

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is not merely a tool for conveying information; it also functions as a form of social action. Through language, individuals express intentions, influence others, and construct identities. This perspective is supported by speech act theory, introduced by Austin (1962), who argued that utterances do not only describe actions but also perform actions. Austin divided speech acts into three components: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts.

Searle (1976) further developed speech act theory by classifying speech acts into five categories: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Directive speech acts are particularly significant because they aim to make the hearer act, such as giving commands, requests, warnings, suggestions, or advice (Yule, 1996).

In cinematic works, dialogue plays an essential role in shaping characters and developing the storyline. Through dialogue, characters express authority, vulnerability, confidence, or concern. Therefore, analyzing speech acts in film dialogue can provide insight into how characters' identities and personalities are constructed through language (Culpeper, 2001; Yule, 1996).

This study focuses on *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (Rønning, 2019), a fantasy film that portrays Maleficent as a complex protagonist rather than a traditional villain. In the film, Maleficent embodies dual roles: she is a protective maternal figure to Aurora and also the powerful leader of the Moors. These roles

reflect different dimensions of her character, which are expressed through her interactions and dialogue throughout the film.

Maleficent frequently uses directive speech acts when interacting with other characters. Her commands often demonstrate firmness and authority, while her requests and warnings may reflect care and emotional concern. The variation in her directive speech acts contributes significantly to how her character is portrayed. By examining the types of directive speech acts she employs and analyzing how they reflect her personality, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of her characterization.

Although previous studies have analyzed speech acts in films, many of them focus primarily on identifying speech act types without examining how directive speech acts contribute specifically to the development of a central character. Moreover, limited research concentrates exclusively on Maleficent as a single linguistic subject. Therefore, this study focuses on identifying the types of directive speech acts used by Maleficent and examining how these directives contribute to the construction of her characterization in *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, this research is guided by the following questions:

1. What types of directive speech acts are used by Maleficent in *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*?
2. How do these directive speech acts help reflect Maleficent's characterization in the film?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In accordance with the research questions, this study aims to:

1. Identify and classify the types of directive speech acts used by Maleficent in *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*.
2. Analyze how these directive speech acts contribute to the construction of Maleficent's characterization in the film.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to analyzing directive speech acts used by Maleficent in the film *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* (Rønning, 2019). The analysis focuses exclusively on Maleficent's utterances and does not examine the speech acts of other characters in detail.

The study applies Searle's (1969) classification of directive speech acts to identify and categorize Maleficent's commands, requests, warnings, suggestions, and related directive forms. The analysis concentrates on how these directive speech acts contribute to the construction of her characterization in the film.

This research does not analyze other types of speech acts, such as representatives, commissives, expressives, or declarations. In addition, it does not examine cinematography, visual elements, or broader political themes in the narrative. The primary focus remains on the linguistic aspects of Maleficent's dialogue and their role in shaping her character portrayal.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes both theoretically and practically to the field of linguistic and

cinematic studies. Theoretically, it enriches the field of pragmatics, particularly Speech Act Theory, by applying the analysis of directive speech acts to film dialogue. It demonstrates how directive speech acts function as linguistic mechanisms in constructing character portrayal.

Practically, this research provides valuable insight for students and researchers in linguistics, literature, and film studies regarding the application of pragmatic analysis to cinematic discourse. It also deepens understanding of how language reflects personality traits and shapes character development in narrative works.

1.6 Previous Studies

Several previous studies have examined speech acts in cinematic discourse, particularly in fantasy and animated films. These studies demonstrate that directive speech acts play an important role in shaping character interactions and narrative development.

1. Wijayanti and Yulianti (2020) analyzed illocutionary acts in *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* and found that directive and expressive speech acts reveal emotional tension and interpersonal relationships. However, their research focused broadly on various types of speech acts rather than specifically examining how directive speech acts contribute to Maleficent's characterization.
2. Namira (2021) studied speech acts in *Maleficent 2* and identified the frequency of directive utterances, especially during scenes of conflict. Although the study provided a useful classification, it did not analyze in

depth how these directives construct Maleficent's identity.

3. Putri (2020) examined directive speech acts in *Maleficent* (2014) and concluded that Maleficent's commands and requests reflect her leadership and protective traits. Nevertheless, the study focused on the first film and did not explore how directive speech acts function in the sequel's portrayal of her character development.
4. Fitriani (2022) investigated speech acts used by secondary characters in *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*. The findings showed that directives often reflect hierarchical relationships; however, Maleficent's own directive strategies were not analyzed in detail. Beyond the *Maleficent* films, several researchers have explored directive speech acts in other cinematic works.
5. Ramayanti and Marlina (2018) analyzed directive speech acts in *Tangled* and found that commands and requests help shape character positioning and narrative conflict.
6. Similarly, Sembiring (2019) studied directive speech acts in *Aladdin* (2019) and concluded that directives reveal social status and speaker intention, particularly in interactions involving authority figures.
7. Kusuma (2019) examined speech acts in *Frozen II* and observed that directive utterances contribute to expressing leadership and familial relationships.
8. Hadi (2021), in a study of *Avengers: Endgame*, found that directives are frequently used in conflict situations to coordinate action and demonstrate leadership.

9. Arsha and Dewi (2022) conducted a comparative study of directive speech acts across several animated films and concluded that directives significantly influence narrative progression and audience perception of characters. However, their research adopted a broad comparative approach and did not focus on the characterization of a single protagonist.
10. Nuraini (2018) explored speech acts in Disney princess films and found that directive usage varies according to gender roles and character development. While this study provides insight into gender representation, it does not specifically analyze how directive speech acts construct the characterization of a complex female protagonist like Maleficent.

Although these studies confirm that directive speech acts are significant in film dialogue, several limitations remain. First, many of the studies emphasize classification and frequency rather than examining how directive speech acts contribute to the construction of a specific character's identity. Second, research on the *Maleficent* films often analyzes speech acts broadly or includes multiple characters, resulting in limited attention to Maleficent as a single linguistic subject. Third, few studies focus specifically on how directive speech acts construct the characterization of a central female protagonist in a fantasy narrative.

Therefore, a gap exists in the literature regarding a focused analysis of the types of directive speech acts used by Maleficent in *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* and how these directives contribute to the construction of her characterization. To address this gap, the present study concentrates exclusively on Maleficent's directive speech acts and examines how they function in shaping her character in

the film.

1.7 Organization of the Writing

This research consists of four chapters:

1. Chapter I presents the introduction, including the background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, previous studies, and organization of the writing.
2. Chapter II discusses the theoretical framework and research methodology.
3. Chapter III presents the findings and discussion of the analysis.
4. Chapter IV provides conclusions and suggestions for future research.