

ILLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACTS IN TAYLOR JENKIS REID'S NOVEL *MALIBU RISING*

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Received: 2024-10-20

Accepted: 2024-11-07

Published: 2024-11-30

Abstract

This research aims to identify the types of illocutionary speech acts found in the main characters' utterances in Taylor Jenkins Reid's novel *Malibu Rising*. Using Searle's theory of illocutionary acts, the study examines the contextual meanings behind these acts. A qualitative descriptive methodology was applied, focusing on character dialogues as data. Data collection involved reading and analyzing dialogues, selecting utterances containing illocutionary acts. Analysis followed Miles and Huberman's framework, encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification. Results reveal that the main characters' utterances incorporate five types of illocutionary acts: representatives, directives, declaratives, commissives, and expressives, with directives and expressives being predominant. The research underscores the role of competitive and conflicting speech acts in character interactions, demonstrating how these acts advance the narrative and depict social dynamics. Findings suggest that illocutionary acts in *Malibu Rising* illustrate internal states, facilitate social interactions, and navigate interpersonal relationships. This study offers insights into the pragmatic functions of language in literature, enhancing understanding of how speech acts reflect real-life communication and contribute to character development and narrative structure. Future research could build on these findings by examining illocutionary acts in various literary genres and comparing their use across different authors and themes.

Keywords: *character; illocutionary acts; pragmatic functions; speech acts*

1. Introduction

Communication is understood as the conveying of messages by exchanging thoughts or information via speech, visuals, signals, writing, or behavior. Communication requires a sender, a message, and a recipient, although the receiver may not be present or aware of the sender's intent to communicate at the time of communication. When communicating, people who get involved clearly express information, ideas, intentions, feelings, and emotions. The very effective tool in creating communication is using language. Language as a means of communication enables the expression of emotions through words, sounds, and gestures. Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols (Sapir, 1921). Language is utilized for speech and writing. The scientific study of language is understood as linguistics.

Language is not only a compilation of a numbers of words, phrases, or sentences, but it is more than that. The set of those words and the higher level should contain any meaning. In expressing an idea, people do not just say something, but at the same time they take action via their words. Those expressions are called speech act. Speech act is the language study which examines the way speakers use language to accomplish desired aims and also how listener determine the intended meaning of what is said.

Speech act can be divided into three categories: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. In this study, the researcher only focuses on describing illocutionary speech act. Illocutionary acts are speech acts that are used to express the speaker's intentions (Austin, 1962). Every word that a speaker expresses to a listener constitutes an illocutionary act.

Speech act can be found in literary work. A literary work is a portrayal of the world and social activity. A literary work contains any intention, desire and also passion that the author requires to deliver.

Various studies have been conducted to explore illocutionary speech act as the subject of research. Some of them are Frandika & Idawati (2020), Munandar & Darmayanti (2020), and Nurjanah (2021). In these three studies, research results were found in the form of types of illocutionary speech acts contained in the research data sources. There are similarities between the three studies and this research, namely the research methods used, what differentiates this research from previous research is the research time and data sources studied. In the research conducted by Frandika & Idawati (2020), the data source used was the dialogue of the characters in the short film *Tilik* (2018), in the research Munandar & Darmayanti (2020) the data source used was Ridwan Kamil's speech at the Bukatalks event with the theme *Come on Young People, Build the Nation* on the Bukalapak YouTube channel. Then in research conducted by Nurjanah (2021) the data source used was NKCTHI Instagram account posts. Meanwhile, in this research, the data source was obtained from prose literary works, namely novels. This novel gives readers a meaning about family, love, heartbreak, surfing, and an unforgettable party so that researchers are interested in studying the illocutionary speech acts contained in the novel.

In this research, the focus is on written speech, that is a novel. Novels, as a form of literary work, create narratives about human interactions with the environment and each other. In this literary work, researchers use the novel "Malibu Rising" by Taylor Jenkins Reid, which can provide data capable of analyzing speech acts. Apart from that, this novel gives the reader an impression and message that the reader can learn about the story of family, love, heartbreak, surfing, and an unforgettable party.

Malibu Rising is the story of one unforgettable night in the life of a family: the night where they each had to choose what they would keep from the person who created them and what they would leave behind. The Rivas family has a believable sibling dynamic, and their family members are complicated and lovably flawed (especially Mick, whose bad decisions reverberate throughout the novel). A compulsively readable story about the bonds between family members and the power of breaking free. A woman who can handle anything, who can consistently steps up and takes care of everything, but needs to learn to let the chips fall instead of picking it up or holding it all together herself.

As noted above, then the research problem of this research can be formulated as follows: What types of illocutionary speech acts are found in the Novel *Malibu Rising*?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is not only concerned with the interpretation of certain sentences, but also regarding the hidden meaning that the speaker wants to convey. It is understood that pragmatics expresses unspoken aspects, depending on the speaker's perception of the message he wants to convey to the listener in various situations. Through pragmatics, listeners or readers can analyze the intended meaning, allowing them to investigate the goals and assumptions behind the speech, as well as explore behaviors and actions that may differ from the speaker's intentions when speaking in front of an audience. Pragmatics is the study of the actual use of language. According to (Leech, 1983), pragmatics is the study of meaning and ways of speaking in various situations, as well as considering aspects of speaking in a situational context. The core principles of pragmatics pave the way to determine whether pragmatics is concerned with semantic or pragmatic phenomena. The more important aspect of pragmatics shows that the study of meaning is related to the context of speech production, with a focus on the target party (listener and speaker), the context of the utterance, the purpose of the utterance, and the verbal form, action, and speech as a form of activity or action.

Pragmatics is the science that studies the meaning of speech. Yule (1996), argues that pragmatics is the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and the use of those forms. The benefit of learning language through pragmatics is that a person can talk about a person's intended meaning, their assumptions, their aims and objectives, as well as the types of actions they show when they are speaking. Pragmatics involves how people can understand each other linguistically. Pragmatics also requires being able to understand other people and understand what is on other people's minds. Pragmatics is the science that studies the meaning of speech.

The relationship between pragmatics and speech acts is very close because speech acts are the center of pragmatics (Nuramila, 2020). Pragmatics can be understood from various aspects, including: (1) the study of language in communication, especially language use (the relationship between language elements and context and situation); (2) problems of interpretation (semantics) and the use of speech in the real world; (3) use and understanding of speech acts; and (4) the influence of sentence structure due to the speaker-listener relationship (greeter-greeter).

2.2 Speech Act

There were two thinkers who first proposed speech act theory, the first was explained by Austin (in Kroeger, 2018), who introduced the concept of speech acts and the relationship between speech and performance. The second philosopher is his follower (Searle, 1979), who believes that all linguistic communication involves linguistic action. In contrast to the general view that symbols, words or sentences act as units of linguistic communication in the implementation of a speech act, Searle shifted his focus to events or actions that occur through language, which were then called "speech acts". More specifically, he emphasized that the production or delivery of a sentence under certain conditions is a speech act, and speech acts are the basic or minimal unit of linguistic communication.

Speech acts theory looks at the pragmatic function of utterances. The theory is premised on the belief that language is used to perform actions. That is, how meaning and actions are related to language. Schiffrrin cites Austin (in Kroeger, 2018), that "the uttering of a sentence is, or part of the doing of an action, which again would not

normally be described as or as „just“ saying something”. Speech acts mean actions performed in saying something. That is, doing something with words. Every user of language intends, among other things, to influence their listener(s). That is, their listener should behave in a way that is commensurate with the utterance. In other words, speech acts theory looks at the behaviour or attitude of interlocutors in communicative discourse. As Ndimele puts it, “utterances are acts... capable of producing enormous and far-reaching results...” (Egoro & Gunn, 2021).

Searle (1979), further states that speech acts or actions carried out in uttering a sentence are generally a function of the meaning of the sentence. Although the meaning of a sentence does not always strictly determine the speech act performed in a particular utterance of that sentence, Searle notes that a speaker may mean more than is explicitly said. Nevertheless, he emphasized that in principle a speaker can always express exactly what he means. Speech acts are divided into three types, namely locutionary speech acts, illocutionary speech acts, and perlocutionary speech acts. In this research, only illocutionary speech act is being focused.

2.3 Types of Illocutionary Speech Act

According to (Searle, 1979) theory, illocutionary speech acts can be grouped into five types of speech forms, each of which has a different communicative function. There are five classification of illocutionary acts, they are representatives, directives, commissives, declarative, and assertives. In performing illocutionary act, the speaker should utter something with intended meaning to the hearer based on the situation and real condition. By studying illocutionary act, it can help us to know more knowledge in understanding the speaker utterance in certain situation, for example is movie. A summary of the five types of speech forms that demonstrate these functions can be described as follows:

1. Declaratives

Declaratives is what the speaker says changes the propositional content and reality. Searle (1979) explained that “it is the defining characteristics of this class that the successful performance of it's members brings about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality”.

2. Assertives/representatives

Assertive is what the speaker believe. Searle (1979:12)) argued, that “the point of purpose of the members of the assertive class is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something is being the case, to see truth of the expressed proposition” .

3. Expressive

Expressive refers to what the speaker feels, which include sentence of pleasure, pain, likes, dislike, joy, and sorrow as well. Searle (1979) argued that this type of speech act is about a psychological state of sincere condition.

4. Directives

Directives refers to what the speaker says about asking the hearer to do something. It is about the instruction to direct the hearer to do what the speaker says (Searle, 1979:13). The sentences that include the directives are of commands, orders, requests, and suggestions.

5. Commissives

Commissives relate to speaker's say of the future action. It is about the promise, refusal, and pledge.

3. Research Method

This research was designed to adopt a descriptive qualitative research method, for the data were presented in the form of words, not in number. It is in line with Maleong in Istiqomah (2013), who argued that as data collection are in the form of words, sentences, pictures, which have meaning belongs to descriptive research.

The data were collected from the utterances of the characters such as words, phrases, sentences. The source of the data was taken from the novel *Malibu Rising*, written by Taylor Jenkin Reids. To collect the data, there were several steps in this research: reading the novel several times until getting the holistic meaning, scrutinizing the characters' utterances on the basis of the determined topic, and presuming the utterances which relate to Illocutionary act.

After data were collected, then data were analysed by following procedures: data reduction, data display, drawing conclusion or verification (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

4. Discussion

Based on the analysis, there are 65 of the main characters' utterances that contain illocutionary act. However, there are only found two types of illocutionary act that appeared in the utterances of the main characters of the novel *Malibu Rising*. They are directives and expressives. The followings are the explanation of the types in detail.

4.1 Directives Illocutionary Act

Directives refer to speech acts in which the speaker aims to influence or direct the actions of the listener. These speech acts can take various forms and are used to convey requests, commands, suggestions, advice, or recommendations. Here's an expanded explanation of the types of directives. Orders/Commands are directives that are explicit and authoritative, indicating that the speaker expects immediate compliance from the listener. Suggestions are directives that propose or recommend a course of action without imposing it on the listener. Suggestions often allow the listener some degree of choice. Requests are directives that express a desire for the listener to perform a particular action, typically framed politely. Requests may allow the listener the option to refuse. Pleadings involve begging or earnestly asking the listener to perform an action, often out of desperation or strong emotion. Advice offers guidance or recommendations regarding a particular course of action. Recommendations suggest a preferred option or course of action based on the speaker's judgment or expertise. The following quotation shows the directives from the speaker to the hearer.

"Stay here." Jay Riva hopped out of his CJ-8, jumped the five-foot gate, walked down the gravel drive, and knocked on the door of his older sister's house (Reid, 2021: 12)."

The quotation above indicates directive illocutionary. The utterance "Stay here" is a directive illocutionary act because the character *Jay* is giving a command to *Kit* to remain in a particular location. By saying "Stay here," Jay is instructing the Kit not to

move or leave the current spot. This statement is intended to influence the behavior of the listener, guiding them to comply with the instruction to remain stationary.

There are so many utterances quoted from the novel, which direct to directive illocutionary act. Only some are presented here, as below:

Give me your shirt, too," Nina said.

"You're gonna cut my shirt?" Kit asked.

"Not if you don't want me to," Nina said.

"No," Kit said, intrigued. "Go ahead (Reid, 2021: 133)."

The quotation above indicates directive illocutionary act because, directive illocutionary act is characterized by the speaker's intention to influence the actions of the listener. In this dialogue, Nina's statement "Give me your shirt, too" is a directive illocutionary act because she is instructing Kit to hand over her shirt. Nina's subsequent statements, "Not if you don't want me to," functions as a disclaimer, indicating that she is open to Kit's preference and will not proceed if Kit objects. This demonstrates Nina's consideration for Kit's autonomy and preferences. Kit's response, "No, go ahead," further confirms her compliance with Nina's directive, indicating her consent for Nina to proceed with cutting her shirt. Therefore, the illocutionary force of Nina's directive is acknowledged and accepted by Kit. It is resulting in compliance with Nina's request.

4.2. Expressive Illocutionary

Expressiveness in communication is the art of conveying emotions, attitudes, and intentions through speech and actions. It adds depth and richness to interactions, going beyond the mere exchange of information. Whether it is offering congratulations for an achievement, expressing gratitude for a kindness, acknowledging regret for a mistake, extending apologies for a wrongdoing, exchanging greetings to establish rapport, or simply expressing thanks for someone's presence, each act of expressiveness serves to strengthen relationships and foster understanding. These expressions not only convey our own feelings but also demonstrate empathy and recognition of others' experiences. By embracing expressiveness, create a more vibrant and interconnected social fabric, where emotions are acknowledged, understood, and respected, leading to deeper and more meaningful connections with those around us. This can be seen in the quotation below:

"Instead, Nina Riva stood on the edge of the cliff she'd never wanted, and looked out onto the water she wished was closer, and for the first time in her quiet life, screamed into the wind (Reid, 2021: 11)."

The quotation above contains expressive illocutionary acts, as it conveys the intense emotions and inner turmoil of the character, Nina Riva. Standing on the edge of a cliff, which she metaphorically never desired, Nina is physically and emotionally at a precipice. The description of her looking out onto the water she wishes was closer symbolizes her longing and sense of being distant from what she truly desires or needs. The act of screaming into the wind, especially given that it is for the first time in her quiet life, is a powerful expression of her frustration, pain, or release of pent-up emotions. This scream is a clear manifestation of an expressive illocutionary act, as it directly conveys Nina's deep-seated emotional state and serves as a cathartic release of her inner feelings.

“Keep shooting,” she said. “Shoot until we’re done.” And then she pulled at his shorts, and let them fall down, and put her mouth on him. And he kept photographing her until they were done, when she looked up at him and said, “Those are just for you. You have to develop them yourself, all right? But now you’ll have them forever. Because I love you (Reid, 2021: 18).”

The quotation above contains expressive illocutionary acts, showing the characters' deep emotions and intimate connection. The command "Keep shooting," followed by "Shoot until we're done," conveys a sense of urgency and determination, reflecting the woman's emotional intensity and commitment to the moment. Her actions, pulling down his shorts and engaging in an intimate act, reveal a profound level of vulnerability and desire, further emphasizing her emotional state. When she instructs him that the photos are "just for you" and that he must "develop them yourself," she expresses trust and exclusivity, highlighting the personal and private nature of their bond. Finally, her declaration, "But now you'll have them forever. Because I love you," is a direct and powerful expressive illocutionary act, clearly communicating her deep affection and commitment. This combination of verbal commands, intimate actions, and explicit expressions of love underscores the rich emotional tapestry woven throughout the passage.

5. Conclusion

Directive and expressive illocutionary acts are the most frequently used in the novel *Malibu Rising*. Directive acts, which serve to state facts, beliefs, or descriptions, play a significant role in reflecting the characters' perspectives and advancing the plot. Expressive acts reveal the characters' emotions and attitudes, adding depth to their development and interactions. The novel effectively employs these speech acts to build and progress the narrative. Directive acts often provide essential information or make declarations that move the story forward, while expressive acts enhance emotional engagement, allowing readers to connect with characters on a personal level through their expressions of emotion. Character interactions in the novel are further enriched through the use of competitive and conflicting speech acts. Competitive acts, such as organizing, requesting, demanding, or begging, often conflict with social goals. These actions prioritize personal or group interests and use aggressive or persuasive strategies to achieve desired outcomes, potentially causing social tension or conflict by opposing norms of cooperation and social harmony. Conflicting acts, which include promises and threats, highlight commitments and potential conflicts, driving further character development and interaction. The study reveals that the primary functions of illocutionary acts in "Malibu Rising" are to reveal internal states, facilitate social interaction, and manage interpersonal relationships. These functions help convey underlying themes of family dynamics, personal struggles, and the quest for identity. Analyzing the novel through the lens of illocutionary speech acts provides a pragmatic understanding of the characters' communicative behaviors. It demonstrates how language use in literary texts can reflect real-life communication, offering insights into human interaction and the use of language to achieve specific ends.

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