

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer discusses the introduction of the study. This chapter consists of four parts. They are background of research, problem of research, research purpose, research significance, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Background of the Research

The development of digital media has rapidly transformed the way people access and disseminate information through the internet and social media. This transformation is supported by the increasing use of smartphones and the continuous improvement of digital literacy skills among users (Munabiah Munabiah Lestari, 2023). Digital platforms have made communication more interactive, flexible, and accessible to a wider audience. However, alongside these advantages, digital communication also presents various challenges, including the spread of misinformation, privacy concerns, and potential psychological effects. These challenges require users not only to consume information but also to interpret and manage communication more critically and effectively.

In the digital era, communication has undergone significant changes (Hasan et al., 2023), particularly in the ways individuals and organizations interact with their audiences. Social media platforms, especially YouTube, have become prominent spaces for language use and interaction. Through video content, comment sections, and various interactive features, YouTube enables content creators to communicate directly with audiences from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. As a result, YouTube functions not only as a source of information and entertainment but also as a dynamic site where language practices and interactional patterns continuously evolve.

From a linguistic perspective, particularly within pragmatics, language is not merely a tool for conveying information but also a means of performing actions in social contexts. This concept is explained through speech act theory, first introduced by Austin (1962), who proposed that utterances involve three components:

locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. This theory was further developed by (Searle, 1979), who classified illocutionary acts into five categories: representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Speech act theory plays a crucial role in understanding how speakers perform actions and convey intentions through language in real communication, including within digital media contexts (Yule, 1996).

Among the types of illocutionary acts proposed by Searle, directive and commissive speech acts are particularly prominent in interactive communication (Searle, 1979). Directive speech acts aim to make the hearer perform an action, such as commanding, requesting, inviting, or suggesting (Searle, 1979; Yule, 1996). Commissive speech acts, on the other hand, express the speaker's commitment to future actions, including promises, offers, and pledges (Searle, 1979; Levinson, 1983). In digital entertainment platforms such as YouTube, these two types of speech acts are frequently used by content creators to encourage participation, guide behavior, and establish expectations among audiences.

Beyond their pragmatic functions, directive and commissive speech acts are closely related to the speaker's authority and social role in interaction. From a sociolinguistic perspective, speakers who occupy positions of authority tend to employ directive speech acts more freely and expect compliance from their interlocutors (Holmes, 2013). In digital entertainment contexts, content creators often assume dominant social roles as hosts, leaders, or organizers, enabling them to direct actions and make commitments that are readily accepted by participants and audiences. Therefore, the use of directive and commissive speech acts in YouTube content not only serves communicative purposes but also reflects the authority and social role of the speaker within creator audience interaction.

YouTube is one of the most widely used social media platforms in Indonesia and plays a significant role in everyday digital communication. Indonesian audiences actively consume both local and global content, resulting in continuous exposure to various styles of language use and interaction. Entertainment content on YouTube is often characterized by persuasive and interactive language, such as

invitations to participate in challenges, instructions directed at participants, and promises of rewards or future content. These interactional patterns demonstrate how language use on YouTube shapes audience engagement and influences expectations in digital communication.

Several previous studies have examined speech acts in various media contexts. (Fatkhiyatur Rohmah et al., 2022) analyzed illocutionary speech acts in a YouTube vlog using Searle's classification and found that directive and commissive acts were frequently employed to influence audiences. However, the study primarily focused on identifying types of speech acts without examining how these acts reflect the speaker's authority or social role in digital interaction. Similarly, (Azizah & Suhardi, 2020) investigated directive and commissive speech acts in the film *Kartini* and identified various forms of directives and commissives in cinematic dialogue. Nevertheless, the study did not address issues of authority and social role, particularly within interactive digital media such as YouTube.

Another study by (Dhea & Azhari, 2025) examined speech functions in MrBeast YouTube videos using a systemic functional linguistic approach. While their research highlighted patterns of commands, offers, and statements, it did not analyze directive and commissive speech acts from a pragmatic perspective, nor did it explore how such utterances reflect the speaker's authority and social role. As a result, the pragmatic and sociolinguistic dimensions of authority embedded in MrBeast directives and commitments remain underexplored.

Based on the review of previous studies, it can be observed that research on directive and commissive speech acts has largely focused on identifying types, functions, or frequencies of speech acts. Limited attention has been given to examining how these speech acts reflect the speaker's authority and social role, particularly in digital entertainment contexts. This indicates a clear research gap that needs to be addressed.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing directive and commissive speech acts in MrBeast YouTube videos from a pragmatic perspective,

while incorporating a focused sociopragmatic lens on authority and social role. By examining how these speech acts function in directing actions and expressing commitments, this research aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of language use in digital interaction.

Ultimately, this research offers a significant contribution to the study of pragmatics by demonstrating that language in digital media is not only used to convey information but also serves as a resource for exercising authority, shaping interaction, and influencing audience behavior. Thus, this study provides deeper insight into how communication is constructed and managed in contemporary YouTube entertainment content.

While this study primarily focuses on directive and commissive speech acts from a pragmatic perspective, the concepts of authority and social role are used as supporting frameworks to provide additional insight into how these speech acts function in interaction.

## **1.2 Problem of Research**

This study focuses on the limited analysis of directive and commissive speech acts in YouTube entertainment content, despite their frequent use in creator audience interactions. Therefore, this research examines the types of directive and commissive speech acts used in YouTube entertainment content. Based on the problems described above, the research questions of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What types of both directive and commissive speech acts are there in MrBeast YouTube videos?
2. How do the directive and commissive speech acts reflect the speaker's authority and social role in MrBeast YouTube videos?

### **1.3 Research Purposes**

Based on the problem formulation described above, the authors conducted this study with the aims :

1. To find out the types of directive and commissive speech acts used in MrBeast YouTube videos.
2. To explore how directive and commissive speech acts are used in interaction, with reference to the speaker's authority and social role.

### **1.4 Research Significance**

This study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research contributes to the field of pragmatics by providing a deeper analysis of directive and commissive speech acts in digital entertainment contexts, particularly on YouTube. By applying speech act theory proposed by (Insan et al., 2023) (Searle, 1979), this study enriches pragmatic discussions on how illocutionary acts function in real-life digital communication. In addition, this study offers a novel perspective by incorporating authority and social role as supporting perspectives in analyzing directive and commissive speech acts in creator, audience interaction, while maintaining pragmatics as the primary analytical framework.

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to provide insights for content creators regarding the strategic use of language in managing interaction and engagement with audiences on digital platforms. By understanding how directive and commissive speech acts are used to direct actions and express commitments, content creators may become more aware of how language reflects authority and shapes audience expectations. Furthermore, this study may serve as a useful reference for students and researchers who are interested in pragmatic studies of speech acts in digital media.

However, this study is limited to the analysis of directive and commissive speech acts produced by the content creator in selected MrBeast YouTube videos. The analysis focuses on pragmatic interpretation, with authority and social role

considered only in a limited, role-based sense. Other illocutionary acts, audience responses, comment sections, and broader sociolinguistic variables are not included in this study.

### **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding and to clarify the key concepts used in this study, several important terms are defined as follows:

#### **1. Directive Speech Act**

Directive speech act is a type of speech act used by the speaker to make the hearer perform an action. It includes commands, requests, suggestions, and invitations. This type of speech act shows how speakers attempt to influence the behavior of others (Searle, 1979; Yule, 1996).

#### **2. Commissive Speech Act**

Commissive speech act is a type of speech act that expresses the speaker's commitment to a future action, such as promises, offers, or pledges. It indicates that the speaker is responsible for carrying out the stated action (Searle, 1979; Levinson, 1983).