



Assertive Illocutionary Acts in Sherlock: The Abominable Bride Movie

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Article info	Abstract*
<p>Received Date: 16 March 2021</p> <p>Accepted Date: 5 May 2021</p> <p>Published Date: 31 July 2021</p> <p>Keywords:* <i>Assertive, Illocutionary acts, Utterances, Movie script.</i></p>	<p><i>This study is a pragmatic related and connected to illocutionary act in speech act. There are five types of illocutionary act based on Searle's theory and they are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative. However, to make the analysis more specific, this study will be focused on assertive illocutionary act by using the theory proposed by Searle (1976). The types of assertive illocutionary act will be specifically described by explaining in what context of situation they are usually used in a conversation. The main reason why the researcher found this movie interesting to be the object of this study is because this movie has unique utterances which performed by its main characters, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson. We can also get more knowledge about the assertive illocutionary act which is the type that mostly happen during the movie. It is important to understand the utterance of the speaker in different context of situation and this movie shows a lot of ways the main characters utter with their intended meaning.</i></p>

1. Introduction

Every aspects of human's life involves language. In daily basis, the language itself plays an important role since humans need language to communicate with each other in order to express their feelings, share information with one to another, develop relationships in social life, ask their needs or quiries, etc. But in attempting to convey the message through the language people do not only express their ideas or feelings but also perform the actions through utterances (George Yule, 1996: 47). When people communicate by speaking or writing, they usually have their own intentions which must be recognized and understood by the listener in contemplation of the listener's understanding about their point and purpose.

In reality, people have different level of communication skills. They also have different way to deliver their message in order to make. This makes the speech act is important to study further in order to avoid misunderstanding so one could generate the actual meaning by looking at the

context or situation. As George Yule (2000: 47) states that generally speech act is the action which are performed via utterances.

Speech act consists of three basic types named locutionary, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act (Austin, 1962: 18). The researcher found that illocutionary act is the most complicated kind of speech act considering there are so many cases related with it. Thus, it is the main focus of speech act. Searle (1976) divided illocutionary acts into five different types which are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive and declaration.

In contemplation of expressing the feeling and intention, people do not only construct utterances that contains grammatical structure but also certain acts through the said utterances. The speakers who produce the utterances to the hearers generally look forward that their performed act will be recognized. Accordingly, the speakers can accept the correct respond by the hearer as the result of the utterance that has been uttered.

Searle (1976) stated that the utterances by the speakers that intended to tell the hearers about the exact truth of a preposition is called Assertive act. Assertive act is important to study further in order to fully understand the act intended to attract attention, to make the hearer believe what the speakers are uttered and to persuade others.

Elicited from those statement above, this study will be mainly focused on assertive illocutionary act owing to the importance of conveying information to the hearers or audiences in order to make them believe in something as the exact truth. Moreover, assertive matters also to strengthen several opinion or statement regarding certain problems and topics. Therefore, it is important to study further about this type of illocutionary in order to fully understand about one's perception, opinion and statement.

This study will use a movie as the subject to be analyzed because assertive illocutionary act occur not only on daily conversation in real life but also in the movie as a reel of films usually reflect the real life. Hence, this study will use a movie as the object to be analyzed. *Sherlock :The Abominable Bride* movie is chosen because Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson as the main characters in this movie have eccentric and innumerable course of action when they do communicating. Sherlock as a private consulting detective is very well known for his brilliant deduction by using his logical observation and his extensive knowledge. In most part of the movie, we could easily discover Sherlock describing every single detail of his theory or simply making hypothesis to judge and deduce the evidence of his cases. Watson as his trustworthy partner also consistently took a part during the observation to state his own opinion regarding what happened.

2. Research Method

Assertive is an act which contains the state of affairs. The main purpose of this act is to commit the speaker to the truth of the indicated or demonstrated preposition (Searle, 1979: 13). We could also describe assertive as the utterance to commit in doing something by the speaker. Eg. Hypothesizing, stating, insisting, declarating, protesting, etc.

The data was taken from the movie script of *Sherlock : The Abominable Bride* directed by Douglas Mackinnon and produced by Sue Vertue. The dialogue script was downloaded from the website <https://transcripts.foreverdreaming.org/viewtopic.php?f=51&t=24430>. This movie is actually a special episode from the british series *Sherlock* and broadcasted on BBC one, Chanel 1 and PBS in the very beginning of 2016 as a new year special.

This study use qualitative method to collecting and analyzing the data from the movie script. In order to understand and discover the examining data, the researcher will attach the dialogue from the movie script which contains assertive illocutionary acts. To make it clearer, the researcher also will include the reason why it is chosen from the conversation in order to decide

what kind of context and situation happens by using Searle's theory of assertive illocutionary act and Yule's theory about direct and indirect speech act. This study use informal method to descriptively present the data. There are several steps which are conducted in this study to present the data analysis. The first is attaching the dialogue from the movie script of Sherlock: The Abominable Bride from the website, the second is explaining the data which has been analyzed and the last is step is concluding the result of the data.

3. Discussion

This research found several dialogues performed by the characters of The Abominable Bride movie which are considered as assertive illocutionary act. An act when a speaker expresses their belief or perception about the truth of a proposition. Assertive illocutionary act serves different purposes based on the context of situation the said utterance is performed.

A. Stating

Stating means the act of giving information or in the other word, telling something to someone.

Sherlock Holmes : *"The name's Sherlock Holmes and the address is 221B Baker Street."*

At the very beginning of the movie, there was a flashback of Sherlock telling John Watson about himself when they first met. That sentence was uttered by Sherlock in order to give information to the hearer. In this situation, Sherlock acts as the speaker while Watson is the hearer or audience who receives the information.

B. Informing

This type of assertive is usually used to assert with some additional preparatory condition that is only known by the speaker as the hearer does not know about the thing that is being informed.

Sherlock Holmes : *"I have my eye on a suite of rooms near Regent's Park. Between us we could afford them."*

John Watson : *"Rooms? Who said anything about rooms?"*

Sherlock Holmes : *"I did, I mentioned it this morning, I was in need of a fellow lodger. Now he appears after lunch in the company of a man of military aspect with a tan and a recent injury, both suggestive of the campaign in Afghanistan and an enforced departure from it. The conclusion seemed inescapable. We'll finalise the details tomorrow evening. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a hanging in Wandsworth and I'd hate them to start without me."*

Sherlock Holmes was asserting some additional preparatory that is only known by himself and that thing is about him having a hanging in wandsworth, he even mentioned the details about how he hated them starting without him. John Watson as the hearer obviously didn't have any idea about the said information and he knew that after Sherlock Holmes told him.

C. Boasting

Usually, the speakers use this function of assertive to express, indicate or demonstrate their pride. This type of assertive illocutionary act is not in neutral categories according to the politeness. Boasting is usually considered informal or even rude.

Sherlock Holmes : *"Yes, her perfume, which brings insight to me and disaster to you."*

John Watson : *"How so?"*

Sherlock Holmes : *"Because I recognised it and you did not."*

John Watson : *"Mary!"*

Before Watson could ever recognize their visitor, Sherlock already made a deduction and pointed out that Watson couldn't even recognize Mary's perfume when she is his wife. Sherlock performed this utterance so he can demonstrate his pride as the greatest detective.

D. Complaining

Complaining is the assertive function that has both expressive and assertive use. The speaker usually use this to complain about something difficult.

Sherlock Holmes : *"You did. By every means short of actual speech."*

John Watson : *"Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, Holmes, you have misdiagnosed."*

John was uttering his dissatisfaction regarding Sherlock's deduction about the reason why Lestrade came to visit their flat. That is the reason why this conversation has the purpose to complain.

E. Denying

This assertive act usually creates the action of denying or opposed the prepositions.

John Watson : *"He didn't WANT a drink, he needed one. He's not embarrassed, he's afraid."*

Watson creates the action of denying Sherlock's idea about why Lestrade visited their flat.

4. Novelties

Long story short, At some point, Lestrade drops by to demand Holmes' assistance with the Ricoletti case: Mr. Ricoletti has been killed by his significant other, Emelia, hours after publically ended it all, and keeping in mind that she was at that point dead at the mortuary. Before long, five additional men are killed by "the spooky lady of the hour." Then Mycroft Holmes brings his sibling, Sherlock Holmes, to educate him regarding a danger to the Empire from an adversary that should win. To accomplish this, he requests that Holmes acknowledge the case that Lady Carmichael is going to submit to him.

The theoretical findings in this study can be explained based on the analysis above. In short, there are two main characters of Sherlock: The Abominable Bride movie and they are Sherlock Holmes as the eccentric private consultant detective and his partner Dr. John H Watson. Sherlock himself is very well known for his brilliant deduction by using his logical observation and his extensive knowledge. In most part of the movie, we could easily discover Sherlock describing every single detail of his theory or simply making hypothesis to judge and deduce the evidence of his cases. Watson as his trustworthy partner also consistently took a part during the observation to state his own opinion regarding what happened. They both take part of doing illocutionary act while discovering the crimes that they must solve. Since the genre of this movie is thriller and action, we can learn and observe through their utterance that they mostly use assertive type of illocutionary act.

5. Conclusion

This research is presented in order to obtain the different functions of assertive illocutionary acts in The Abominable Bride movie script. From the discussion which already explained above by mentioning each dialogue performed by the characters and analyzing each type by using Searle's theory, there are five types or function of assertive illocutionary acts found in those utterances. They are stating, informing, boasting, complaining and denying.

Each of the characters has different intention while performing assertive act. The purpose of the said utterance is based on the context of situation. That context of situation is affecting what

kind of assertive act will be performed by the characters of *The Abominable Bride* movie because they usually have different intentions.

As the main characters of this movie, Sherlock Holmes and John Watson have their own idea that is conveyed through assertive utterances. Both of them have the rightful encouragement to perform the utterances as they are making their own decision. Sherlock Holmes as the greatest detective he is, always stated his deduction about several issue which was being discussed. John Watson as Sherlock's partner, also had the authorization to deliver his perception about Sherlock's ideas.

Assertive illocutinary acts can be found in this movie with ease owing to the fact that there are so many scenes that contain assertive act, mainly stating and informing as the majority of them is Sherlock's utterance while conveying his deduction. After all, this research has a specific intention to give a transparent understanding about the different purposes of assertive illocutinary acts in order to achieve a good communication skills.

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