Can We Call the Speech Acts of Heroes who Bounce Back from Defeat Ultimatives?

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Abstract

In animated films and video games, there is always a scene where the heroes bounce back from defeat and charge the villains with a final strike. I argue that this particular scene has a specific speech act – ultimative. To prove this claim, I employed apostrophe as a dramatic device by Wagener (1931), speech act markers by Zeevat (2003), speech act formula by Pawley (2009), and invocation by Frankfurter (2019) on twenty titles of animated films and video games to indicate the presence of ultimatives. The findings indicate that ultimatives have distinctive traits. Speech act markers of sudden changes of speech and narratives, pathic speech act markers, and speech act markers of invocation construct them. The combination of these three elements constructs the speech act of ultimatives. I also found that ultimatives in animated films and video games have different functions due to different characteristics and features of the media. In animated films, ultimatives function as a narrative marker indicating that ultimatives signify the plot progression and rationalization. In video games, ultimatives function not only as a narrative marker but also as mechanical marker. Functioning as a mechanical marker indicates that ultimatives require the players to perform certain mechanical interactions through button configuration to bounce back from possible game over. Narrative designers of both animated films and video games could employ the results of this study as a consideration in designing dramatic battle scenes that contain apostrophes to evoke narrative engagement from the audiences and gamers.

Keywords*: apostrophe, invocation, narratives, speech act markers, ultimatives*

Article information

Introduction

One scene involving dramatic fighting from both heroes and villains is where the heroes bounce back from a seemingly devastating defeat and turn the table of the fight. If seen from the perspectives of Wagener (1931), this scene might fall into an apostrophe. Through an apostrophe, a dramatic scene is emphasized over two constitutions. They, as implied by Wagener, encompass a sudden change in speech or narrative to address an opponent and an

indication of pathos – emotion – over the fate of an individual.

These two constitutions of apostrophe, due to the facts that they rely on speech, are assumed to have distinctive markers. These markers are called speech act markers that, as Zeevat (2003) suggested, function in tandem with other devices to construct a speech act from its default form and function. In the case of apostrophe, it implies that any speech acts occurring on the dramatic events merge to signify the presence of a new speech act related to the apostrophe. The following example from Square Enix's *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children* might illustrate the statement:

> *Sephiroth: (stabbing Cloud with his lengthy katana) Is this the pain you felt before, Cloud? Let me remind you. This time you won't forget (spreading his black wing, throwing Cloud upward, delivering a series of slashes, throwing Cloud into the ground)*
> *Cloud: (vomitting blood and looking at the floating Sephiroth)*
> *Sephiroth: Tell me what you cherish most. Give me the pleasure of taking it away (descending to deliver his final strike to Cloud)*
> *Cloud: (having a reminiscence of his friends and witnessing the appearance of his mentor's spirit – Zack – who encourages Cloud not to surrender. **That's right. I'm your living legacy** (talking to Zack spirit and ascending to strike Sephiroth) **I pitied you. You just don't get it all. There's not a thing I don't cherish** (invoking the Omnislash – Cloud's most powerful strike). **Stay where you belong. In my memories.***

The constitutions of apostrophe are seen from the battle dialogue between Cloud and his nemesis, Sephiroth, ornamented by epic song entitled 'One Winged Angel' in Latin. The first constitution, sudden changes in speech or narratives to address an opponent are perceived from Sephiroth that stabs Cloud and delivers a provoking speech and from Cloud that bounces back from his defeat and delivers

his determination speech. The second constitution, showing pathos, is seen from how Cloud pities Sephiroth from having nobody and nothing to cherish and from Sephiroth who wants to take away anything Cloud cherishes. These acts of addressing, provoking, showing a determination and pathos are wrapped with Cloud invoking most powerful *animesque* sword attack called the Omnislash, where Cloud's sword pieces surround Sephiroth and with a speed of light Cloud one by one takes them and lands them on Sephiroth. This state implies that the appearance of Omnislash becomes the peak of all speech acts performed by both the hero, Cloud, and the villain, Sephiroth. I argue that this specific act which involves speech act-turning-speech markers deserves its own name – ultimatives. These ultimatives – I argue – have become what Pawley (2009) calls as speech act formula in animated films and video games. The two popular culture products are identical to ultimatives due to the facts that they have skills, abilities, movesets, or *jutsu* and most of them are onomasticized. That these elements are the peak of the speech act formula of ultimatives point out the specificity of animated films and video games in regard to the new speech act.

Studies talking about apostrophes as a dramatic device in the context of either speech acts or speech act markers are under investigated. Field (1983) and Miller (1990) suggest that the marking function of speech acts are signified from form and function synchronicity and desynchronicity. This state of being synchronous and desynchronous further suggests that speech acts might function as a marker from which different speech acts might be constructed. One of the new speech acts is related to dramatic events. Elam (1984) and Nordlund (2016) investigate speech acts in Shakespeare's plays that function as dramatic devices. His Searlean study indicates that dramatic speech acts might function as an indicator to perceive what the characters are doing when the dramatic events roll out. One of the dramatic events where speech acts function distinctively, as implied by Fitzgerald and Oakley (2016) and Steven (2018), is the apostrophe. These previous studies have not yet discussed specific uses of speech acts markers in

apostrophe as dramatic device that formulaically appear on comics, animated films, and video games.

Being dramatic, as implied by Freytag (1895), involves an action and being in an action, as suggested by Dean (1990), ones require a language – the language that could speak of the action and vice versa. This action related language, in pragmatics, signifies the necessity of speech acts and their markers. In apostrophe as dramatic device to indicate a distinctive action, as implied by Wagener (1931), requires interactional exchanges between two persons or more that have different perspectives or views. These interactional exchanges are marked by speech acts that indicate the showing of pathos preceded by sudden changes in speeches and narratives. These two constitutions indicate that they support the position of apostrophe as a dramatic device.

As a dramatic device, apostrophe signifies a particular set of actions that require a specific set of speech acts and their markers to differentiate it from the other dramatic devices. Euripidesian apotopraic prayer, for instance, has a particular set of actions different from apostrophe. The former, as implied by Mastronarde (2010), requires the presence of an elite and a humble individual while the latter tends to require a hero and a villain or the likes of the both. Speech acts produced from the interactions of the former might be different from the latter since the focus of language and action exchanges tend to be different. This difference leads to the refunctioning of the speech acts as a speech act marker from which a new speech act might be constructed.

The construction of new speech act requires a focal key point differentiating the new speech act with the others. Apotopraic prayer, as studied by Mastronarde (2010), is accompanied by a chorus that rhymically and rhytmically presents the hopelessness of an exile. This tragic presentation might share similarities with apostrophe. One of the connecting points is the presence of invocation. As stated by Frankfurter (2019), invocation language revolves around the use of the sound of incantation (*aoidē*) and song

(*molpē*). That these two language elements of invocation are rhymically and rhythmically orchestrated and delivered indicates that apotopraic prayer and apostrophe might share similarities on this language. However, both employ the invocation differently with apotopraic emphasizing over hopelessness and with apostrophe emphasizing over bounce back or awakening.

That apostrophe tends to emphasize on how the heroes bounce back or awake from an utter defeat signifies the possibilities of the formulaic presence of particular speech acts and their refunctioning as a marker. A study on bathroom formula by Levin (2014) suggests that formula on the specific use of speech acts for specific purposes is existent and thereby, it further suggests that speech acts might function as a marker to generate the presence of new speech act. If the new speech acts make an appearance formulaically, then, it can be said that the proposed speech act has indeed has a new function as a new speech act. The necessity of having a formula for a speech act is addressed by Pawley (2009) in his speech act formula. To indicate the presence of speech act formula, as Pawley states, ones have to investigate discourse function, discourse context, literal meaning, pragmatic meaning, regular grammatical structure and constraints, idiomaticity constraints, basic phonology, music, and body language. From this gap, I formulate the following questions in this study:

1. What are ultimatives?
2. What typology of ultimative functions can be constructed?

Methodology

The data of this study encompass textual, visual, and operative elements of the selected animated films, live actions, and video games that indicate the presence of apostrophe. Textual data refer to verbal expressions uttered by characters categorized as heroes and villains, visual data to the actions of the both, and operative to how the actions are delivered or played. These data were taken from animated films and video games that I assume to possess apostrophe, specific speech act markers, and invocations in the forms of

movesets, skills, abilities or *jutsu*. The followings are the data sources. The data were taken by screenshooting and video saving scenes that indicate the presence of

apostrophe. The reasons behind the selection are provided on the appendix:

Table 1. Data Sources

Animated Films	Video Games
Digimon Adventure	Assassin's Creed Valhalla
Dragon Ball Z	Doraemon: Story of Seasons – Friends of Great Kingdom
Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children	Final Fantasy XII
Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood	King of Fighters XIII
Hunter x Hunter	Middle Earth: Shadow of War
Mobile Suit Gundam: Iron Blooded Orphan	Street Fighter VI
Naruto Shippuden	Suikoden II
One Piece	Tales of Arise
Pokémon Journeys: the Series	Tekken 7
The Seven Deadly Sins	Valkyria Chronicles

The data taken from the sources in Table 1 were analyzed by employing the technique by Spradley (2016). In the analysis, I employed the theories of apostrophe as dramatic device by Wagener (1931), speech act markers by Zeevat (2003), speech act formula by Pawley (2009), and invocation by Frankfurter (2019). The first theory was employed to indicate the presence of apostrophe in the comics, animated films, and video games. The second theory was applied to point out what speech acts correspond to the constitutions of apostrophe from which they tend to function as a marker. The third theory was implemented to signify how the speech act markers are in tandem with skills, abilities, or movesets to make a meaning out of the speech act markers.

The analysis encompasses four phases to do. The first was domain analysis, in this phase, the theory of apostrophe was applied to indicate the presence of the constitution of sudden changes on speech and narrative and the constitution of pathos exchanges between the heroes and the villains. Completed, taxonomy analysis proceeds. In this phase, the theory of speech act markers was applied to reveal the formula of speech acts that function as a marker in unison with apostrophe and invocation theories. The third phase,

componential analysis, took place after the taxonomy analysis was implemented. In this phase, a definition of ultimative is proposed. Once ultimatives were defined, a typology of ultimative functions is proposed on the last phase, cultural theme analysis.

Results and Discussion

This section is divided into two subsections. The first section provides a definition of ultimatives with the focus on their distinctive features. The second section presents a typology of the functions of ultimatives. Examples from the selected data sources are provided to illustrate the defintion and the typology.

1. The Definition of Ultimatives

I define ultimative as a speech act uttered in apostrophic state and condition where the heroes bounce back or awakened after a seemingly utter defeat by the villains. This speech act is distinctively constructed by the presence of any speech acts that mark sudden changes in speech and narratives, the acts of sympathizing and antipathizing over one's fate, and the presence of invocation. The following example from Toriyama's *Dragon Ball Z* on the episode where Gohan has to face

Cell all by himself. Gohan was in a dire state due to the overwhelming power Cell had. His power cornered Gohan in a seemingly hopeless condition of being preyed by Cell's destructive power but little Gohan could bounce back.

> Gohan: (standing with his left arm becoming immovable due to Cell's attack)
> Cell: Gohan, I told you not to stand in my way. I do hope you are not planning on continuing this fight. I wouldn't want you to suffer. So, I see you're still stubborn as ever, Gohan. Well, have it your way, then. Let's get this over with.
> Gohan: I'm not giving up. No way. This is for my dad.
> Cell: (posing for Solar Kamehameha – Cell's strongest strike) Gohan. This is it. It ends here.

The dialogue exchanges between Gohan and Cell point out the presence of mockery wrapped in pathic acts as seen from the bold lines of the example. These speech acts tend to refunction as a marker when perceived from the fact that they are blended by intense background music that hints a state and condition of hopelessness. Declarative aside in the form of speech acts that contain determination emerges as the response from Gohan. Though not heard by the other characters, this response is followed by Cell's intention to destroy Gohan, his friends, and the planet with his most powerful strike – Solar Kamehameha. As hinted by *this is for my dad*, a narrative continuance that involves Gohan's dad, Goku, in bouncing back and defeating Cell is assumed to take place.

> Goku: (the spirit of Goku appears behind Gohan to give him supports) Release it, Gohan! Release everything! Remember all the pain he's caused. The people he's hurt. Now make that your power!
> Cell: Say good bye! (attacked by Vegeta) Vegeta!
> Goku: Now's your chance!
> Gohan: (shouting and releasing Father-Son Kamehameha)

The sudden change of narrative is hinted through, and this is for my dad, followed by the presence of Goku's spirit. The sudden change of narrative is also followed by sudden change of speech – from Goku encouraging Gohan to never surrender into Goku teaching Gohan how to deliver a Kamehameha more powerful than Solar Kamehameha together with him. This sudden change of speech is also indicated by the shout performed by Gohan in releasing Father-Son Kamehameha. The sudden change of speech by Goku and Gohan also function as an invocation that ushers and generates Father-Son Kamehameha, ending Cell's life forever. A combination of these speech act markers and invocation signifies further that apostrophe indeed has its own speech act to indicate and that is ultimative.

2. The Features of Ultimatives

Ultimatives have three features that differentiate them from the other speech acts. The features are speech act markers bound – meaning that through the refunctioning of speech acts into markers, a new speech act can be formulaically constructed. These speech act markers are speech act markers that indicate sudden changes in speech and narratives, that indicate the acts of sympathy and antipathy, and that indicate an invocation. The following sub-section will explain these features one by one.

a. Speech Act Markers of Sudden Changes of Speech and Narratives

Sudden changes of speech and narratives might be performatively identical to Aristotlean dramatic terms of peripetiea and anagnorisis. As studied by Boitani (2021), the former refers to sudden reversal fortunes of particular characters and the latter to discovery that might bring about changes to the life of the characters. These two Aristotelian dramatic devices also appear in the context of ultimatives, along with the changes in the speech of the heroes and villains. The following example from Togashi's *Hunter x Hunter* on the episode where Gon, the main character, has to fight against an opponent stronger than him, Pitou. Gon was seemingly more inferior than Pitou since the cat-like lady could defeat Kite, Gon's mentor

but the death of Kite awoke Gon's hidden power.

> Pitou: Gon. I'm sorry to say this but I must kill you.
> Gon: You must kill me? (a burst of energy is seen from Gon) (getting up wrapped in aura) (epic music played) (a wind burst storms the room)
> Pitou: (taken by surprise of the sudden changes of Gon and her surrounding) What is this?
> Gon: (his gaze turns empty) I don't care if this is the end... (turning into his adult form) So, I'll use everything.
> Pitou: I was right. His power is now equal to that of the king!
> Gon: Pitou!
> Pitou: Terpsichora! (striking Gon with her claw but missed the hit)

The peripetiea is seen from the reversal of Pitou's fortunes over Gon through the anagnorisis perceived from sudden changes of Gon's speech and circumstances. These peripetiea and anagnorisis are delivered through speech act markers that indicate surprises not only by Pitou as the villain but Gon as the hero. The two dramatic devices are also exercised through changes of speech tones especially on the tones. Pitou's tone changes from calm into anxious while Gon's from calm into self-absorbed. These changes, wrapped along with epic music and changes in narrative story-wise, hint and mark to the viewers that something unexpected or something anticipated will be taking place.

Regarding the expectation and anticipation of the viewers to the sudden changes of speech and narratives, it implies that illocutionary forces bursting out of the speech acts refunctioned as a marker influence not only the characters but also the viewers. This state points out that ultimatives might only be found in the context of mimesis related products such as animated films and games. Though mimetic in nature, they have markers that differentiate one from the other, especially in relation to speech act markers that indicate the presence of sudden changes in speech and narrative. In fighting games, these changes are visually indicated from the

presence of particular gauge that fills when the played characters keep receiving damage that the health bar drops into a certain low point range.

One of the examples is Capcom's *Street Fighter VI*'s Critical Arts. This move is available when the health of the played character reaches 25% of the full health. Indicated by gauge that says CA, players can then execute a devastating move that could significantly damage the opponent's health bar. When CA is executed, the played character will utter a battle quote. The following example from Guile's CA's battle quote might illustrate the statement:

> Guile: Time to end this (delivering a somersault to his opponent) Cross Fire (casting double crescent shaped blitz followed by another somersault) Double (landing on his opponent's chest) Somersault (landing another somersault)!

Time to end this marks a peripetiea delivered in declarative pathic speech act that might result in sudden change of the character's fate – from losing to winning or vice versa if seen from the opponent's perspective. *Time to end this* also points out that the declarative pathic speech act marks also the function of battle quote since the line is followed by an invocation of Guile's most powerful attack 'Cross Fire Double Somersault'. That battle quote tends to be comprised of apostrophic state, speech acts that indicate pathos, and the onomasticization of the most powerful strike signifies that ultimatives in video games tend to be delivered in different narrative. The differences, if seen from the case of fighting game, come from the fact that fighting games, when played in non-story mode, have an implied story.

b. Speech Act Markers of Pathos

As stated by Buch (2011), pathos circumnavigates around the designation of characters overtaken by their passion. This passion that consumes the characters is expressed through various speech acts, such as expressive acts that function as a marker. Due to the marking function, these various pathos

related speech acts might unite to incite a new speech act specifically functioning the pathos as one of the features. In the context of ultimatives, pathos might be expressed by the heroes and the villains. The process of addressing each other between the heroes and the villains might situate pathos marking speech acts as pathic speech acts with implicative and non-implicative meaning. In Tajiri's *Pokémon Journeys: the Series*, for instance, Goh's passion he directs to his Pokémon, Scorbunny, leads the monster to evolve into Raboot and finally into Cinderace. In expressing the passion, Goh primarily utters encouragement related speech acts in a non-implicative fashion. This encouragement helps Scorbunny win battles and help him evolve.

This encouragement to create a bonding between friends is commonly found in animated films intended for younger audiences and teenagers. Through this encouragement, the encouraged characters could bounce back and defeat the opponents with the most powerful skills, abilities, and movesets. Even this encouragement-for-bonding speech act is textually and visually marked to emphasize their ultimative acts. An example for this can be found from Hongo's *Digimon* series. The series are like *Pokémon* that emphasize on capturing monsters, train them, and battle against the other monsters. The difference lies primarily on the monsters with *Pokémon* aimed at metaphorizing animals in real lofe while *Digimon* at personifying comouter related elements. Similar to *Pokémon*, where trainers and monsters work together to help each other with trainers helping their monsters to evolve, Digimon also introduces the concept of evolution through what is called as Digivolution. This evolution is not linear, meaning the monsters could evolve through various methods. The methods of evolution that indicate the visualization of encouragement for bonding speech acts are jogres, a portmanteau of 'join' and 'progress', or also known as DNA Digivolution and fusion evolution, where human trainers fuse with beast spirits. Through this visualization, the pathic elements and attributes of the encouragement speech acts become a marker to indicate the presence of ultimatives. That the names of evolution denotatively indicate how the process of evolution works indicates

that non-implicative use of pathos is the fashion.

Meanwhile, implicative pathic speech acts might operate as say-your-prayer farewell which tends to function as a mockery or an insult. This implicative pathic speech act tends to function as anagnorisis for viewers to point out and anticipate of the upcoming events involving the sayer and the addressee. The following example from *Mobile Suit Gundam: Iron Blooded Orphans* might illustrate the statement:

Iok: *Why don't you die already? (slashing Akihiro's mobile suit) Accept the judgment that I, Iok Kujan, pass on you!*

Akihiro: *(taken by surprise after hearing 'Iok Kujan') That name... (Iok's mobile suit stomps on Akihiro's mobile suit) So it was you! (shouting, taking giant piers, and squeezing Iok's mobile suit along with Iok inside)*

Iok: *(taken by surprise) What? (screaming)*

Akihiro: *(shouting) It was you!*

Iok: *(consumed by fear) I cannot die here!*

Akihiro: *Good things come to you if you just live long enough. To think that I'd be able to crush you with my own hands.*

Iok: *(screaming and dies)*

Akihiro: *I now have a great story to tell when I meet them there...*

Akihiro had a grudge over Iok for bearing the responsibilities of causing the death of his allies and beloved. In his near death situation due to Iok's men's assaults, Akihiro learnt that one of the assaulters was Iok. He was filled with rejoice of vengeance. He accumulated all his strength to deliver a final blow. He took his Gundam's gigantic scissors and squeezed Iok along with his Gundam. The implicative pathic speech act – the say-your-prayer farewell – is seen from Akihiro's lines toward Iok while he crushes Iok's mobile suit – a term for gigantic bipedal robot – along with him. Though the lines tend to function in a wise word fashion and to have a positive vibe, Akihiro through the lines actually attempts to say that 'if you wait

patiently, you will be able to exact your revenge'. Blended with pathos of violence that depicts gushing of blood and breaking of bones, the lines tend to indicate how Akihiro finds himself in satisfaction with his vengeance. Though the calls of skills, abilities, or movesets are absent from Akihiro's use of the giant piers, the implicative pathic speech acts performed with the act of squeezing the antagonist have already indicated the presence of ultimatives.

In the context of video games, pathic speech acts are designed depending on the game genres. Genres with heavy narrative aspects like Role-Playing Games (RPG) exploit more pathic speech acts than genres that weigh on mechanical aspects like fighting games. The ultimatives found in narrative game genre tend to drive a similar function to that of animated films due to the story-wise nature of the genres. On the other hand, the ultimatives in mechanics-oriented games tend to be different in realizing the pathic speech acts. Fighting games, for instance, formulaically script their pathic speech acts through pre-battle, battle, and post-battle dialogue. In each of this dialogue, pathic speech acts are designed to indicate and strengthen each fighter's characterization, highlight confidence, taunt the opponents, and reveal the names of the strongest move. Table 3 of Bandai Namco's *Tekken 7*'s Julia Chang might illustrate the statement. As seen from Table 3, characterization is the primary purpose of Julia's pathic speech acts that are delivered through declarative, requestive, gratitude, and greeting markers. Even the confidence and taunt highlight tend to pathically mark the characterization purpose of the pathic speech acts. Ended with the names of the strongest move, gained from being low in health due to damages delivered by the foe, ultimatives are defined from these pre-battle dialogue, battle dialogue, and post battle dialogue of Julia Chang's.

c. Speech Act Markers of Invocation

Invocation, as suggested by Frankfurter (2019), comprises of sound of incantation (*aoidē*) and song (*molpē*). This combination generates magical effect in the forms of spells. In the context of animated films and video

games, besides spells, invocation might take the forms of physical attacks. One primary feature of invocation is using poetic lines for the incantation and the names of the spells or attacks and using epic song as background music (BGM). The primary roles of invocation are to mark the culmination of ultimatives – appearing as the final marker after the utterance of pathic speech act markers. The following example from Oda's *One Piece*'s Sanji might illustrate the statement. Sanji was in the midst of apostrophic state and condition since he had to face Queen, the brutal technopile genius that could transform into a Brachiosaur.

> Sanji: I haven't given you the final touch yet! I can even cook scrap meat to be delicious! Bring it on, Queen of the Plague!
> Queen: Shut up! My science is number one in the world! I'll get rid all the rest at once! (shooting Sanji with beams of laser as Sanji is charging toward him)
> Sanji: (leaping and hitting Queen's head with his left heel) Bœuf Burst! (delivering his burning right leg on Queen's chest that makes Queen fall into the depth)

Sanji is the playboy chef of Straw Hat pirates. To emphasize a narrative synchronicity and alignment, Sanji's skills are onomasticized based on various types of dishes stylized as such to evoke romance. 'Bœuf Burst' is the pinnacle of Sanji's skills that literally means 'Beef Burst'. The stylization of 'beef' into French sounding 'Bœuf' is to strengthen the romantic side of Sanji archetypically. The elegance Sanji's narrative builds around cook and romance generates a pathic nuance when the elegance is employed to confront the brute nuance Queen emits. That 'Bœuf Burst' is employed as the closing speech act indicates that invocation signifies the presence of ultimatives.

In the context of video games, invocation might function differently in constructing ultimatives since video games are interactive in nature. Table 4 of Bandai Namco's *Tales of Arise*'s Ganabelt Valkyris might illustrate the

statement. Ganabelt Valkyris is one of the villains in *Tales of Arise*.

> Ganabelt: *Drink deep the despair! Whilst the depths of despair consume thee... I, who command all the astral plane... Whilst thou are cursed to expire into nothing... I, who stands bathed in heavenly light... Whilst thou cowers before the gates of hell... Come forth, divine lightning! The end is imminent! Indignation!*

His elemental attack is that of lightning spell and his most powerful lightning-based spell he has is Indignation. As seen from Table 3, to cast Indignation, Ganabelt has to invoke nine lines of incantation. The nine lines also function as pathic speech acts with similar formula found from fighting games namely characterization, confidence, taunt, and move onomasticization indicators. This invocation is audially and visually made epic to signify the sense of being the most powerful spell through the gradualization of intensifying sound and visual effects. If the player-controlled characters do not have high magic defense against lightning attack, they will be put in an apostrophic and dire situation that might bring the players to game over screen. On the other hand, if the players ready the characters to reach high level through grinding, a common activity found in RPG genre, they could withstand the prowess of indignation. That the ultimatives are interactive – influencing how the players behave – indicates that the ultimatives in the context of game, especially that of RPG genres, function as a hint.

Though invocations as speech act markers tend to distinctively different in animated films and video games, they share similar types namely verbal, textual, gestural, and the combination of the three. Verbal invocations are delivered through oral incantations, textual through writings on the screens, gestural through body movements and motions, and combination might take two or three invocations type. In the context of ultimatives, these types of invocations function differently depending on the narratives the animated films and video games attempt to build. In SNK Playmore's *King of*

Fighters XIII, for instance, just like other fighting games, the invocations are the combination of all three invocations. Verbal invocations are noticed from some of the characters that shout the names of their moves, textual invocation seen from command list menu, and gestural from the visualization of the moves. These invocations are dependent on the button input skills of the players since each move has different input. The greater the damage of a move could inflict, the more sophisticated and focus-demanding the button input sequences are. However, uniquely it is not always the moves with the highest damage that become the ultimatives since players have different ultimative situation in their battle. This condition implies that since the narratives of games tend to be of immersive, invocations in the context of ultimatives might be different in formula than that of animated films.

3. Typology of Ultimative Functions

I propose, based on the findings, two functions of ultimatives namely the functions of narrativity and the functions of ludicity. The former, as laid out by Prince (2003), deals with the properties of narratives that make a text narrative while the second, as proposed by Conway (2010), circumnavigates around the degree of playability in digital games that highlight on how players and game characters affect the game world. The following section will discuss these two functions in detail with examples to illustrate how ultimatives deliver these two functions.

a. The Functions of Narrativity

Ultimatives, due to the specific speech act markers they have, have specific functions in the narratives of animated films and video games. These specific functions deal with how ultimatives operate as a narrativity to turn animated films and video games from texts into narratives. In hero-vs-villain themed animated films and video games, for instance, the absence of ultimatives might indicate the loss of identity of being hero-vs-villain films and games since it has been a formula for this genre to display ultimatives.

Invocations, as the pinnacle of ultimatives, for instance, have to formulaically make a

presence in hero-vs-villain narratives since invocations are an integral part of skills, abilities, or movesets that become inseparable features of the hero-vs-villain narratives. As discussed in the previous sub section, invocations comprise verbal, textual, gestural, and the combination of the three. These three forms of invocation are constructed through the considerations of the narratives – meaning that they reflect the characters and their characterization or the stories. This status of the invocations points out that invocation bears itself narrativity that defines the narratives of hero-vs-villain. Without invocations, hero-vs-villain will never be a narrative that distinguishes itself from the other narratives. In Suzuki's *The Seven Deadly Sins*, for instance, since the series use a combination of verbal invocations as uttered by the characters and textual invocations written on screen, it indicates that the invocations might aim at immersing the viewers into the series and might also point out that invocations in the series are narratively integral in signifying the messages of the series.

In the context of immersing the viewers, as implied from the invocations in Suzuki's *The Seven Deadly Sins*, narrativity holds significance roles in influencing the viewers paratextually. Cosplay, standing for costume players, often not only put themselves costumes of particular characters from animated films but also acting out certain scenes. One of the scenes often acted out is invocation. Animated films with distinctive gestural invocations sometimes attract not only cosplayers but also fans to mimic the gestures. Kishimoto's *Naruto* series have 'in', ninjutsu-related hand invocations to cast certain skills or called *jutsu*. Arakawa's *Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood* has alchemy circle drawing as invocation to cast alchemy effects. These two animated films with their gestural invocations as the point of attraction are the examples of how invocations signify the narrativity of the hero-vs-villain films.

b.   The Functions of Ludicity

Ludicity, as implied by Conway (2010), deals primarily with the state of game of being playable in regard to the acts and and effects

the games have upon the game worlds. This playability implies that textual, visual, and operative elements of games might influence how the game worlds are influenced. Ultimatives textually, visually, and operatively play a significant role in marking what the gamers expect regarding the influences the ultimatives have toward the game worlds. The following example from Sega's *Valkyria Chronicles* might help illustrate the statement:

> Selvaria: Listen to me, Gallia! Cast aside your weapons and surrender! If you do not, Naggiar's plains will drink deeply of your blood!
> Imperials: (yelling)
> Gallians: (consumed by fear) G-gah.
> Gallian Troop: Wait a minute… I don't believe it. (witnessing Alicia in trance shrouded in blue flame moving forward to the battlefield)
> Welkin: No! She can't be a Valkyria!
> Selvaria: Another scion to the Valkyrur? (shrouded in blue flame) This world has no need for two. Get out! Rraaaugh! (charging forward to attack Alicia with some sword strikes but all fails)
> Alicia: (striking Selvaria with her sword)
> Selvaria: (falling) This can't be…(fainted)

Gallians are on the apostrophic verge of defeat due to the presence of Selvaria, a Valkyria possessing inhumane strength. The table was turned when suddenly Alicia in a trance state evolved into a Valkyria. Pathic speech acts that indicate table-turning surprises like *g-gah*, *wait a minute*, *I don't believe it*, *no! she can't be a Valkyria,* and *another scion of the Valkyrur* and invocation like *This world has no need for two*, *get out*, and *rraaaugh* accompany the visual of Alicia's Valkyria awakening state. These pathic speech acts and the visuals appear on the pre-battle scene – implying that Alicia in Valkyria mode will appear in the commencing battle scene. This implication is what the narrative takes. In the following battle scene, Alicia in Valkyria mode, though unplayable, helps the players in battling against the Imperials. Due to her immense power, the players could take tactical advantage from her to win the battle and

obtain an A rank. This state of tactical advantage suggests the presence of influences by certain character to which ultimatives are directed to the game worlds.

The ludicity, as shown by the example above, signifies how lingual elements especially pathic speech act and invocation markers in the context of ultimatives. This condition implies that ultimatives have a specific function – ludicity – not found from the other audiovisual products. Through this ludicity, ultimatives, as discussed in the invocation section, might have distinctive illocutionary forces in relation to the games, the game worlds, and the gamers. The following example from Square Enix's *Final Fantasy XII* might illustrate the statement:

> Cidolfus: Let us use the Stone! Finish this Venat! (throwing nethicite – power imbued stone – into the mist with Venat flying to the mist) (laughing) Shards of nethicite! Cocoon of the Sun-cryst! Spill forth your Mist upon this Ivalice! Let sea and sky be awash in it, that Bahamut may come and drink his fill! And lo! How brightly burned their lanthorn! Casts it back the shadow of Occurian design! Testament that Man's history shall be His alone!

The ultimatives as performed by Cidolfus are primarily delivered through invocations. These invocations mark three functions of ludicity. The first is to indicate the players of the upcoming of battle against him, the second is to hint the players that Cidolfus is more powerful than he was in the previous battle, and the third is to clue the players that Cidolfus might gain a help from an ethereal being called Esper. These three functions of ludicity possess illocutionary forces to which the player has to perform perlocutionary actions by strategizing a battle plan. Table 4 points out that ultimatives in games might have illocutionary forces that demand perlocutionary actions from the gamers. The illocutionary forces in games are unique since they are ludic in nature – implying that verbal markers are interactively responded by the gamers. These responses shape how the game worlds are influenced; thus, the ultimatives' designs might influence the balance between curiosity in narratives and engagement in gameplays. These narrative curiosity and gameplay engagement shape the gamers' perlocutionary actions.

4. Ultimatives, Speech Act Markers, and Speech Act Formula

Speech act markers are the essence of ultimatives. Through the combination of markers that indicate changes on speech and narratives, markers that point out pathic expressions, and markers that highlight the use of invocation through incantation and song, ultimatives are constructed. However, speech act markers might generate problems since speech acts could function not only as a single marker in constructing ultimatives. This sub section attempts to highlight this issue in light of the findings.

Speech act markers, as implied by Zeevat (2003), signify the construction of new speech acts. The types of speech acts that become markers might be formulaically noted or signified. In the context of ultimatives, the formula is seen from superordinate and subordinate relationships that speech acts weave. Speech acts that indicate sudden changes on speeches and narratives, pathic speech acts, and invocatives are the superordinate speech acts that umbrella subordinate speech acts. Invocatives, for instance, might be delivered through requestives or commands.

However, at the same time, requestives or commands might also become the subordinate speech acts for narrative and speech changes and pathic speech acts. This state might evoke the problems of speech act formula. As implied by Levin (2014) and Pawley (2009), particular acts carried as a routine might be marked through the recurring of certain speech acts. This condition implies that speech acts might formulaically work and operate to signify particular actions just as the formula of language in general that has, as indicated by Corrigan, Moravcsik, Ouali, and Wheatley (2009), choice of elements and choice of arrangement. If applied on speech act marker

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context, choice of elements circumnavigates around whether certain subordinate speech acts might work as a marker under certain superordinate speech acts.

On the other hand, choice of arrangement might deal with the occurrence order of the superordinate speech acts. Ultimatives tend to work this formula not in notable established speech act types but they tend to work and operate on speech acts operatively working on superordinate level. In the lens of general language formula with speech act marker as the focus, ultimatives might be expressed differently through speech acts in the sense of their types and their order of occurrence. These differences in the types and orders of occurrence in the fashion of consistency might occur due to presence of narrative formula.

Speech acts that work and operate on superordinate level tend to indicate the necessity to address the circumstances on which the speech acts occur as a marker. In ultimatives, the circumstances are defined through narrative formula of the animated films and the games. Narrative formula, as implied by Calweti (1972), is not a form but a system aimed at structuring cultural products. Since the aim of structuring is not a form but a system, cultural products like animated films and games might have different forms of delivering ultimatives yet similar systems. In Japanese comics – *manga* – intended for boys or commonly called as *shonen*, the forms of presenting ultimatives might be different but the system of being a *shonen* tends to be similar. Similar to *shonen*, in RPGs, for example, the form of delivering ultimatives might be different but the system for bearing the genre tends to be similar. Through this system structuring, it implies that speech acts that function as a marker tend to be diverse in form and thus, a system of subordinance and super ordinance is required.

Conclusion

I argue that apostrophic scenes that depict heroes bouncing back from defeat in animated films and video games are marked by a specific speech act. I call that speech act ultimatives. This speech act has specific markers namely speech act markers of sudden changes on

speech and narratives, of pathos, and of invocations. These speech act markers are delivered to highlight two functions, namely narrativity and ludicity. The former function deals with how ultimatives are employed to formulaically strengthen the narrativity of animated films and video games while the latter to ludically support the gameplay to which the gamers respond and react.

Future research could study two topics related to ultimatives. First, future research could investigate ultimatives concerning in-game skills or abilities set on video games. The study could take an example of action RPG like Ubisoft's *Assassin's Creed: Valhalla* to reveal how ultimatives are projected in the game in relation to personalized choices of the gamers to the already set skills or abilities. Second, future research could also investigate how ultimatives are delivered in an intertextual fashion.Researcher could investigate Marvelous Inc. and Bandai Namco's *Doraemon Story of Seasons: Friends of the Great Kingdom* on how the consistencies of ultimatives are depicted on the comics and the games.

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Appendices

Table 2. Data Source Selection Reasons

Animated Films	Defining Ultimatives	Video Games	Defining Ultimatives
Digimon Adventure	Transformation Skills	Assassin's Creed Valhalla	Weapon Related Skills
Dragon Ball Z	Transformation Skills	Doraemon: Story of Seasons – Friends of Great Kingdom	Items Related Skills
Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children	Weapon Related Skills	Final Fantasy XII	Weapon Related Skills
Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood	Skills	King of Fighters XIII	Skills
Hunter x Hunter	Skills	Middle Earth: Shadow of War	Weapon Related Skills
Mobile Suit Gundam: Iron Blooded Orphan	Transformation Skills	Street Fighter 6	Skills
Naruto Shippuden	Skills	Suikoden II	Skills
One Piece	Skills	Tales of Arise	Skills
Pokémon Journeys: the Series	Transformation Skills	Tekken 7	Skills
The Seven Deadly Sins	Skills	Valkyria Chronicles	Transformation Skills

Table 3. Pathic Speech Acts of Julia Chang

Name	Characterization	Confidence	Taunt	Move
Julia Chang	Stream is live! Are you ready? (holding her tablet while online)	Here I come! (posing for her strongest move)	Get ready! (doing a looking far hand gesture)	Twisting Arrow Cannon
	Thanks for watching!			
	Stream's over! Whoops... See ya!			

Table 4. Invocation of Indignation

Name of the Spell	Incantation	Song	Player's Perlocutionary Acts
Indignation	Drink deep the despair!	Gradually intensifying sound effect supported by gradually intensifying lightning like visual effect	Defending Increasing lightning defense
	Whilst the depths of despair consume thee... I, who command all the astral plane... Whilst thou are cursed to expire into nothing...		

Name of the Spell	Incantation	Song	Player's Perlocutionary Acts
	I, who stands bathed in heavenly light... Whilst thou cowers before the gates of hell... Come forth, divine lightning! The end is imminent! Indignation!		

Table 5. Ludicity Functions

Markers	Illocutionary Forces	Perlocutionary Actions
Let us use the Stone! Finish this Venat!	To indicate the upcoming battle	The gamers have to prepare anything related to battle
Shards of nethicite! Cocoon of the Sun-cryst! Spill forth your Mist upon this Ivalice!	To hint that Cidolfus is more powerful	The gamers have to be at minimum suggested level
Let sea and sky be awash in it, that Bahamut may come and drink his fill!	To clue that an Esper might help him in the upcoming battle	The gamers have to possess instruments of defense and prepare their own Espers
Markers	Illocutionary Forces	Perlocutionary Actions