

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Animated movies often show the unique ways characters express their intentions, emotions, and relationships, such as the “Elemental” (2023) movie, which was produced by “Walt Disney Pictures dan Pixar Animation Studios” (rottentomatoes.com, 2023). In this animated movie, the interaction between the main characters is not just an exchange of dialogue but it is rich in meaning that can be analyzed through the lens of illocutionary act. The illocutionary act is part of speech act in pragmatics, which according to Searle is speech functions that convey the speaker's intentions, such as making promises, giving orders, or expressing feelings. In other words, this study analyzes the illocutionary act of the main character's utterances in the Elemental movie.

As mentioned above, this study involves an animated movie released in 2023 titled “Elemental”. The “Elemental” movie presents a unique exploration of communication through its diverse cast of characters, each representing a different element. The interactions between these characters are not only central to the movie's plot, but also a reflection of broader social themes such as diversity, and identity (imdb.com, 2023). Despite the richness of these interactions, there is a real uniqueness that focuses on the illocutionary acts in the study of pragmatics used by the lovers named “Ember” as the fire element and “Wade” as the water element. Therefore, this study looks into how the illocutionary acts contribute to the development and resolution of conflict in their relationship.





This study utilizes Searle’s theory of illocutionary act to analyze the communication between “Ember Lumen” and “Wade Ripple”. In addition, there are several reasons for selecting this theory. Searle’s theory (1979) is particularly suited for this analysis because it focuses on the performative nature of language—how utterances are not just about conveying information but also about performing actions. In the context of “Elemental” movie, this theory allows for a nuanced examination of how the characters' dialogue serves to assert, question, command, express, and declare emotions, thereby advancing the plot and character development. By applying Seale’s illocutionary act, the study offers a deeper understanding of the communicative strategies using the types of illocutionary act used by “Ember” and “Wade”. To make it clearer, here is an illustration how the theory works in this study.

Minute: 05:58

Context: The opening day of THE FIREPLACE shop. When Ember Lumen and her dad prepared the order, squeezing logs to make bite-size pieces of coal and handed them to the customer. By doing so, she was happy, and she said...

Ember Lumen: “Someday, this shop will all be mine!”

Based on Ember’s utterance, it can be identified that her utterance belongs to the Assertive Illocutionary Act. According to Searle (1979), an assertive is to assert something that the speaker believes to be true. Ember's statement above reflects her belief or conviction about a future reality where she envisions herself as the owner of the shop. Thus, through this assertive act, she is expressing a confident expectation about what she perceives as an inevitable future event, which aligns with the nature of assertive in conveying the speaker's belief or commitment to the truth of the proposition.



There are several previous studies that inspired the current research. These previous studies are related to pragmatics, speech acts, illocutionary acts, and their analysis in a movie. The first prior study was analyzed the directive speech act in “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness” movie script using Yule’s speech act theory (Andani, 2023). The second prior study was analyzed expressive illocutionary acts on “Matilda in Roald Dahl's Matilda” novel through using Yule's theory (Jamielah, 2020). The last prior study was analyzed the commissive speech acts used by the characters in the “Knives Out” movie (Devi & Degaf, 2021).

Nevertheless, these previous studies have gaps that this current research aims to address. For instance, Andani's (2023) study focused on directives and did not explore other types of illocutionary acts such as assertives or expressives, which can provide a more comprehensive understanding of character intentions. Similarly, Jamielah's (2020) was limited to expressive illocutionary acts in a literary context, which could not account for the unique interplay of visual and verbal elements present in animated movies. Lastly, the study by Devi and Degaf (2021) was limited to commissive speech acts and did not explore the diversity of speech acts that can be found in different genres and settings. Therefore, this current study seeks to fill these gaps by applying Searle’s (1979) comprehensive theory of illocutionary acts, which includes five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations to identify these strategies and explore how “Ember” and “Wade” use them in their utterances.



1.2 Statements of the Problem

- 1) What are the types of illocutionary act used by “Ember” and “Wade” in the “Elemental” movie?
- 2) How do “Ember” and “Wade” use each type of illocutionary act found in their utterances in the “Elemental” movie?

1.3 Objectives of the Problem

- 1) To identify the types of illocutionary act used by “Ember” and “Wade” in the “Elemental” movie.
- 2) To explain how “Ember” and “Wade” use each type of illocutionary act found in their utterances in the “Elemental” movie.

1.4 Significances of the Study

1.4.1 Theoretically

This study will contribute to the field of pragmatics by providing an analysis of illocutionary acts in a contemporary animated movie. By examining the types of illocutionary acts from Searle's theory used by the characters Ember and Wade in “Elemental”, this study offers insight into how this illocutionary act functions in the context of narrative and character interaction. By doing so, this theoretical contribution enriches the reader's understanding of how the illocutionary act is represented in popular media, potentially leading to a more nuanced interpretation of communication strategies in animated movies.



1.4.2 Practically

From a practical point of view, the findings of this study can be useful for communicators. Communicators can apply the findings of this study to better understand and interpret the intricacies of verbal interaction in popular media content.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study is pragmatics, which is limited to the analysis of illocutionary acts of speech acts (Searle, 1979) in the conversations of the movie “Elemental” (2023). In addition, this study is limited to the characters “Ember Lumen” and “Wade Ripple”. “Ember Lumen” and ‘Wade Ripple’ were chosen because they are the main characters whose interactions greatly influence the storyline of ‘Elemental’ (2023). The contrast between them, both in the elements they represent and their communication styles, makes analyzing the illocutionary acts in their conversations important for understanding the relationship dynamics and the main themes of the movie. In other words, focusing on these two characters allows this study to be more focused and relevant.



1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

1) Pragmatics:

“Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by a hearer or reader” (Yule, 1996, p. 3)

2) Speech Acts:

Speech acts are forms of action performed through speaking or communicating (Searle, 1979).

3) Illocutionary Act:

“In general, in the performance of any illocutionary act with a propositional content, the speaker expresses some attitude, state, etc., to that propositional content.” (Searle, 1979, p. 4)

1.7 Thesis Organization

Chapter I introduces the study by presenting the background, stating the research problem, and outlining the objectives and significance of the study. It also defines the scope and limitations of the research and explains the key terms used. Additionally, this chapter provides an overview of the thesis organization, setting the stage for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter II delves into the theory of Speech Act as proposed by Seale in 1979. Furthermore, this chapter explores the film "Elemental" and reviews related studies, establishing the theoretical framework and context for the study.

Chapter III outlines the research design, detailing the sources of data and the methods used for data collection and analysis. It provides a step-by-step explanation of the procedures followed to ensure the reliability and validity of the research.



Chapter IV focuses on the illocutionary acts within the main characters' utterances in the film "Elemental." This chapter analyzes how these acts convey meaning and contribute to the overall narrative of the movie.

Finally, Chapter V presents the conclusions drawn from the research and offers suggestions for future studies. It summarizes the findings and reflects on the implications of the study, providing a comprehensive closure to the study.