

ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS BY LARA JEAN'S UTTERANCES IN *TO ALL THE BOYS* MOVIE TRILOGY

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Abstract: This research aimed to describe and classify types of illocutionary acts found in Lara Jean's utterances in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy including *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), *To All the Boys P.S I Still Love You* (2020), and *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). The research method used in this research was descriptive qualitative research, where the primary data were in the form of transcripts of Lara Jean's utterances. The data were elicited through documentation, namely gathering the data and identifying the linguistic units according to the pragmatics study. In analyzing the data, the researcher utilized the theory of Speech Acts by Austin (1962) and the classification of the types of illocutionary acts by Searle (1979). The results showed five types of illocutionary acts found in Lara Jean's utterances in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy, such as assertives, directives, declaratives, expressives, and commissives. The researcher found 127 data in the three movies comprising 32 assertives, 37 directives, 5 commissives, 48 expressives, and 5 declaratives. The study revealed that the dominant use of illocutionary acts by Lara Jean in her utterances are expressives. The researcher concluded that in the movie trilogy, Lara Jean used expressive illocutionary acts to express her feelings to thank, apologize, praise, or state something in her mind.

Keywords: pragmatics, speech acts, illocutionary acts, movie trilogy

INTRODUCTION

Communication is not merely about words or sentences. It would be more significant if it is referred to as the result of words, symbols, or phrases in speech act behavior. When people use language in conversation, they produce utterances in specific contexts. In linguistics, communication is studied within a pragmatic domain. As a branch of linguistics, pragmatics examines how linguistics greatly influences human speech. Yule (1996:4) states that pragmatics is the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and the user of those forms. According to Yule (1996:3), pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by the speaker and interpreted by the listener. In other words, pragmatics studies the meaning and context between the speaker and the listener. Context is essential in the study of pragmatics because it is the background knowledge assumed by the speaker contributing to the listener's interpretation of what the speaker meant by the utterances.

One of the pragmatic studies related to communications and utterances is speech acts. J. L. Austin, a British language philosopher, developed the recent speech act theory. He introduced this theory in 1975 in his well-known book *How do things with words*. A speech act is one of the pragmatic studies about an action of utterance. Austin, in Yule's perspective (1996:48), explains that there are three types of speech acts comprising locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. One of the most important studies of the three types of speech acts is illocutionary acts, which are the basis for analysis in the pragmatic study. Austin,

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as cited from Searle and Vanderveken (1985:109), explains that minimal units of human communication within the speech act domain are illocutionary acts. There are at least five basic types of illocutionary acts, including assertives or formerly known as representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives (Yule, 1996:48). Representatives are when the speaker believes something is the case. Directives are when the speaker asks the listener, and then the listener takes action. Commissives ask the speaker to do something in the future, which can be an agreement. The fourth is expressives which show how the speaker feels about the situation. The last is declaratives which change the world through the utterance produced. Knowing such phenomena, the researcher thinks that studying illocutionary acts is very influential in daily communication practices.

To avoid misunderstanding in the conversation, a hearer needs to understand the meaning that is trying to be conveyed by the speaker. By studying illocutionary acts, it is expected that someone could convey and understand the purpose of utterances correctly so that the objectives of the communication can be achieved. It is interesting to note that illocutionary acts are not only found in daily life conversations. The use of illocutionary can also be expressed in various literary works such as songs, poems, and including movies. The movie is one of the media that tries to visualize the reflection of the social life of human society. For that reason, this research aimed to analyze the illocutionary acts in the character of Lara Jean's utterances portrayed in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy. There are three movie sequels comprising *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), *To All the Boys P.S I Still Love You* (2020), and *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). These three movies are selected because the genre is American teen romantic comedy-drama, which contains more casual conversation, various feelings, and emotions. The three movies are expected to provide meaningful data and thus offer significant discussions regarding the application of illocutionary acts within literary works.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics studies concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by the speaker and interpreted by the listener. In other words, pragmatics studies the meaning and context between the speaker and the listener. Further, Yule (1996) elaborates on a four-dimension scope in pragmatics. First, pragmatics is the study of utterances as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a hearer. Second, pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning. It requires considering how a speaker organizes what they want to say. Third, pragmatics is the study of how the hearer gets the implicit meaning of the speaker's utterances. The last, pragmatics is the study of the expression of a relative distance, assuming the study of the relationship between linguistics forms and the users of those forms.

One of the most studied areas in pragmatics is speech acts. Briefly, a speech act is an utterance defined in terms of the speaker's intention and effect on a listener. Speech acts are actions using language as a way to communicate purpose. Every production of utterance covers the intended message delivered through the word's force. The theory of speech act assumes that the smallest unit of human communication is not a sentence or other expressions but instead the performance of specific activities such as producing a statement, asking a question, giving orders, describing, explaining, apologizing, thanking, and congratulating (Searle, 1980). In another discussion, Leech (1983) explains three distinct levels of action beyond the act of utterance comprising locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act.

For further details, Yule's (1996) perspective also demonstrates that speech acts consist of three related acts. The first is a locutionary act which is the standard act of utterance or producing a meaningful linguistic expression. The second dimension is the illocutionary act, performed through the communicative force of an utterance. Most people not only make a well-formed speech without a purpose, but they will form a speech with some function in mind. Illocutionary acts are the function of the word, the specific purpose that the speakers

have in mind. The third dimension is the perlocutionary act. No one can express speech with function without intending to have an effect.

There are five basic illocutionary acts: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. Each type of illocutionary act has a different context and meaning. The explanation of each type is as follows.

1. Assertives/representatives are when the utterance is produced through the speakers' observation on certain things followed by stating the fact based on their observation. Searle (1979:10) adds, "the point or purpose of the members of the assertive class is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something is being the case, to see the truth of the expressed proposition." For example, when someone says, "*he is handsome*," the speaker delivers the statement based on observing someone's physical condition. The sentence that includes assertive illocutionary acts is a statement of fact, question, conclusion, and description representing the world as the speaker believes.
2. Directives are when the speaker gets someone else to do something. The sentences that include in directives are the sentence of commands, orders, requests, and suggestions. For example, when someone says, "*could you open the door, please?*" this means a request from the speaker expecting the hearer to do something, which is to open the door for the speaker.
3. Commissives are when the speakers use to commit themselves to some future action. The sentences include promise, refusal, pledge, threat, and offer. Such action can be performed alone or by a group. For example, when someone says, "*I'll be there*," this means the speaker's promise that he/she will go to a particular place.
4. Expressives show an expression of how the speaker's feelings about the situation. The sentences in expressive illocutionary acts are pleasure, pain, likes, dislike, joy, and sorrow. For example, when someone says, "*make yourself at home*," the speaker is ready to receive or welcome visitors.
5. Declaratives may change the world through the utterance produced. Searle (1979:13) mentioned that "it is the defining characteristic of this class that the successful performance of its members brings about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality." Declarative acts change the propositional content and reality via utterances.

Several studies have been done by various scholars focusing on illocutionary acts. The first research is from the English department journal at Mulawarman University, written by Fita Nur Rahayu et al. (2018), entitled *Illocutionary Act in The Main Character's Utterances in Mirror Mirror Movie 2018*. This research aimed to find out the types of illocutionary acts of the main characters' utterances in *Mirror Mirror* within Searle's perspective of illocutionary acts. Another objective of the study was to analyze the context underlying the illocutionary acts of the main characters by Hymes' speaking model in *Mirror Mirror* movie. The results of the research showed that 55 utterances of the main characters contain illocutionary acts. The second research is from Partohap Saut Raja Sihombing et al. (2021) entitled *An Analysis of Illocutionary Act in Incredible 2 Movie 2021*. This research aimed to investigate the types of illocutionary acts in the *Incredible 2* movie and to interpret the dominant types of illocutionary acts. The results showed that there were 25 illocutionary acts consisting of directives (8), assertives (7), expressives (7), commissive (2), and declarations (1). The third research is *Illocutionary Acts and Contextual Utterances in The Movie Raya and The Last Dragon 2022* from Ayu Ratri and Barli Bram (2022). The study's objective was to explore the types and contexts of utterances in the movie *Raya and the Last Dragon*. The researcher found 31 data in this study. The study results showed that the movie characters used all five illocutionary acts. The most dominant illocutionary act was the assertive type, which occurred 13 times.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research applied descriptive-qualitative method. Qualitative analysis is a process of reviewing, synthesizing, and interpreting data to describe and explain the phenomena or social worlds being studied (Fossey, 2002). Qualitative research aims to answer questions related to developing an understanding of the meaning and dimensions of the experience of human life and the social world. The main instrument of the current study was the researcher herself. Meanwhile, the data of this study were Lara Jean Covey's utterances related to the illocutionary acts taken from three sources, i.e. *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), *To All the Boys P.S I Still Love You* (2020), and *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). To collect the data, the researcher employed documentation technique comprising several activities such as searching, watching, selecting, collecting, finding, and indentifying utterances containing the illocutionary acts performed by Lara Jean as the main character in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy. The elicited data were then analyzed by using Spradley's theory (1980) that comprises domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the Searle's (1979:7) theory, there are five basic types of speech acts namely assertives or formerly known as representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. Each type of illocutionary act has a different context and meaning. The distribution of illocutionary acts spoken by Lara Jean as the main character in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy can be seen in the following table.

Table 1: The Types of Illocutionary Acts Found in *To All the Boys* Movie Trilogy

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Assertives	32	25%
Directives	37	29%
Commissives	5	4%
Expressives	48	38%
Declaratives	5	4%
Total	127	100%

Assertives

Generally, assertives are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker believes, whose purpose is to make the hearer think that the utterances' propositional content is true. "The point or purpose of the members of the assertive class is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something is being the case, to see the truth of the expressed proposition" (Searle, 1979:10). Assertive acts show the actual condition of the meaning of an utterance. The sentence that includes assertive illocutionary acts is a statement of fact, question, conclusion, and description representing the world as the speaker believes. This section explains the situation when Lara Jean applies assertives in the dialogue. The researcher found 32 data of assertives from *To All the Boys* movie trilogy, which consists of 14 data from *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), 10 data from *To All the Boys P. S. I Still Love You* (2020), and 8 from from *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). The following are examples of assertive acts performed by Lara Jean.

Peter Kavinsky: You know people usually check behind them before they reverse.

Lara Jean : *Yeah, I'm just not completely comfortable with using my mirrors yet.*

This scene portrays that Lara Jean and Peter Kavinsky are arguing. On the first day, Lara Jean is driving to school with Kitty, and suddenly she accidentally almost runs into Peter Kavinsky, which makes Peter come to her. When Peter comes to Lara Jean, she says, "*Yeah, I'm just not completely comfortable with using my mirror yet, so...*" as an excuse. Here the speaker asserts a proposition to be true, using such verbs as to affirm, believe, conclude, deny, or report. In this scene, Lara Jean is trying to come up with an excuse because what has happened shocked and panicked her.

Lara Jean : *My gosh, I've never been to Cordona's.*

Peter Kavinsky: It's a good place.

In this scene, Lara Jean and Peter go to Cordona. Lara Jean states that she has never been to Cordona before and is pleased based on how she says things about Cordona very excitedly.

Directives

The utterance can be classified as directives when the speaker asks the listener, and then the listener takes action. More specifically, directive acts are the speaker's use to get someone else to do something. This illocutionary purpose is to produce an effect in the form of actions taken by the interlocutor. Such utterances are ordering, begging, demanding, and giving advice. The researcher found 37 data of directives in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy comprising 17 data in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), 13 data in *To All the Boys P. S. I Still Love You* (2020), and 7 data in *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). The examples of directives performed by Lara Jean are what follows.

Kitty : I forgot I had to drive with Lara now.

Lara Jean: *Feel free to take the bus.*

In this scene, Lara Jean feels annoyed with her sister's words, where Kitty mocks her because she is not good at driving a car. That is why Lara Jean says to Kitty, "*Feel free to take a bus.*" This utterance can be classified into directives because Lara Jean implicitly asks Kitty to take a bus when she goes to school.

Peter Kavinsky: Well, we did it. Senior prom!

Lara Jean : *Do you want to come in?*

This scene portrays Lara Jean and Peter Kavinsky finishing their school prom night. After prom night, Peter takes Lara Jean home. Then, Lara Jean tries to invite Peter to come to her house because she wants to give him something. This utterance can be classified into directives because inviting is also included in a request.

Commissives

Commissives are part of speech acts used by the speaker to do something in the future. The researcher found 5 data of commissives in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy which consists of 2 data in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), 2 data in *To All the Boys P. S. I Still Love You* (2020), and 1 data in *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). Here are the examples taken from the movies.

Lara Jean : *So, first things first, we need to have a contract so we're on the same page about the rules.*

Peter Kavinsky: You got rules? Come on, you really know how to zap the fun of a situation.

The dialogue is classified into commissives because Lara Jean and Peter make rules for their fake dating agreement. The agreement is a type of sentence included in commissive.

Peter Kavinsky: I promise I am not going to break your heart

Lara Jean : *I promise not to break your heart*

Lara Jean and Peter promise not to hurt each other. This utterance is classified into commissives. According to Searle (1979:11), commissive acts are when the speaker uses to commit themselves to some future action. The action in this context is that both try not to hurt each other in the future.

Expressives

This type of act shows an expression of how the speaker's feelings about the situation. In terms of expressives, the researcher found 48 data in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy, which comprises 22 data in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), 13 data in *To All the Boys P. S. I Still Love You* (2020), and 13 data in *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). Examples of Lara Jane's expressive acts are as follow.

Kitty : She got in.

Mrs. Trina : You got in.

Lara Jean : *I got in? Where? Show me! No!*

The scene shows that both Kitty and Mrs. Trina inform Lara Jean that she is accepted into Berkeley. After Lara Jean sees the announcement, she expresses her shocked yet happy feelings. Hence, the dialogue is classified as expressive act as the speaker describes her euphoric feelings.

Declaratives

Declaratives are the act that changes the world through the utterance which is produced. In other words, the declarative is the act to change the propositional content and reality through utterances. The researcher found 5 data of declaratives in *To All the Boys* movie trilogy, which comprises 4 data in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), and 1 data in *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). Here are examples of declarative acts from Lara Jean's utterance.

Lara Jean : *This is over, in every possible way Peter Kavinsky (Shake Lara Jean's hand to accept the deal).*

Peter Kavinsky: Can we just talk about this? Let me drive you home, I'll explain.

This utterance "*This is over, in every possible way*" means that Lara Jean declares that she wants to break the relationship with Peter. Her statement may lead to the new status from in relationship to break-up. Thus, this new status can be classified into declarative acts.

CONCLUSION

To avoid misunderstanding in the conversation, a hearer needs to understand the meaning that is trying to be conveyed by the speaker. By studying illocutionary acts, people will know to speak and understand the purpose of utterances correctly so that the objectives of the communication can be achieved. In terms of illocutionary acts, the current study found

different types of illocutionary acts performed by Lara Jean as the main character in *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2018), *To All the Boys P.S I Still Love You* (2020), and *To All the Boys Always and Forever* (2021). The researcher found 127 of Lara Jean's illocutionary acts that can be divided into five types: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. Expressives are the most dominant illocutionary act found in Lara Jean's utterance, with 48 utterances, followed by directives and assertives with 37 and 32 data, respectively. Declaratives are barely uttered by Lara Jean, responsible for 5 data. According the function of Lara Jean's expressive acts, she uses expressive illocutionary acts to express her feelings through each dialogue in the film, such as thanking, apologizing, praising, and stating her feeling.

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