

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background Of The Study

Shutter Island (2010), a film directed by Martin Scorsese, starring Leonardo DiCaprio as the main character, Edward “Teddy” Daniels, and Mark Ruffalo as Chuck. The film depicts Daniels, the patient, is a former U.S. Marshal who served in World War II. When he returned home, he discovered that his children had been killed by his wife, who was stressed by his absence. In response to this, Daniels killed his wife and ended up suffering from schizophrenia. Because of this, he was sent to Ashecliffe Hospital as a patient.

In the context of this study, the mental illness examined was schizophrenia. Schizophrenia itself is a complex condition that has been widely studied in relation to mental illness in individuals. American Psychiatric Association (2013: 87) explained that patients with schizophrenia are defined by abnormalities in one or more of the following five domains: delusions, hallucinations, disorganized thinking (speech), grossly disorganized or abnormal motor behavior (including catatonia), and negative symptoms.

In the treatment of this schizophrenia condition, Edward Daniels undergoes a psychodrama treatment conducted by the hospital staff as part of fictional narrative. Hospital staff placing Daniels in the role of a U.S. Marshal conducting an investigation. Throughout this treatment process, Daniels interacts with doctors and other hospital staff, creating communication patterns that are intended to support

the treatment. These interactions can be understood through the concept of therapeutic communication, which refers to an interactive process between healthcare providers and patients for the purpose of achieving health-related goals (Ruesch, cited in Mallette & Yonge, 2020: 73). Therefore, this study examines therapeutic communication through the patterns of illocutionary acts, which the utterances have a function in the communicative force of an utterance (Yule, 1996: 48) and can be classified into five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985: 37). By analyzing these illocutionary acts and their patterns, this study analyzed how it can be functioned for Daniels treatment.

This study is significant because it explores how patterns of illocutionary acts can function as therapeutic communication strategies. Previous research has focused more on the illocutionary acts of characters in various films without linking them to therapeutic functions. Therefore, this study fills a gap, specifically by complementing the research conducted by Salsabila (2022), who examined how psychodrama is applied by hospital staff in the film *Shutter Island*. Furthermore, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the field of linguistics by examining how the selection of illocutionary acts can serve as a therapeutic strategy in the treatment of patients with schizophrenia.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background and the problems identified above, the following research questions are proposed:

1. What types of illocutionary acts are produced by the hospital staff and other patients in Shutter Island?
2. How do illocutionary acts function as a therapeutic communication pattern in Edward Daniels' treatment?

1.3. Objective Of The Study

The purpose of this study are:

1. To explain and describe the illocutionary acts produced by the hospital staff in the film Shutter Island.
2. To explain how the illocutionary acts pattern and its function in guiding Edward Daniels toward reality orientation through therapeutic communication in his schizophrenia treatment.

1.4. Review of Previous Studies

Several previous studies have been found and used as references in making this study. Among these studies are about speech acts, and their application in literary works or films. There are also some analysis of schizophrenia related to

literary works or films, and analysis of Shutter Island is also found. Then to complete this research, research about therapeutic communication in the real cases are also included. The following descriptions describe some research related to this.

Studies focusing on Shutter Island were conducted by Salsabila (2022), Gofur (2015), and Syahputra (2025). Using a descriptive qualitative method, Salsabila (2022) examined psychodrama therapy used by Ashecliffe Hospital to treat Edward Daniels' schizophrenia and found that the hospital successfully reconstructed Daniels' memories through psychodrama until he accepted reality. Similarly, Gofur (2015) employed a qualitative approach and Freud's psychoanalytic theory to analyze Daniels' schizophrenia, finding that his behavior was strongly influenced by conflicts among the id, ego, and superego. Meanwhile, Syahputra (2025) used a qualitative method to investigate the illocutionary acts produced by Daniels and found that assertive acts were the most frequently used speech acts in the film. These studies contribute to understanding the film and Daniels' condition. However, they do not examine how communication from hospital staff functions in the treatment process.

Studies about speech acts in medical communication were conducted by Sejati et al. (2021), Ali (2023), and Dianita and Sofyan (2023). Sejati et al. (2021) employed a qualitative method to analyze doctor-patient interactions in Grey's Anatomy and found that representative and directive acts were the most dominant speech acts used by doctors. Likewise, Ali (2023) used a qualitative pragmatic approach to examine medical interactions in The Good Doctor and identified

several pragmatic strategies, including speech acts, implicatures, and presuppositions. Dianita and Sofyan (2023) also applied a qualitative method to investigate felicity conditions in *Knives Out* and demonstrated that speech acts should satisfy specific conditions to function appropriately in communication. Although these studies discuss speech acts and communication, they do not focus on schizophrenia treatment or therapeutic communication patterns.

Studies related to speech acts spoken by schizophrenic character were conducted by Hidayatulloh et al. (2022) and Asriwanti et al. (2021) conducted research of symptoms that occur on schizophrenic character. Hidayatulloh et al. (2022) employed a descriptive qualitative method to examine representative speech acts produced by a schizophrenic character in *A Beautiful Mind* and found several forms such as claiming, denying, reporting, and assuring. Similarly, Asriwanti et al. (2021) used a qualitative approach to analyze schizophrenia symptoms in *The Voices* and identified various hallucinations and language abnormalities. These studies contribute to understanding schizophrenia through language and behavior, but they do not investigate how other speakers communicate with schizophrenic patients during treatment.

Studies on therapeutic communication were conducted by Prasetya and Septiani (2026) and Siregar et al. (2021). Prasetya and Septiani (2026) used a scoping review approach to examine therapeutic communication practices for schizophrenia patients and concluded that empathy, trust-building, and patient involvement significantly improve treatment outcomes. Meanwhile, Siregar et al.

(2021) used a qualitative approach involving therapeutic sessions with schizophrenia patients and identified three important variables for effective therapeutic communication which are building trust, troubleshooting with constructive coping, and giving appreciation. These studies highlight the importance of therapeutic communication in schizophrenia treatment; however, they do not explain the linguistic through communication that is performed.

Based on previous studies reviewed, research on speech acts has been conducted in general, and research on schizophrenia has also been studied, mainly from psychological aspects and communication characteristics. However, there are no studies specifically analyze how speech acts can function as therapeutic communication pattern strategies for individuals with schizophrenia, especially in the context of patient and doctor/psychiatrist communication.

Furthermore, most studies conducted on schizophrenic patients have taken place in real clinical settings. This study, however, is a fictional representation, which depicted as a film. Although the film does not show factual data on clinical settings, it still reflects the interactions that occur in therapeutic and psychological practitioners. Therefore, this study fills the gap by focusing on how hospital staff in Shutter Island use illocutionary acts as strategies to guide, stabilize, and reorient schizophrenic patients within a therapeutic communication framework.

1.5. Scope Of The Study

This study focuses on illocutionary acts spoken by hospital staff, particularly doctors, nurses, other staff members, and patients, to Edward Teddy Daniels. The study aims to examine how interaction patterns are depicted by analyzing the classification and functions of illocutionary acts which led Daniels to realize that he was a patient at the end of the film. All utterances related to this will be collected and analyzed using Searle and Vanderveken's (1985) theory of illocutionary acts, validated through felicity conditions and followed by explanations.

