CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the research background, research questions, research objectives, research significances, and definitions of key terms.

A. Research Background

Viruses are pathogenic microorganisms that can only replicate within the cells of living things because they do not have the cellular equipment to reproduce on their own. All forms of life can be infected by viruses, from plants, and animals, to bacteria and archaea. Likewise with humans, because the cells contained in the human body related to their development and function, can be disturbed by infection due to microorganisms called viruses. The type of cell that is infected and the type of virus that infects it will cause different diseases and symptoms. The are many viruses that have been identified, a new type of virus emerged at the end of 2019 originating from Wuhan, China. The virus was identified as a coronavirus, a large family of viruses that cause disease in humans and animals. In humans, it usually causes respiratory tract infections, ranging from the common cold to serious illnesses such as *Middle East Respiratory Syndrome* (MERS) and *Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome* (SARS). The new type of coronavirus found in humans since the extraordinary event was later named *Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2* (SARS-COV2), and caused Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19).

Coronavirus can cause mild symptoms such as common respiratory illnesses, sore throat, runny nose, cough and fever. About 80% of cases recover without the need for special treatment. About 1 in every 6 people may develop severe illness, such as pneumonia or difficulty breathing, which usually develops gradually. Although the mortality rate for this disease is still low (around 3%), older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease) are usually more susceptible to becoming ill critical. Looking at developments to date, more than 50% of confirmed cases have

been declared to be improving, and the cure rate will continue to increase. A person can be infected from a person with Covid-19 because this disease can spread through small droplets from the nose or mouth when coughing or sneezing. The droplets then fall on surrounding objects. Then if someone else touches an object that has been contaminated with these droplets, that person touches the eyes, nose or mouth (triangle of the face), then that person can be infected with Covid-19. Or it could be that a person becomes infected with Covid-19 when they accidentally inhale droplets from an infected person. This is why the people need to keep a distance of at least one meter from people who are sick. Until now, experts are still conducting investigations to determine the source of the virus, the type of exposure, and the mode of transmission. Several ways that can be done to prevent the transmission of this virus are: maintaining health and fitness so that the body's stamina remains excellent and the immune system increases. Wash the hands properly regularly using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Washing hands thoroughly in addition to killing viruses that may be on the hands, this action is also one of the easy and inexpensive measures. About 98% of the spread of disease comes from the hands. Therefore, maintaining hand hygiene is very important.

The virus is spreading worldwide with the number of global coronavirus cases surpassing 175 million, according to *World Health Organization* (WHO) data, with nearly 3.8 million deaths. Citing the WHO's official website, the number of global coronavirus cases on Monday (June, 14) reached 175.5 million infections and 3.798 million deaths. The number of global coronavirus cases reached 150 million on April 30. Thus, in less than a month and a half, more than 25 million people were infected. The Americas region has the highest number of coronavirus cases, with 66.69 million, followed by Europe with 54.98 million, and Southeast Asia which includes India at 33.43 million (Reuters, S.S. Kurniawan 2021). The extraordinary event caused by the Coronavirus has an impact on the transition of government that is being experienced by the United States after holding the election in 2020. After three weeks of the election, the previous president, Donald Trump, finally agreed to carry out a formal transition process. As quoted by *NBC News*, the

president-elect is already planning to meet with the Covid-19 task force at the White House to discuss vaccine distribution and access. The coronavirus pandemic is surging in America. But the virus is caught up in the political drama, if this transition of government is hampered then there is a bad chance to befall the United States during a surging pandemic. The transition team needs to receive a briefing on the (virus) threat to understand the vaccine distribution plan, know where the supply is, and what is the status of masks and gloves. There is a lot of information that needs to be released, can not wait until the last minute and President Trump has not attended a virus task force meeting in five months, according to the *Washington Post*. But president Biden spoke last week about the Covid-19 vaccine timeline. Admiral Brett Giroir, a member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, said the Trump administration's efforts to fight infection were widely shared with the public, including members of Biden's team. He said it was not a matter of political interest, but a matter of public health and saving American lives. That gave Republican leaders a boost to press the White House to share information with the upcoming Biden administration on the virus and national security. What is more, Republicans need to make it clear that basically, the United States needs a transitional government as soon as possible. According to Johns Hopkins University, the United States has now recorded nearly 11 million confirmed cases and nearly 246,000 deaths due to transmission in the United States, the highest in the world (Reuters, 2021). Medical experts advising President-elect Joe Biden on the Covid-19 pandemic worry that the federal government's delay in recognizing Biden's election victory could jeopardize it. The discussion about this is circulating everywhere, one of which is on social media Twitter. It is one of the most popular social media platforms in the world. Twitter allows anyone, from ordinary people to heads of state to "*tweet*" on it. There are many things can on Twitter, ranging from replying to each other's comment, and retweeting to finding out what things are trending.

Twitter is an online social networking site that is used for people to communicate in short messages which are often called "*tweet*". Meanwhile, as quoted from Hubspot, Twitter is a social networking site that was launched in 2006

and now has at least 100 million active users every day, and 500 million tweets sent every day. Twitter is used to get news, follow celebrities, and keep in touch with friends. Twitter was founded by Jack Dorsey in 2006. Twitter started with the idea of creating an SMS-based communication platform where people can keep tabs on each other by updating their status. At first, the idea of Twitter is not much different from SMS. The idea of Twitter then developed after brainstorming with Evan Williams who is also the founder of Blogger. Twitter has continued to grow exponentially over the last 10 years. Twitter has even succeeded in creating a platform that seems very addictive for its users. Through this application, it is users can cconnectthoughts with an audience that is the number is large. There are many reasons why people use Twitter. Some of these reasons include sharing thoughts. Some also use Twitter to brag, attract attention, and self-promotion, and it can also be just a diversion from boredom. Twitter is an opportunity to express anything to the world and have fun with some people reading their tweets. Twitter has a lot of useful news bases and knowledge content. As Twitter has grown, it has also become useful for amateur news reporting, influencing people, marketing tools, and follower building. Twitter also has a great effect on its users. There is another reason that underlies the research from these tweets because President Biden conveyed an interesting Covid-19 topic in line with representative illocutionary acts. Technological advances do not always have a negative impact if used properly because they are used to seek educational matters. Apart from the advantages of Twitter, there are also other things social media such as allowing individuals to interact directly with speakers and possibly to continue discussions through comments with other users (Masson, 2014).

On the other hand, the reason for taking this topic is because the writer wants to know how to handle Covid-19 from the perspective of President Biden which is included in the Representative Illocutionary Act. After all, this type is a type of speech act that states what the speaker believes to be the case or not (Yule, 1996, p. 53). In using 'representative' (also known as 'assertive'), the speaker makes words according to the world (beliefs). The writer wants to categorize the utterances of President Biden and analyze the function of what is said through Pragmatics as one

of the studies in the branch of linguistics. Discuss the relationship between utterances and speakers to find out their meaning. In the book Pragmatics by George Yule (1996, p. 3) stated that pragmatics is the study of meaning which is communicated by the speaker (or writer) and interpreted by the hearer (or reader). This statement can be related to the topic to analyze the problem above. In line with that, Yule (2010) states that communication does not only depend on the meaning of words in an utterance but also to recognize what is meant by the speaker with his speech so that can be interpreted. It is said because it has the intention that the speaker wants to give to the hearer so that the hearer can try to identify what the speaker meant by the utterance and the context. The context used in communicating has a very important function to understand because the meaning in an utterance will differ according to the context. In learning, every utterance made by someone is a speech act. This is a human ability to use language as a tool to communicate and have a specific purpfollowingwith certain situations. From this definition, it can be seen that the speech act is more emphasized the meaning of the action in the speech. In addition, speech acts also include psychological expressions (such as apologies and gratitude), and social actions such as influencing the behaviour of others (Zakiah, 2018). Speech acts have three types there are the locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act (Yule G., 1996). An illocutionary act is an act of saying something that is to be conveyed. Then illocutionary speech is not speech that has a purpose for the hearer to do something, there is a message in the speech delivered. The last is perlocutionary which is the speech where the result of the action is caused by the illocutionary act (Rohmadi, 2017).

Representative is a type of speech act that states what the speaker believes to be the case or not. The essence of the representative illocutionary act is to do the speaker truth for the expressed propositional content. Representative illocutionary act is very commonly used in life in communication and not only applied in human life but also literary works such as novels, plays, short stories, and films. Representative illocutionary act is very often found on social media and one of them is Twitter (Violeta, 2019). This type of representative illocutionary act is very common in oral or written forms of communication. It is also explained further by

Searle (2005) that the representative illocutionary act is a speech act that presents the situation of an affair based on reality. This makes the writer interested in analyzing President Biden's views on the Covid-19 pandemic experienced by his administration through the remarks made on his Twitter account. As we know that he is a president of a superpower whose speech is heard by all citizens of the world. Moreover, the words made by a president cannot lie, of course, it must be a fact that happened. In line with this, the representative is a type of speech act that states what the speaker believes is happening or not. The essence of the representative illocutionary act is to do the speaker's truth for the expressed propositional content. This category of speech acts aims to convey information. The other studies have been done by another researcher that used as previous studies. This research refers to several published studies relating to the object and research topic. The previous studies serve to be a reference for relevant studies and also as a sign that the research has never been done before and the writer has no plagiarism from some of the previous studies that have been selected. The study of the representative illocutionary act has been carried out by other researchers:

The first research is "*Speech Act Analysis of the Joseph R. Biden, Jr.'s Inaugural Address on 20th of January 2021 as the 46th President of the USA*" written by Hazhar Ramadhan Ahmed & Shamaila Amir (2021). This research is in the form of a scientific journal. The focus of the problem is to highlight the speech acts used by President Biden in his inaugural speech. This journal also analyzes the direct and indirect speech acts. To analyze speech acts from all these aspects, both qualitative and quantitative analyzes were carried out. The framework used for this analysis is the Speech Act Theory, introduced by Austin and Searle. The results of his research are revealing Joe Biden's speech which includes directive actions and maximum representation when the use of direct speech is also seen. This journal has the conclusion that speech act analysis highlights the demanding yet informative, and supportive nature of the President of the United States.

The second research is "*Representative Illocutionary Act in an Interview Between Charlie Rose and Jack Ma (World Economic Forum)*" written by Dini

Zakiah (2018). This research is in the form of a thesis. The focus of this research is on the types of representative illocutionary acts in the interview between Charlie Rose and Jack Ma using the theory of John R. Searle, about Jack Ma's success in business. The case paradigm includes stating, reporting, concluding, and suggesting. besides that, it also focuses on the delivery of representative illocutionary acts in an interview between Charlie Rose and Jack Ma spoken directly or indirectly. The result of the research is that the representative illocutionary acts used by Jack Ma and Charlie Rose include Reporting, Complaining, Stating, and Suggesting. Representative illocutionary act of stating is dominantly presented by Jack Ma as the interviewee. The third research is, "*Speech Acts Analysis of The Main Character in Maleficent Movie Script by Jane Mctee*" written by Rani Violeta (2019). This research is in the form of a thesis. The focus of the problem in this study is to find out the types of speech acts that are dominantly presented by Maleficent in the Maleficent film through its script. The speech act is divided into three; locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. In this study, the illocutionary act is the main concern because it is the most important action in speech acts and it is related to the speaker's intention. The result of this research is that the writer uses a qualitative descriptive method to describe and analyze the speech acts taken from the script, and then they are classified according to John R. Searle's theory of the types of illocutionary acts. In this study, the writer found that Maleficent used all types of illocutionary actions: Representative, Directive, Commissive, Expressive, Declarative. Through previous research conducted by other parties, The writer found differences between this study and previous studies. The difference is that this study focuses on one type of illocutionary act, namely representative illocutionary act using Searle's theory, and using President Biden's utterances in the form of tweets on his Twitter account with the theme of covid-19 as the data. The writer is excited to examine Joe Biden's utterances as the 46th president of the United States. The writer is interested in analyzing the kinds and functions of representative illocutionary acts of covid-19 by using a pragmatic approach in the research entitled "*Representative Illocutionary Act of Covid-19 on President Biden's Twitter Account*".

B. Research Questions

From the explanation in the background above, there are several kinds of representative illocutionary acts and their functions related to understanding the meaning of a speech act in a conversation or statement. The problems in this study are formulated as the following:

1. What kinds of representative illocutionary act of Covid-19 are found on President Biden's Twitter Account?
2. How functions of the representative illocutionary act of Covid-19 are found on President Biden's Twitter Account?

C. Research Objectives

Based on the problem statements, the writer wants the objects are:

1. To find out kinds of the representative illocutionary act of Covid-19 on President Biden's Twitter Account.
2. To find out functions of the representative illocutionary act of Covid-19 on President Biden's Twitter Account.

D. Research Significances

The results of this study are expected to be used theoretically and practically:

1. Theoretically

The results of this study are expected to expand the knowledge of students and academics in using speech act material in pragmatics to improve academic skills in analyzing speech acts. Then as a reference for other researchers who want to study speech act more intensively in the representative act.

2. Practically

The results of this study are recommended for students and academics to improve their competence in making similar research. It is hoped that after this research there will be more interesting and more perfect studies.

E. Definition of Key Terms

To clarify the key terms used in this research, some definitions are proposed.

1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of the meaning of utterances conveyed by the speaker and interpreted by the hearer.

2. Speech act

The speech act is a part of pragmatics related to certain utterances or sentences that have certain actions in them. Speech acts are used to express certain attitudes in communication such as expressing a statement as a belief.

3. Illocutionary act

An Illocutionary act is a speech act that has a function to say or inform something and is used to do something.

4. Representative Illocutionary act

A Representative Illocutionary act is a speech act that carries the truth value of the real condition of the utterance meaning is spoken or written conversation. It carries the value of 'true' or 'false' about how to assert or conclude something.

5. President Biden's Twitter Account

Twitter is a social media and microblogging service application that allows users to send and read messages that are no longer than 280 characters, referred to as tweets. President Biden @POTUS is the official Twitter account of the 46th President of the United States, Joe Biden, which is officially managed by the United States government. As of December 1, 2021, President Biden's account already has 15.8 million followers and has made 2,061 tweets containing a wealth of trustworthy information.