

Analysis Of Commissive Speech Acts In “Up” Movie 2009

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the commissive speech acts in the animated film Up (2009), specifically how the characters in the film express promises and commitments. Data were collected through analysis of the film script and direct observation of the dialog. The method used is descriptive qualitative approach with a focus on identifying commissive speech acts such as promise, commitment, and offer. The results show that there are nine commissive utterances that reflect the moral values, determination, and loyalty of the main characters, namely Russell and Carl. These commissive speech acts play an important role in character development and storyline while strengthening the emotional and moral themes of the movie. This research provides insight into the importance of commissive speech acts in building relationships between characters and conveying moral messages through the medium of animated films.

Keywords: Speech Act; Commissive Speech Act; Pragmatics

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tindak tutur komisif dalam film animasi Up (2009), khususnya bagaimana karakter dalam film mengungkapkan janji dan komitmen. Data dikumpulkan melalui analisis naskah film dan observasi langsung terhadap dialog. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan fokus pada identifikasi tindak tutur komisif seperti janji, komitmen, dan tawaran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat sembilan ujaran komisif yang merefleksikan nilai moral, tekad, dan kesetiaan karakter utama, yaitu Russell dan Carl. Tindak tutur komisif ini berperan penting dalam pengembangan karakter dan alur cerita sekaligus memperkuat tema emosional dan moral film. Penelitian ini memberi wawasan tentang pentingnya tindak tutur komisif dalam membangun hubungan antar karakter dan penyampaian pesan moral melalui media film animasi.

Kata kunci: Tindak Tutur; Tindak Tutur Komisif; Pragmatik

INTRODUCTION

Speakers and hearer play an important role in the communication process, especially in conveying and understanding the meaning implied in each expression. One of the interesting types of speech acts is commissive speech act, which is a speech act in which the speaker commits to do something in the future. The movie “Up” presents various commissive speech acts to reveal how the characters in this movie express their promises or commitments. Pragmatics analysis, especially on speech acts becomes an



important foundation in understanding the implied meaning behind the statements in the dialog of the movie “Up”. Carl is a 78-year-old man who wants to fly his house with 20,622 balloons, Russel is an 8-year-old student adventurer, Ellie is Carl's wife and other supporting characters. Carl and Ellie met when they were young, they had a shared dream of going to Paradise Falls. They both made a promise to each other to realize that dream together. But before they could realize their dream, Ellie passed away. Even so, Carl still realized the dream as a form of promise fulfillment and in memory of Ellie.

The theory of speech acts pioneered by Austin (1962) and refined by Searle (1980). Speech acts are generally understood in three levels, namely the Act of Locution is the act of saying words that have meaning or expression. The focus is on the content of the utterance itself. Illocutionary Act is the intention or purpose that the speaker wants to convey through his speech. Perlocutionary Act is the effect or impact of the utterance on the listener, such as making the listener feel, think, or act. Among the three, illocutionary acts are very important because they reveal the communicative purpose of the speaker, which is further classified by Searle into five categories, namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. In the study of pragmatics, language not only functions as a means of conveying information, but also as a medium for carrying out actions through speech. This is explained in speech act theory which emphasizes that every utterance has a broader function than just conveying meaning. When someone speaks, they do not merely provide information or description, but also perform an action through their speech. One of the important types of speech acts is commissive speech acts. One important type of speech act is the commissive speech act, which is an utterance that shows the speaker's commitment to a future action, such as promising, offering, or swearing. “A commissive speech act is an utterance that binds the speaker to do something and is also responsible for what has been said in the future.” (Hermina & Pairin, 2024).

Previous studies have discussed commissive speech acts in discourses such as religion, politics, and debates, but there are still few that examine their application in film dialog. Tajabadi & Pourmohammad (2022), examined commissive speech acts in the Qur'an and found forms of promises, oaths, threats, and guarantees that are influenced by social context and power relations. Mišić Ilić & Radulović (2015) found that politicians use commissive speech acts implicitly to show credibility without explicit commitment. Meanwhile, Husain et al. (2020) studied the debates of Indonesian presidential



candidates and found that promises and offers were the dominant forms of commissives that functioned to show ability and provide confidence. These studies generally use a descriptive qualitative approach and speech act theories from Searle (1979) and Austin (1962). However, research in the narrative and cinematic realms is still very limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by analyzing the commissive speech acts in the animated film *Up* (2009), Specifically, how the characters use various forms of commissions to build relationships, express intentions, and reinforce moral and emotional values in the story.

Although there have been many studies that examine commissive speech acts in various discourse domains such as religion, politics, and debate, the use of commissive speech acts in film dialog, especially animated films, is still very limited. Previous studies have shown that commissive speech acts are used to express commitment and morals, for promises and action plans, and as a strategy to convince the audience, so the narrative and cinematic aspects in visual media such as animated films have received less attention. Existing studies often only discuss some aspects of commissive speech acts or certain speech categories, without conducting a thorough analysis of all the main categories of commissive speech acts that appear in the film. Therefore, this study has a broad scope not only identifying the types of speech acts in the movie *Up* 2009, but also examining how the use of these speech acts in the interaction between characters. Based on this description, this research answers 1). How commissive speech acts reflect the moral value and character development of the main character in the movie *Up* 2009? and 2). What types of commissive speech acts are used by the characters in the movie *Up* (2009)?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speech Acts

Speech acts originated from J.L. Austin's work on performative language in the 1950s and were further developed by Searle in the 1960s. The theory focuses on how words are used to convey information and perform actions, such as making promises, requests, or apologies. Speech act theory has been influential in linguistics, philosophy, and communication studies, examining how language shapes social interaction. According to Searle (1979), a speech act is an utterance that not only conveys meaning but also performs an action through language, so speaking basically means doing



something. classifies speech acts into five categories, namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Each form of speech act has a certain intention of the speaker. Assertive speech acts are statements that bind the speaker to the truth of a fact or situation. Directive speech acts aim to make the listener do something. Expressive speech acts express the speaker's feelings or psychological state. Declarative speech acts make direct changes to the external situation. Commissive speech acts are forms of speech acts in which the speaker commits to perform an action in the future, such as promising, offering, refusing, or swearing.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and its context of use in communication. The main focus of pragmatics is how the meaning of an utterance is not only determined by the linguistic structure alone but also by the social and situational context and the communicative intention of the speaker (Yule, 1996). According to Langford, (1938), pragmatics is a branch of semiotics that studies the relationship between signs and the users or interpreters of these signs. Pragmatics, according to Armstrong & Ferguson (2010) emphasizes aspects of language use in the context of communication and how meaning is formed in the interaction between speakers and listeners. This approach paves the way for the development of the study of pragmatics as a study of linguistics that is closely related to the context of speech and the process of interpreting meaning.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach because it aims to describe and analyze the types of commissive speech acts contained in the movie *Up* (2009). A qualitative method is used because the data analyzed are words, phrases, and sentences, not numbers. The focus of this research is to identify and interpret utterances that contain commissive meaning spoken by the characters in the movie. This research uses a document analysis approach, in which the script of the movie *Up* (2009) is used as the main data source. This movie was chosen because it contains strong moral and emotional values, especially related to promises and commitments, which are the main characteristics of commissive speech acts. The researcher used the transcript of *Up* (2009) as the main document and watched the movie repeatedly to understand the context of each utterance and match it with the transcript. This research procedure

consists of three main stages, namely data preparation, data collection, and data analysis.

FINDINGS

This section presents the results of the analysis based on commissive speech acts. The findings show the types of speech acts that exist in the movie *Up 2009*.

Table 1. Commissive Speech Act

Commissive Speech Act	Utterances
Promise	6
Commitment	2
Offer	1
Total	9

Based on the analysis, there are 9 utterances included in the Commissive speech acts in the movie *Up*. The findings show that commissive speech acts reflect the intentions, promises, and commitments of the characters throughout the storyline. Through commissive speech acts, the characters express their willingness to perform an action or make a commitment that drives the development of the story. The following discussion will explain each commissive speech act in more detail with context and simple explanations that form relationships between characters, reinforcing the theme of determination and loyalty.

Discussion

Data 1

Russel: "If I get it, I will become a Senior Wilderness Explorer."

Carl: "Good afternoon." (closes the door quickly after Russell introduces himself)

When he first met Carl, Russell introduced himself as a young Wilderness Explorer who wanted to earn the "Helping Seniors" badge. Russell explained that if he succeeded in helping Carl, he would become a senior wilderness explorer. However, Carl is not interested and refuses Russell's help. Russell's promise to earn this badge was not fulfilled at that time, as Carl did not want to be helped.

Data 2

Russell: "I will find it, Mr. Fredricksen!"

Carl: "Good! Off you go!"

Russell is trying to earn a special badge called "Helping the Elderly" to become a Senior Wilderness Explorer. Carl, not wanting to be bothered, gives Russell a fictitious task to find a creature called a "snipe" as a strategy to get Russell to leave. Russell's

promise to find the snipe was unfulfilled, as the creature was not real, but his actions showed his sincerity and determination. This promise ends with a rejection from Carl.

Data 3

Russel: "I'll help you get Kevin back."

Carl: "No, we're not going after that bird. We're going home!"

When Kevin is captured by Charles Muntz, Russell wants to help and promises to help Carl save Kevin. However, Carl initially refused because he only wanted to complete his trip to Paradise Falls as promised to his late wife. Despite Carl's refusal, Russell still tried to keep his promise. In the end, Russell actually helped save Kevin, thus fulfilling his promise with courage and sincerity.

Data 4

Russel: "Can we keep him? Please? I'll get the food for him..."

Carl: "No, we're not keeping the dog."

After meeting Dug, a talking dog through a translator, Russell took an instant liking to him and begged Carl to let them take him. Russell promised to take care of him and feed him. Carl initially refused because he didn't want any distractions on his trip. However, over time, Carl accepted Dug on their journey. Russell's promise to take care of Dug was fulfilled, showing genuine responsibility and compassion for animals.

Data 5

Russel: "I'll stay with you, Mr. Fredricksen."

Carl: "Go home, kid. This is my problem."

When the going gets tough and dangerous, Carl asks Russell to back off. However, Russell refuses and promises to stay with Carl. Initially, this promise was not accepted because Carl wanted to solve everything himself, but he eventually realized that he would have to continue his journey alone if he could not get help. Russell stayed faithfully with him until the end of the adventure.

This promise was fully realized, showing Russell's incredible loyalty and courage.

Data 6

Carl Fredricksen: "Now, whether you assist me or not, I am going to Paradise Falls..."

Russel: "Can I come with you?"

Carl uttered this sentence as a form of determination to keep his promise to his late wife, Ellie, to go to Paradise Falls. He felt he had to go, even without anyone's help. Russell, who heard this, offered to go along. Carl refused Russell's help, having tied



thousands of balloons to his house and successfully flown the house into the sky. Carl thought he would go alone, leaving everyone below.

However, sometime after flying, Carl heard a knock on his door. When he opened it, he found Russell on the porch, having accidentally flown away with the house. In the end, Russell really did come along for the ride.

Data 7

Ellie: "Swear you'll take us"

Carl: "Cross my heart."

As children, Ellie and Carl made a commitment to go to Paradise Falls together. Ellie asked Carl to promise that he would keep the commitment. Carl replied with a typical child's oath, "Cross my heart." This promise became the foundation of Carl's entire motivation into adulthood. Although Ellie died before they could go together, Carl eventually fulfilled the promise himself by taking their house to Paradise Falls—an act of love and loyalty to their childhood promise.

Data 8

Carl: "We'll save up for it."

Ellie: "Yay! We'll have our own house there!"

When they grew up, Ellie and Carl talked about their childhood dream of going to Paradise Falls. Carl committed to saving money so that the dream could be realized. They saved for years, but their money was always spent on immediate needs. This commitment almost didn't happen during Ellie's lifetime, but Carl finally fulfilled it after Ellie's death by realizing the dream on his own. This shows his deep love and dedication to his wife.

Data 9

Russell: "I'll help you cross your yard."

Carl: "No, thank you."

Russell offered to help Carl across his yard, a symbolic gesture signifying his sincere intention to help the old man walk more easily. However, Carl refuses the help, as he is a stubborn old man who doesn't like to be bothered, especially after losing his wife. Although Russell's offer is rejected, this moment marks the beginning of their relationship, which later develops into true cooperation and friendship during their adventures.

CONCLUSION(S)

This study analyzes the commissive speech acts in the animated film *Up* (2009), which include promises, commitments, and offers from the main characters such as Russell and Carl. Through the descriptive qualitative method with the main data in the form of movie scripts, nine examples of commissive utterances are found that reflect the moral values, determination, and loyalty of the characters who are the main drivers of the story. The literature used strengthens the understanding of speech act theory, especially commissives, and explains the importance of pragmatic context in interpreting the meaning of utterances. This study shows that the use of commissive speech acts strengthens the relationships between characters and shows the development of the storyline and emotional themes of the movie. Thus, commissive speech acts have an important role as a medium of communication that conveys moral and emotional commitment in animated film narratives.

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