

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Communication is crucial for every human being. To fulfill his daily necessities, a salesperson will communicate with a client, promoting the products he is selling. To heal a certain disease, a patient will communicate his symptoms in hopes of being cured by the doctor. Likewise, a student will constantly communicate with his thesis advisor to graduate on time. According to Effendy (2009), one of the aspects of a successful communication is when both communicator and communicant understand the language used.

In communicating, language plays an important part and is used in all life aspects, be it economics, culture, social politics, and others (Kaonang, 2011). Similar to Kaonang, Rahayu (2018) added that language is used to exchange information and deliver ideas and thoughts like *requesting, ordering, thanking, promising, refusing, asserting, and treating*. In understanding language, communicator and communicant need to comprehend its sound – usually called phonetics – and its meaning. Both of these are important and inseparable. If misunderstanding occurs in a conversation, either in sound or meaning, then the message conveyed will be interpreted incorrectly.

There are two terms in understanding meaning in a language: 1) semantics and 2) pragmatics. Semantics is how meaning is concluded from words and concepts, while pragmatics is how meaning is concluded from context. As an example, when a couple is taking an afternoon stroll, and one of them says, “*That restaurant serves delicious lasagna,*” the utterance is semantically a statement about the restaurant and its menu, but pragmatically, it is implying the communicator’s desire to eat *lasagna* there. In reality, according to Abdurrahman

(2011), to be able to understand the meaning of an utterance, semantic and pragmatics complete each other and a message cannot be analyzed from only one of these aspects.

According to Levinson in Saifudin (2019), pragmatics is a study about a language user's ability to contextually adjust sentences so that it can be used precisely. Levinson in Abdurrahman (2011) stated pragmatics is the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with the contexts in which they would be appropriate. By comprehending these statements, we can understand the significant elements in pragmatics are the language use, user, and context. The users are, of course, communicator and communicant. Language use is related to language functions. Language functions can be classified into six: 1) delivering and finding factual information, 2) expressing and changing attitude, 3) asking others to do something, 4) socializing, 5) constructing discourse, and 6) increasing the effectiveness of communication. (Ek & Trim, 1998). Synthesizing language functions pointed out by some linguists, Tamah (2003, 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2008) mentioned seven functions of language. They include 1) referential function, 2) personal function, 3) directive function, 4) metalinguistic function, 5) phatic function, 6) commissives function, and 7) poetic function. Context is about the situation of the communication (Dijk, n.d.). There are some considerations to understand this study, like who the communicator and communicant are, when, where, and in what kind of situation the utterance is produced. For instance, there are two football fans talking to each other, and one saying "*How is the Old Lady?*" and another replying "*Yeah, we just won our first Champions League match this year.*" For people who do not understand football, they will assume that the answer does not make sense. However, when it is viewed contextually, both men automatically understand if '*The Old Lady*' is the term of Juventus Football Club, not literal an old lady.

In pragmatics, one of the objects is *speech acts*. The famous two philosophers in linguistics, Austin and Searle, introduced this term. Based on the theory, whenever the speaker says an utterance, he is trying to work on or achieve it. Yule (1996) added that speech acts is actions performed via utterances. A judge stating “*With this I state that the defendant will be sentenced to life*” is giving a punishment to the defendant. By uttering that, the punishment takes place. The defendant will not get punished without the judge’s words.

There are three types of speech acts: 1) locutionary act, 2) illocutionary act, and 3) perlocutionary act.

- 1) Locutionary act: actual words of the message.
- 2) Illocutionary act: what speaker means to convey. Yule (1996) stated that it is an action which is performed via the communicative force of an utterance
- 3) Perlocutionary act: hearer’s reaction to speaker’s message.

Over the years, the two philosophers, Austin and Searle, developed a theory about illocutionary act. Austin classifies illocutionary act into 5 categories: 1) *verdictives*, 2) *exercitives*, 3) *commissives*, 4) *behabitives*, and 5) *expositives*. Meanwhile, Searle’s classifies them into 1) *representatives*, 2) *directives*, 3) *commissives*, 4) *expressives*, and 5) *declarations*. In this study, the writer will analyze the use of illocutionary act in a TV series titled ‘*Prison Break*’ using Searle’s theory.

A TV series reflects the significant role of communication in real life. *Prison Break* is an American action and crime serial drama created by Paul Scheuring for Fox. The writer chooses to analyze a TV series because in order to understand the whole plot, the viewers must understand the story from the very beginning. Since it is a series, misunderstanding only one scene or maybe

utterance will cause confusion when watching the next episodes. Therefore, the ability to understand illocutionary acts will help viewers understand the series better. The story is about a young man, Michael Scofield (Wentworth Miller), who tried to free his innocent brother, Lincoln Burrows (Dominic Purcell), from prison. The characters always work together and have solutions to escape from Fox River, the prison where they get sentenced. Through dealing with cellmates, other inmates, doctor, guards, and warden, these characters managed to free themselves, although some prisoners escaped along with them. From this interesting storyline, somehow the writer is convinced this series has many illocutionary acts expressed in many utterances.

This is one of many conversations between the characters, Michael Scofield, and his brother. Michael's utterance '*I'm getting out of you here*' is an illocutionary act of commissives (promise to his old brother that they will flee from the prison soon). Lincoln's reply '*It's impossible*' implies illocutionary act of representatives as he asserts that there is no way to get out of prison. The other utterance of Michael '*Not if you designed the place it isn't*' is the illocutionary act of representatives, describing that it is still possible because he understands the construction of the building.

Until this study is being written, the series has five seasons. To be more specific, Seasons 1 and 2 each covers twenty two episodes. Season 3 has thirteen episodes. Season 4 covers twenty three episodes. And the last season covers only nine episodes.

1.2 Research Problem

With the elaborated background of the study, the research problem is as follows: What types of illocutionary acts are used by and addressed to the characters in *Prison Break*?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

The objective of the present study is to discover the types of illocutionary acts used by and addressed to the characters in *Prison Break*.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The focus of the study is to find out the types of illocutionary acts used by and addressed to the characters in *Prison Break*. The researcher applies the theory of pragmatics, the theory of context, the theory of speech acts, and the theory of illocutionary act.

According to Levinson (1983) in Saifudin (2019), pragmatics is a study about language user's ability to contextually adjust sentences so that it can be used precisely. Saifudin (2018) explains that context influences both the speaker in producing an utterance and the hearer in comprehending the utterance. Yule (1996) states speech acts is actions performed via utterances. Searle (1978) in Kaonang (2011) categorizes illocutionary act into five divisions: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

According to the background research above, the focus of this study is on the types of illocutionary acts used by and addressed to the characters in *Prison Break*. Realizing there are five seasons and a lot of episodes on *Prison Break* series, the researcher limits to only the first season to be analyzed. To be more specific, the writer analyzes the utterances of the seven characters in first five episodes of Season I. The researcher limits it because he does not have enough time to analyze all the *Prison Break*'s episodes and characters. The seven characters are divided into two: main and side characters. The two main characters are Michael Scofield and Lincoln Burrows; and the five side characters are Fernando Sucre, John Abruzzi, Theodore Bagwell or T-Bag, C-

Note, and Charles Westmoreland. These are the characters who have same status: a prisoner.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

Academically, the writer hopes this research has contributed in enriching the discourse analysis research in a movie or TV series. Theoretically, the information and data collected from this study are expected to give the readers, especially students majoring English education, a better understanding about the illocutionary acts. And practically, this research can be a reference for similar future studies.

1.7 Definition of Key-terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, the writer states some definition of key terms as follows:

1. Pragmatics: a branch of linguistics concerned with the contextual use of language.
2. Speech acts: an action which is performed via utterances (Yule, 1996).
3. Illocutionary act: an action which is performed via the communicative force of an utterance (Yule, 1996).
4. *Prison Break*: an American action and crime serial drama created by Paul Scheuring for Fox. The story is about a young man, Michael Scofield (Wentworth Miller), who tried to free his innocent brother, Lincoln Burrows (Dominic Purcell), from prison.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction covering the background of the study, the research problem, the objective of the study, the theoretical framework, the scope and limitation of the study, the significance of the study and the definition of key-terms. The second chapter consists of review of literatures and some previous studies. Chapter three is the research method. This chapter presents the research design, source of the data, research instrument, procedure of collecting the data, and procedure of analyzing the data. Chapter four includes data analysis of the study and the discussion. And the last chapter contains conclusion of recent study and suggestions for future researchers if they want to do a similar study.