

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A.1 Background of the Research

Human communication is often not conveyed directly, but through various forms of implication, and implied meaning, and this might affect the hearer's behavior. Therefore, when a person makes an utterance, such as an apology or a promise, they do not only express, but also performs an action through these utterances (Septiani, 2019). Austin distinguishes three components of a speech act: locutionary acts are those something utterance said, illocutionary acts have a strong connection with the speaker's goal, while perlocutionary acts are carried out with the aim of triggering additional effects from the hearer (Accius, 2017).

Furthermore, According to the speech act theory developed by language philosophers such as John Searle and J.L. Austin, speech acts can be classified into various types based on the relationship between the form of the utterance and the speaker's intended meaning: direct and indirect speech acts. Direct speech acts aim to convey a literal meaning with a direct relationship between form and function, indirect speech acts do not share this direct relationship (Mellor, 2014). Indirect speech acts occur when the intended meaning of a sentence does not match the literal meaning of the words used and the speaker wants to convey something other than the surface meaning of the sentence.

As people speak, they do not only expect a response from the hearer but also the following actions, for example: *“Can you give us some privacy for a*

*second?*” It is not merely a question but a request from the speaker to the hearer to give them privacy. However, according to Searle, indirect speech acts are used when a speaker wants to convey more than what is normally conveyed in their words (Searle, 1979). In other words, there is more to these words than their literal meaning.

John Searle classified five speech acts functions (illocutionary act): Declaratives explain that the speaker wants to change the world through his or her utterance (Searle, 1979). According to Yule, declarations are the kinds of speech acts that change the world via words. By the utterance that the speaker produces, it can change the situation or condition (Yule, 1996). Directives describe how the speaker uses their words to persuade someone else to do something. This category covers acts which the words are aimed at making the hearer do something, such as command, request, invite, and forbid. Expressive, which describes the speaker express emotions, it is an act in which the words state what the speaker feels, such as regretting, apologize, etc. Representatives explain how the speaker wants to change the world through their words. These are acts which the words state what the speaker believes to be the case, such as describe, claim, inform, and predict (Astrianti, 2022). Commissive, which describe how the speaker uses their words to commit themselves to do a future action, such as promise, offer, threaten, and refuse.

In line with the illocutionary acts expressed by the speaker, there is always a reaction from the listener, and this is called a perlocutionary speech act. The

purpose of this speech act is to trigger a certain response or action from the listener. However, in some situations, the listener may not be able to respond as the speaker expects. Therefore, not all illocutionary acts in conversation produce the desired perlocutionary impact (Rosida, 2019).

Performing indirect speech acts can lead to unclear understanding for the listener. This is because ambiguity can cause listeners to misunderstand the literal meaning of the actual message because the speech acts often contain meanings that are not explicitly expressed (Budiman, 2016). Understanding the implied meaning in indirect speech acts in various situations and how the meaning behind the words is interpreted by the hearer are challenging as it requires understanding the context, and the speaker's intention (Juwita & Inayah, 2021). In this case, it is necessary to consider the context in which the utterance takes place, including the relationship between speaker and listener and the context surrounding the communication process. Indirect speech acts are not only used in real life, but are also often found in movies.

In the realm of cinematic storytelling, few movie have depicted the complexities of teenage social interactions as effectively as *Mean Girls* (2024). The movie portrays the complex social dynamics of high school life, where indirect speech acts play a crucial role in communication among characters. This analysis explores how characters in *Mean Girls* use indirect speech to convey more than what is explicitly stated, contributing to the narrative and character development. Indirect speech acts, as defined by pragmatics, occur when the

speaker's intention is not explicitly stated but inferred from context, social norms, and shared knowledge. Overall, the frequent use of indirect speech acts in *Mean Girls* highlights the strategic nature of high school social interactions, where power, influence, and relationships are constantly in flux.

The analysis of indirect speech acts in *Mean Girls* (2004) reveals how language is used to navigate and negotiate social relationships in complex and often subtle ways. By conveying more than what is explicitly stated, characters use indirect speech to maintain power, manipulate others, and manage social interactions effectively. This linguistic strategy is central to the film's portrayal of high school life and the intricate dynamics of teenage social hierarchies (Ramadhani & Mustikawati, 2023). For instance, the protagonist Cady Heron, initially an outsider, learns to interpret and utilize indirect speech acts to integrate into the complex social web of The Plastics the dominant clique led by Regina George.

In this research the researcher chose *Mean Girls* 2004 which is a movie adaptation of the first *Mean Girls* 2004 as a data. According to an article posted on the Story Maps page, *Mean Girls* is a very popular and widely recognized movie among the general public. The movie is famous for its sharp and sarcastic dialogs, and it provides many concrete examples to analyze, as many people are familiar with the movie's content, making it easier for them to understand the research context. In the context of social relationships, the way a person speaks, including the use of indirect speech acts, can greatly influence interactions and

perceptions among individuals. Thus, the context is perfect for studying dynamics in a high school environment, where social hierarchy, group pressure, and interpersonal indirect speech acts are used to influence, or maintain social status.

Based on the background above, the study of indirect speech acts is very useful for understanding how people use language to communicate effectively and for understanding the meaning behind the words used. This was an interesting point for the researcher and motivates the topic to analyze indirect speech acts of utterances presented in the *Mean Girl* movie. The researcher is interested in analyzing the structural forms and function of indirect speech act, and how are the perlocutionary effects successful or unsuccessful given by the hearer using John Searle's (1979) theory of indirect speech acts. In this research, the movies are used as data to prove that indirect speech acts are performed in society, *Mean Girls* movie in particular provides the indirect speech acts necessary for analysis. Therefore, this research helps us understand how people use language to communicate effectively and understand the meaning behind the words they use.

Based on previous studies that analyzed various types of illocution, the research is different from this study because it uses utterances in the film "*Mean Girls*". Although there are similarities in the theory used, the focus of this study is different, namely on the form and function of indirect speech acts. Although there are similarities in the theories used, the focus of this research is different, namely on the form and function of indirect speech acts. In addition, this study analyzes

how the perlocutionary effects that arise after the speaker utters an illocutionary act.

## **A.2 Problem of the Research**

Based on the background of the research mentioned above, the researcher identifies several problems, such as:

1. What are the structural forms of indirect speech act in the *Mean Girls*?
2. What are the functions of indirect speech acts used in the *Mean Girls*?
3. How the perlocutionary effect of indirect speech acts on the hearer?

## **A.3 Objective of the Research**

According to the research questions, this research aims to:

1. To identify forms of indirect speech acts uttered by characters in the movie *Mean Girls*.
2. To disclose functions of indirect speech acts uttered by the characters in *Mean Girls Movie*.
3. To analyze the perlocutionary effect to the hearer in conversation are success or unsuccessful.

## **A.4 Significance of the Research**

Based on background, this research was conducted to achieve general and specific benefits. In general, this research is aimed at people interested in pragmatics, especially the study of indirect speech. Specifically, this research

advances the study of indirect speech acts and will serve as a reference for future researchers interested in exploring and expanding on related topics.

### **A.5 Limitation of the Research**

The researcher limits this study to examining the use of indirect speech acts by the main characters in the movie *Mean Girls*, Cady Heron and Regina George. The research focusing on the use of indirect speech acts use Searle's theory to explain the form of indirect speech acts, function of indirect speech acts in the movie *Mean Girls*: representative, expressive, assertive, indicative, and declarative, and how the perlocutionary effects successful or unsuccessful gives by the hearer.

### **A.6 Definition of the Key Terms**

#### **A.6.1 Indirect Speech Act**

Indirect speech acts are types of speech acts in which the speaker's intended meaning is not explicitly expressed by the words used, but is inferred by the listener based on context, shared knowledge, and social conventions. In other words, the literal meaning of an utterance is different from its intended meaning. These speech acts are used for a variety of reasons, including politeness, avoiding direct conflict, and managing social relationships. Conveying the intended meaning relies heavily on the context and the shared understanding of the speaker and listener.

### **A.6.2 Illocutionary Act**

An illocutionary speech act is a central concept in the study of speech acts in pragmatics and refers to the performance of acts by speaking. It is the intention behind the utterance and the role it plays in communication. When someone speaks, they not only utter words, but also perform actions such as making requests, making promises, apologizing, and providing information. The illocutionary force is what the speaker intends to achieve by making the utterance. Situational factors and background knowledge that help determine the illocutionary force of an utterance. The same word can perform different illocutionary actions depending on the context. Understanding illocutionary speech is crucial to analyzing how language functions in communication, because it goes beyond the literal meaning of words and examines the intentions and social actions that take place through language.

### **A.6.3 Perlocutionary Act**

Perlocutionary act is a type of speech act that focuses on the effect that an utterance has on the listener. This includes the audience's understanding, beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors. This act is concerned with the impact or consequences that an utterance has on the listener. The primary characteristic of a perlocutionary act is the change it brings about in the thoughts, feelings, or actions of the listener. This includes persuading, scaring, amusing, or inspiring someone. The perlocutionary effect can vary widely depending on the context, the relationship between speaker and listener, and the specific situation of the conversation.

Understanding perlocutionary acts is important because it highlights the dynamic and dialogical nature of communication. This shows that language not only conveys information and intentions, but also about affecting the listener in some way.

#### **A.6.4 Mean Girls**

The movie *Mean Girls* 2024 is a musical comedy film directed by Samantha Jayne and Arturo Pérez Jr. based on the 2004 Broadway musical movie adaptation. The screenplay, written by Tina Fey, closely follows the plot of the original film and stage production. In this updated version, Cady Heron, played by Angourie Rice, navigates the dangerous social world of North Shore High School after being homeschooled in Africa. She befriends Janice (Auli'i Cravalho) and Damien (Jaquel Spivey), but becomes involved with the popular group “The Plastics” led by Regina George (Renee Rapp). The film explores themes of high school dynamics, identity, and redemption, all with a comedic and musical twist. The cast includes Christopher Blaney as Aaron Samuels, Bebe Wood as Gretchen Winners, Avantika Vandanapu as Karen Shetty, Jenna Fischer as Cady's mother, and Busy Philipps as Regina's mother. The film was released in theaters on January 12, 2024.

#### **A.7 The Organization of the Research Reports**

This research consist of five chapters which are arranged systematically bellow:

## **Chapter I: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter includes the background of the research, research problems, research objectives, significance of the research, limitations of the research, definitions of key terms, and the organization of the research report.

## **Chapter II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This chapter consists of two sections, a theoretical framework and a review of related research. The theoretical framework contains the definition of the theories used. The review of related research consists of the research that has similarities with this thesis.

## **Chapter III: METHODOLOGY**

This chapter deals with research design, data and source of the data, the method of collecting the data, how the technique of collecting the data, and the method of analyzing the data.

## **Chapter IV: DATA ANALYSIS**

This chapter is about the description of the data, data analysis, and the discussion.

## **Chapter V: CONCLUSION**

This chapter is the final part of the analysis, which consists of conclusions and suggestions for the research.