CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHOD

This chapter discusses the theories that supported this research. These theories provide a useful framework to gain a deeper understanding of how emotions are conveyed through language and how it can help shape the characterization of the two main characters in the movie. Additionally, this chapter also serves as a guide to understanding the approach taken in this study including; research methods, types of data, and how the researchers can analyze the data effectively.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Expressive Speech Act

The expressive speech act is a part of the pragmatic analysis. Pragmatic itself, as defined by Levinson in *Pragmatic* (1983)*,* is the study of the relationship between language and the context behind it. It is focused on implicit meaning, which is meaning that is unstated or implied by speakers. One of the key approaches within pragmatism is the theory of speech act by Austin and later developed by Searle. In his book *How to Do Things with Words* (1975), Austin describes speech acts as the study of how language can influence the hearer's reactions or reversely.

Speech acts are divided into three categories, they are locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Among these types, illocutionary is the most relevant one to this study since illocutionary follows the speaker's motive in speech. There are five types of illocutionary classified in *A Classification of Illocutionary*

Act (Searle, 1976, pp. 10-13), there are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. This research provides explicitly on the expressive speech act, which involve verbal actions that express the characters 'emotional state.

Searle (1976) defines expressive acts as the utterances that involves the psychological attitude or mental conditions of one's communication (p.12). The *Foundation of Illocutionary Logic* (Vanderveken, 1985, p. 211) stated when we refer to the expressive speech act, it implies that something good or bad is being expressed in a response to a certain situation. Even though expressing a psychological state does not always have to include a judgment, many of them (like congratulating, lamenting, protesting) already assume what is directed to be good or bad. Norrick (1978) stated that as they are a response to specific events or situations, this expressive speech act conveys psychological states, not one's intentions or beliefs. This type of speech act can serve as a channel for articulating psychological conditions on the characters (p.279).

2.1.3.1 Types of Expressive Speech Act

There are 12 types of expressive acts according to Searle & Vanderveken (1985):

a. **Thank**

The word **"thank"** in the *Cambridge Dictionary* (2025) refers to the way of someone expresses grateful to someone. Along with this, Searle & Vanderveken (1985) stated that thanking is the act of serving gratitude or showing appreciation, in response to someone's action. However, the things that are being thanked don't

always have to describe a specific action, as long as the hearer is responsible for it (p. 212). For example:

> **Nick** : Thank you very much for bringing Rachel.
> **Peik Lin** : Oh, no worries.
> (Rahmawati, 2021, p. 87)

From the dialogue above, we can see the aim of using this act is to show the speaker's gratitude towards the hearer because it benefits them. (Tauchid & Rukmini, 2016, p. 6). Apart from the usual phrases like **"Thank you" or "Thanks",** based on the *Cambridge Dictionary* (2025)*,* there is also another way of saying gratitude, for example, **"I appreciate it"** or **"I owe you one".**

b. Apologize

Searle & Vanderveken (1985) claimed that the term **"apologize"** helps the speakers in showing their regret or wrongdoings. This means that the speaker is responsible for the situation they apologized for (p. 211). Thus, the meaning of apologizing includes, begging for forgiveness, admitting one's mistakes, expressing regret, and hoping to repair the relationship. We can see apologize example below from a conversation:

> **John** : Jesus, I'm so sorry, man.
> **Tim** : Hey, I like it. Makes me look like a badass.
> (Widyowati, 2019, p. 55)

Based on the conversation above, it can be seen that the speaker is asking for forgiveness because he punched the recipient. According to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (*2013)*,* the form of apologizing can be such as **"I beg your pardon"** *and* **"My apologies".** It can be also represented in more simple terms such as stated in *Collins English Dictionary* (2025)*,* like **"My bad!".**

c. Congratulate

According to Searle & Vanderveken (1985), the term **"congratulate"** is an expressive act that helps the speaker to show their positive emotions towards someone's achievement, positive event, or good fortune (p. 212). For example:

Mia	: I got a callback
Sebastian	: What? Come on, for what?
Mia	: For a TV show. The one who I was telling you about earlier.
Sebastian	: The "Dangerous minds meet the O.C"?
Mia	: Yeah.
Sebastian	: Congratulations!

(Royanti, 2019 , p. 136)

From the conversation above, the act of congratulation can be seen when Sebastian shows his appreciation to Mia for getting a call from a TV show. In everyday speech, the form of the word congratulation can change into several forms like **"Way to go!"** or **"Well done!"** (Collin Dictionary, 2025).

d. Complaint

Complaint is the expressive act used by the speaker in order to express their disappointment, annoyance, dislikes, or sadness when their expectations do not meet reality (Nugraheni et al, 2022, p. 76). Searle & Vanderveken (1985) best describe the term **"complaint"** as the face of unhappiness or dissatisfaction from the speaker because of a specific aspect of a situations (p.213). One example of a complaint is**: "Could you please turn your music down?"** (Al-Khawaldeh, 2016, p. 201). The goal of a complaint from the sentence above is to show the speaker's annoyance to the one who turns on the music too loud and aims to modify the situation.

e. Condole

Condole is an expression of sympathy for someone or something, and the speaker grieves with them (Sirwan & Yulia, 2017, p. 62). The expressive act of **"condole"** is to help speakers show their genuine condolences to someone who experienced something bad, like loss or suffering (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985, p. 212). For example, **"I wish you and your family peace and comfort as you grieve the loss of your beloved friend".** This utterance aims to provide emotional support to the recipient. Condole can also be used without the context of losing something or someone, it can simply be in a form like **"I'm sorry to hear that"** which is more suitable for any misfortune condition.

f. Lament

The word **"lament"** is defined as a passionate expression of grieving (*Oxford English Dictionary,* 2024). Along with the definition, Searle & Vanderveken (1985) stated that lament is the act of showing grief or sorrow over a situation or condition, which it does not always need to involve speaking, it can be simply by the feeling of sorrow that the speaker is experiencing. For example:

Seb : Tell me why you're not going?
Mia : Because I've been to a million auditions and the same thing happens every time where I get interrupted because someone wants to get a sandwich! Or I'm crying, and they start laughing or there's people sitting in the waiting room, and they're like me but prettier and better at that because maybe I'm not good enough.
(Royanti, 2019, p. 138)

According to the conversation above, the aim of the lament is not to modify the situation, but to express feelings. Lament can also be used to convey one's mourn as the impact of the situation, however, it does not always have to be a

serious situation, one can express lament with pitying themselves (Searle & Vanderveken 1985, p. 213)

g. Protest

In everyday speech, protest can be referred to as a strong expression of disapproval, opposition, or disagreement *(Cambridge Dictionary,* 2025). On pragmatism, Searle & Vanderveken (1985, p. 213), proposed the definition of protest as an act that shows one's opposition or disapproval towards something. The aim of this act is to coax others to change their actions or behaviors. For example:

> **Rachel** : Hey, Mom, this one's kinda cute. What do you think?
> **Rachel's Mother** : No, no, no, no! You can't wear that to meet Nick's Ah Ma. Blue and white is for Chinese funerals.
> (Rahmawati, 2021. P. 90)

Based on the conversation above, we can see how protest serves as a way for someone to show their demands for change. As stated in Searle and Vanderveken, protesting is not just about disapproval but also a demand for change (p.14).

h. Deplore

Deplore is classified as an expressive utterance wherein the speaker expresses strong disapproval and condemnation about a certain situation or action (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985, p. 214). The purpose of this speech is to convey the speaker's negativeness of the situation. For example:

> **Speaker 1 :** I still can't believe Mr. Thompson is gone. He was such a kind person.
> **Speaker 2 :** Yeah… it's heartbreaking.
> **Speaker 1 :** He didn't deserve to go like this.

Deploring is when both of the speakers deplore the death and they believe someone is responsible for it (Tauchid & Rukmini, 2016, p. 7). In the conversation above, it was said that both of the speakers could not believe in the death of someone they respect.

i. Praise

Searle & Vanderveken (1985) stated that **"praise"** is an expressive act that shows one's positive emotion, approval, and admiration towards someone or something. In everyday speech, **"praise"** is defined as a way of expressing approval of the achievements or admiration of characteristics of a person or a thing (*Cambridge Dictionary,* 2025). For example, **"Good job!".** Praise tends to be more formal and focused on specific achievements or actions, and usually serves as encouragement.

j. Boast

Searle & Vanderveken (1985) stated that **"boast"** is an act where the speaker show their achievements or abilities to promote themselves (p. 215). The purpose of boasting is to enhance the speaker's reputation or image, and to impress or intimidate others. There are other forms of boasting, such as exaggeration, self-praise, or comparison. For example: **"But you're right, I am a legend***"* (Piscesco & Afriana, 2022: 94). The primary objective of boasting is to influence the beliefs or attitudes of the audience towards the speaker.

k. Compliment

Compliment is the speech act for showing the speaker's admiration, praise, or one's approval towards the recipient's actions or appearance (Searle &

Vanderveken, 1985, p. 215). Usually, the purpose of a compliment is to encourage one's self-image or something that is more general. For example:

Hann : You look nice in person"
Jess : "Thanks! You too"

However, on the other hand, compliments are complex speech acts, they can play a role as the speaker's genuine response and approval to the hearer but also can play a role in the speaker's disagreements or sarcasm, depending on the context.

l. Greet

The *Oxford English Dictionary* refers to **"greet"** as a way to address someone we acknowledge or to welcome them with a good gesture. **"Greet"** is defined as a way to acknowledge someone's or something's presence. For example, **"Hello"** and **"Good morning/afternoon".** (Searle & Vanderveken, 1985, p. 216). This act can also be seen as welcoming and showing a good sentiment towards someone.

2.1.2 Context

In pragmatics, context helps the audience understand deeply about the meaning behind utterances. According to Leech (1983, p. 13) context is the setting that is also delivered in the utterances by the speaker so that the hearer able interpret the meaning behind the utterances. In this study, the researcher will use situational context to add insight into the characterization. Situational context is the environment where the utterances took place (Cutting, 2002, pp. 4-6).

2.1.3 Big Five Personality Traits Theory

In the *Big Five Personality Traits* theory, there are five factors that classify a human's personality. There are Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. All of them can be shortened to OCEAN (McCrae & John, 1992). This theory can be a useful tool in examining *Lady Bird* movie, in other words, it is possible to understand the characters' language choice and how it can reflect her personality.

2.1.3.2 Types of Personality Traits

a. Openness to Experience

This personality type shows how open one is to new experiences, ideas, and creativity. People who score high on openness tend to be creative, critical, curious, flexible, have high empathy, and like to try new things. (McCrae & John, 1992. p. 179). For example :

> **White Queen** : I had hoped to have a champion by now.
> **Alice** : Why don't you slay the Jabberwocky yourself? You must have the power.
> **White Queen** : It is against my own vows to harm any living creature.
> (Bahri et al., 2022, p. 7).

In this scene, the White Queen shows her Openness to Experience because she holds tight to her moral values and has a strong empathy about hurting living creatures. She has a strong value and a wide knowledge of her surroundings.

b. Conscientiousness

This type of personality is tight with discipline and responsibility. They have been known as organized, dependable, and have good self-control. In addition, individuals with high levels of conscientiousness also have a strong drive for

achievement and are able to maintain self-discipline. (McCrae & John, 1992, p. 178). For example :

> **Bruce** : Yeah, it's happening, hon. I got sweeps and I'm alive. You know what that means?
> **Bruce** : They're seeing if I can think on my feet, like you might have to do in a live news anchor situation.
> **Grace** : Oh, my gosh.
> (Faisal, 2011, p. 24).

In this scene, Bruce shows his conscientious personality by preparing to face his professional challenges. He understands the importance of thinking ahead and immediately shows his preparedness. This illustrates the Conscientiousness personality.

c. Extroversion

Extraversion illustrates a person's sociability, energy, and positive emotions. Someone with a high score in this type is usually friendly, full of energy, and also dominant in their surroundings (McCrae & John, 1992, p. 178). For example :

> **Tom** : Good morning, Miss Ella!
> **Cinderella** : Good morning, Tom. (*Cinderella answered kindly and smiled.*)
> (Mentari & Wennyta, 2019, p. 70).

Based on the above quote, Cinderella appears to be an outgoing and expressive individual, which is typical of a personality with a high level of extraversion.

d. Agreeableness

This type reflects kindness, reliability, and empathy in dealing with others. People with this type of personality tend to be more caring and cooperative with other people. They also tend to avoid conflict and like to help others around them.

Some of the main aspects include being outgoing, nurturing, and caring (McCrae & John, 1992, p. 178). If it faced with a conflict or problem, they always try to find a compromise with the other person. For example:

Hermione	: There's an answer! It's a Devil's Trap! If you don't relax, it'll kill you faster!
Ron	: Kill us faster? Ah, now I can relax!
Hermione	: No, Ron, listen, I read it in a book once. Devil's Traps don't like sunlight, so... *(explains the solution).*

(Bahri et al., 2024, p. 3).

In this scene, Harry, Ron, and Hermione are trapped in a room full of plants called the Devil's Trap. Hermione shows a willingness to help her friend get out of the trap. She states the solution and is willing to make a positive contribution to the group. She resolves the conflict in a cooperative and knowledgeable way.

e. Neuroticism

Neuroticism measures people's emotional stability, and how vulnerable they are when facing a bad experience. People with which score in Neuroticism tend to be more anxious, afraid, angry, or sad compared to people with a low score. They are usually more reactive when facing pressure and more likely hard in controlling their emotion, and offended easily (McCrae & John, 1992, p. 179). For example :

Edmund	: (1) Yah, didn't I tell you about the football field I found in the bathroom closet?
Edmund	: (2) Shut up! You think you're dad, but you're not! *(storms out)*

(Junafiah & Abdulrahman, 2019, p. 157)

In this scene, Edmund says *"You think you're dad but you're not!"* in a defensive way, showing how he's not emotionally stable and exaggerating in reacting to the situation he's in.

2.2 Research Method

The researcher conducts descriptive-qualitative research in analyzing the movie. In *Research Design: Qualitative Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* by Creswell (2012), descriptive-qualitative research is defined as research that describes the characteristics of a phenomenon to gain an understanding involving an observation. This was employed in order to interpret the utterances that are considered the expressive acts in the movie *Lady Bird*.

2.2.1 Data, Population and Sample

This research focuses on the relationship between *Lady Bird* and Marion, thus, the data collected are all from *Lady Bird* and Marion. All the data was derived from the movie itself which is available on Netflix. In this research, the population is all the spoken utterances produced by *Lady Bird* and Marion throughout the movie. The researcher used purposive sampling, in which the criteria is the utterances that contain expressions of psychological states or emotions defined by Searle and Vanderveken's expressive speech act theory.

2.2.2 Method of Collecting Data

The method of collecting data is observation. The following methods are taken by the researcher when gathering data using the observation method :

1. Watch *Lady Bird* on Netflix (https://www.netflix.com/id-en/) carefully.

2. Transcript the utterances produced by the characters (Lady Bird and Marion).

3. Identify the context behind the production of the utterances and classifying the utterances based on expressive speech acts.

4. Conduct sampling based on the results of expressive speech acts to identify the personality traits

2.2.3 Method of Analyzing Data

The distributional method is being employed by the researcher to examine the data. This method was used to examine the patterns of utterances found in the data, how often the sentence pattern appears, and how it can describe the character's situation. After watching the movie and carefully transcript utterances produced by the characters, the researcher will analyze the context behind the utterances. Then, the data were identified and classified according to Searle & Vanderveken's (1985) types of expressive speech act and the McCrae & John (1992) theory to perceive their personality traits.