

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHOD

2.1. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter we will explore the theories used to analyze the data collected for this study. To be precise, the theories applied in this research are provided below.

2.1.1. Speech Acts

As mentioned in the introduction, speech acts were first classified by Austin (1962) and later on refined by Searle. John Searle (1979) divided into three levels of speech acts, they are: (1) Utterance acts, which involve the production of sound and words; (2) Propositional acts, which involve reference and predication; (3) Illocutionary acts, which focus on expression and meaning (Searle, 1979: 11-12), Searle criticized Austin's taxonomy of speech acts from *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). He then refined the classification by introducing the key notions such as illocutionary point, direction of fit, and sincerity condition. Specifically, Searle distinguished between direct and indirect speech acts. A direct speech act occurs when the speaker utters a sentence and means literally what he or she says, for example: "*I want you to do it*" as a direct request to the hearer to do something. In contrast with indirect speech acts which occur when the speaker communicates more than the literal meaning, such as "*Can you reach the salt?*" mean not merely as a question but as a request to pass the salt (Searle, 1979: 30). Regardless of whether the speech acts is indirect or direct, an utterance may contain multiple illocutionary points

depending on the formulation. Based on Searle (1979), the basis for identifying the basic categories of illocutionary acts are:

1. Assertives: To commit the speaker to the truth of what is said (words - to-world). Examples include stating, informing, complaining, and concluding (e.g., "It's raining outside").
2. Directives: To get the hearer to do something (world-to-words). Examples include commanding, requesting, begging, and asking (e.g., "Please close the door").
3. Commissives: To commit the speaker to a future action (world-to-words). For example: "*I promise I'll call you tomorrow.*" The other types of commissives are pledging, offering, rejecting, threatening, and many more.
4. Expressives: To express the speaker's psychological state or attitude. Examples include apologizing, congratulating, and thanking (e.g., "I'm sorry for being late").
5. Declarative: To change reality by saying it (words *change* the world). For instance: "*You are fired,*" said by a boss, then it becomes reality.

2.1.2. Characterization

In Aspect of the Novel by Forster (1927), characters could be categorized into flat and round characters based on their complexity and capability to improve beyond a fixed representation. When a character is generally portrayed with limited characteristics and easily summarized through a simple description then

the character is called a flat character. Whereas, when the character is possessing complexity and is able to surprise the reader in a convincing way, then it is categorized as a round character (Forster, 1927: 117). Additionally, Forster utters that “it is only round people who are fit to perform tragically for any length of time and can move us to any feelings except humor and appropriateness” (Forster, 1927: 111). This points out that round characters provide greater human-like complexity due to their ability in awakening deeper responses from the audience through their layered personalities and motivations.

The implementation of Forster’s concept can be seen in *Analysis of Round and Flat Characters in Forster’s Howard Manor* by Zhang (2019), the character he analyzed is Margaret, initially pictured as a submissive character who accepts Henry’s decisions without resistance. Somehow, Margaret later shows another side of her personality when she challenges Henry’s moral standards and expresses her own decision regarding their relationship. This development surprises the reader and it remains convincing due to its improvement from Margaret’s previous experiences and motivations (Zhang, 2019: 40). Regardless of that, Margaret is interpreted as a round character since the narrative reveals her complexity rather than portraying her through only one fixed characteristic.

According to this concept, this study applies Forster’s theory of round character to analyze whether Spencer White’s character development could reflect through his illocutionary speech acts. The indicators of a round character based on Forster (1927) are identified through:

1. Complexity of personality and motivation: A round character is not represented through merely one fixed personality traits but experiences layered motivations, emotions, and responses. It means the character exposes different aspects of personality throughout the narrative.
2. The ability of surprising the reader through a convincing transformation: As Forster said in his book (1927: 117), the test of a round character is whether the character is enabled to surprise the reader in a convincing way that creates a sense of novelty which then reveals the unexpected aspects of the character. The process of development should not appear sudden or unrealistic, instead it should be rational and supported by the character's previous experiences and motivations.

These indicators are implemented to examine Spencer White's development of illocutionary speech acts. The transition in his speech act patterns is analyzed as linguistic evidence to identify whether Spencer illustrates complexity, demonstrates different aspects of himself, and experiences a convincing transformation as a round character. Therefore, when the use of speech acts in the same context undergone by Spencer White are found different and it refers to the parameter above then it fulfills the indicators of round character.

2.2. Methods

In this chapter the researcher explores the methods used to analyze the data collected for this study. To be precise, it is divided into type of research, data and data source, method of collecting data, and method of analyzing data which are provided below.

2.2.1. Type of Research

This study applies a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data assembled for the analysis. Descriptive qualitative is a helpful method in this analysis since it correlates with the purpose of this study, especially in understanding and detailing how a character evolves throughout a story or narrative. According to Creswell (2013: 24), the qualitative method contains a view of social constructivism which is a way for individuals to seek understanding of the world in which they live and work.

Descriptive qualitative analysis involves the researcher's interpretation based on the text or data and relies heavily on textual evidence (Lincoln, 2011 and Mertens, 2010 in Creswell, 2013). Therefore, the researcher will collect selected utterances produced by Spencer White throughout the second season of *Heartbreak High* (2024) and analyze the illocutionary speech acts delivered in those utterances. The analysis concentrates on the shifts in Spencer White's speech act patterns as linguistic evidence to investigate his character development is portrayed throughout the series of season 2.

2.2.2. Data and Data Sources

The data source of this research is the second season of a series entitled *Heartbreak High* which was published in 2024. This series consists of eight episodes with each episode having an approximate duration of 42-52 minutes and is available through Netflix as the original streaming platform. In this research, the population data is all of Spencer White's utterances across the eight episodes of the series, with a total of 142 utterances. From the population data,

the researcher takes 76 utterances containing illocutionary speech acts that are relevant to the objectives of this study. The sampling data consists of dialogues between Spencer White and other characters containing illocutionary speech acts which becomes the linguistic representation of character development based on Forster's (1927) concept of round character. In order to ensure data accuracy, the researcher verifies the subtitles by comparing them with Spencer White's actual spoken utterances in each episode.

2.2.3. Methods of Collecting Data

In choosing the data, this study applies purposive sampling as the method of collecting the data. By purposive sampling, the data are selected intentionally based on their relevance to the research question (Tajik et. al., 2024: 1). Since this research analyzes a fictional character rather than human participants, the selected units of analysis are Spencer White's utterances throughout the second season of *Heartbreak High* (2024). The utterances produced by Spencer White are purposely selected based on their relevance to the analysis of illocutionary speech acts and the changes in Spencer White's language use that may reflect his character development.

2.2.4. Methods of Analyzing Data

The process of analyzing the data is used to understand the correlation and concept of the data so that the objective of the study is achieved (Stainback in Sugiyono, 2013: 244). According to Sugiyono (2013: 19 – 20), there are three ways in a qualitative analysis process, specifically orientation

or description step, reduction step, and selection step. Thus, this study applies the similar analyzing method based on Sugiyono (2013: 19 – 20):

1. Description step: Observing and identifying all of the utterances produced by Spencer White across the eight episodes of the Heartbreak High series season 2 (2024).
2. Reduction step: Sorting out the utterances that are relevant to the research objectives by identifying those containing illocutionary speech acts. The selected utterances are then classified according to Searle (1979) five categories of illocutionary speech acts and its forces.
3. Selection step: Examining the selected utterances based on each episode to recognize the patterns and changes in Spencer White's illocutionary speech acts along the series. The findings are then interpreted using Forster's (1927) concept of round character to find out whether the shifts in Spencer White's language use could reflect the characteristic of round character.