

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

People interact with each other through language. Language is the foundation of human communication. Language is essential because it allows individuals to express feelings and ideas effectively. In social life, speaker and hearer generally communicate to express their feelings and ideas. On the other hand, the speaker and hearer still can face misunderstanding in communication. It often occurs in daily life if the speaker cannot clearly express the utterance and the interlocutor cannot understand the implied meaning of the utterance. Hence, understanding the implied meaning of utterance helps to create the effective communication.

Study the relation between language and context that is basic to an account of language understanding is pragmatics (Levinson, 1983). It means that pragmatics is one of the fields of linguistics that specializes in the relationship between language and speech context. To determine the meaning of a certain utterance, context should be discovered because each utterance can have different meaning. According to Searle (1969), the basic unit of linguistics communication is speech act. It has connection to the speaker's meaning, context, speaker's intention, hearer's interpretation, and rules for uttering specific elements of linguistic. The speech act is performed in the form of utterance to convey information and to deliver specific elements of linguistics.

In linguistics, a speech act refers to the act of communication performed by the speakers when they use language, not only conveying information but also performing various actions through their utterances. There are three kinds of speech acts namely locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts (Austin, 1962, p. 102-103). One of the speech acts kinds that attracts attention of the researcher is illocutionary acts. Illocutionary act is an act performed when a speaker says something. Searle and Vanderveken (1985) said that illocutionary acts occur when a speaker says something in a specific context for a specified purpose. Searle (1979, p.viii) mentioned there are five categories of illocutionary acts, namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. One of the illocutionary acts categories that was analyzed in this research is commissive acts. Commissive acts is uttered by the speakers to commit themselves to a certain future course of actions. The acts of commissive are commit, promise, threaten, vow, pledge, swear, accept, consent, refuse, offer, bid, assure, guarantee, warrant, contract, covenant, and bet (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985, p.192).

The phenomena of commissive speech act exist on social media. Social media is dealt to socialize and communicate with others. People tend to discuss and express anything connected to a future action in the middle of a conversation. The conversation below was found on YouTube channel of Late Night with Seth Meyers entitled “Jud Apatow Had to Write a Love Scene for His Wife and David Duchovny”. It was published on April 6th, 2022. Seth Meyers was a host and Judd Apatow was a guest. The phenomenon of commissive illocutionary act occurred as follows.

- Judd : “You know, I’m going to do a soft-cover version where I add more interviews.”
 Seth : “Oh, wow.”
 Judd : “You know we could do a little piece of it now. So, **we’ll just do a little bit of the interview.**” (00:01:42-00:02:09)
 Seth : “Okay, great.”

That dialogue happened during the talk show in a television studio. The utterance was said by a speaker named Judd to a hearer named Seth. The speaker firstly uttered that he was going to do a soft-cover version of the book which added more interviews. It indicated that the speaker wanted to do an interview with the hearer. The hearer was mesmerized by the speaker’s utterance. The speaker then promised to do an interview with the hearer. The hearer accepted the promise. As a result, the speaker took action to fulfill his promise which was to do an interview with the hearer. The speaker's utterance was classified as **promise** act. As stated by Searle and Vanderveken (1985), one who creates a promise is obligated to perform the action in the future. The function of that utterance was **convivial**. According to Leech (1983), promise acts tend to be **convivial** as they are delivered for the hearer’s benefit. The hearer received the benefit because after being interviewed by the speaker, the speaker put the hearer’s name in his soft-cover version of the book.

Another phenomenon was found on the YouTube channel of The Daily Show with Trevor Noah. The video was entitled “Daniel Ricciardo – The Taste of Victory” published on April 30th, 2022. In that video, a guest star named Daniel Ricciardo and a host named Trevor. Daniel Ricciardo is a professional racing driver from Australia. The following conversation is the performance of a commissive illocutionary act.

Trevor : “When you look forward to races, what are the ones you think, man I can’t wait to get back on the race track. You can’t say Australia. That’s home. Pick another one.”

Daniel : “And I’m not just saying this because we’re on American soil, but Austin. Like, I get so excited for Austin.”

Trevor : “Really? Why?”

Daniel : “**I Swear I have some like, some DNA, like Texan DNA in me or something.** I don’t know. I love it.” (00:07:04-00:07:30)

Trevor as the speaker asked Daniel as the hearer about what country he would like to visit as a race track instead of Australia. The hearer replied that he was so excited for Austin. Austin is a city in the United States located in the south, precisely in the state of Texas. Moreover, the speaker asked question why the hearer chose Austin. Then, the hearer produced a **swear** act to express the truth that he had Texan DNA in him. Swear refers to the expression of the speaker to tell the truth as his utterance will be relied on (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985, p.188). In addition, the utterance above indicated a **collaborative** function. As defined by Leech (1983, p.105), collaborative function is indifferent to the societal goals and politeness is not relevant to this function. The expressions are reporting, asserting, instructing or announcing. Thereby, the hearer’s utterance was referred to collaborative function because it contained an expression of asserting.

The phenomena of commissive acts also occurs in artwork, such as movies. In this research, the “Aftermath” movie was taken to be specific phenomena. The movie released on August 4th, 2021. It was an American horror movie based on the true story and tells about the life of a married couple who decided to move into a house that has many mysteries. As agreed by Flick (2014, p.409), “analyzing movie is becoming increasingly important in a mediatized society”.

Movie is embedded in a situation where society communicates and associates because it is a media of communication. He also stated that movies are part of discursive and social practices which represent the situations and structures of society. Movie should be analyzed systematically through examination of the structures of movie texts, the circumstances of production as well as reception circumstances, and social contexts (Mikos as cited in Flick, 2014, p.409).

The specific phenomena of commissive acts can be found at the following conversation. Kevin became a speaker and Nathalie appeared as a hearer had a conversation inside their house. Kevin was going to purchase a luxury house that had been the site of a murder-suicide. He asked for permission from his wife to purchase it.

Kevin : “Uh, I want to run something past you. You have a minute?”
 Natalie : “Are you fucking insane?”
 Kevin : “No. I’m trying to heed the advice that we’ve been paying for. Just take a look at the house.”
 Nathalie : “**No, thank you.**” (00:10:02 – 00:10:07)

The speaker firstly told he wanted to run something past the hearer. The hearer became shocked with his utterance. Then, the speaker offered the hearer to take a glance at the house. The hearer finally refused the speaker’s offer. It was because the hearer did not want to move into the house that has been a murder-suicide place. Accordingly, the bold utterance was categorized as an act of **refusal**. Refusal is used to express someone’s rejection (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985). That utterance highlighted a **competitive** function as it was delivered with a forceful tone. It can be said this utterance reflects impoliteness. As stated by

Leech (1983), the competitive function is designed to compete with societal goals and considered impolite.

There is another specific phenomena found in the “Aftermath” movie that identifies the acts and functions of commissive. Following is the conversation between Kevin as the speaker and Natalie as the hearer.

Natalie: “And you have to go back to college. Kevin, I can’t watch you throw your life away anymore.”

Kevin : “Okay.”

Natalie: “Promise me.”

Kevin : “**I promise.**”

The dialogue showed up during the time set of (00:12:12 – 00:12:32) minutes. Kevin and Natalie were on the couch talking seriously. Natalie requested Kevin to continue his study. Then, Kevin accepted her request. Natalie asked Kevin to promise that he would actually do it. As a result, Kevin promised her and he fulfilled his promise. His utterance was categorized as **promise** act. Promise is an obligation stated by speaker with intention of performing future action (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985). Moreover, the function of the utterance is **convivial**. This was because Kevin politely promised Natalie to go back to college. Convivial function coincides with the societal goals and contains politeness (Leech, 1983).

The theory of Searle and Vanderveken (1985) had been analyzed previously by many researchers. Devi and Degaf (2021) investigated the commissive speech act types and functions uttered by the characters in the “Knives Out” movie. The qualitative descriptive method was taken to conduct the analysis of the research. The data were collected into the types of commissive speech acts based on Searle

and Vanderveken (1985)'s theory. The results of this research revealed the data of commissive speech acts were found such as guarantee, promise, offers, refuse, threat, and volunteers.

Virginia and Ambalegin (2022) identified the types of commissive speech acts uttered in "Senior Year" movie. The theory of Searle and Vanderveken (1985) was employed to examine the types of commissive speech act. The observational method and non-participatory technique were used to gather all the data. The results demonstrated the types of commissive acts including accept, threaten, promise, offer, and refuse. The most frequent type found was accept.

There are similarities and distinctions between prior and present research. Both prior and present research investigated commissive illocutionary speech act. In order to distinguish between the prior and present research, the researcher adopted two theories with different data source. The data source for this present research came from the "Aftermath" movie. This research aimed to identify the acts of commissive using the theory of Searle and Vanderveken (1985) and to identify the functions of commissive illocutionary speech acts that were shown in the movie using theory of Leech (1983). As a result, the researcher attempted to conduct research entitled "An Analysis of Commissive Illocutionary Speech Act in "Aftermath" Movie: Pragmatic Approach."

1.2 Identification of the Problem

From the background of the above research, the research found several problems that can be analyzed as follows:

1. The importance of context to reveal the meaning of the utterances appeared in “Aftermath” movie.
2. The phenomenon of commissive illocutionary speech act appeared in “Aftermath” movie.
3. The acts of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” movie.
4. The functions of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” movie.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

The limitation of the problem is required to focus on the analysis some problems stated in the identification of the problem are as follows:

1. The acts of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” movie.
2. The functions of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” movie.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

The main problems were formulated by the researcher as follows:

1. What are the acts of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” movie?
2. What are the functions of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” movie?

1.5 Objectives of the Research

The researcher discovered the objectives of this research as follows:

1. To find out the acts of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” movie.
2. To figure out the functions of commissive illocutionary speech act performed by characters in “Aftermath” Movie.

1.6 Significance of the Research

1. Theoretical Significance

This research has some purposes theoretically. First, the results of this research are expected to increase knowledge about pragmatics studies specifically commissive acts. Second, this research is intended to be guidance for the readers in understanding the speech acts.

2. Practical Significance

There are some advantages of this research. First, this research will broaden the readers’ knowledge in linguistics, specifically commissive act. Second, the results of this research will assist the researchers in describing the phenomenon of commissive illocutionary acts that utilized movie as a data source. Third, the topic in this research will help the speaker and hearer to implement the expression of commissive act in daily activity such as promise, threaten, offer, swear.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Pragmatics : The study of pragmatics examines how language and context interact in ways that are essential to an account of language understanding (Levinson, 1983).

- Speech acts** : Speech acts are related to the utterance, meaning, and context (Searle, 1969).
- Illocutionary act** : Illocutionary acts occurs when a speaker says something in a specific context with a specific intent (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985).
- Commissive act** : Kind of speech acts that speakers perform to formally commit to a future course of action (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985).