

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Nearly all aspects of daily activities rely on language. It performs not merely as a communication tool, but also as a tool people use to convey emotion, notion, and intention. Language conveys more implication than the words carries. Language brings the interpretation formed by context, background, social connection, and cultural reference. By observing how people employ language, specifically spoken utterances, we can understand the framework and function of speech in social connection. It permits us to create and maintain relationships with others, reflect social dynamics, and portray personalities. Comprehending these roles demands a framework of structure that can scrutinize how language performs further than the surface meaning.

One of the frameworks is the theory of speech acts, a crucial part of pragmatics. The theory of speech acts centers on how words deliver acts instead of only stating facts. In this theory, directive illocutionary acts are crucial as they consist of the speaker's attempts to make the interlocutor perform an act. According to Yule, directive speech acts refer to someone's utterances spoken to get others to act (1996, p.54). These actions are multipurpose and depend on the context, resulting in them being crucial for comprehending interpersonal interaction. Cutting also underscores that the theory of speech acts utilizes not merely co-text (deliberate linguistic context) but also the setting of intertextuality and the extensive cultural and circumstantial background, emphasizing its extensive appropriateness (2002,

p. 119). Directive illocutionary acts can be scrutinized in diverse types of interaction, encompassing written text, daily conversation, and media like movies. In cinema discourse, the dialogue and monologue of characters are taken as primary data for elaborating how language forms relationships and social connections. This research concerns the movie "The Prestige" (2006) by Christopher Nolan, with specific attention to Alfred Borden as the main character. The movie is set in London, late nineteenth-century. The movie tell a story of intense rivalry between two magicians, Alfred Borden and Robert Angier. They are obsessed surpassing each other which leads to their personal sacrifice and tragedy. The narrative of the movie is interconnected with themes of identity, secrecy, and the consequences of ambition, all of which are represented in the relationships between the characters.

Borden is portrayed as a magician obsessed with his job and tends to control and manipulate others. His connections with other characters like Angier, Sarah, Fallon, and other characters are characterized by intricate power dynamics. Remarkably, he is perceived to utilize significant directive illocutionary acts in his speech, which can unfold how language functions to shape and reveal social interaction and connection within the movie.

Previous articles concerning the movie "The Prestige" (2006) by Christopher Nolan predominantly observe from a literary perspective. For illustration, Rachel Smith (2018), in her research concerning Robert Angier's motives and how science functions in supporting the movie plot, elaborates on the connection of science, art, and the psychological perspective of Robert Angier. Edwin Tan Leng Phil (2020) also wrote an article regarding the external and internal

conflict of Alfred Borden in the movie. Jasir Al-Faruq and his colleague (2024) also analyze the film from a literary point of view concerning the figurative language used in the movie. According to prior studies of the movie, no article has elaborated explicitly on the relation of Alfred Borden with others through the perspective of directive speech acts. The gap provides a chance to give a new understanding of how utterance functions in the social and narrative structure of movies.

By examining directive speech acts in "The Prestige," this research can provide a deeper insight into the characters' desires, interaction strategies, and interactions in social settings. Examining the kinds and total number of directive acts employed by Borden will highlight how his words reflect and build his connection with other characters. This concept enhances the understanding of the movie's narrative and delivers the practical implications of the theory analysis.

In short, this research seeks to elaborate on the role of directive speech acts employed by Alfred Borden in Christopher Nolan's movie "The Prestige" (2006) to comprehend his relation with other characters. This research will fill a void in previous research from a literary perspective by utilizing the perspective of linguistic pragmatics.

1.2. Research Problems

Although the previous research has examined various aspects of directive speech acts, some questions remain unresolved. This study aims to address the following issues:

- a. What are the kinds of directive speech acts used by Alfred Borden in the movie?

b. How do the social factors influence directive speech acts that depict Alfred Borden's relationships with other characters?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

This research intends to unfold Alfred Borden's relationship with others in the movie "The Prestige" (2006) by Christopher Nolan, using one of the pragmatic features, directive speech acts. The purposes of this are to acknowledge the kind of directive illocutionary acts employed by Alfred Borden and how the social factors influence directive illocutionary acts to illustrate the relationship of Alfred Borden with others through his utterances.

1.4. Previous Studies

The researcher found 10 previous studies relating to this research. The previous studies are chosen based on their similarity to the written research. It includes the analysis of the movie "The Prestige" (2006) by Christopher Nolan from another point of view, IFIDs theory, felicity condition theory, directive theory itself, and the relation of power and directive speech acts theory.

The researcher found three articles concerning "The Prestige" movie; two focus on the movie's theme, and one concerns its language. The first article, written by Rachel Smith in 2018, concerns the connection of science, art, and the psychological standpoint of the character Robert Angier. However, it merely elaborates on surface-level film analysis. The article does not discuss about pragmatic analysis, but it merely explores character interaction in general focusing

on narrative, setting, and the rivalry between Alfred Borden and Robert Angier. The second article, written by Edwin Tan Leng Phil in 2020, focuses on the movie's dualistic external and internal conflicts. Alfred Borden is the analyzed character. It talks about the external conflict between Alfred Borden and Robert Angier and the internal conflict in Alfred Borden concerning his dedication to magic. The third article, written by Octa Pratama P. and Jasir A. in 2024, takes figurative language as its concern. It examines the dialogues in the movies by employing seven figurative languages combined with their text and context. The article only takes the figurative language as its concern without any further analysis, such as into its narrative, stylistic, or emotional impact from the figurative language utilized.

The fourth article is about IFID's element contribution to examining utterances. Domaneschi, F., *et al.* wrote this article in 2017. The article indicates that the upper face acts as a non-verbal IFIDs to emphasize the comprehension of the illocutionary force of a speech act. It underscores the significance of IFIDs in examining the classification of utterances. However, it merely takes eyelids and eyebrows as non-verbal markers of IFID, not entire facial expressions.

The fifth and sixth articles are about the felicity conditions in utterances. Chusni Hadiati (2019) states that a sentence cannot be stated to be false or true; it merely can be evaluated by utilizing some certain conditions. It must be a felicitous sentence if it satisfies those conditions. It uses natural data (daily conversation), which results in natural interpretation. However, the article lacks data and heavily relies on the researcher's interpretation of context, intention, and sincerity, which can lead to subjectivity and affect reliability. In another article, Toisuta & Aritonang

(2024) discusses the felicity condition of directive speech acts in Jokowi's speech. He also states that the felicity condition is employed to ensure the felicity of the sentence. The article provides the practical importance of speech act theory in factual and specific situations. Still, it lacks audience perspective because it is a single speech. It does not provide information on how audiences receive or interpret utterances to measure the effectiveness of directive speech acts.

The following two articles are about directive speech acts. Arbain *et al.* (2024) examine the differences between command and request in a classroom setting. The article highlights the differentiation of the functions of command and request and their impacts on students. Commanding speeches are crucial for the management of the classroom and assuring students obviously comprehend the commands, while requests speeches helps encourage a respectful circumstance and active participation. Another article by Pramudita and Oktaviani (2025) concerns the directive speech acts in the "A Man Called Otto" movie. It elaborates on the types of sentences and their function. The observation of the articles includes the text and contextual background of the utterances. However, it uses more than specific characters to observe, which might lead to broader than specific conclusions.

The last two articles concern the use of directive speeches in portraying the relative power of characters in literature. Pertiwi *et al.* (2021) use Bach and Harnish's directive theory and Brown and Levinson's and Fairclough's theories for power relations or hierarchy in the novel *Amal Unbound*. The article states that a specific character holds diverse background qualities, including non-linguistic

phenomena, such as social stratification, role, age, and education. It portrays that permissive, prohibitive, or requirements are commonly used by someone with higher power. Social context also counts as a consideration, as it is a matter of politeness. Nevertheless, the article employs many characters to observe, which resulted in a broad conclusion and not a specific depiction of someone's power. Using several movies as their objects, Napoli & Tantucci (2022) also examine the impact of relative power and social distance on requestive modification and the strategy of realization in English and Italian. It shows that relative power did not influence requestive modification to a significant extent in both languages, but social distance was a crucial factor. It uses multifactorial and statistical rigor, which robustly tests the influence of directness, indirectness, and social distance on request modification strategies. However, the relative power theory is not emphasized as a variable in the cross-cultural comparison.

According to the earlier research, several researchers employ "The Prestige" (2006) movie as their object from a literary point of view. Many other researchers utilize the IFIDs theory, felicity condition, and directive speech acts to depict other points, specifically the relation to power and society. However, the researcher has not found any earlier research that discusses the role of directive illocutionary acts to portray the relationship of Alfred Borden with other characters in the movie. In order to fill the gap, the researcher employs the theory of John Cutting (2002) about directive illocutionary acts to identify how the directive speech acts could portray the connection of Alfred Borden with others.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This research is noteworthy because it contributes to the understanding of how the directive illocutionary acts performed in a movie's dialogue unfold the characters' intentions, relationships, and social dynamics. By taking Alfred Borden's utterances in "The Prestige," this research will fill a gap in previous studies, which primarily examined the movie through a literary perspective. Therefore, it provides an understanding of how language constructs interpersonal interactions and provides relevant knowledge to pragmatics.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The researcher analyses Alfred Borden's dialogue in the movie by applying Joan Cutting's (2002) directive illocutionary acts used by Alfred Borden in Christopher Nolan's movie *The Prestige* (2006).

1.7. Writing Organization

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I provides the fundamental reason for conducting this research. It consists of the background of the study, research problems, objectives of the study, previous studies relating to the written research theory and theoretical framework, significance of the study, previous studies, scope of the study, and writing organization.

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHOD

Chapter II presents the theoretical framework and the research method. Theoretical framework elaborates on the theories used to examine the data and method of research explains the approach and process of compiling and categorizing the data.

CHAPTER III

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Chapter III provides the result and the discussion answering the research questions mentioned. The researcher organizes the concise and compact conclusion in the results session, and the explanation of the conclusion is elaborated in the discussion session.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Chapter IV encompasses the entire conclusion of the research.

REFERENCES

APPENDIX