

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains some discussion points on the following topics: background of research, statement of problem, research objective, research significance, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of Research

Language is one of the most important aspects of social interaction. It is broadly defined as a means of communication, both oral and written, used by people in a particular region. It is inseparable from human life because it is involved in every activity, including the mindset and culture of society. Besides functioning as a communication tool, it also functions to convey information. To be able to understand the meaning of what is conveyed by the speaker, it can be learned or studied using linguistic studies in the study of pragmatics. The use of language is closely related to linguistics, in linguistics there are several studies and one of them is pragmatics. Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the structure of language externally, namely how the linguistic unit is used in communication.

Good communication can occur when the speaker and hearer use good and polite language. Mey (1998) argued that one part of contemporary linguistics, namely intercultural pragmatics, is a part that is very familiar with the phrase "language as part of life", that is, millions of lives in the contemporary world will be influenced by language and it can be said that in every human life must know it (Mey, 1998). The use of language by humans can be associated with speakers and hearer, which form speech events or can be called speech acts. The act can be performed using the utterance. Speech acts are actions that are performed through utterances (Nurlila, 2019).

Speech act is a type of verbal communication and part of pragmatics, which often occurs in verbal and nonverbal communication. According to Yule (1996), speech acts are the study of how speakers and listeners use language. According to (Bach & Harnish, 1982), an action in verbal communication has a message in itself, so communication is not only about language but also about action. So, a speech act is an utterance that occurs, and act refers to an action.

Searle (1976) argued that from a pragmatic perspective, speech acts are divided into three types, namely locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Locution is a speech act that expresses something, illocution is a speech act that has the function of stating or telling something and is used to do something, and perlocution is a speech act whose teaching aims to influence the interlocutor. According to Allan (in Azizah et al., 2020), the use of pragmatics is emphasized to focus on the intent expressed by the speaker rather than the linguistic meaning conveyed by the speaker.

Illocutionary acts are realized through the communicative competence of an utterance (Yule, 1996). Yule also argued that promising, apologizing, and offering are all classified as illocutionary speech acts. According to the types of illocutionary acts, this type has a more specific classification of related sentences. It can be identified as assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative.

Assertive is a speech act that binds the speaker to the truth of what people say. Such as reporting, stating, concluding, suggesting, and complaining. Assertive means expressing opinions or ideas as well as facts. The purpose of this assertive speech act is to provide information to the public. The utterances are produced as a result of the speaker's observation of certain things, followed by the statement of a fact or opinion based on the observation. The speaker can state the sentence based on facts or simply express his or her own opinion about a person's physical condition. It also states whether or not the speaker believes this to be the case (Puji Hariati et al., 2020). Factual statements, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions are all examples of how the speaker represents the world as they see it (Agus, 2016).

Based on the description presented by the experts, researcher used speech subtitles to find out the assertive illocutionary speech acts. In this study, researcher took a speech from a singer and songwriter, Taylor Swift at NYU's 2022 Commencement. Taylor Swift is a well-known American singer-songwriter and actress who has had a great career in the music industry. Taylor Swift, who was born on December 13, 1989, in Reading, Pennsylvania, soared to stardom at a young age and has since become one of the entertainment world's most influential and iconic people. Taylor Swift's music career began at the age of 14 when she signed a publishing deal with Sony/ATV. "Taylor Swift," her self-titled debut album, was released in 2006. Swift initially gained prominence as a country music artist, but she transitioned to pop music with her 2014 album, "1989." The album marked a significant departure from her earlier country sound and showcased her versatility as an artist.

Taylor Swift has garnered numerous Grammy Awards, American Music Awards, Billboard Music Awards, and Country Music Association Awards during her career. She is well-known for her songwriting abilities and has received awards for her contributions to the music industry. Taylor is actively involved in philanthropic efforts and has donated considerable sums to different causes and charities. She has also utilized her position to promote causes such as education and disaster relief. Taylor Swift is becoming more involved in social and political problems. Her vocal endorsements of political candidates and advocacy for subjects such as gender equality have garnered attention and caused debate.

Taylor Swift also has an educational center called Taylor Swift Education Center. Taylor Swift Education Center is located in Nashville, Tennessee, and is part of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. This educational institution was named after the famous singer-songwriter Taylor Swift, who made a large donation to the museum's development in 2013. The Taylor Swift Education Center's mission is to provide educational opportunities and information about the history and relevance of country music. Its purpose is to inspire and educate visitors, particularly young people, about America's rich country music heritage.

The center is a 7,500-square-foot educational facility located within the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. It features classrooms, exhibit areas, and a learning center outfitted with cutting-edge technology to promote interactive and immersive learning experiences. Taylor Swift's donation for the education center shows her devotion to arts education and maintaining country music's cultural heritage. She has been active in a number of humanitarian and educational endeavors, including the provision of scholarships to budding musicians and the promotion of music education programs. The Taylor Swift Education Center is a branch of the broader Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, which is dedicated to preserving country music's history and traditions.

For all her achievements, Taylor Swift was awarded a Doctor Fine Arts honoris causa degree from New York University on Wednesday, May 18, 2022. As the recipient of the honorary degree, Taylor also had the opportunity to give a speech in front of all the graduates. The purpose of the researcher to take this object is to find out the categories and functions of assertive illocutionary speech acts contained in Taylor Swift's speech. The functional forms of assertive speech acts include reporting, stating, describing, claiming, predicting, and complaining.

This study is not the first which concerns discussing speech acts. However, this study has links with several other researchers. They are as follows. First research was conducted by Reski Ramadhan, Lia Maulia Indrayani, and Ypsi Soeria Soemantri who analyzed "*Assertive Illocutinary Act Adapted in Donald Trump's Political Speech: A Pragmatic Study*" in 2019. The purpose of the study was to analyze speech acts, especially illocutionary acts in Donald Trump's speech, specifically assertive acts and most dominant. The results showed that most of the statements Trump used in his speech contained assertive illocutionary acts. Then, most of the assertive contains a statement of fact that he believes to be the case or true.

Second research was conducted by Puji Harianti, Anni Holila Pulungan, and Rahmad Husein who analyzed "*Illocutionary Acts in Jack Ma's Inspiring Speech in His Graduation at The University of Hongkong*" in 2020. The purpose of the research is to

find the types of illocutionary and the context supported interpretation of meaning in illocutionary acts. The results show that there are 7 types of illocutionary acts such as: 0 (0%) for declarative, 58 (62%) for assertive, 11 (12%) for expressive, 3 (3%) for directive, 11 (12%) for commissive, 4 (4%) for assertive expressive and 7 (7%) for assertive directive. It means that most of dominant illocutionary acts is assertive. The context supported the interpretation of meaning in illocutionary acts through the participants, the setting or social context of interaction, the topic, and the function.

Third research was conducted by Nurfaiz Febriyanti who analyzed "*Illocutionary Act of Representative Used in Muniba Mazari's Speech About We All Are Perfectly Imperfect*" in 2021. The purpose of this study is to find the types of illocutionary acts of representative function used in Muniba Mazari's speech about We all are Perfectly Imperfect. The results show that the types of illocutionary acts used in Muniba Mazari's Speech about We All are Perfectly Imperfect are 188 utterances of Representative, 66 utterances of Directive, 13 utterances of Commissive, 9 utterances of Declarative and 28 utterances of Expressive of the 304 utterances on Muniba Mazari's Speech about We All are Perfectly Imperfect. Functions of Representative used in Muniba Mazari's Speech about We All are Perfectly Imperfect are 36 utterances of Describing, 10 utterances of Reporting, 31 utterances of Claiming, 6 utterances of Predicting, 101 utterances of Stating and 4 utterances of Complaining of the 188 utterances of Representative that are used in Muniba Mazari's Speech about We All are Perfectly Imperfect.

The distinction between this research and previous research are: some previous studies analyzed not only one type of speech act, while this study only focuses on assertive speech acts in Taylor Swift's speech. In addition, the object of research is also different, the last previous study examined Donald Trump's speech, Jack Ma's speech and Muniba Mazari's speech. This research focuses on the assertive speech acts contained in Taylor Swift's speech. Therefore, researcher is interested in conducting research with the title *Assertive Illocutionary Act in Taylor Swift's Speech at New York University 2022 Commencement*.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background above, the researcher found that Taylor Swift's speech at the New York University 2022 Commencement was included in the classification of illocutionary acts. This study only focuses on assertive acts. The main problem of this research can be formulated into the following questions:

1. What categories of assertive acts are found in Taylor Swift's speech at NYU's 2022 Commencement?
2. What functions of assertive acts are found in Taylor Swift's speech at NYU's 2022 Commencement based on the identified assertive acts?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the problem formulation above, the following problems can be formulated:

1. To identify and classify the categories of assertive acts contained in Taylor Swift's speech at NYU's 2022 Commencement.
2. To analyze and describe the functions of assertive acts in Taylor Swift's speech at NYU's 2022 Commencement.

1.4 Research Significance

The researcher hopes that the results of this study can be useful and bring benefits to the use of language theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically

This research is expected to contribute to linguistic studies, namely pragmatics, especially research on the use of assertive speech acts. In addition, this research is also useful for other studies related to the use of speech acts.

2. Practically

This research can be used to help readers analyze speech acts. This research is also expected to be an empirical source for future researchers and readers. The researcher also hopes that this research can be further developed by parties who are interested in linguistic studies.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Some definitions are given to clarify the key terms used in this study.

1. Pragmatics

According to Yule, pragmatics is the study of speaker intent and as a result the study is more concerned with analyzing the intent of an utterance than the separate meanings of the words or phrases used in the utterance itself.

2. Illocutionary Act

The illocutionary act is called the act of doing something in saying something. In other words, an illocutionary act is when a sentence is used to perform a function.

3. Assertive Act

Assertive is a speech act that directs the speaker's attention to believe that the proposition displayed is correct and binds the speaker to the truth.

4. Taylor Swift

Dr. Taylor Alison Swift or commonly known by her stage name Taylor Swift is an American singer-songwriter. Her narrative songwriting, which often centers around her personal life, has received critical acclaim and extensive media coverage.