

An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings Movie

Desthia Amalia¹ and Nuri Adlina²

^{1,2}Lecturer in Faculty of Letters and Cultures, Gunadarma University
Jakarta, Indonesia



Abstract — This study aims to analyse and present the classification of speech acts that occurred in the Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings movie. The research methodology used in this study is the descriptive qualitative method. The data collection method in this study is observation and documentation. The data are obtained by watching the movie and reading the script. The results of this study showed 29% assertive, 33% directive, 23% commissive, 15% expressive and 0% declarative. Therefore, the most dominant speech act that occurred in the movie is directive, while the declarative data could not be found.

Keywords — Speech Act; Illocutionary; Semantics; Pragmatics; Linguistics.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the essential things in human life. It is used to communicate with each other in daily life. Due to its important role in human life, then language cannot be separated from humans, either in spoken or written form. Language plays a significant role because it can help humans to express their feelings, ideas and thoughts. Moreover, using language can make humans extend their communication in terms of what they want to say and communicate with each other.

These days, the best result in communication can be drawn when the speaker and the hearer understand what they are talking about. The utterance represents the verbal communication that happened between the speaker and the hearer. Furthermore, it is not only focusing on the grammatical structure but also the way they perform the utterance. It means the utterances can be figured out further by interpreting the context and situation where the speaker and the hearer get engaged.

The study of speech can be categorized into pragmatic branches. Yule (1996) found that pragmatics was related to the study of meaning transmitted by a speaker or writer and interpreted by a listener or reader. In addition, Pragmatics further explained that pragmatics is more about analyzing what an utterance means than the meaning of a word or phrase in the utterance itself. In short, pragmatics examines the meaning of the speaker.

Yule (1996) explained speech act is about the communicative purpose of the speaker in producing an utterance and it is determined by the intention for which the speaker use the language such as, to make a request, to apologize and to report. It can be concluded that speech act is often used in daily life where the speakers say some things and the hearers understand what the speakers want to convey. If this process exists then it can form then best result of communication.

Besides explaining the meaning of speech act, Yule (1996) also pointed out three dimensions of speech act namely locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. The first dimension is locutionary act which means the basic act of utterance, or producing a meaningful linguistic expression. The second dimension is illocutionary act where people form an utterance with some kind of function in mind. Furthermore, the illocutionary act is performed through the communicative force of an utterance. Then, the third dimension is perlocutionary act where people create an utterance with a function and an intention to

have an effect. It means Depending on the circumstances, you will utter on the assumption that the hearer will recognize the effect you intended (for example, to account for a wonderful smell, or to get the hearer to drink some coffee). This is also generally known as the perlocutionary effect.

Based on those explanations then this research will focus on the classification of speech acts that happened in the second dimension which is called illocutionary acts. According to Searle (as cited in Cruse, 2000) divided speech acts into five categories that is explained in Table 1.

Table 1. The Classification of Speech Acts

Category	Definition
Assertive	Assertive obliges the speaker to tell the truth of the statement expressed as follows: warn, state, complain, suggest, report, claim and boast.
Directive	Directive is intended to evoke certain actions on the part of the listener, such as: ask, command, order, recommend, request and advise.
Commissive	Commissive commits the speaker to future actions for instance: vow, threaten, undertake, promise, contract and offer.
Expressive	Expressive informs the speaker's psychological attitude towards the following presupposed situations. For example, congrats, thanks, blame, praise, pardon and forgive.
Declarative	Declarative aims to make a difference in reality. In other words, the world after being told is not the same. This applies to all performing verbs in the obvious mind. For example, after someone blesses someone, a new world is born where this blessing took place.

Movie can be a good field in finding speech acts and its classification because it delivers various utterances produced by the characters. Furthermore, the movie is a type of visual communication which is used the combination of audio and video to tell stories and to help people to have better understanding. Thus, in this research, the writers aim to figure out the classification of speech acts as well as the further analysis of speech acts occurred in the movie, Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings.

Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings is produced by Marvel in 2021 and it is talking about Shang Chi who must confront the past he thought he left behind when he is drawn into the web of the mysterious Ten Rings organization. The story begins when Xu Wenwu who is Shang Chi's father, discovered ten mythical rings. The ten rings blessed him with immortality and unmatched power. During his marriage with Shang Chi's mother, Ying Li, he decided to not using his ten mythical rings until one day his wife got murdered and he trained Shang Chi to take revenge and kill people who killed his mother. Shang Chi refused the idea to take revenge thus, he chose to run away to San Fransisco. After some years, Shang Chi came back to Macau and heard a narrative from his dad that his mother is still alive but she is locked behind the cave by Ta Lo people. Shang Chi did not believe his dad's narrative so that he tried to figured out the truth. After knowing the truth from Ta Lo people, then Shang Chi's narrative and his dad's narrative are completely different. Shang Chi's dad still believed that his narrative is the right one and he used his ten rings to break the cave. At that time, finally he figured out that the one locked behind the cave was not his wife but the evils. After that, he passed the ten rings to Shang Chi then the battle finished when Shang Chi tear the Dweller into pieces.

The writers have several reasons to choose *Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* as the instrument of the research. First, this movie is a big hit since the first time of its release date. Then, the movie has drawn huge attention from the audiences, it can be seen how the movie won several awards such as Chicago Indie Critics' Awards (CIC) for winning best stunts, Gold List for winning best picture and best adapted screenplay, also Hawaii Film Critics Society (HFCS) for winning best stunts and best comic book film. To realize that the movie has big achievements as well as interesting plot, it encourages the writers to choose the movie as the instrument for this research.

There are several studies that are related to this research. First, Sintamutiani, Fitriani, Inayah (2019) in their research "An Analysis of Speech Act Classification in *Beauty and The Beast*" is talking about the classification of speech acts that occurred in a short story namely *Beauty and the Beast*. The writers revealed that they found 10 speech acts in the short story. Moreover, the speech acts were classified into 4 types. The classification showed that directive (50%); representative (30%); declaration (10%); and commissive (10%). The writers did not find expressive speech acts in the short story. Second, Putri, Ramendra, and Swandana (2019) commented in their research entitled "An Analysis of Speech Act Used in *Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire Movie*". The authors explained that there are 40 data of utterances found in the movie. The data are in the form of illocutionary act, locutionary act, perlocutionary act, indirect speech and direct speech. In the category of illocutionary act, the authors found that there are 2.5% for declarative, 25% for representative, and 22.5% for expressive. On the other hand, in locutionary act, the authors revealed there are 45% in declarative, 25% in interrogative, and 5% in exclamation. In addition, the authors found that the perlocutionary act had some effect on the listener when the utterance was made. Next, the writers also found that 92.5% of the data are in indirect speech format and 7.5% of the data are in direct speech format. Third, in their study "An Analysis of Speech Act Used in *London Has Fallen Movie*", Tutuarima, Nuraeningsih, Rusiana (2018) found that the types and languages of speech act used in the film *London Has Fallen*. The method of action and the in-speech act are used in the movie. In addition, the author revealed that there are 76 speech acts used in the movie "London Has Fallen". The most dominant is illocutionary act that consist of 37 utterances. In addition, there are 99 utterances as a classification of illocutionary acts, with 32 utterances are directive and 23 utterances are expressive category.

The position of the current research done by the writers, is somehow similar to the previous research mentioned before. The first research done by Sintamutiani, Fitriani, Inayah is similar to the current research, both research analyzed the speech act classification. However, the instrument of the data for both researches are different. Sintamutiani, Fitriani, Inayah used short story meanwhile the writers here used movie. The second research done by Putri, Ramendra, and Swandana is similar to the current research, both researches used movie as the instrument of the research but the previous research chose to analyze the data to figure out the three dimensions of speech act namely locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act meanwhile the current research done by the writers, focuses on the illocutionary act only. The third research done by Tutuarima, Nuraeningsih, and Rusiana is quite similar with the current research, both researches focus on the classification of speech act which happened in the dimension of illocutionary act. However, the title of the movie from both researches are different, the previous one chose *London Has Fallen* and the current research chose *Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*.

Based on the explanation above the writers found out that the utterances which occurred in the movie might not bring the literal meaning only but those can help the audiences to understand the story better. The utterances can give the audiences a better understanding based on the context of the movie. Thus, the writers decided to conduct a research with the title "An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in *Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings Movie*"

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is the descriptive qualitative method. Hancock (2009) stated that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. Moreover, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) explained that qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach. It means that qualitative research is a study about things in their natural settings which has attempted to make things make sense or to interpret a phenomenon. Thus, the writers choose the descriptive qualitative method to present the findings.

The source of the data in this research is a movie from Marvel: *Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* which is 2 hours and 12 minutes long. The movie fits the category which the writers need to figure out the speech acts. Furthermore, the writers focus on the utterances which happened in the movie. The utterances are produced by any characters in the movie. To support the

writers figuring out the data then the writers choose to use two instruments for collecting the data, such as the movie Sang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings and its script.

There are two techniques used by the writers to collect the data namely observation and documentation. Riduwan (2004) explained that observation is the technique of collecting the data when a researcher conducted an observation directly to the research object to look closely the undertaken activities. Sugiyono (2008) added observation is a basic technique commonly used in all sciences in which the technique is a deliberate and systematic observation of the symptoms that occur for later recording. Thus, the first technique used by the writers is observation although in this case the writers did not go directly to the field, but the writers only observed the utterances which happened through the movie and its script. The second technique used by the writers is called as documentation. After observing the movie and its script then the writers made some important notes about the utterances produced by the speakers. The writers identified the speaker and the hearer of those utterances. As explained before that this research focuses on the speech acts specifically on the category of the illocutionary act therefore after taking notes about the utterances that happened, the writers then classified those into the illocutionary acts' categories.

In collecting the data, the writers have several steps. First, the writers watched the movie several times while observing the script to find out the data of speech acts. Second, the writers wrote down the data which they found during watching and observing the script. Then, the writers classified the data into the categories from illocutionary acts. After collecting and classifying the data then the writers analyzed the chosen data based on the theory and the context which happened in the movie. Furthermore, the writers write down the context of the situation happened in the movie along with the explanation why the chosen data are suitable with the categories of illocutionary acts.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As the first step, the writers watched Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings to have a better and further understanding of the whole plot, value and characters of the movie thus that could help the writers to figure out and analyze about the speech acts which found in the movie. After watching the movie and reading the script several times, the writers found out several data which can be categorized as speech acts.

After comprehending the whole plot of the movie then the writers identify the kinds of speech acts, in this case the writers are focusing on the classification of illocutionary acts. The data are categorized based on the context that found by the writers. The context of the movie becomes the great guide for the writers to classify and to understand the speech acts.

Based on the observation that had been conducted by the writers, it is found that there are four kinds of speech acts in the movie, namely assertive, directive, commissive and expressive. For each category the writers found out several data which can be shown in Table 1. The writers could only find four types of speech acts meanwhile declarative speech act could not be found in the movie.

Table 2. The Classification of Speech Acts in Sang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings Movie

Types of Speech Acts	Frequency	Percentages
Assertive	27	29
Directive	31	33
Commissive	22	23
Expressive	14	15
Declarative	0	0
Total	94 Data	100%

Table 3. Example of Speech Acts Utterances Found in Sang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings Movie

No.	Types of Speech Acts	Example of Speech Acts Utterances
1	Assertive	"Those guys back there were sent by my dad."
2	Directive	"Turn around now and I won't have to hurt you"
3	Directive	"Everyone to the water now!"
4	Commissive	"I'll explain it when I get back. I promise"
5	Commissive	"Im gonna do what he trained me to do"
6	Expressive	"Thanks!"
7	Expressive	"Xu Xialing, you're amazing!"
8	Expressive	"I like your pants!"

3.1. Assertive

Xu Wenwu: "She would still be with us. We would all be living there together. Ta Lo did this to us. They locked her behind that gate to punish her. Don't you see? She's leaving clues for us. She wants us to find her and bring her home, so we can be a family again."

Shang Chi: **"Dad, Mom's gone. She's not talking to you from behind a gate, and she's not leaving any clues for us"**

The data which classified as assertive are those that commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition. The chosen datum above comes from the scene where Xu Wenwu (Shang Chi and Xialing's father) believes that his wife is still alive and she is locked by her people the Ta Lo clan behind the gate. Through the scene, Xu Wenwu persuaded his thoughts to Shang Chi and Xialing about his belief that his wife is still alive and she is locked behind the gate.

In this conversation, the writers found an assertive utterance **"Dad, Mom's gone. She's not talking to you from behind a gate, and she's not leaving any clues for us"**, this utterance shows the way of complaining from the speaker to the hearer. Shang Chi through his utterance commits the truth of the expressed proposition. Xu Wenwu previously stated about the proposition where he believed that his wife is still alive and his wife is locked by her persons behind the gate. Furthermore, Shang Chi through his utterance complained about the proposition made by his dad, he led to the truth where his mom has already gone thus, she is not talking to his dad from the gate and the sound which came to Xu Wenwu was not the voice of his mom.

3.2. Directive

Shang Chi: "Hi there! I am Xu Shang-Chi. This is my sister, Xu Xialing. We're Ying Li's children. This is my friend, Katy."

Guang Bo: **"Get in your car and go home!"**

Shang Chi: "Please. You don't understand."

Nan: Guang Bo! What are you doing? **Put down your weapons!**

The data which classified as directive are those that have the intention to get the hearer to do something. The chosen datum above comes from the scene where Shang Chi, Xiangling and Katy come to their mom's homeland and the reaction from Ta Lo people who refuse them at first and there is Nan who welcomes them. Through the scene, Guang Bo at first refuses Shang Chi's arrival by saying **"Get in your car and go home!"** then Shang Chi responds to give further explanation by saying **"Please. You don't understand."** Guang Bo and Ta Lo people still refuse them before Nan comes to stop them by saying "Guang Bo! What are you doing? Put down your weapons!"

In this conversation, the writers found several directive utterances. The first one is the utterance **"Get in your car and go home!"**, this utterance shows the command from Guang Bo to Shang Chi, Xialing and Katy to leave Ta Lo because they refuse to welcome them. The second one is the utterance **"Guang Bo! What are you doing? Put down your weapons!"**, this utterance

shows the command from Nan to Ta Lo people to stop appointing their weapons to Shang Chi, Xialing and Katy. The command from the speaker is heard by the hearer, in this case the speaker refers to Nan who wants her people to stop appointing the weapons and the hearer which refers to Ta Lo people, they stop appointing the weapons to Shang Chi right after hearing Nan's command.

3.3. Commissive

Shang Chi: "Please get out of the car."

Katy: "Shaun, we've been friends for 10 years, okay? You know I'm not an idiot. Please, get in. **I'll go slow.**"

The data which is classified as directive are those that have the intention of the speaker commits to take action in the future. The chosen datum above come from the scene where Shang Chi and Katy are at their job as valet parking. A cool car came and Katy without hesitation took the car keys for a drive. Worried that Katy would drive carelessly, Shang Chi immediately tried to stop Katy. In the end Katy promised and reassured Shang Chi by saying "**I'll go slow**".

In this conversation, the writers found a commissive utterance "**I'll go slow**". It shows a promise from Katy to Shangchi in pursuance of her plan for making Katy to drive the car. The speaker promises the hearer things to do in the future. In this case if Katy drives the car she will drive slowly and carefully thus Shangchi should not be too worried about the car and their job.

3.4. Expressive

Katy: "Hi, Xialing. I'm Katy. **You're, like, such a badass. Everything that you do is, like, so cool. That was really cool.**"

Xialing: "**I like your pants.**"

Katy: "**Thank you. Thanks.** Yeah."

The data which is classified as expressive are those that express a variety of the physiological condition of the speaker is in at a specific time. The chosen datum above comes from the scene when Shang Chi and Xialing finished their fight and Xialing won against Shang Chi. After Katy joined Xialing and Shangchi, she immediately praised Xialing's greatness by saying "**Hi, Xialing. I'm Katy. You're, like, such a badass. Everything that you do is, like, so cool. That was really cool.**". Xialing answered by praising the clothes Katy's wearing by saying "**I like your pants**". Katy responded by thanking her for the compliment.

In this conversation the writers found several expressive utterances. The first one is the utterance "**You're, like, such a badass. Everything that you do is, like, so cool. That was really cool.**", this utterance shows the expression of compliment, admiration, and applause from the speaker to the hearer. The conversation continues as Xialing showed another expressive utterance "**I like your pants**". Similar to what Katy has said, this utterance is intended to express a compliment by the speaker. It didn't end there, to respond to a compliment the hearer respond by saying "**Thank you. Thanks**". Saying "thank you" or "thanks" according to Macmillan Dictionary used for telling someone that you are grateful for something that they have said or done. In this scene Katy was pleased by Xialing complimenting her pants.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1. Conclusion

Derived from the explanation an analysis on the previous chapter, it is concluded that in Shang Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings movie is found 94 data which are categorized as of illocutionary acts utterances. From five types of speech acts, the writers could only able to find four types of speech acts in the movie—namely assertive, directive, commissive and expressive. The following is some details about the finding of the research.

As the writers focus only illocutionary acts, it is found that there are around 29% data of assertive, 33% data of directive, 23% data of commissive, 15% data of expressive and 0% data of declarative. The classification of speech acts which is dominant in this movie is directive speech acts. The writers conclude the reason directive is the most dominant because the genre of this movie is action that contain some troops facing a war so that a lot of characters are giving directive utterances.

4.2. Suggestion

By means of this research, the writers hope the readers will gain more understanding and knowledge about illocutionary acts especially speech acts which is used in daily conversation. The writers anticipate more researches in semantics and pragmatics fields such as locutionary acts or locutionary and illocutionary function. For the next researcher who intends to write related research as we did, hopefully this research can be used a reference.

REFERENCES

- [1]Cruse, D. A. (2000). *Meaning in Language an Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.
- [2]Denzin, N., Licoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publication Inc.
- [3]Hancock, B. (2009). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. Nottingham: NIHR RDS EM.
- [4]Putri , I. A. P. A. D. P., Ramendra , D. P., Swandana, I. W. (2019). AN ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACT USED IN HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE MOVIE. *International Journal of Language and Literature* , 3(2), 78–88.
- [5]Riduwan. (2004). *Metode Riset*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- [6]Sintamutiani , D. P., Fitriani , D., & Inayah , R. (2019). An Analysis of Speech Act Classification in Beauty and The Beast. *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education)*, 2(4), 429–435.
- [7]Sugiyono. (2014). *Metode Penelitian. Pendidikan*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- [8]Tutuarima, Z., Nuraeningsih, N., & Rusiana, R. (2018). An Analysis of Speech Act Used in London Has Fallen Movie. *VISION: JOURNAL FOR LANGUAGE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING*, 7(2), 160–169. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.21580/vjv7i23022>
- [9]Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.