicators 1,2,3 and 4 are all lit despite there are no computers connected to the router hardwired?*(8.2)
Customer No. No. They're all blinking. They're actually are connected together but they are all blinking together in sync which is not normal.
Agent Oh.
Customer And I cant...and the other thing is that I can't (pause) I can't get to the configuration page.
Agent *Ahuhm.* (8.3)
Customer If I'm (pause) If I'm hooked via the Ethernet cable, but if I'm hooked via the wireless, I can get to the configuration page of the (Model), (Model).
Agent *Okay.*(8.4)
Customer It's almost like- it's almost like the Ethernet port on there is not working correctly. Agent *Okay.* (8.5)
So since the light, by the way, Sir, or the globe light on the router is not lit. I supposed that you're able to get online directly to the modem with the same Ethernet cable that is linking from the Inter port on the rou- (Brand) router to your modem. Is that correct? (8.6)
Customer Correct.

(Transcript 8)
From Male Agent 4

Transcript 8 begins with the call center agent's offer: *"So how may I help you today, Sir?"* Line 8.1 supports Tsohatzidis's (1994) view that the speaker will perform an act on the condition that the hearer accepts the offer and that the speaker expresses his willingness and ability to perform the act. Then, the customer began describing the issue. Thus, Line 8.1 is an example of a commissive speech act because the call center agent is committed to some future action.

To build customer trust, the call center agent must paraphrase the customer's statement, as seen in the following example.

"Oh lemme just verify Sir that your concern here is that you have lost on the Internet connection with the (Model) router where everything seems to be working fine on your (ISP Brand) modem and right now, the world or the globe light on the router is currently not lit and all those LAN uh indicators 1,2,3 and 4 are all lit despite there are no computers connected to the router hardwired?"

It is evident that the call center agent used the second-person pronoun 'you' or 'your' three times, which makes the utterance a direct speech act. The paraphrasing is quite lengthy, too verbose. In his utterance, he paraphrased the customer's statement but ended with a question mark. Therefore, line 8.2 is an assertive-directive speech act, as the call center agent shares something clear to the customer and, at the same time, tries to get the customer to do something. This is to ensure the call center agent understands the issue.

Then, the customer disagreed with the call center agent's utterance in line 8.2, and he began again in describing the issue, wherein, when the customer halted, the call center agent's responses were only "Okay", which can be seen in lines 8.3, 8.4, and 8.5. The *Okays* in this context serve as tokens that the call center agent acknowledges and understands as what the customer's utterance is taken to project (Beach, 1993). Thus, these responses are examples of an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition.

Then, the call center agent attempted again to paraphrase the statement of the customer for him to seek an agreement with the customer if he was able to address the customer's concern, but in a clear and concise way:

from *"you have lost on the Internet connection with the (Model) router where everything seems to be working fine on your (ISP Brand) modem and right now,*

the world or the globe light on the router is currently not lit and all those LAN uh indicators 1,2,3 and 4 are all lit despite there are no computers connected to the router hardwired"

to *"you're able to get online directly to the modem with the same Ethernet cable that is linking from the Inter port on the rou- (Brand) router to your modem"*

The utterance is still a direct speech act because he used, *you* and *Sir*, to address the customer. Then, his final utterance sought confirmation and agreement by asking, *"Is that correct?"*, indicating he wanted to know whether the customer had already understood him. Thus, the utterance in line 8.5 is an example of an assertive-directive speech act, since the call center agent shares something clear with the customer and tries to get the customer to do something.

Customer	I purchased two cameras.
Agent	<i>What is the model number of your camera?</i> (9.1) Customer The first one is (Model).
Agent	<i>Uhuhm...[Okay</i> (9.2)
Customer	And] the second
one is DC.	
Agent	<i>Okay.</i> (9.3) <i>Lemme just going to gather some info- ah the- lemme just have your phone number starting with the area code so that I can pull [up</i> (9.4)
Customer	Im] not-Im not in your- I'm not in your
Agent	system. I just bought your camera literally like in half an hour ago. <i>Yes Ma'am. So can I have you phone number starting with the area code, so that I can create a record of you in our system.</i> (9.5)
Customer	Do it on my name... I just wanna ask the question. Do I, do you-do we have a brand setting or we don't to [?] with the cameras?
Agent	<i>We actually have brand setting configuration page for the camera,</i> (9.6) <i>but I need to have your phone number starting with the area code, and your first and last name.</i> (9.7)
Customer	PUT MY PHONE NUMBER.I DON'T WANT YOU GUYS HAVE MY I DON'T WANT YOU GUYS TO HAVE MY PHONE NUMBER. I DON'T WANT YOU GUYS TELLING MY INFORMATION.
Agent	<i>Okay.</i> (9.8)

(Transcript 9)
From Female Agent 4

In this transcript, *okay* is extremely noticeable. The utterance is *okay* in lines 9.2 and 9.3 serves as the acknowledgment token from the customer's response. Meanwhile, the utterance *okay* in line 9.8 is more about acceptance, in which the call center agent initiates to proceed to the next agenda. However, both of the utterances are the case in point of an assertive speech act. Thereupon, the utterances are examples of an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition.

The utterances such as "*lemme just have your phone number starting with the area code,*" "*can I have your phone number starting with the area code,*" and "*I need to have your phone number starting with the area code, and your first and last name*" are examples of request acts. Though the forms of the aforementioned utterances vary, all of them belong to the directive speech act, since the call center agent

tries to get the customer to do something, which is a common practice among call center agents before they proceed with their troubleshooting steps.

Another example of a directive speech act is seen in line 9.1. The call center agent tells the customer that he/she would like her to do something utilizing the (wh-) question form in gathering information from the customer's device.

Furthermore, "Yes Ma'am" in line 9.5 and "We actually have brand setting configuration page for the camera" in line 9.6 are assertive speech acts, as the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition by telling the customer something, especially in an official manner. However, the utterance in line 9.5 is more about acknowledging the customer's statement, while the utterance in line 9.6 is more about providing new information to the customer.

From this transcript as well, fillers are also noticeable, though these fillers can be labeled as expressive speech act, but in this context, these fillers such as *so* and *uhuhm* are more on initiation and acknowledgment so that the call center agent can proceed to a new exchange. Therefore, the utterances are examples of an assertive speech act.

Agent	<i>May I know who is your Internet Provider (ISP).</i> (10.1)
Customer	
Agent	<i>Did you already call them prior calling us?</i> (10.2)
Customer	I certainly did and they told me that'll- that I would have to call you.
Agent	Haha. So I don't know. I just- <i>Okay.</i> (10.3)

(Transcript 10)
From Male Agent 7

As part of the script, gathering information from the customer is a must for proper probing. In line 10.1, the agent shows a high level of politeness in asking the customer. In a call center, representatives must maintain a polite tone and use appropriate words, as required. That is why, when they would ask their customers or make a request, their utterance should start with modals, like *may*, as noticed in line 10.1. Thus, the utterance in line 10.1 is an example of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

Since the first question has been determined, the call center agent asked the customer again for verification. In this context, line 10.2 is a follow-up question relevant to his previous question, so the agent can ensure there's no issue on the Internet service provider's side before starting any troubleshooting. Thus, line 10.2 is an example of a directive speech act as well.

The *okay* in line 10.3 implies that the agent acknowledges and understands what the customer's utterance is projecting (Beach, 1993). Therefore, the *okay* utterance is an example of an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition.

Agent *Hmhm...but then ahm, Brad, before we proceed, let me just inform you first okay? That the system checks out the warranty status of the (Brand) device, it says here in the system that your device is already out of warranty, okay? (11.1)*

Customer Okay.

Agent *It's no longer. (11.2)*

Customer Okay

Agent *Yes, it is no longer entitled for a free technical support. (11.3)*
So basically, in able for us to proceed, you have to choose one of the out of warranty options that we provide, to all the out of warranty customers, okay? (11.4)
And are you ready for the options? (11.5)

Customer Sure!

Agent *Okay. (11.6)*
Brad, first option that we provide is basically a new hardware device, okay. We both know that devices and technologies are upgrading from time to time. (11.7)

Customer Yes.

Agent *So basically, if you've wanted that much powerful router, six times much better than the current router that you have right now, I could uhm, basically ship that one for you for free, you'll be able to have your new hardware warranty and complementary assistance support, and of course, you will be able to maximize the performance of your computer. (11.8)*

Customer Yeah.

Agent *Hmhmm. Oh, I can even provide you ten percent discount for that. That if ever you want to upgrade it to a newer version. However, if ever you don't want to upgrade it, all you have to do is to choose one of the out of warrant extended phone support. First is our \$29.99, that is our one-time uhm, fee, or that is a one-time fee of \$29.99 that will basically provide you fourteen days grace period. (Pause) The second one, is a six months uhm, support, which is only for \$39.99, that has ten-dollar difference, you will be able to extend the warranty period of your devices for half a year. But those, options will basically include upgrading firmware, remote access in able for us to do all the troubleshooting for you, and we will be able to check all the settings inside the router. We will make sure that everything after the call will be ended that everything is properly fixed so that you will not be able to experience some problem in the near future. (11.9)*

Customer Okay.

Agent Okay. (11.10).

So those are actually the options except on how you would us to proceed.

(11.11) Well...now you said that, uhm, I think I may go ahead and go buy a new router. *Hmmm, Actually that's one of your options.* (11.12)

(Transcript 11)
From Female Agent 9

The utterance in line 11.1 is an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition, especially in an official way. In her utterance, she used the assertive verb *inform*. The main point of *inform* is to let the customer be aware of the status of the device and how they could proceed further. Moreover, utterances in lines 11.2 and 11.3 are examples of assertive speech acts, as the call center agent conveys something clear to the customer.

This is also called initialization of the call center agent for her next utterances, which are more about making proposals. The utterances in lines 11.7, 11.8, and 11.9 are acts of suggesting. This is very common in a call center agent's response: once the customer is not entitled to any free technical support, the device is already out of warranty. The company created a call script for the call center agent to deliver the said offers. Whenever the call center agent receives calls like this, it is his or her accountability to promote the services since he/she believes that this is for the benefit of the customer. Thus, the utterances in lines 11.7, 11.8, and 11.9 are examples of a directive speech act because the call center agent asks the customer to take some action that the agent believes would benefit the hearer, even one that the agent should desire. Moreover, the call center agent explains the matter directly, and the customer understands it thoroughly.

On the other hand, the utterance in line 11.12 is the reactive speech of the call center agent when the customer decided to buy a new device, which means the customer declined the offer. Thus, the utterance "*Actually that's one of your options.*" is an example of an act of agreeing, another type of speech that belongs to commissive act by reason of the call center agent is committed to some future action

Customer [?] For just a moment...Okay I got Internet Explorer open, I just got a homepage on there now.

Agent *Alright so clear everything on the address bar, including the HTTP.* (12.1)

Customer Uhm, Okay. And you want, and you want me to put in this uhm, there is Http192168. Is that what you want me to put in there?

Agent *Yes. It should be 192 dot 168 dot 0 dot 1.* (12.2)

Customer Okay. Okay. Hold on one second...192...Okay. There is (Brand), and then log in, etc.

Agent *Alright, username is Admin, all lowercase, no need for the password, just leave it blank and hit log in.* (12.3)

Customer Okay. Okay. It says uh "please enter the geographical identification code." Agent *So you must enter the code correctly, so that it will allow us to access the page.* (12.4)

Customer I don't know what that is. It says, it says there's an administrator, username administrator, there's a password, is that what it wants?...Oh no. It says there's a uhm a code, there's a cryptic, cryptic code in here...I think that it wants. Does it want a password?

Agent *No need, Sir, the password, just leave it blank.* (12.5)
Just enter the graphical code there. (12.6)

Customer Okay the graphical, that's what what I'm asking. Okay hold on one second... it says invalid...now it still keeps on asking me for a password. I put in the graphical but it won't do in it. It says it want the password, well I have the password but you said not to put it in.

Agent *Okay if you set up the password in your router, you must enter the password of the router there [itself]* (12.7)

Customer Okay] that's what what I'm asking you, you said not to do that

Agent *I'm just telling you the default setting of ah the router's page.* (12.8) Customer Okay.

Agent *But if you set up a password, so you must enter it there.* (12.9)

Customer Yep I know that, but you told me not to do that. I would have done it, because I set up before.

Customer	Okay.
Agent	<i>But if you set up a password, so you must enter it there. (12.9)</i>
Customer	Yep I know that, but you told me not to do that. I would have done it, because I set up before.
	<i>Okay Sir. Do go ahead and enter the password there. (12.10)</i>
Agent	Yeah. I'm doing that right now. Hold on. I'm putting the cryptic code. Okay now it's letting me in. Okay now I'm in.
Customer	<i>Alright. (12.11)</i>

(Transcript 12)
From Female Agent 5

From this transcript, this is the typical conversation when the call center agent and the customer are in the middle of troubleshooting. The call center agent will provide instructions, and the customer will follow them. Moreover, if the customer has difficulty following the steps or is confused about them, the customer would ask the call center agent. And when the call center agent responds to a question, it is more about providing new information.

Consider the following utterances as examples of a directive speech act used as a request:

clear everything on the address bar, including the HTTP. (12.1)

just leave it blank and hit log in. (12.3)

Just enter the graphical code there. (12.6)

Do go ahead and enter the password there. (12.10)

From the utterances, the call center agent used the imperative form, which is the most direct, explicit level, realized by syntactically marked requests using performative verbs such as *clear*, *leave*, *enter*, and *go*. In this way, it aligns with the speech act of directives, since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

In addition, take a look of the following examples of assertive speech act:

Yes. It should be 192 dot 168 dot 0 dot 1. (12.2)

Alright, username is Admin, all lowercase, no need for the password (12.3)

No need, Sir, the password, just leave it blank. (12.5)

*Okay if you set up the password in your router, you must enter the password of the router there
[itsel(12.7)*

Okay Sir. (12.10) Alright. (12.11)

What is interesting here is that the agent usually begins her statement with an acknowledgment token such as *alright* and *okay* as the initialization before she starts in providing information to her customer. Then the rest of the utterances are facts for them to access via the device's interface. In this type of business, the call center should be direct in providing answers to customers, since their goal is to fix the issue. The utterances in lines 12.2, 12.3, 12.5, and 12.7 are the responses of the call center agent. She also carefully informed the customer how they could access the device's interface, which is customary among call center agents. She shares something clear with the customer. The way she performs it is a direct speech act because the representative speech act matches its function (to inform). Moreover, the customer does not necessarily look for any other interpretation.

Agent *Can you see the name (Brand) now?* (13.1)
Customer Yeah, there's a (Brand) network there. Yes. But that's not originally the name of our network...the original name of our network is gone.
Agent *That's okay.* (13.2)
Agent *We'll just need to connect to the router first...okay?* (13.3) So can [uh-Okay].
Customer
Customer *We can configure the settings.* (13.4)
Agent *Can you click on the name [(Brand)-* (13.5)
Customer Okay].
Customer *And click on connect at the bottom right corner?* (13.6)
Agent Alright. Now it says type in the PIN.
Customer *Uhm, actually there should be an option there, Dorie, that says connect, setting Up the network, or I don't want to setup the network.* (13.7)
Agent Alright, after I hit connect the network, I can type the pin from (Brand) system? Yes. (13.8)
Customer *Can you see option there, or a button that says, I don't want to set up my network... or connect without setting it up?* (13.9)
Agent Okay. So what I'm hitting right now?
Agent *Uhm. Okay.* (13.10)

Customer *But can you see the option, right?*
Customer (13.11) Yeah! I see it. Yes!
Agent
Customer I don't wanna configure the network. Okay...now it says (Brand) is a non- secured network. Connect anyways or connect to a different network.
Agent Uh, just click on connect anyways. (13.13)
Customer Okay...Connecting to (Brand)...Okay, successfully connected to (Brand). Alright. Yes! [?]

(Transcript 13)
From Male Agent 8

In this transcription, the call center agent begins with a Yes-No question. The utterance in line 13.1 is a directive speech act, since the call center agent tells the customer to do something. Based on the context, the call center agent walked the customer through connecting to her own wireless network. When the call center agent heard the affirmative response of the customer, “*That's okay*” in line 13.2, it serves as an acknowledgment, which is a casual positive response to a statement that has an informative intention. *Okay* in line 13.10 is a signal that the call center agent is following what the customer is saying.

Thus, this is an assertive speech of a response in view of the call center agent's commitment to the truth of the proposition. Then he continues by proposing a future action the call center agent could undertake for the customer's benefit, "*We'll just need to connect to the router first... okay?*" (13.3). It can be observed that the call center agent's utterance includes an 'okay' after the speech act of offering. The *okay* in this utterance signals that a new stage of the dialogue follows; in this case, it is spoken with an interrogative intonation and means roughly, *I'm checking if are you still with me*. Hence, line 13.3 represents the act of commissive by reason of the call center agent being committed to some future action.

Upon the customer agreeing to the proposition, line 13.4 provides an assurance statement, making the customer feel that the call center agent is with her to walk her through the issue until it is resolved. Thus, the utterance in line 13.4 is an example of a commissive speech act, since the call center agent is committed to some future action, telling the customer that it would be fixed.

In the following utterances of the call center agent, interrogative form such as in lines 13.5 "*Can you click on the name [(Brand)-*" and 13.6 "*click on connect at the bottom right corner*", and imperative form such as in lines 13.12 "*Just click on that option*" and 13.13 "*Uh, just click on connect anyways*", are speech acts of requests, wherein the call center agent requests a directive or instruction from the hearer. Therefore, these lines are examples of a directive speech act, since the call center agent is trying to get the customer to do something.

Agent *We will now create a password to login to the router, earlier, there was no password, so we will create one so that this will be secured.* (14.1)

Uhm, it should ask you right now for an admin password, right? (14.2)

Customer Yeah.

Agent *Okay.* (14.3)

Customer *Please create an admin password and please make sure to type it carefully.* (14.4)

Agent (Giggling) *Okay. And then type a password?*

Yup.

(Transcript 14)
From Male Agent 1

The transcription above is an example of transactional conversation. Line 14.1 "*We will now create a password to login to the router, earlier, there was no password, so we will create one so that this will be secured.*" is an act of offering since the speaker commits himself to a certain future course of action. In addition, when the call center agent used the pronoun *we*, the speaker expresses his desire that he and the hearer will do the act on condition that the hearer expresses acceptance of that offer (Tsohatzidis, 1994). An offer then is treated in this utterance as a commissive-directive act.

Then, line (14.2) is an utterance of assertion and verification, a representative act. The utterance is a follow-up to his offering statement, since he had already assumed the customer was on the same page and wanted confirmation that his statement was correct. Thus, the utterance is an assertive-directive act, as the call center agent seeks to get the customer to do something.

And when the customer confirmed that the statement was correct, the call center agent used the word *Okay* in line 14.3. In the call center industry, it is common for call center agents to rely on 'okay' in

their utterances to initiate and manage actions such as closing the preceding utterance and moving on to the next action. This is supported by Merritt (1980; cited in Beach, 1993), who states that 'okay' serves as a bridge, a linking device between two stages or phases of the service encounter.

When the call center agent initiated the next step, line 14.4, “*Please create an admin password and please make sure to type it carefully*” was uttered. The grammatical mood of the verbs in the utterances marks their illocutionary force as a request. It is noticeable that *please* has been used twice. *Please* is one of the most common discourse markers in making a request. The function of the word *please* is to convey politeness and is usually used in conjunction with the act of requesting (Wichmann, 2011). Thus, the utterance is an example of a directive speech act, since the call center agent is trying to get the customer to do something.

Customer	(Whispering)
Agent	<i>I am having trouble hearing you right now.</i> (15.1)
	<i>I'm sorry?</i> (15.2)
	<i>What does it say?</i>
	(15.3) It says save a registry?
Customer	<i>Uhm no...Okay Uhm ah... try to do this one. Close first all the open windows on your computer...</i> (15.4)
Agent	Huh?
Customer	<i>Close all the opened windows on your computer.</i> (15.5)
Agent	Alright.
	<i>And (pause) and then after that one, open your Internet Explorer.</i>
Customer	(15.6) Got it.

(Transcript 15)
From Female Agent 6

In a call center agent-customer phone conversation, there are instances when the call center agent barely hears the customer. It could be that the customer is too far from the phone, that the customer is soft-spoken, or that the line is bad. In this transcription, the call center agent was having trouble hearing the customer clearly. Most of the time, the call center agent’s utterance would start in informing the customer that he/she could barely hear the customer, such as in line 15.1 “*I am having trouble hearing you right now.*”, which is an example of an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of proposition by telling the customer about something formally. Then, an explicit illocutionary force indicating device is usually added: *I'm sorry* (15.2), as an expression of regret for not being able to comprehend the customer's statement; thus, this is an example of an expressive speech act, since the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs. After that, the call center would ask a question to repeat their statement so that he/she is able to comprehend what they are trying to say, as seen in line 15.3 “*What does it say?*”, in which this is an example of a directive speech act for the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

After the customer responded to the call center agent's question, the utterances in lines 15.4, 15.5, and 15.6 are requests, which are primarily instructions to the customer. In this way, the utterances are

examples of directive speech acts, as they involve performative verbs such as *try*, *close*, and *open* (e.g., the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something).

Customer	Yeah..(unclear) hang on...(unclear) my question is uhm, ..(unclear) I can go online.. And I'm not able to see the footage. I'm trying to locate. I can't be able to see the images, replay, and video.
Agent	<i>Okay Sir, you would still have to set up, Sir, and you would use a software for that Sir, and it's called the V__Software. You have to install that on your computer. And then the computer you would be installing the software Sir should be, uh, should be a local computer, Sir; meaning, the computer should be based, Sir, on the network, a network-based computer...work and uh...where you [can save... (16.1)</i>
Customer	What's] the name of the software?
Agent	<i>V Software, Sir; (16.2)</i>
Agent	<i>and then we have the updated version, Sir. Uh 3 point 2- (16.3)</i>
Customer	0.3 point 2-0.
Agent	Uhuhm. And you [can...
Customer	And] this install...
Agent	<i>Ahuh?</i>
Customer	This done with the camera or you have to buy separately or you data downloadable, just downloadable for free?
Agent	<i>Ah, downloadable for free, Sir: (16.4)</i> <i>You can visit our web (pause) website, Sir and then look for the camera, and then, it would be one of the downloads. (16.5)</i>
Customer	Okay. I think that can help me.

(Transcript16)
From Female Agent 1

In line 16.1, the call center agent's utterance begins with 'okay,' which is an initiating speech act; subsequent utterances are responses to the customer's question. The call center agent informed the customer what are the necessary equipment and application that the customer must have so that he would be able to locate the file that he is looking for. The utterance in line 16.1 is an example of an assertive speech act since the call center agent shares something clear to the customer. Furthermore, the customer does not necessarily seek any further comprehension.

Technically, in line 16.1, the utterance is not an answer; the utterance is more about giving new information. She advised the customer to follow the steps needed so that the customer's dilemma would be resolved. The usage of would and should strengthen its politeness. Hence, the utterance is a clustered speech of directives and assertiveness.

Lines 16.1 and 16.4 are direct responses to the customer's questions. And in order to soften its directness, she continued by offering to the customer the new feature of the said product, because once the call center agent is knowledgeable about the company's products, she would be able to provide the customer with valuable product or service information without the customer having to be transferred to another agent (White, 2003). Thus, line 16.3 is a commissive speech act because the call center agent is committed to some future action.

Withal, the first part of the utterance line 16.5 is more on suggestion, "You can visit our web (pause) website", in which this utterance proposes some future action or decision by the hearer, then she continued by asking for a request, "look for the camera", and it's up to the customer to accept or refuse the said proposition. Hence, line 16.5 is a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

In transcription 17, the call center agent was walking through the customer in setting up a wireless connection. It is noticeable from the call center agent's utterance that before they would perform the action, she was giving a heads-up to her customer as

seen in line 17.1 "we're going to setup your wireless now, okay. We're going to setup your network." The utterance is a speaker-hearer-oriented one, since she used the pronoun 'we' to inform the customer. Hence, the utterance is an example of commissive speech because the call center agent is committed to some future action. Furthermore, the customer does not necessarily seek any further comprehension.

Agent	<i>For now Charles, we're going to setup your wireless now, okay. We're going to setup your network, (17.1)</i>
Customer	<i>so kindly click on setup. (17.2) Okay.</i>
Agent	<i>And then on the left side, you will see there wireless connection. (17.3) Kindly click on it, please? (17.4) Kay</i>
Customer	<i>I will.</i>
Agent	<i>And then select on Manual Wireless Connection Setup. (17.5)</i>
Customer	<i>Okay that's the button. I'll click on that button that's wireless connection setup, correct?</i>
Agent	<i>That's correct, Charles. (17.6) Thank</i>
Customer	<i>you...</i>

(Transcript 17)
From Female Agent 10

It is evident as well that whenever she made a request; she used the illocutionary marker *kindly*, which is very habitual among call center agents to express politeness in making a request. "*Kindly*" is also one of the most common discourse markers for making a request. The word *kindly* refers to politeness and is usually used in conjunction with the act of requesting (Wichmann, 2011).

Likewise, in line 17.4, the call center agent became more polite by using the illocutionary markers 'kindly' and 'please' simultaneously. At this point, there is a redundancy in using the marker. Thus, the utterances in lines 17.2, 17.4, and 17.5 are examples of a directive speech act because of the performative verbs click and select (the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something).

In line 17.6, the call center agent's response to a question is not just a simple yes or no answer; instead, she echoed the last word of the preceding turn in providing a positive response to a question. The purpose of this is to ensure that the customer's statement has been clearly heard and understood by the call center agent. Therefore, the utterance in line 17.6 is an example of an assertive speech act in view of the call center agent's commitment to the truth of the proposition.

Agent	What is the uh, network status? (18.1)
Customer	Connected.
Agent	Connected right.
Agent	Give to me the IP Address, please? (18.2)
Customer	76,dot 111,dot195.dot 88.
Agent	And how about the primary DNS Server? (18.3)
Customer	75, dot 75, dot 75, dot 75.

(Transcript 18)
From Male Agent 3

Transcript 18 is an initiating and responding acts. The call center agent in line 18.1 issued the question "What is the uh, network status?" in a direct (wh-) question structure. Thus, the utterance is an example of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. The customer provided a response to the first question, and the call center agent repeated it with agreement (right).

Then, in line 18.2, the call center agent explicitly made a request "Give to me the IP address on the device page." The statement in line 18.2 is too direct, but since the call center agent added the word please on the final part of the sentence, the token, please, could simultaneously be heard as a politeness marker (House, 1989), cited in Kasper (2004).

The call center agent asked for the device's IP address so he could start analyzing whether the customer was getting a valid connection. Therefore, the utterance in line 18.2 is an example of a directive speech act, since the call center agent is trying to get the customer to do something.

Then, since the customer had answered the previous question in line 18.3, the call center agent issued a follow-up direct (wh-) question: "And how about the primary DNS server?" The call center agent also asked for the DNS values, since the device sometimes gets a valid IP address but not from the DNS servers. Therefore, utterances in lines 18.1, 18.2, and 18.3 are examples of directive speech acts, as the call center agent tells the customer to do something.

Customer Agent	How do I change the time? The time is wrong.
Customer	<i>Ah, You can just try to go [to- (19.1)</i>
Agent	<i>The] time zone.</i>
	<i>The time zone, time and date on the left side, and there you can actually change some settings on that specific page. So I'll be just sending... (19.2)</i>
	<i>Okay.</i>
Customer Agent	<i>So, I'll be sending you the link, just download 3.20 D _____ Cam software version, okay? (19.3)</i>
	<i>3.20. Okay.</i>
Customer Agent	<i>Yep. (19.4)</i>
Customer Agen	<i>Download that now?</i>
	<i>Oh. I'll be going to send you the link first, and download that now, and then you can try to like uhm, add the camera on that specific software. (19.5)</i>
	<i>If you're actually having issues, or having difficulties, you can always call us back, and I'll be just providing you the case number, for uh this call. (19.6)</i>

Lines 19.1 and 19.2 are examples of assertive speech acts, as the call center agent clearly shares information with the customer. Line 19.2 is the continuation only of the utterance in line 19.1. Though the call center agent was interrupted with the

Customer acknowledgment response, which is very common in a call center agent-customer phone conversation: the call center agent just continued informing the customer on how to solve the issue.

As part of the call center agent's responsibility, to make the customer delighted, the agent proposes a future action for the customer's benefit. Thus, the utterances in lines (19.3), "So, I'll be sending you the link, just download 3.20 D Cam software version," (19.5), "I'll be going to send you the link first, and download that now, and then you can try to like uhm, add the camera on that specific software" and (19.6), "you can always call us back, and I'll be just providing you the case number" are the examples of commissive-directive speech acts since the call center agent is committed to the truth of proposition since she tells the customer about something, especially in an official way. The call center agent is also committed to future action. She made an offer and advised the customer on what to do after receiving the link. The call center agent initiated sending the link instead, so the customer wouldn't have any difficulty finding the application on the website.

The utterance in line 19.4 is a commissive speech act since there is an agreement

In this context, the call center agent needs to gather more information from his tool to be more helpful to his customer. With this, the call center agent first asks for permission, as seen in line 20.1, using the formulaic expression 'allow me'. Then the agent committed himself to a certain future course of action because of the modal in line 20.2, will, leaving the customer assured that, after he verified the necessary information, the customer would receive the help needed. Then, in line 20.3, the utterance, "I'll just be putting you hold on for a while, just give me 3 minutes" is an assertive-directive act since the utterance implies that the customer should hold the line while something else is done. This could be inferred as a kind of directive since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something, but is not labelled 'direct' because it is an important part of the mechanics of dialogue control, for which a formulaic expression is apparent from his utterance, "I'll just be putting you hold on for a while." It could also be noted that the agent had used the downgrader, just, that makes the mood in the imperative form soften. After stating the reason why, the agent needed to place the customer on hold, line 20.4 is shown as commissive-directive

speech act since the first clause of the sentence “I’ll get back to you” is an act of promise, while “stay on the line” is an act of request.

The customer's utterance, "okay," is a reactive speech act following a request for

Agent	<i>And uh allow me to verify some of the information right here, and also</i> (20.1) <i>I'll check some uh resources so that I can assist you better.</i> (20.2) <i>I'll just be putting you hold on for a while, just give me 3 minutes.</i> (20.3) <i>And I'll get back to you, stay on the line.</i> (20.4)
Customer	Okay. <i>Thanks.</i> (20.5)
Agent	(Customer was placed on hold)

(Transcript 20)
From Male Agent 6

permission, indicating that the customer permitted the call center agent to place him on hold. The call center agent's utterance of " thanks in line 20.5 is an expressive act to show his appreciation for allowing him to perform the act. The call center agent then expresses an attitude about a state of affairs.

Agent	<i>Use a different website Ma'am. Go to Youtube, Facebook, any website.</i> (23.1)
Customer	Okay. (Dead Air)
Customer	Okay... Okay it looks like it will go to Youtube...
Agent	<i>Uhuh.</i> (23.2)
Customer	Let me see if I can get.. a- ahuh, okay, yah it will let me get to Yahoo. But why won't it, [why won't it
Agent	<i>ah] basically Ma'am, here's the thing, okay...uhm...when you use this ah adapter in replacement of the, ah, you know, built in adapter of your computer or your laptop right?.. So your built in ah, ahm laptop, I mean your built in adapter for your laptop uses windows to configure, okay. Uses windows manager, the first one that you did for available wireless network, okay. Now since that you're using this (Brand). (Brand) is not using that windows to configure the ah, the ah adapter, okay, but instead (Brand) has its own or have own wireless manager, so that you can connect to the network and that's the its wireless connection manager that you have open, okay. So anytime you want to connect to a network, you will, ah, need to go to that wireless connection manager under all programs and you will see the name there and from there you ah will connect it to the network</i> (23.3)

(Transcript 23)
From Male Agent 5

Use a different website Ma'am. Go to Youtube, Facebook, any website." is an example of a suggestion act. The utterance uses a direct strategy because, first, he addressed the customer using an honorific title, Ma'am; second, the call center agent clearly stated what he meant by using the performative verbs use and go. It could be understood in the context that, since the other website was not working, the call center agent suggested that the customer visit another website to see if the customer could access it. Edmonson and House (1981), cited in Flor (2005), state that the use of imperatives is regarded as the most direct form of making a suggestion, since they have the greatest pragmatic force. Thus, the utterance is an example of a directive speech act, since the call center agent asked the customer to take some action that the agent believed would benefit the hearer, even one that the agent should desire. Moreover, the call center agent explained clearly without figurative language, and the customer understood deeply what the call center agent intended.

When the customer was able to access the suggested website, the *uhuh* in line 23.2 is the expression of the call center agent as a response, which means it acts as a free-standing response token, in which the call center agent relied on this token as a shorthand display that marks understanding and confirmation.

When the customer heard the utterance of the call center agent, she mentioned that she could go to the suggested websites already and tried to explain something; however, the call center agent interrupted her, and asserted what caused the issue as seen in his utterance below:

ah] basically Ma'am, here's the thing, okay...uhm...when you use this ah adapter in replacement of the, ah, you know, built in adapter of your computer or your laptop right?.. So your built in ah, ahm laptop, I mean your built in adapter for your laptop uses windows to configure, okay. Uses windows manager, the first one that you did for available wireless network, okay. Now since that you're using this (Brand). (Brand) is not using that windows to configure the ah, the ah adapter, okay, but instead (Brand) has its own or have own wireless manager, so that you can connect to the network and that's the its wireless connection manager that you have open, okay. So anytime you want to connect to a network, you will, ah, need to go to that wireless connection manager under all programs and you will see the name there and from there you ah will connect it to the network.

The utterance is a direct speech act since the call center agent used *you/r* for 15 times. Moreover, while the call center agent was explaining, he used 'okay' as his final token in every sentence, which signals agreement with what the call center agent's prior utterance was taken to project. One reason for using 'okay' is that the hearer will be better prepared for the speaker's argument and views. They can anticipate whether the hearer will agree or disagree. Those who use these words will find them easier to understand. Hearer may conceive of misunderstanding as a product of 'how' things are said rather than as a product of 'what' is said. It is here that the successful management of different conversational strategies comes to the fore (Rapila, 1993). Thus, the utterance is an example of an assertive speech act since the call center agent shares something clear to the customer. He educated the customer regarding the difference between a wireless client, which is already built into her laptop, and a wireless zero configuration, which is part of the Microsoft program. Furthermore, the customer does not necessarily look for any other comprehension.

Agent *So the LAN 1, is it lit?*
Customer (24.1) Ah yes, LAN 1, lit.
Agent *Kay. (24.2)*
And the globe icon? (24.3)
Customer No. It's not lit.
Agent *Not lit...So basically, there's really something wrong with that one... (24.4)*
And you mentioned th-that the resent band is not working, right? (24.5)
Customer Yeah. The one at the back, Yes. Ah The paper creep, you pushed it again and again for a quite awhile.
Agent *Yes. So when you m(pause) you've mentioned that you tried pushing it down for ah 10 seconds. Is that right? (24.6)*
Customer Yes yeah ah [?]
Agent *Ahuh...And it hasn't make any difference at all, right? (24.7) No. [?]*

Agent *Ahuhm okay. (24.8)*
So you tried observing the lights when you did the reset, right? (24.9)
Customer Pardon me?
Agent *Ay- Did you observe the lights when you did the reset?*
Customer (24.10) Ah yeah. I actually watched it. Yes. [?]
Agent *Ah you did do everything. Ah for this one, Robert, would you mind Sir if I place you on hold for about 2 to 3 minutes, while I discuss this one with my supervisor? And let's see how we can proceed, okay? (24.11)*
Customer Okay. Thank you.

(Transcript 24)
From Female Agent 8

Yes-No question forms are highly observable from this transcript, which is very typical among the call center agents. Most of the time, they would utilize Y-N question forms or commonly known as closed-ended questions because the responses are more specific and direct, and the call center agent could think analytically based on the short responses of the customers which is easier for them to draw conclusion and provide appropriate recommendations (Barnhart, 2000; Freeman & Rustnell, 2000 cited in White 2003).

Moreover, this type of utterance would appear in sequence; therefore, the call center agent can pinpoint the solution to the issue. Thus, this type of question form is usually used to probe customers.

Below are the following utterances in the form of a (Y-N) question:

So the LAN 1, is it lit? (24.1)
 And the globe icon? (24.3)
 And you mentioned th-that the resent band is not working, right? (24.5)
 So when you m(pause) you've mentioned that you tried pushing it down for ah 10 seconds. Is that right? (24.6)

Did you observe the lights when you did the reset? (24.10)

The identified utterances are examples of directive speech acts, since the call center agent tells the customer what she would like the customer to do. Mainly,

The call center agent was asking questions for her to properly diagnose the customer's device. Proper probing is necessary during troubleshooting so the call center agent can identify the cause of the device problem. Though the utterances are too direct, this is common among the samples that the researcher had listened to.

The call center agent had exhausted all the possible solutions as shown in line

24.11 "would you mind Sir if I place you on hold for about 2 to 3 minutes, while I discuss this one with my supervisor? And let's see how we can proceed, okay?" which implies that the customer should hold the line while something else is done. Hence, the utterance is a directive speech act, since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something; however, it is an indirect speech act, since the call center agent uses the expression, "Would you mind if I place you on hold?"

Agent	<i>Sir, as you're able to put up ah your ID, put up a name, and a network security password for your router; all you need to do next is disconnect this cable, or disconnect the laptop from the router, and connect</i>
Customer	<i>your laptop from the WIFI network that you name it, and it will be wireless.</i>
Agent	(25.1) Okay.
Customer	Okay. (25.2)
Agent	Alright. And ah looks like I need to save this somehow and I don't see a save button anymore.
	<i>Ah no need (pause) no need to save, it's already done. Yes.</i>
	(25.3)
Customer	Okay. Thanks very much.
	(Transcript 25) From Male Agent 6

Line 25.1 is a clustered speech act. The call center agent utterance starts by addressing the customer, Sir, an honorific title, then the utterance, as you're able, is a reactive speech when the customer was able to perform or execute the action, put up ah your ID, put up a name, and a network security password for your router. Likewise, the utterance is a preparatory statement so that the call center agent could shift to the next task, which is by giving a direct advice/request, "all you need to do next is disconnect this cable, or disconnect the laptop from the router". This shows that the utterance is more on request because the main goal of which is to get the customer into doing something. However, since the call center agent utilized the conventionalized form, you need, that makes the utterance more on advice; still, the utterance is categorized as a directive- request speech act because of its imperative form, "connect your laptop from the WIFI network that you name it." In this juncture, the agent wrapped up the utterance with a fact, an assertive

speech act, that if the customer were able to perform the aforementioned request, customer's device would be able to go the Internet wirelessly.

The utterance 'okay' in line 25.2 is the acknowledgment token in the customer's response statement. This is another way of telling the customer that I got you. Thus, the utterance is an assertive speech act in view of the call center agent being committed to the truth of the proposition.

The utterance in line 25.3, "Ah no need (pause) no need to save, it's already done", is the call center agent's reply when the customer asked for clarification, in which the utterance is an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed

to the truth of the proposition. He tells the customer about something in a formal

Agent	<i>Kindly check the cable first coming from the modem, where is it connected? (26.1)</i>
Customer	<i>Aah...I don't know where the modem is.</i>
Agent	<i>Okay. (26.2)</i> <i>Because here's this thing, Joseph, you need to verify first, or you need to</i>

(Transcript 26)
From Female Agent 6

manner which implies confirmation with emphasis; it informs the customer that the data has been saved automatically already.

Moving on, the utterance in line 26.1 "Kindly check the cable first coming from the modem, where is it connected?" is an example of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. The call center agent posing the request in the form of an imperative, "check the cable first coming from the modem," is a direct speech act because of the performative verb "check." She then used "kindly," which is an illocutionary marker for making a request. Then, to make the instruction clearer, she used the wh- question form to gather information about the customer's equipment.

When the call center agent heard the customer's response, she acknowledged it by saying "okay" in line 26.2. According to Beach (1993), 'okay' is an acknowledgment token (e.g., confirmation) of what the prior speaker's utterance projected. Then she informed the customer what should be done first for them to properly diagnose the connection, as seen in her utterance, "need to uh make sure that your physical connection is cor...uhm a properly connected." The utterance is closer to assertive, but since she used the phrase 'you need to,' it's more about giving instructions or procedures. Therefore, the utterance "you really need assistance from your parents, so that we can proceed further for this concern" is an act of advice, as the call center agent believes the proposed action is in the customer's best interest. Thereupon, line 26.3 is a cluster of assertive-directive acts, since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. Moreover, the listener could understand directly the meaning of the call center agent's utterances because it does not use any figurative language.

(Customer is placed on

Agent *Thanks for patiently staying on the line. (27.1)*

Agent *And I apologize for that long wait. (27.2)*

(Transcript 27)

From Male Agent 5

The utterances in lines 27.1 and 27.2 are examples of expressive speech acts because the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs. When the call center agent returned to the customer after putting him on hold, his first utterance was a thank-you for remaining on the line: “*Thanks for patiently staying on the line.*” The agent unambiguously used the explicit illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) by saying the word ‘*Thanks,*’ a token of appreciation.

Then he asked for an apology because he had used the explicit illocutionary force indicating device (IFID). It could be that the call center agent put the customer on hold for a long time because it took him a while to find the information he needed in his resources. Thus, the call center agent exhibits politeness in communicating with the customer, using ‘*thank you*’ and ‘*sorry,*’ which are indicators of modest politeness. Thereupon, transcript 27 is an example of an expressive speech act.

Agent *Can you please try to double check if you are able to see a gear icon located at the upper right hand side of the screen? (28.1)*

What do you mean your gear icon?

Customer *It’s like a gear icon. It’s like uhm...It’s like a flower...looks like a flower at the upper right hand side of the screen. (28.2)*

Agent *Oh like on the computer?*

Yeah... (28.3)

Customer *Can you please try to click on the home button on the remote? (28.4)*

Agent *If you’re able to see the gear icon, we need to click on that. That’s the settings gear. It’s like a gear icon for the settings. (28.5)*

Customer *Yeah. I don’t...Honestly, I don’t even see that.*

Agent *Uhm... can you try to get back on the home button? Were you able to... (28.6)*

Customer	Home button?
Agent	<i>Yeah. (28.7)</i> <i>Click on the remote control of your (Model) device to your wireless TV. (28.8)</i>
Customer	See. It's connected to the TV and it's telling us the activation code, to activate on- on- on the computer? But, when we do that on the computer, it doesn't, it's asking for a username and a password.
Agent	<i>Yes. (28.9)</i> <i>Uh, what is the username and password of your router? Is it- is it under Pandora? (28.10)</i>
Customer	Yeah, it's under Pandora.
Agent	<i>Then what's the username and, and password of your Mom's uhm account under Pandora? (28.11)</i>
Customer 2	(to her mom) Mom what's your username and password of
Customer 1	Pandora? It won't go through.
Agent	<i>I see then you need to call Pandora for this. [Uhm... (28.12)</i>
Customer 1	(murmuring) Exactly.
Customer 2	Okay. Thank you.

(Transcript 28)
From Female Agent 3

In this transcript, examples of directive speech act are easily recognizable as can be seen in the following utterances:

Can you please try to double check if you are able to see a gear icon located at the upper right hand side of the screen? (28.1)

Can you please try to click on the home button on the remote? (28.4)

... can you try to get back on the home button? (28.6)

Click on the remote control of your (Model) device to your wireless TV. (28.8)

From the conversation above, the call center agent was helping the customer get the device up and running. From the selected utterances, the call center agent used two forms in making a request, posing the request in the form of a modal question can you in lines 28.1, 28.4, and 28.6, and posing the request in the form of an imperative in line 28.8. The first form is the most common mitigation strategy in English to make the request less direct, while the second form is the most direct, explicit level, realized by syntactically marked requests.

The utterances such as “what is the username and password of your router? Is it- is it under Pandora” (28.10) and “what’s the username and, and password of your Mom’s uhm account under Pandora”? (28.11) are act of questioning which belongs to directive speech act as well, since the call center agent tells the customer that he/she would like the customer to do something.

Moreover, aside from the directive speech act, another type of speech act that could be found in this transcript is the assertive speech act. It is notable in the following utterances:

It's like a gear icon. It's like uhm...It's like a flower...looks like a flower at the upper right hand side of the screen. (28.2)

It's like a gear icon for the settings. (28.5)

This is very common as well in a call center agent-customer conversation over the telephone. If the customer has difficulty following the directives or cannot locate the area where he/she needs to click, it's

the call center agent's responsibility to make the instructions clearer and comprehensible by describing them in layman's terms. That is why, from the utterance, the use of "its" is very palpable, making the description fit the setting they were looking for. Thus, the utterances are examples of assertive speech acts, since the call center agent conveys something clear to the customer. Moreover, the customer does not necessarily look for any other instructions.

Another example of an assertive speech act is the utterances 'Yeah' and 'Yes'. These are the call center agent's positive responses to a question.

Lastly, the utterance "you need to call Pandora for this" in line 28.12 is an act of advice since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. With that, the customer could understand directly the meaning of the call center agent's

utterances because it does not use any connotative expression. In order for the device to work, the customer should contact the right people, since the call center agent believes that this is for customer's advantage

Agent	<i>Okay. Actually the uhm- the modem is supposed to give ah Internet connection for Internet service and that's where the (brand) router is also getting Internet connection. So basically if the modem is not working, then our router won't work as well. (29.1)</i>
	<i>You need to go to (ISP) and ask them to fix the modem, 'coz I can't do anything with the modem. That's ah different, and that's provided by your Internet service provider; uhm (ISP). (29.2)</i>
Customer	Oh. Okay! I will do that.

(Transcript 29)
From Male Agent 8

Another good example of an assertive speech act is the utterance in line 29.1. In this line, the call center agent shares something clear with the customer. Furthermore, the customer does not necessarily look for any other instructions. The call center agent explicitly explained to the customer how a modem works. This speech act is associated with a discourse marker, so, which indicates an initiation of a new part of the dialogue, which is an analogy type of explaining, so that the customer would be able to comprehend the connectivity concept.

His utterance "You need to go to (ISP) and ask them to fix the modem" serves both as a suggestion and as advice; it's an act of direction, since the call center agent is trying to get the customer to do something. Moreover, he asked the customer to take some action, which the agent believes would benefit the hearer, even one that the agent would desire. Moreover, the listener could understand the meaning of the speaker's utterances directly because they do not use any connotative expressions. The call center agent used direct speech in telling the customer that for her device to work again,

the customer should seek assistance from the manufacturer of her modem. Also, the next clause in the utterance "coz I can't do anything with the modem" is an act of assertiveness, since the call center agent was stating a fact: he was not trained to configure modems. In view of this, the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition.

Agent	<i>And do you know how to connect to the network? (30.1) Well,</i>
Customer	<i>it shows connected I guess, already.</i>
Agent	<i>Go ahead. (30.2)</i>
Customer	<i>It's already enabled...So that's it?</i>
Agent	<i>Ahuhm... That's it Sir. (30.3)</i>
Customer	<i>Alright. So I shouldn't have any problems, right?</i>
Agent	<i>Hmm. No more problems unless you still want to be assisted on any concern... Are there still anything? (30.4)</i>
Customer	<i>What?</i>
Agent	<i>Uh, do you still have any concern, Sir, that I may assist you? (30.5) No.</i>
Customer	<i>Thank you very much, though.</i>

(Transcript 30)
From Male Agent 4

The utterance in line 30.1 is an example of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. The call center agent asked the customer directly because he used the second-person pronoun 'you,' and he asked about the customer's ability to connect to the network with a direct wh-question. The utterance is too direct, since the call center agent didn't use any hedges or downtoners, but it is a good start in an initiating-response conversation, so the call center agent wouldn't treat the customer like a pinhead.

Then, the utterance in line 30.2 is an explicit request due to the performative verb, go, but this time, the call center agent omitted the second person, you, and this is a common imperative; thus, the statement is a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

"Ahuhm... That's it, Sir," is the call center agent's response when the customer asks him if his issue has been resolved. It is too informal, though; but uhuhm in this context means yes. Still, the call center agent retained his politeness by addressing the customer with an honorific title, Sir.

Then the customer asked for clarification. The call center agent's response in line 30.4 confirmed that the issue has been resolved and he has no problem at all (No more problems), which is an act of assertiveness since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition. Then he made follow-up utterances, which is an example of a directive-commissive act as seen on his statement, "unless you still want to be assisted on any concern. Are there anything else?" The call center agent's utterances are direct speech acts because of the second-person pronoun "you." The utterance "unless you still want to be assisted on any concern" signals that the call center agent commits himself to a future action. And in order for the customer to understand the offering statement, he asked the customer in interrogative-negative questions, which in those cases presume a yes-answer and function as a positive politeness device, as seen in the following utterances: "Is there anything else?" This indicates that the speaker knows the addressee's tastes, wants, habits, and so on (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

However, the customer didn't catch the offering statement, so the call center agent repeated his offer by paraphrasing it: "Uh, do you still have any concern, Sir, that I may assist you?" The initial part of line 30.5 is still a direct speech act since he used the second person pronoun, you, but his statement was mitigated since he used the honorific title, Sir, in the middle part, then the modal, may, which further emphasizes the addresser's recognition of the addressee's freedom of action (Ad-Darraj et al., 2012).

Customer ...my other question is uh, where I go to where I have the other
WIFI? Ahh..The other one for the skype- ah- I can't find that in
Agent Customer there.
Agent *I'm sorry, Sir, what are you trying to find?*
(31.1) The, the other wireless., which is the 5,
Customer Agent uh...108. *Mmm. Okay.* (31.2)
So you're not able to uhm detect the 5GHz wireless band on your laptop?
(31.3) No.
*Okay the reason for that, Sir, because the device or the laptop that you are using
is not capable of detecting that wireless band, so, the adapter that you have
(pause) you have been using the (pause) for the for the laptop. Uhm the adapter
from the laptop, wireless adapter is not capable of detecting that 5GHz wireless
band, that's why you're not able to detect that one.* (31.4)
Customer *But no need for you to worry, it's just ah for ah the adapter but basically it's
already connected into your wireless network with the other computer, uhm you
just need to do the same thing okay? Use the same information.* (31.5)
Alright.

(Transcript 31)
From Female Agent 2

An example of an expressive-directive speech act could be seen in the utterance in line 31.1 "I'm sorry, Sir, what are you trying to find?" The agent used the explicit illocutionary force indicating device 'I'm sorry' as an expression of regret for not being able to comprehend the customer's statement, in which apologizing is an expressive act; the call center agent expresses an attitude toward a state of affairs. Then she continued by asking the customer in a (wh-)question form to better understand her. Thus, the interrogative utterance is a directive act, as the call center agent seeks to get the customer to do something.

The utterance in line 31.3 "So you're not able to uhm detect the 5GHz wireless band on your laptop"? could be identified as an act of confirming, just to make sure she understood the customer's concern. However, since it ends with a question mark, that makes a directive speech act, the act of questioning, since the call center agent tells the customer that he/she would like the customer to do something.

After she received the customer's response, she explained to him why he could not detect the 5GHz wireless band. The utterance in line 31.4 is not just a simple answer but also is more on providing a long piece of information. However, it is evident that the call center agent kept repeating certain words, such as laptop, adapter, and wireless band. This is customary in a call center agent-customer conversation, where the call center agent may repeat not just to ensure the information is accurately received and understood, but also to emphasize the need to take the facts seriously. Thus, this is an example of an assertive speech act, since the call center agent clearly shares something with the customer. Furthermore, the customer does not necessarily look for any other instructions.

The utterance in line 31.5 is an act of advice since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. The utterance is closer to an assertion since the call center agent uses the phrases “no need for you to worry, you just need to do the same thing and use the same information”; however, the utterances are directives since the call center agent believes that those are for the benefit of the customer. Moreover, the listener could understand directly the meaning of the speaker’s utterances because it does not use any figurative expression.

Agent	<i>This is not about (Brand). (Brand) Ma'am only lets you connect to the network of your, a router, okay? Any, any problems with regard to connecting to a certain website that is, that would be answered by the router itself, okay? (32.1) So what you need to do, you need to call the manufacturer of your router which I believe also your Internet Service Provider is (ISP), right? (32.2)</i>
Customer	Right.
Agent	<i>Yes, just call them. (32.3) Let them know that you can go to Facebook, you can go to YouTube, you can go to Yahoo, but you can't access the ahm, the MSN.com, okay (32.4)</i>
Customer	Okay.

(Transcript 32)
From Male Agent 5

The utterance in line (32.1) is an example of an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition since he/she tell the customer about something, especially in an official way. The call center agent's utterance is a direct speech act because he used the second person, 'you,' and addressed 'ma'am' as an honorific title. The call center agent explained to the customer the function of the router, and he used the token 'okay' to emphasize his prior utterance.

Then, after his explanation, his next utterance is a directive speech act since he made a suggestion, a proposition, so that the issue would be straightened out. The utterance is not too direct because the call center agent utilized the verb, “So what you need to do, you need to call the manufacturer of your router.” The utterance is a type of conventionalized form that is used to make suggestions, still allowing the hearers to understand the speaker's intentions behind the suggestion, since the illocutionary force indicator appears in the utterance Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1996, cited in (Flor, 2005)

The utterance in line 32.3, “just call them”, is a direct speech act since the call center agent's suggestion is in the form of an imperative; the speech is softened when he utilizes a downgrader, just.

Also, the utterance in line 32.4 is an act of advice, which could be seen in his utterance, “let them know”, in which the call center agent believes that the objective of the utterance is to benefit the customer.

Moreover, 'okay' was included as his final statement, seeking agreement with the customer. One reason for using 'okay' or 'alright' is that the hearer would be better prepared for the speaker’s argument and views. They can anticipate whether the hearer is going to agree or disagree. Those who use these words will find that they are more easily understood. Hearer may conceive of misunderstanding as a product of ‘how’ things are said rather than as a product of ‘what’ is said. It is here that the successful management of different conversational strategies comes to the fore (Rapila, 1993). Thus, another example of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

Agent	<i>Your router is now back up. It's now, it's now been configured. (33.1)</i> <i>So what you have to do is to close this page, and try to check if you can pull up a website with this computer. (33.2)</i>
Customer	Okay. Let's close this page...already. Already.Yep! Google came up. <i>That's good. (33.3)</i>
Agent	<i>So (pause) so your router now, Sir, is configured again. (33.4)</i> <i>You have successfully configured it. (33.5)</i>

(Transcript 33)
From Male Agent 9

The utterance “Your router is now back up. It’s now, it’s now been configured.” in line 33.1 is an example of an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of proposition since he tells the customer about something. The call center agent informed the customer that the router is good to go already. Then he continued by uttering an imperative form of request, “So what you have to do is to close this page, and try to check if you can pull up a website with this computer.” The call center agent asked the customer to check if it’s able to browse to test if they were able to configure the device successfully. Hence, this utterance is an example of a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something.

The call center agent responded with appreciation to a previous turn in which the customer has indicated something from which the call center agent is presumed to benefit as seen in the utterance “That’s good.” In line 33.3, therefore the utterance is an example of an expressive act by reason of the call center agent expressing an attitude about a state of affairs.

Then he echoed the information that had been uttered in line 33.1 as seen in line 33.4 to give emphasis that the device is now working. More so, the utterance in 33.5 “You have successfully configured it.” is an assertive-appreciation speech act since the call center agent informed the customer that the device has been properly configured because the customer was able to troubleshoot the device, which is another way of telling the customer, you did a great job. Thus, the utterance is an example of an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition since he tells the customer about something.

Agent ...would you like to enable the My (Brand) Service?(34.1)
Customer What is that?
Agent *Oh, The My (Brand) Service enables you to control your router even your, even though you're uh away from it. For example, if uh, if you are in a Starbucks uh...in a Starbucks Coffee Shop, and you wanna check out your router and see what's the, what's in the network and who's in the network, you can actually, you can remotely access the router settings and find out if there any intruders on the network or stuff like that. [Basically [?]] (34.2)*
Customer Oh], okay!
Agent *Should like to do so?(34.3)*
Customer Yes.

(Transcript 34)
From Male Agent 1

The utterance in line 34.1 of Transcript 1 is a commissive act of offering since the call center agent commits himself to a certain future course of action. It can be inferred that the moment the call center agent made an offer with his utterance 'would you like,' this type of speech act is labeled an act of commitment, meaning the call center agent undertakes the responsibility to perform a future act that benefits the customer. In the call center industry, it is usual for a call center agent to make an offer, not only that, but they believe that it is beneficial to their customers, and also to let them feel that they are valued customers. It is up to the customer to accept or refuse the offer. But in this scenario, since the customer was unaware of a specific device feature, she asked a question.

The utterances of the call center agent in line 34.2 are samples of assertive speech acts. The call center agent knew that the customer was unaware of the new feature of her device because of the customer's behavior. The call center agent provided a clear description of the feature, with an example, so the customer could easily picture how it would work.

When the call center agent heard the customer's utterance, "Oh, Okay," it prompted him to ask for the customer's permission to proceed with the action. The call center agent's utterance in line 34.3, "Should like to do so?" is an interrogative-negative construction. The modal should strengthen the commissiveness of the utterance. In offers, interrogative-negative cases presume a yes answer from the hearer and function as a positive politeness device, indicating that the speaker knows the addressee's tastes, wants, habits, and so on.

Agent	<i>What is the operating system of the laptop, please? (35.1)</i>
Customer	(laughing) I don't know.
Agent	Okay are you [run-
Customer	I] just recognize. I recognize the system.
Agent	<i>Uhuhm. Okay?(35.2)</i>
Customer	Oh it wants my security key.
Agent	<i>Ahuhm?(35.3)</i>
Customer	It's connecting.
Agent	<i>Ahuhm.(35.4)</i>
Customer	Alright. I guess we're going to stop now. I recognize how to
Agent	do it. (Chuckles)

(Transcript 35)
From Female Agent 10

The utterance in line 35.1 is an example of a directive speech act the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. The call center agent explicitly asked the customer about the device's operating system so she could guide the customer properly on how to connect to the wireless network. It is also noticeable that at the end of the utterance, they used the final token, 'please'. Please is one of the most common discourse markers in making a request. The function of the word please refers to politeness and is usually used in conjunction with the act of requesting (Wichmann, 2011).

The utterances in lines 35.2, 35.3, and 35.4 can be labeled as expressions, but in a phone call center agent-customer conversation, when the customer is stating something or asking for confirmation, call center agents habitually use 'uh-huh' as their response. The uh-huh means the listener simply acknowledges that something has been heard and accepted into the stream of conversation (Rapila, 1993). Uh-huh is a listener's reaction that chiefly signals attention and agreement, functioning as a floor returner. Their use is interpreted by the speaker as a 'go on' or 'tell me more' (Rapila, 1993). Therefore, the utterance is an indirect assertive speech act.

Agent	<i>Ah Ma'am, I'll be advising you call again (ISP), inform them the steps that we've done. (36.1)</i>
Customer	Okay.
Agent	<i>And then, Ma'am, read to them, the IP Address...(36.2)</i>
Agent	<i>This is called IP Address that you get from your modem. (36.3)</i>
Customer	That IP Address is that 169? Is that it?...169254? Is that my IPAddress?
Agent	<i>That is your IP Address, because basically, that is an inva- not really invalid, but that IP Address signifies that their modem is not giving any Internet access. (36.4)</i>
Customer	Oookay. Okay. Alright. Well, thank you so much for being patient with me. I know I'm not too smart. Hehe!
Agent	<i>Oh no no. (36.5)</i>
Agent	<i>It's alright, Ma'am. (36.6)</i>
Agent	<i>It's alright. (36.7)</i>
Customer	<i>Thank you also for being patient. (36.8) Thank you.</i>

(Transcript 36)
 From Male Agent 8

The utterance in line 36.1 is an example of a directive speech act, since the call center agent is trying to get the customer to do something. The agent explicitly advised the customer because of the performative verb, advising. It could be inferred from this utterance that both of them, because of the pronoun 'we', had already exhausted all the troubleshooting steps, yet the issue remained unresolved. With that, the last resort was to advise the customer to contact her Internet Service Provider again, as the call center agent believed the issue was on the ISP's end. Thus, line 36.1 is an act of advice under directives. Moreover, the listener could understand the meaning of the speaker's utterances directly because they do not use any connotative expressions.

Line 36.2 is also a directive speech act, but it is an act of request: read to them, in the imperative form, since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. Then line 36.3 is an assertive fact since the call center agent stated a fact when he said "This is called IP Address that you get from your modem". Then that statement was elaborated in line 36.4 as seen in his utterance That is your IP Address, because basically, that is an inva- not really invalid, but that IP Address signifies that their modem is not giving any Internet access, in which the agent explained the meaning of the numbers in the customer's connection. Hence, lines 36.3 and 36.4 are examples of assertive speech acts, as the call center agent clearly shares information with the customer. Furthermore, the customer does not necessarily look for any other instructions.

Then the utterances in lines 36.5-7 are the call center agent's reactive speech when the customer said she was not tech-savvy. There is a repetition of his utterances when he disagrees with the customer's. This indicates that the utterances belong to an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition, since he/she tells the customer about something.

This softens the mood of the conversation by showing his appreciation for the customer's behavior throughout the call. A politeness utterance could be inferred in line 36.8, "Thank you also for being patient", which serves as a compliment to his customer for being patient, in which he uses the illocutionary force indicating device (IFID). Thus, the utterance in line 36.8 is an expressive speech act because the call center agent expresses an

Agent *If you have still questions about this router, Sir, don't hesitate to call us and I'll be giving you a reference number, alright? (37.1)*

Customer Okay, thank you very much.

(Transcript 37)
From Male Agent 2

The utterance in line 37.1 of Transcript 5 is an example of a commissive speech act because the call center agent is committed to some future action. Multiple strategies could be found in the call center agent's utterances on various levels of politeness to perform the speech act of offering. "If you have still questions about this router, Sir, don't hesitate to call us" is a conditional clause because of the word if, then he addressed his customer by calling him Sir, an honorific title, another indication of politeness, then the future tense in the last part of his utterance, "I'll be giving you a reference number." The call center agent has utilized strategies such as if clauses, using future tense and honorific title in recognizing the customer's freedom of action. The decision was left to the customer whether he'd accept the offer or not. This shows that the proposition of the call center agent was successfully determined when the customer uttered Okay, which means acceptance of the offer. This utterance is customary when the call center agents are wrapping up their calls since this is part of their closing spiel, they would make the customer feel that they value their calls and any time, they are available and ready to assist them with their issues.

Customer I appreciate your help. Thank you so much.
Agent *Okay you're welcome, Jerome. Not a problem. (38.1)*

(Transcript 38)
From Female Agent 5

The utterance in line 38.1, "Okay, you're welcome, Jerome," is an example of an expressive speech act because the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs. This is the usual response when the customer expresses gratitude for helping them resolve the issue.

The utterance "Not a problem" could be an assertive speech act or a commissive speech act. It could be an assertive speech act because it could be understood that there was no need for the customer to say 'thank you' since it was her job to help the customer. The call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition because he/she tells the customer something, especially in an official capacity. On the other hand, it could be a commissive speech act since it is another way of telling the customer that they feel free to call us any time and we are ready to assist you, which means the call center agent commits herself to a certain future course of action.

Customer	I'm gonna ask a question, not now 'coz this one works fine. Does (Brand) also have wireless routers? <i>Ah! Your router Sir is already a wireless router. (39.1)</i>
Agent	No. No. Oh- Oh- Oh. That's right. Well mean, it's something like you don't have to push bunch of cords, and everything?
Customer	<i>Yes. You don't have to push cords anymore... The cord that needs to be connected, as always, will be the cable ah the cable connects between the modem and the router is very important, it should always stays there. Since this desktop doesn't have the wireless capability, then it should also stays connected wired to the router. (39.2)</i>
Agent	

Customer	I- I understand. If you had a desktop, that already have wireless capability, then you could get a complete wireless router?
Agent	<i>That is correct. Correct, Sir. (39.3)</i>
Customer	Oh good. Good. Well then eventually, this dinosaur computer here to a windows media center, uh, uh, it's, it's a strong computer. But it's not gonna last forever. (chuckles) And that time, and at that time I get (brand) complete wireless for my wireless computer.
Agent	<i>I see. (39.4)</i>
Customer	I like (brand) products. They are very good.
Agent	<i>That's good. (39.5)</i> <i>Thank you so much I hear that from you, Sir. (39.6)</i> <i>Alright. (39.7)</i>
Customer	<i>Well, anyway, if in case you have troubles in the future, don't hesitate to call (brand) and we'll assist you Sir, okay? (39.8)</i> Thank you very much Sir.

(Transcript 39)
From Male Agent 9

In this transcript, line 39.1 “Ah! Your router, Sir, is already a wireless router.” is an assertive speech act since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition. The utterance is a response to a query that notifies the customer of the device's specifications. Likewise, line 39.2 belongs to this type of speech act, since both utterances provide information about the device.

“That is correct. Correct, Sir.” in line 39.3 is an assertive speech (in view of the call center agent's commitment to the truth of the proposition) as well, in which the call center agent did not just recognize the previous utterance which has been heard from his customer, but also agreed with the force of that speech act. On the other hand, lines 39.4 “I see.” and “Alright.” 39.7 it could be labeled as expressions, but these utterances in this context are acknowledgment tokens, which point out an initiation of a new part of the dialogue. Thus, these utterances constitute an assertive speech act, since the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition. An example of an expressive speech act is the utterance in line (39.6), “Thank you

so much I hear that from you, Sir.” due to the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs. The call center agent used the illocutionary force-indicating device 'Thank you' to show his gratitude to his customer when the customer appreciated the device's quality.

Lastly, as the issue has been resolved, the call center agent uttered, “Well, anyway, if in case you have troubles in the future, don’t hesitate to call (brand) and we’ll assist you Sir, okay?” This type of speech act is labeled an act of commitment because the call center agent is committed to a future action; that is, the call center agent undertakes the responsibility to perform a future act that benefits the customer.

Agent	<i>Take care of the password, alright? (40.1)</i>	
Customer	Pardon? Yeah.	
Agent	<i>Uh, take note of the password...okay.(40.2)</i>	
Customer	Thank you for choosig, Sir and have a nice day.	
	Thank you. Bye.	(Transcript 40) From Male Agent 2

The utterance in line 40.1, “Take care of the password, alright?”, is a direct advice act due to the transparent expression of the performative verb “take care”. The utterance clearly implies that the customer is being advised to do something directly. Then, the free-standing/non-continuative response token 'alright' is added to his final utterance, providing an agreement signal with the call center agent's prior utterance. Thus, the utterance is an example of a directive speech act, since the call center agent is trying to get the customer to do something. Moreover, the listener could understand the meaning of the speaker’s utterances directly because they do not use any figurative language.

Then line 40.2 is also a directive speech act since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something, very similar to line 40.1. However, the utterance in line 40.2 is only a rephrased statement of the call center agent since the customer wasn’t able to catch the call center agent’s statement and asked him to repeat what he just said. Later on, the customer realized what the call center agent had said. That is why the call center agent, after he just rephrased his direct advice act, used the token 'okay,' a free-standing/non-continuative response token. The call center agent relies on this token as a shorthand to mark understanding and confirmation.

Agent	And thank you for calling (brand)- Thank you so much.	
Customer	<i>You’re welcome there Charles. (41.1) And thank you for calling</i>	
Agent	<i>(brand). (41.2) My name is (___) once again. (41.3) Have a</i>	
	<i>good one also, Charles. (41.4)</i>	(Transcript 41) From Female Agent 10

At the end of the call, whether the issue has been resolved or not, the call center agents should utter their closing spiel by thanking their customer for patronizing the product as seen in line 41.2. The utterance

in line 41.2 is an example of an expressive speech act since the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs.

The utterance in line 41.1, “You’re welcome there, Charles.”, is an example of an expressive speech act because the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs. This is the usual response when the customer expresses gratitude for helping them resolve the issue.

The utterance in line 41.3 is an example of an assertive speech act that functions as information. During this part, the call center agent formally stated their phone name, especially in a careful and clear way, so that, if the customer ever received an electronic survey at their email address, they would at least be able to mention their name verbatim.

The utterance in line 41.4 is an example of an expressive speech act because the call center agent expresses an attitude about a state of affairs. Wishing is the expression of the speaker’s desire and wants in order to expect it to come to reality.

The presentation focuses on the analysis generated from the study's two research questions.

Directive uses have in common is that they are all attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something (Searle, 1975).

Below are the examples of directives (inquiring speech act type):

Transcript	Utterance	Line
1	<i>Is this your first time to call (Brand), Sir?</i>	1.1
1	<i>How about your last name, John?</i>	1.3
3	<i>What is this, uh, camera, brand new, Sir?</i>	3.3
3	<i>No need for the email, Sir,</i>	3.4
4	<i>How are you related with Francis, Ma’am?</i>	4.2, 4.3
5	<i>What is your issue today?</i>	5.1
5	<i>What is the model of your router, uh, Wanda?</i>	5.3
5	<i>Who’s your Service Provider?</i>	5.5
5	<i>So what is the brand of your (ISP) modem?</i>	5.7
5	<i>So uhm, okay, so, what computer do you have right now?</i>	5.9
5	<i>So uhm...Okay So, do you have uhm, where is your desktop connected right now?</i>	5.11
5	<i>Do you have Internet on your desktop?</i>	5.15
6	<i>You already reset the router, Sir John?</i>	6.1
6	<i>When you try to log in to the router, is that correct, Sir?</i>	6.5
7	<i>So basically the main reason, Sir, is you wanted to connect your tablet wirelessly to the router. Is that right?</i>	7.2

Transcript	Utterance	Line
7	<i>And uh, aside from the tablet, do you have any computer that is already working?</i>	7.3
8	<i>Oh lemme just verify Sir that your concern here is that you have lost on the Internet connection with the (Model) router where everything seems to be working fine on your (ISP Brand) modem and right now, the world or the globe light on the router is currently not lit and all those LAN uh indicators 1,2,3 and 4 are all lit despite there are no computers connected to the router hardwired?</i>	8.2
9	<i>What is the model number of your camera?</i>	9.1
10	<i>Did you already call them prior calling us?</i>	10.2
14	<i>Uhm, it should ask you right now for an admin password, right?</i>	14.2
15	<i>What does it say?</i>	15.3
18	<i>What is the uh, network status?</i>	18.1
18	<i>And how about the primary DNS Server?</i>	18.3
22	<i>...Lemme ask you first, the laptop, is this the only computer that you have there?</i>	22.1
24	<i>So the LAN 1, is it lit?</i>	24.1
24	<i>And the globe icon?</i>	24.3
24	<i>And you mentioned th-that the resent band is not working, right?</i>	24.5
24	<i>So when you m(pause) you've mentioned that you tried pushing it down for ah 10 seconds. Is that right?</i>	24.6
24	<i>Ahuh...And it hasn't make any difference at all, right?</i>	24.7
24	<i>So you tried observing the lights when you did the reset, right?</i>	24.9
24	<i>Did you observe the lights when you did the reset?</i>	24.10
28	<i>Uh, what is the username and password of your router? Is it- is it under Pandora?</i>	28.10
28	<i>Then what's the username and, and password of your Mom's uhm account under Pandora?</i>	28.11
30	<i>And do you know how to connect to the network</i>	30.1
31	<i>what are you trying to find?</i>	31.1
31	<i>So you're not able to uhm detect the 5GHz wireless band on your laptop?</i>	31.3

35	<i>what is the operating system of the laptop, please?</i>	35.1
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In speech act theory, questions are defined as requests for information. Searle (1969) stated that questions are a kind of request: To question is to request the hearer to state what the speaker wants to know.

This is a common speech act in a call center agent-customer dialogue where the agent wants to know what service the customer is seeking. The utterances have the same intention, seeking an instruction from the customer.

For the call center agent to assist the customer accurately, he/she should ask questions that are related to the issue, and these questions could be a form of a wh- question or a (Y-N) question/closed-ended question. This type of utterance would appear in sequence; yes-no question forms are highly observable from the previous transcripts, which is very typical among the call center agents. Most of the time, they would utilize Y-N question forms or commonly known as closed-ended questions because the responses are more specific and direct, and the call center agent could think analytically based on the short responses of the customers which is easier for them to draw conclusion and provide appropriate recommendations (Barnhart, 2000; Freeman & Rustnell, 2000 cited in White 2003). Thus, this type of question form is usually used to probe customers. Likewise, the customer recognizes accurately what the call center agent means.

The identified utterances are examples of directive speech acts, since the call center agent tells the customer what she would like the customer to do. Mainly, the call center agent asks questions to properly diagnose the customer's device. Proper probing is necessary during troubleshooting so the call center agent can identify the cause of the device problem. Though the utterances are too direct, but this is common among the samples that the researcher had listened to.

Other examples of directives (suggesting and advising speech act types):

Transcript	Utterance	Line
11	<i>However, if ever you don't want to upgrade it, all you have to do is to choose one of the out of warrant extended phone support. First is our 29.99, that is our one time uhm, fee, or that is a one- time fee of 29.99 that will basically provide you fourteen days grace period. (Pause) The second one, is a six months uhm, support, which is only for 39.99, that has ten dollar difference, you will be able to extend the warranty period of your devices for half a year.</i>	11.9
23	<i>Use a different website Ma'am. Go to Youtube, Facebook, any website</i>	23.1
32	<i>So what you need to do, you need to call the manufacturer of your router which I believe also your Internet Service Provider is (ISP), right?</i>	32.2
6	<i>Well, supposedly, Sir John, just in case in the future, you don't need to reset your the router, if you just change the password.</i>	6.3
19	<i>download that now, and then you can try to like uhm, add the camera on that specific software.</i>	19.5
28	<i>I see then you need to call Pandora for this.</i>	28.12

29	<i>You need to go to (ISP) and ask them to fix the modem</i>	29.2
31	<i>But no need for you to worry, it's just ah for ah the adapter but basically it's already connected into your wireless network with the other computer, uhm you just need to do the same thing okay? Use the same information.</i>	31.5
32	<i>Let them know that you can go to Facebook, you can go to Youtube, you can go to Yahoo, but you can't access the ahm, the MSN.com, okay?</i>	32.4
36	<i>Ah Ma'am, I'll be advising you call again (ISP), inform them the steps that we've done.</i>	36.1
40	<i>Take care of the password, alright?</i>	40.1
40	<i>Uh, take note of the password...okay.</i>	40.2

The utterances above are the acts of suggesting and advising. These are very customary in call center agents' utterances; it is his or her accountability to promote the services or recommendations since he/she believes that this is for the benefit of the customer. Thus, the utterances are examples of a directive speech act because the call center agents ask the customer to take some action that the agent believes would benefit the customer, even one that the agent would desire. Moreover, the call center agent explains the matter explicitly, without using connotative expressions, and the customer understands it thoroughly.

Edmonson and House (1981), cited in Flor (2005), state that the use of imperatives is regarded as the most direct form of making a suggestion, since they have the greatest pragmatic force. However, there are times when call center agents use the conventionalized forms in making suggestions and giving advice, such as 'you can,' 'you just need/you need', and 'you should.' This still allows the hearers to understand the speaker's intentions behind the suggestion and advice, since the illocutionary force indicator appears in the utterance (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1996 in Flor, 2005)

More so, according to Michael Schrage (2013), "Give your customers information that will be useful to them. Become their trusted advisor; become their go-to source. This approach to marketing - providing a continuous stream of useful content - is what will attract customers in our information-rich age."

Directives are also a type of requesting speech act. Below are the utterances under this type of speech:

Transcript	Utterance	Line
1	<i>Can I have your first name, please?</i>	1.2
2	<i>Can you try to login using the username admin, A-D-M-I-N, and no password.</i>	2.2
3	<i>And can I have your email address, please, Sir, please?</i>	3.1

Transcript	Utterance	Line
3	<i>Sir, can I have the serial number of the (Brand) camera?</i>	3.6
5	<i>So can you try to pull up our website?</i>	5.13
9	<i>So can I have you phone number starting with the area code, so that I can create a record of you in our system.</i>	9.5
10	<i>May I know who is your Internet Provider?</i>	10.1
13	<i>Can you see the name (Brand) now?</i>	13.1
13	<i>Can you click on the name [(Brand)-</i>	13.5
13	<i>Can you see option there, or a button that says, I don't want to set up my network...or connect without setting it up?</i>	13.9
13	<i>But can you see the option, right?</i>	13.11
22	<i>So, on that computer that is connected with that blue cord, can you open up or can access Internet on that one?</i>	22.5
28	<i>Can you please try to double check if you are able to see a gear icon located at the upper right hand side of the screen?</i>	28.1
28	<i>Can you please try to click on the home button on the remote?</i>	28.4
28	<i>Uhm... can you try to get back on the home button?</i>	28.6
7	<i>So, we are going to work on your main computer first.</i>	7.6
7	<i>So let's go to that computer, please?</i>	7.7
9	<i>Lemme just going to gather some info- ah the- lemme just have your phone number starting with the area code</i>	9.4
9	<i>I need to have your phone number starting with the area code, and your first and last name.</i>	9.7
19	<i>just download 3.20 D_____Cam software version, okay?</i>	19.3
20	<i>And uh allow me to verify some of the information right here</i>	20.1
20	<i>just give me 3 minutes</i>	20.3
21	<i>I'll be giving you the privilege to create your own wireless password, that must be at least 8 characters.</i>	21.1

22	<i>So, okay so we needed to use a computer, and we needed to use another Ethernet cable, and make sure that that computer, the laptop, will be wired to port one at the back of the (Brand).</i>	22.3
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Transcript	Utterance	Line
24	<i>Ah you did do everything. Ah for this one, Robert, would you mind Sir if I place you on hold for about 2 to 3 minutes, while I discuss this one with my supervisor? And let's see how we can proceed, okay?</i>	24.11
12	<i>Alright so clear everything on the address bar, including the HTTP.</i>	12.1
12	<i>just leave it blank and hit log in.</i>	12.3
12	<i>Just enter the graphical code there.</i>	12.6
12	<i>Do go ahead and enter the password there.</i>	12.10
13	<i>And click on connect at the bottom right corner?</i>	13.6
13	<i>Okay. Just click on that option.</i>	13.12
13	<i>Uh, just click on connect anyways.</i>	13.13
14	<i>ate an admin password and please make sure to type it carefully.</i>	14.4
15	<i>Uhm no...Okay Uhm ah... try to do this one. Close first all the open windows on your computer...</i>	15.4
15	<i>Close all the opened windows on your computer.</i>	15.5
15	<i>And (pause) and then after that one, open your Internet Explorer.</i>	15.6
17	<i>so kindly click on setup.</i>	17.2
17	<i>And then on the left side, you will see there wireless connection, kindly click on it, please?</i>	17.3-4
17	<i>And then select on Manual Wireless Connection Setup.</i>	17.5
18	<i>Give to me the IP Address, please?</i>	18.2
20	<i>stay on the line</i>	20.4
23	<i>t website Ma'am. Go to Youtube, Facebook, any website.</i>	23.1
25	<i>all you need to do next is disconnect this cable, or disconnect the laptop from the router, and connect your laptop from the WIFI network that you name it, and it will be wireless.</i>	25.1
26	<i>heck the cable first coming from the modem, where is it connected?</i>	26.1

26	<i>Because here's this thing, Joseph, you need to verify first, or you need to uh make sure that your physical connection is cor...uhm a properly connected. So if that's the case right now, basically, you really need assistance from your parents, so that we can proceed further for this concern.</i>	26.3
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Transcript	Utterance	Line
28	<i>Click on the remote control of your (Model) device to your wireless TV.</i>	28.8
30	<i>Go ahead.</i>	30.2
32	<i>just call them.</i>	32.3
33	<i>So what you have to do is to close this page, and try to check if you can pull up a website with this computer</i>	33.2
36	<i>And then, Ma'am, read to them, the IP Address...</i>	36.2

Directives are more likely to be expressed in the direct mode, at the explicit level, and realized through syntactically marked imperatives and modals.

It is noticeable from the call center agents' utterances that whenever they make a request, it is in the form of a modal question, such as can I... and may I.... According to Barron (2008), in directive speech acts, the most frequent request strategy is the use of can/could I/you.

These are typical conversations when the call center agent and the customer are in the middle of troubleshooting. The call center agent provides instructions or asks for specific information, and the customer follows the steps.

Moreover, a directive utterance of an imperative expresses a certain content related to the addressee's future actions; conveys that the speaker wants the content to become reality; and acts as an inducement for the addressee to bring about the content. The uses of imperatives are intended to get the addressee to do something or refrain from doing something. An utterance of an imperative creates an obligation for the addressee, a view explicitly espoused by Lewis (1969). It comprises requests and pleas.

Furthermore, when a call center agent asks a customer for something, he/she uses the illocutionary markers please and kindly, which are very common among call center agents to express politeness when making a request. Please and kindly are some of the most common discourse markers in making a request. The function of the word please and kindly refers to the notion of politeness, and usually in conjunction with the act of requesting (Wichmann, 2011). And to make the customer feel that the call center agent valued their time and their presence, whenever they provided instructions, they usually uttered " let's. It is very apparent that, in all the examples presented, the pronoun 'you' is dominant. Krolak & Rudnicka (2006) claimed that the mere choice of the second person singular form of the verb signals some degree of intimacy between the interlocutors. Therefore, the utterances formulated in such a context are fairly direct.

What's more, since call center agents must be polite at all times when talking to their customers, it is noticeable in their utterances that they use ma'am and sir. According to Lorimer (1999), Bennington et al. (2000), Career Services (2001), cited in White (2003), this is customary in a call center because it shows respect to customers. The overuse of the respect markers ma'am and sir suggests that these markers actually contribute positively to the quality of the interaction when delivered effectively by agents during transactions. Language ability appears to correlate with more respect markers, achieving two distinct

purposes: (1) as direct expressions of good customer service behavior by the agents, and (2) as discourse markers or fillers that help in sustaining a good flow of speech during their calls (Frigilan, 2009). According to Raffy Pekson II (2012), "It is common practice for Filipinos to address Americans with 'sir' or 'ma'am' repeatedly, and in almost every sentence. It's just the way Filipinos talk." This perception may influence many Filipino agents in outsourced call centers to use more respect markers in their requests and questions.

Though the forms of the aforementioned utterances vary, all of them belong to the directive speech act, since the call center agent tries to get the customer to do something. This is a common practice among call center agents as they assist their customers in resolving the issue. In this manner, a good call center agent is able to maintain an effective problem-solving focus throughout the transaction and provide not only clear information and an accurate solution, but as importantly, gain the callers' trust by using polite and respectful language matched with effective paralinguistic devices in discourse (D'Ausilio, 1998; Gramred, 2001 cited in Frigilan, 2009).

Transcript	Utterance	Line
3	<i>Uhm. Not necessarily Sir.</i>	3.2
4	<i>Ma'am, I was able to pull up a record under Francis Woodward?</i>	4.1
7	<i>'Coz for the tablet, Sir, we n- (pause) we need to figure out if you have the right password security key, and if you have the right one, we might need to check the kind of security that you've created, 'coz it might not be compatible with the [tablet].</i>	7.5
9	<i>We actually have brand setting configuration page for the camera</i>	9.6
11	<i>Hmhm...but then ahm, Brad, before we proceed, let me just inform you first okay? That the system check out the warranty status of the (Brand) device, it says here in the system that your device is already out of warranty, okay?</i>	11.1
11	<i>It's no longer.</i>	11.2
11	<i>Yes, it is no longer entitled for a free technical support.</i>	11.3
11	<i>We both know that devices and technologies are upgrading from time to time.</i>	11.7
11	<i>So those are actually the options except on how you would us to proceed.</i>	11.11
12	<i>Yes. It should be 192 dot 168 dot 0 dot 1.</i>	12.2
12	<i>Alright, username is Admin, all lowercase, no need for the password</i>	12.3
12	<i>No need, Sir, the password, just leave it blank.</i>	12.5
Transcript	Utterance	Line
12	<i>Okay if you set up the password in your router, you must enter the password of the</i>	12.7

	<i>router there [itself</i>	
12	<i>I'm just telling you the default setting of ah the router's page.</i>	12.8
13	<i>That's okay.</i>	13.2
13	<i>Uhm, actually there should be an option there, Dorie, that says connect, setting Up the network, or I don't want to setup the network.</i>	13.7
15	<i>I am having trouble hearing you right now.</i>	15.1
16	<i>Okay. Okay Sir, you would still have to set up, Sir, and you would use a software for that Sir, and it's called the V Software. You have to install that on your computer. And then the computer you would be installing the software Sir should be, uh, should be a local computer, Sir, meaning, the computer should be based, Sir, on the network, a network-based computer...work and uh...where you [can save...</i>	16.1
16	<i>V Software, Sir,</i>	16.2
16	<i>Ah, downloadable for free, Sir.</i>	16.4
17	<i>That's correct, Charles.</i>	17.6
19	<i>Ah, You can just try to go [to- The time zone, time and date on the left side, and there you can actually change some settings on that specific page.</i>	19.1-2
20	<i>I'll just be putting you hold on for a while</i>	20.3
21	<i>Ah, It is the security key, Sir, or the same manner with the wireless password... Because there are devices that will coin, uh, that will term it as wireless security key, there are also devices, especially Apple devices will treat it as wireless password. But still the same.</i>	21.2
22	<i>Okay.] That's. That's- that's- That's okay. That's okay.</i>	22.4
23	<i>ah] basically Ma'am, here's the thing, okay...uhm...when you use this ah adapter in replacement of the, ah, you know, built in adapter of your computer or your laptop right?.. So your built in ah, ahm laptop, I mean your built in adapter for your laptop uses windows to configure, okay. Uses windows manager, the first one that you did for available wireless network, okay. Now since that you're</i>	23.3 (a)

Transcript	Utterance	Line
23	<i>using this (Brand). (Brand) is not using that windows to configure the ah, the ah adapter, okay, but instead (Brand) has its own or have own wireless manager, so that you can connect to the network and that's the its wireless connection manager that you have open, okay. So anytime you want to connect to a network, you will, ah, need to go to that wireless connection manager under all programs and you will see the name there and from there you ah will connect it to the network</i>	23.3 (b)
24	<i>So basically, there's really something wrong with that one...</i>	24.4

25	<i>Sir, as you're able to put up ah your ID, put up a name, and a network security password for your router</i>	25.1
25	<i>Ah no need (pause) no need to save, it's already done. Yes.</i>	25.3
28	<i>It's like a gear icon. It's like uhm...It's like a flower...looks like a flower at the upper right hand side of the screen.</i>	28.2
28	<i>It's like a gear icon for the settings.</i>	28.5
29	<i>Okay. Actually the uhm- the modem is supposed to give ah Internet connection for Internet service and that's where the (brand) router is also getting Internet connection. So basically if the modem is not working, then our router won't work as well.</i>	29.1
29	<i>'coz I can't do anything with the modem. That's ah different, and that's provided by your Internet service provider, uhm (ISP).</i>	29.2
31	<i>Okay the reason for that, Sir, because the device or the laptop that you are using is not capable of detecting that wireless band, so, the adapter that you have (pause) you have been using the (pause) for the for the laptop. Uhm the adapter from the laptop, wireless adapter is not capable of detecting that 5GHz wireless band, that's why you're not able to detect that one.</i>	31.4
32	<i>This is not about (Brand). (Brand) Ma'am only lets you connect to the network of your, a router, okay? Any, any problems with regard to connecting to a certain website that is, that would be answered by the router itself, okay?</i>	32.1

Transcript	Utterance	Line
33	<i>Your router is now back up. It's now, it's now been configured.</i>	33.1
33	<i>So (pause) so your router now, Sir, is configured again.</i>	33.4
33	<i>You have successfully configured it.</i>	33.5
34	<i>Oh, The My (Brand) Service enables you to control your router even your, even though you're uh away from it. For example, if uh, if you are in a Starbucks uh...in a Starbucks Coffee Shop, and you wanna check out your router and see what's the, what's in the network and who's in the network, you can actually, you can remotely access the router settings and find out if there any intruders on the network or stuff like that.</i>	34.2
36	<i>This is called IP Address that you get from your modem.</i>	36.3

36	<i>That is your IP Address, because basically, that is an inva- not really invalid, but that IP Address signifies that their modem is not giving any Internet access.</i>	36.4
36	<i>Oh no no.</i>	36.5
36	<i>It's alright, Ma'am.</i>	36.6, 36.7
39	<i>Ah! Your router Sir is already a wireless router.</i>	39.1
39	<i>Yes. You don't have to push cords anymore...The cord that needs to be connected, as always, will be the cable ah the cable connects between the modem and the router is very important, it should always stays there. Since this desktop doesn't have the wireless capability, then it should also stays connected wired to the router.</i>	39.2
41	<i>My name is (_____) once again.</i>	41.3

Assertives commit the speaker (S) to the truth of the exposed proposition. In this way, the call center agent is committed to the truth of the proposition, which is to gain trust from their customer. Call center agents state, share, or inform customers of something, especially in an official manner. The customer could directly understand the meaning of the agents' utterances because they did not use any connotative expressions.

This speech act is associated with a discourse marker, so, which indicates an initiation of a new part of the dialogue, which is an analogical explanation, so that the customer can comprehend the connectivity concept. In this kind of business, it's the call center agents' responsibility to make the instructions clearer and comprehensible by describing them in layman's terms. That is why the usage of it's like is very palpable to make the description fit the object, so that the flow of conversation or the process flow would be smooth. There are instances as well that when the call center agents are clarifying or explaining, agents frequently use the modal might in their assertions. This type of utterance is customarily employed to a probability, which may or may not prove correct.

According to Hultgren, A.K. (2011), "Agents are told to ensure that they are making themselves clear by using 'signposting', 'summarizing' or 'headline techniques'; in other words, not just doing what the caller has asked them to do but also actively communicating to the customer what action they are taking or should be done."

Moreover, it is evident from their utterances that when call center agents inform or share information with their customers, they reiterate it. This is expected in a call center agent-customer conversation, where the call center agent may repeat to ensure the information is accurately received and understood.

Below are other assertive responses evident in the utterances of the call center agents.

Transcript	Utterance	Line
1	<i>Alright</i>	1.4
3	<i>Awe, okay okay. Aaah...</i>	3.5
5	<i>Okay</i>	5.2, 5.4, 5.6, 5.8, 5.10, 5.12, 5.14
6	<i>Okay</i>	6.2, 6.7

6	<i>I] see.</i>	6.4, 6.6
7	<i>Okay</i>	7.1

Transcript	Utterance	Line
7	<i>Ah okay.</i>	7.4
8	<i>Ahuhm</i>	8.3
8	<i>Okay</i>	8.4, 8.5
9	<i>Uhuhm...[Okay</i>	9.2
9	<i>Okay</i>	9.3, 9.8
10	<i>Okay</i>	10.3
11	<i>Okay</i>	11.6, 11.10
12	<i>Okay Sir.</i>	12.10
12	<i>Alright</i>	12.11
13	<i>That's okay.</i>	13.2
13	<i>Yes</i>	13.8
13	<i>Uhm. Okay.</i>	13.10
14	<i>Okay</i>	14.3
22	<i>Okay</i>	22.2, 22.6
22	<i>Okay.] That's. That's- that's- That's okay. That's okay.</i>	22.4
23	<i>Uhuh</i>	23.2
24	<i>Kay</i>	24.2
24	<i>Ahuhm okay</i>	24.8
25	<i>Okay</i>	25.2
26	<i>Okay</i>	26.2
28	<i>Yeah</i>	28.3, 28.7
28	<i>Yes</i>	28.9
30	<i>Ahuhm... That's it Sir.</i>	30.3
31	<i>Mmm. Okay.</i>	31.2
35	<i>Uhuhm. Okay?</i>	35.2
35	<i>Uhuhm</i>	35.3,35.4
36	<i>Oh no no.</i>	36.5
39	<i>I see.</i>	39.4
39	<i>Alright</i>	39.7
41	<i>My name is (_____) once again.</i>	41.3

It is very apparent that in all the examples presented, the responses okay, alright, uhuhm, yes are prevailing.

It is noticeable in the call center agents' utterances of overusing the word Okay. Okay is one of the most common phrases in a call center agent-customer conversation. Okays are the agent's responses or acknowledgment tokens, indicating that the call center agent is following what the customer is saying. In most instances, okay as a response signifies understanding of information and implies permission to go

ahead with the next turn. This implicit confirmation leads speakers to further use 'okay' to transition to the next segment of the interaction and complete the transaction (Friginal, 2009).

Then, Beach (1993) noted that a "facilitator" of a focus-group meeting relied on these tokens, such as "okay," to initiate and manage actions, such as closing previous topics and moving on to the next. Similarly, okay serves as a bridge, a linking device between two stages or phases of the [service] encounter" Merritt, M. (1980) cited in Beach (1993).

While 'Alright' is a free-standing response token used and relied on by speakers to display numerous orientations to what was taken to be meaningful in prior talk, 'Alright' could be understood as locally occasioned resources available to participants for achieving specific and relevant tasks.

Another reason for using okay or alright is that the hearer would be more prepared for the speaker's argument and views. They can anticipate whether the hearer would agree or disagree. Those who use these words will find them easier to understand. Hearer may conceive of misunderstanding as a product of 'how' things are said rather than as a product of 'what' is said. It is here that the successful management of different conversational strategies comes to the fore (Rapila, 1993). And this is why discourse particles are found to be very commonly used in call center agent-customer conversations over the telephone (Biber et al., 1999; Muller, 2005, in Friginal, 2009).

In these telephone-based registers, listeners often need to indicate to their interlocutors that they are still actively listening, especially during longer turns. Because participants do not see each other in these conversations, frequent backchannels are necessary to sustain the flow of talk and indicate that the other participant is still involved in the interaction. It is common for speakers to check whether the other person is still on the line when there is a long silence or gaps in backchannels (Friginal, 2009). Thus, Uh-huh is a call center agent's reaction that chiefly signals attention and agreement, functioning as a floor returner. Their use is interpreted by the speaker as a 'go on' or 'tell me more' (Rapila, 1993).

Meanwhile, the most common explicit short responses from the agent are 'yes' (positive) and 'no' (negative) when their customers ask a question. These responses are too direct, but this is customary because customers most often want to verify only that they understood the agent's instructions. Therefore, when the customer heard the agent's positive response, it was a signal for them to continue. However, when the agent utters a negative short response, expect the agent to rephrase their instructions so the customer can understand. Hence, these short responses are assertive, as the call center agent is committed to the truth of the customer's statement.

Transcript	Utterance	Line
2	<i>No worries</i>	2.1
6	<i>Well. no worry. Let me walk, let me walk you through on how to do this manually, Sir John.</i>	6.8
8	<i>So how may I help you today, Sir?</i>	8.1
11	<i>So basically, if you've wanted that much powerful router, six times much better than the current router that you have right now, I could uhm, basically ship that one for you for free, you'll be able to have your new hardware warranty and complementary assistance support, and of course, you will be able to maximize the performance of your computer.</i>	11.8

Transcript	Utterance	Line
11	<i>I can even provide you ten percent discount for that. That if ever you want to upgrade it to a newer version.</i>	11.9

11	<i>But those, options will basically include upgrading firmware, remote access in able for us to do all the troubleshooting for you, and we will be able to check all the settings inside the router. We will make sure that everything after the call will be ended that everything is properly fixed so that you will not be able to experience some problem in the near future</i>	11.9
11	<i>Hmmm, Actually that's one of your options.</i>	11.12
13	<i>We'll just need to connect to the router first...okay?</i>	13.3
13	<i>We can configure the settings.</i>	13.4
14	<i>We will now create a password to login to the router, earlier, there was no password, so we will create one so that this will be secured.</i>	14.1
16	<i>and then we have the updated version, Sir. Uh 3 point 2-</i>	16.3
17	<i>For now Charles, we're going to setup your wireless now, okay. We're going to setup your network</i>	17.1
19	<i>So, I'll be sending you the link</i>	19.3
19	<i>I'll be going to send you the link first,</i>	19.5
19	<i>If you're actually having issues, or having difficulties, you can always call us back, and I'll be just providing you the case number, for uh this call.</i>	19.6
20	<i>I'll check some uh resources so that I can assist you better</i>	20.2
20	<i>And I'll get back to you</i>	20.4
30	<i>Hmm. No more problems unless you still want to be assisted on any concern... Are there still anything?</i>	30.4
30	<i>Uh, do you still have any concern, Sir, that I may assist you?</i>	30.5
34	<i>...would you like to enable the My (Brand) Service?</i>	34.1
34	<i>Should like to do so?</i>	34.3
37	<i>If you have still questions about this router, Sir, don't hesitate to call us and I'll be giving you a reference number, alright?</i>	37.1
Transcript	Utterance	Line
39	<i>That is correct. Correct, Sir.</i>	39.3

39	<i>Well, anyway, if in case you have troubles in the future, don't hesitate to call (brand) and we'll assist you Sir, okay?</i>	39.8
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Commissives commit the speaker (S) (to a greater or lesser degree) to some future action, including offering.

In a call center agent-customer conversation over the phone, it is habitual for call center agents to make an offer, not only because they believe that it is beneficial to their customers, but also to let them feel that they are valued customers, and it is up to the hearers to accept the offer or refuse. The call center agents' utterances support Tsohatzidis's (1994) view that the speaker would perform an act on the condition that the hearer accepts the offer and that the speaker expresses his willingness and ability to perform the act.

In addition, what makes the commissiveness in the call center agents' utterances so strong is the phrase 'no worry' and the modal 'should,' which together form a promise at the sentence level.

It is apparent as well that in the entire examples presented, the use of 'we' and 'let's' is prevailing, which makes the utterances speaker-hearer oriented. Thus, commissives are still more likely to be made in the indirect mode than the direct.

To end with, the utterance "if in case you have troubles in the future, don't hesitate to call (brand) and we'll assist you," is customary among the agents. Aside from being part of their closing spiel, it is another way to delight the customer by proposing a future action that benefits them. This indicates that the speaker knows the addressee's tastes, wants, habits, and so on (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Transcript	Utterance	Line
4	<i>Oh. I'm so sorry for that one, Ma'am.</i>	4.4
15	<i>I'm sorry?</i>	15.2
20	<i>Thanks</i>	20.5
22	<i>So that's great!</i>	22.7
27	<i>Thanks for patiently staying on the line.</i>	27.1
27	<i>And I apologize for that long wait.</i>	27.2
31	<i>I'm sorry, Sir,</i>	31.1
33	<i>That's good</i>	33.3
33	<i>You have successfully configured it.</i>	33.5
36	<i>Thank you also for being patient.</i>	36.8
38	<i>Okay you're welcome, Jerome. Not a problem.</i>	38.1
39	<i>That's good.</i>	39.5
39	<i>Thank you so much I hear that from you, Sir.</i>	39.6
41	<i>You're welcome there Charles.</i>	41.1
41	<i>And thank you for calling (brand).</i>	41.2
41	<i>Have a good one also, Charles.</i>	41.4

It is very evident among the call center agents' utterances the use of thanks, thank you, and your welcome. Most of the calls in the data begin with "Thank you for calling..." as agents' greeting sequence, which is part of their opening and closing spiels. The repetitive use of 'thanks' or 'thank you' as agents' acknowledgment of callers' responses to questions or requests is common in a call center. Aside from a possible mannerism acquired over months or years of work in the industry, agents may use these repetitive

speech-act formulae to ensure a continuous flow of responses in transactions, avoiding pauses or dead air. In some instances, thanks or thank you appears to act as a discourse marker to introduce the agents' next questions or main response to the callers (Frigilan, 2009).

On the other hand, apologies from call center agents, such as 'I'm sorry' and 'I apologize,' are also very common. Agents, at times, are overly apologetic whenever they miss information coming from the caller or when they have to repeat a request (Frigilan, 2009).

Expressives are explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone for something valued positively by the speaker and the hearer, and even the whole speech community (Holmes, 1986; Ye, 1995 in Yousefvand, 2010). Tokens or explicit illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) such as thanks, thank you, greatly appreciated, sorry, I apologize, my apology are the speakers' strategies in showing politeness which are governed under Leech's Modesty Maxim (Leech, 1983).

In the call center agent-customer phone conversation, the researcher found that most utterances were repetitive, especially in directive speech acts, since the common context is troubleshooting. There is no variation in speech acts, as the context is mainly troubleshooting, regardless of the conversation's characteristics, which are dynamic.

A study by Frigilan (2009), entitled "The Language of Outsourced Call Centers: A Corpus-based Study of Cross-cultural Interaction," is reflected in the present paper. Using his Filipino call center agents as respondents, the study found that troubleshooting accounts involves the transfer of mostly technical information to the caller. With this, there are more caller clarifications during troubleshooting accounts, which is why a series of question-answer or request-accept sequences in these transactions is evident. Because callers ask for assistance during the calls, they require clearer explanations and delivery to get the solution they need. In due course, Frigilan concluded that requests and questions are exchanged constantly in all calls. Because of the regular transfer of useful information in the register, the primary performance of tasks creates more opportunities for agents to use politeness and respect markers when addressing each other after a response or action.

Moreover, this claim is supported by White (2003), who claimed that since the work of a call center agent consists mainly of answering phones and the process is routine (repetition of the same task over extended periods), almost all the agents had memorized the script, the process flow, and the troubleshooting steps. This is why their requests/questions, speech formulae/strategies, and even their explanations don't differ from those of other agents.

What's more, it is noticeable that the utterances of the call center agents are direct. Frigilan (2009) added, "It potentially suggests a combination of factors related to the repetitive nature of this job once the agents have attained a certain level of familiarity with transactions. It is possible that call center agents have gained confidence in their ability to serve callers and are no longer as inclined to focus on showing good, "polite" behavior as newer, less confident agents might. Because of their familiarity with account procedures and their callers' behavior, agents may also prioritize quicker, more satisfactory completion of support from the customer's standpoint over the use of polite language. More so, it is evident that the call center agents are able to "level" with their callers and use more straightforward language or direct speech acts."

It is indeed challenging to analyze the utterances of call center agents, as some were unfinished.

Last of all, the researcher never saw declarative speech acts among the call center agents' utterances.

CONCLUSION

To deconstruct the illocutionary forces at play in this type of speech act, this study examined specialized discourse in professional technical support interactions. It discovers that "troubles-telling"

encounters are high in pragmatic density, in that four of the five operations described in Searle's (1969, 1979) pragmatic model—directives, assertives, commissives, and expressives—are categorical to their fabric as they are arranged in the 20 sampled transcripts. Beyond merely transferring technical data, these utterances strategically combine task-oriented instructions with rapport-building "softeners" to create a professional persona that is at once authoritative and empathetic to the consumer's technical frustrations.

Directives, such as requesting and advising, emerged as the primary linguistic maneuvers that drive the troubleshooting narrative. Utterances like "May I have your account number?" or "I suggest you reset the router" provide a structured rhythm to the call, functioning as mnemonic anchors that guide the customer through complex technical terrain. The use of assertives in stating and informing information allows agents to anchor the conversation in factual reality, forcing the subject to consider the technical status of their equipment through a shared, objective lens.

In addition to commissives like offering and agreeing, which signal a commitment to future resolution, other forms of figuration, such as expressive apologies and thanks, allow agents to humanize the digital interface. This "polite" mode of communication connects technical goods to immaterial effects like brand trust and emotional relief. The consistent occurrence of expressive functions as a "face-saving" mechanism opens the consumer up to a collaborative interpretative process. Thus, the consumer is rewarded in advance by being positioned as an active partner in the technical diagnostic process rather than a passive recipient of instructions.

This study's most meaningful qualitative implication is the recognition of pragmatic competence as a central mode of cultural and professional representation. Filipino call center agents manifest product support attributes in resilient, patient, and highly structured ways. When technical assistance is reconfigured as a performance of "linguistic hospitality," the communicative capacity of the Philippine BPO can be understood as making the global digital world familiar to its users. These appeals mobilize the discourses of helpfulness and reliability that are central to how people identify and understand professional excellence from their own, contextually induced perspective.

At the same time, by documenting the interplay between goal-driven directives and relationship-driven expressives, this study reinforces the argument that speech acts are key communicative devices which mediate between corporate intentions and human narratives. This provides a firm qualitative basis on which to study the mechanics of professional persuasion in the Global South. Thus, BPO practitioners and academic educators need to develop a nuanced "pragmatic intelligence" through an ethical and culturally-grounded form of communication that is responsive to the shared identity and technical needs of the global consumer.

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