

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language has continuously preserved the importance of human progress throughout history. One of the important roles of language is to help humans express their feelings and emotions. The variation of humans expressing their emotions in different ways in languages aligns with what linguists call expressive speech acts, which is a part of the pragmatic study. According to Searle and Vanderveken (1985), expressive speech acts are utterances that reflect the speaker's psychological attitude about the state of affairs represented by the propositional content (p.38).

The way people express emotion through their language is often correlated with how they represent one's personality. According to the *Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count* framework, language can serve as a reflection of the emotional and psychological states of a person. They reveal their thoughts, cognitive thinking process, and emotions through the words they choose in a conversation (Pennebaker et al. 2003, pp. 562-567). This is also supported by McCrae & John (1992) in *An Introduction to the Five-Factor Model and Its Applications* as a response to D.W Fiske's theory of *Big Five Personality* (1949), which stated that speech patterns can reveal a person's dominant personality traits, like *extraversion* and *neuroticism*.

This speech act phenomenon can be seen a lot in the 2017 movie called *Lady Bird*. This movie pictures the life of a high school senior student named Christine who insists on being called "*Lady Bird*". It focuses on the complicated relationship

between *Lady Bird* and her mother, Marion. This movie explores the transitions of *Lady Bird* from teenager to adulthood, and the differences in their personality in affect the love-hate relationship between *Lady Bird* and Marion.

Lady Bird movie uses a lot of expressive speech acts. The movie offers a relatable portrayal of how emotional language. The movie is filled with *Lady Bird* finding her own true identity along with her dreams of leaving Sacramento, and Marion's dealing with her insecurities from her own difficult childhood, making it hard for her to support her daughter's independence. Based on this perspective, this study will focus on exploring *Lady Bird*'s expressive speech acts which not only convey emotions but also can contribute to shaping her characterization.

Various previous studies have examined *Lady Bird* through different approaches. In literary studies, researchers mostly examine *Lady Bird* through psychoanalysis theory or feminist theory, such as Lestari et al. (2024) Herdayanti & Satria (2021), and Fatmasari (2021). In pragmatic studies, they have significantly focused on the use of slang and conversational implicature, for example, Oktaviani & Agung (2023) and Musdalifa et al (2022).

However, there is a lack of research specifically on examining the movie *Lady Bird* through speech act theory and personality theory. This study aims to fill the gap by exploring how expressive speech acts can reveal the personality of the characters. This combination of language and emotional expression makes the movie an ideal subject for further study.

1.2 Research Questions

This research focus on how expressive speech act used in helping to reveal the characters' personality traits, therefore, there are two focus point in this research:

- a. What are the types of expressive speech acts used by the main characters?
- b. How do the expressive speech acts used by the main character represent the characterization?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions stated above, these are the objectives of the study:

- a. To categorize the types of expressive speech acts employed by the main characters in *Lady Bird* and identify the most used acts by the characters
- b. To analyze how the expressive speech acts used by the main character reflect their personality.

1.4 Significances of the Study

This study provides insight into how expressive speech acts can be a tool for conveying emotions and how it can contribute to the personality of the characters. It highlights the importance of language in movies as a tool for emotional expression, offering a deeper understanding of how dialogue contributes to the storytelling process.

1.5 Previous Study

Lady Bird movie has been analyzed through various perspectives; feminist theory, gendered language theory, psychological theory, and also pragmatic. However, there has not been a study that analyses *Lady Bird* through expressive act

theory. The researcher gathered previous studies which will be divided into three groups.

The first group is researchers conducting expressive speech acts in different movies. First, it's Firmansyah (2022), in the movie *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Elvinna et al. (2023) in the movie *All the Bright Places*, Widyowati (2019) in the movie *Dear John*, Wahyuningtyas & Sirniawati (2022) in movie *The King Speech*, Rahmawati (2021) in *Crazy Rich Asian* movie, and the last one is Aritonang & Abalegin (2023) in the movie *Avatar: The Way of The Water (1985)*. These previous studies are mostly using qualitative methods and using Searle's (1985) and Yule's (1996) theory. The average data of expressive speech acts found are 50% of the speech acts that are being analyzed. This data states how important the expressive speech act is in the movie's dialogue and how it can hold a big role in each of the characterizations. However, several studies lack a thorough exploration of how expressive speech acts influence character emotions and narrative development, with some failing to address the situational context.

The second group is the analysis of personality traits using McCrae & John's (1992) theory in various movies. First, Bahri et al (2022) analyzed the movie *Alice in Wonderland*. Manggalasari & Luthfiyati (2018) in the movie *Forest Gump*. Faisal (2011) in the movie *Bruce Almighty*. Gabriela et al (2022) in the movie *Clouds*. Khairunas et al (2018) in the movie *Jobs*. Then, there's Mentari & Wennyta (2019) in the movie *Cinderella*. The last is Murtiningrum et al (2024) in the movie *Avatar*. All of the previous studies above use the same personality traits theory which is The *Big Five Personality Traits* Theory by McCrae & John (1992). These studies

have shown that it is possible to analyze the characters personality through their speech in order to gain a deeper understanding of the plot and emotional state of the characters. Nonetheless, all of this existing research has yet to comprehensively examined the utterances with expressive speech act theory, which could serve as a useful framework for indicators of personality traits. In addition, there are no prior studies have examined this phenomenon through the characters of *Lady Bird*, which presents a gap this research intends to fill.

The last group of previous studies are studies which use the movie *Lady Bird* but were analyzed with a different approach. The first is Oktaviani & Agung's (2023) studying the use of slang phrases. Second, Musdalifa et al (2022) examined the conversational implicatures. Third is Lestari et al. (2024) with women's language features. Next is Herdayanti & Satria (2021) with psychological conflict in the characters. Then, there is Arfani & Kameswari (2023) analyzed the personal movement in the movie, and the last is Sopiyan (2020) on *Politeness and Cooperation* in the movie *Lady Bird*. The previous studies above show how *Lady Bird* has been a popular subject in a wide research field. However, there is no specific research that has vocal point on expressive speech acts. Whereas, expressive act holds a significant role in shaping characters through their utterances, which often show emotion, attitudes, and interpersonal relations. This gap highlights the need for exploration of the correlation between the expressive speech act and personality traits.

In conclusion, despite all of the broad research studies, the researcher found that none of the studies has used the expressive act along with personality traits

theory in the movie *Lady Bird* to gain a deeper insight on the characters' personality as a way to understand more of the story.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The researcher applied Searle & Vanderveken's (1985) *Foundations of illocutionary logic* theory in examining the expressive speech acts that happen in utterances of the main characters in *Lady Bird* which are *Lady Bird* and Marion. This research also conducts McCrae & John's *Big Five Personality Traits* theory to reflect the characters' personality traits based on their speech pattern.

1.7 Writing Organization

This research is divided into four chapters; each chapter consists of specific subchapters. The following are the organizations of the research:

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

Chapter I consists of seven sub-chapters. They are the study's background, research problems, objectives of the study, significance of the research, previous study, scope of the study, and writing organization.

CHAPTER II : THEORY AND METHOD

Chapter II consists of theoretical frameworks and methodology. In the theoretical frameworks, there are explanations about the theory of expressive speech acts, types of expressive speech acts, context theory, the *Big Five Personality Traits*, and types of personality traits. In methodology, there are research methods, data, population

and sample, methods of collecting data, and methods of analyzing data.

CHAPTER III : FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Chapter III discusses of the findings and discussion to answer the research questions. This chapter provides an analysis of the types of expressive speech acts used by *Lady Bird* and Marion along with the correlation to their personality traits. Later it will also be completed with the last sub-chapter which provides how expressive speech can help in a deeper analysis of characters' personality traits.

CHAPTER IV : CONCLUSION

Chapter IV consists of the conclusion of the study