AN ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACTS IN *AVATAR: THE LAST AIRBENDER* NETFLIX SERIES

THESIS

Submitted to Fulfil a Partial Requirement for S1 Degree in The English Department Faculty of Humanities Universitas Bung Hatta

BY

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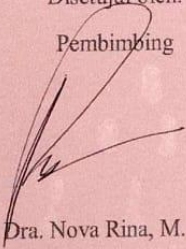**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

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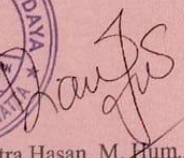|	
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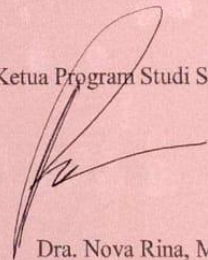
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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This is to certify the originality of this thesis I submitted to fulfill a requirement for an S1 degree in the English Department Faculty of Humanities Universitas Bung Hatta. This thesis is entirely mine and there are no works or opinions written or published by other people except as references or quotations by following the usual scientific writing procedures.

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AN ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACT IN *AVATAR: THE LAST AIRBENDER*

NETFLIX SERIES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis entitled *An Analysis of Speech Act In the Avatar: The Last Airbender Netflix Series*. This research used Searle's theory (1969) to analysis the type of speech act and Leech's theory (1989) to analysis the functions of illocutionary act in *Avatar: The Last Airbender* Netflix Series. This research aims to classify what types of speech act and the functions of illocutionary act are found mostly in these movie. This study used qualitative descriptive methods to examine data in reliable information. The focus in this research is speech act types there are total of 146 data points from all types including: Representative, Directives, Commissive, Expressives and Declaratives. Directives type is the most common data with 67 utterances, followed by Representative 35 utterances, then Commissive with 21 utterances , and expressive 22 utterances. Meanwhile, only 1 utterances of Declarative. This research also identifies the functions of illocutionary acts which are competitive, convival, collaborative and conflictive. The writer's findings regarding the function of illocutionary acts are 36 competitive functions, 27 convivial functions, 53 collaborative functions and 10 conflictive functions. Meanwhile, the writer found 2 functions used in speech act utterances, there are 11 competitive and conflictive functions, 5 competitive and collaborative functions, 2 convival and collaborative functions, and 2 collaborative and conflictive functions. The results of this research understand how speech is used not only to convey information, but also to carry out actions in accordance with the function of illocutionary acts.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Speech Acts, Function, Avatar The Last Airbender

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Linguistic is an important part in English. Linguistic is a studies of language with all aspects that is structure, meaning, related the topic, usage of the language and so on. According to Saussure (1913) that linguistics scope is to describe and analyze the development of each language that has been observed, to ascertain the universally operating, perpetual forces behind all languages, to define and establish limitations. Basically, linguistics studies natural human language. Language must have the intention to convey a message. According to Chomsky (2006) humans possess an innate ability for language acquisition, facilitating the seamless learning and production of language in early development. Chomsky distinguished between surface structure (the sentences we express) and deep structure (the underlying abstract meanings), stressing the significance of grasping the deeper rules and principles governing language. Generally, linguistics studies how language is used to communicate with each other, how language is learned, how language is acquired and how language develops over time.

Linguistics has several branches of language study and one branch of linguistics is Pragmatics. Pragmatics studies how context and communication objectives affect language meaning. According to Yule (1996) pragmatics focuses on investigating the meaning conveyed by a communicator (either a speaker or writer) and understood by a recipient (either a listener or reader). Basically,

pragmatics studied about how a person interprets what is meant and said and how the context influences what is said. Pragmatics studied how the listener carries out an action when the speaker asks the listener to take action according to what is intended. Pragmatics plays a very important role in life, through pragmatics a person can understand the meaning and intent of the context in communication.

Communication is very important to convey information (massage, though and idea) and meaning to each other. To communicate human used language. Communication is an act when speakers and hearer understand about what they are talking about. Nowadays, people communicate to each other through many media for example, smartphone, electronical letter, television and etc. for conveyed their meaning, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions. When people communicate to each others everyday of course they speaking and communicating with different express, meaning and purpose.

To focus on the conceptual meaning and words of an utterance delivered by the speakers, the writer studied about speech acts. According to Austin (1962) in his book entitled *How To Do Things with Words*, speech acts as the actions performed in saying something. Austin's speech acts theory has three levels. The first level is lucotionary act, lucotionary act means that analyzed the word themselves. The second level is illocutionary force, that is what speakers doing with their words such as asserting, expressing, requesting to purpose the meaning of the words. Then the third level is perlocutionary effect or the results of the words, that's mean what the effect for listeners when hearing the utterances or what reactions the listeners then what the listeners done for the utterances. According to Searle (1976)

that the speech act is defined as an action changing the universe of discourse when a speaker utters it, and a recipient grasps it. It may be oral as well as written, or even expressed via some other communication from such as sign language. then, Searle classifying speech acts into a macro-classes of speech acts that is declarations, representatives, commissives, directives, expressives.

Theoretically, the purpose of a communication can be conveyed directly or indirectly. According to Searle's theory (1976) that a speaker employing a direct speech act seeks to convey the literal meaning that the words typically indicate; form and function are directly related. While, indirect speech act is to convey a meaning that differs from the obvious surface meaning because form and function are not directly related. There are many media that display speech acts, one of which is movie. Movie is a platform that provides, depicts and displays many variations of speech acts, for example, how an actor reacts when speakers utters a word.

Movies are one of the things that are interesting for teenagers. The movie not only shows the storyline, but also shows how the characters in the movie communicate and the sentences in the movie contain meaning. So many dialogues in the movie have speech acts that make characters in the movie do something or action that relevant with what other characters said or self-expression. The researcher interested to analyze the movie entitled *Avatar : The Last Airbender* Live Action Series. The series was released on February 22, 2024 on Netflix. The series is an American adventure fantasy adaptation from animated Nickoldeon television series that created by Michael Dante Di Martino and Bryan Konietzko. The difference between the cartoon version of *Avatar: The Last Airbender* Series and

the live action Netflix series lies in the differences in the visuals displayed. The cartoon version of the *Avatar: Last Airbender* is shown with caricature characters, while the live action series is shown with human characters with very attractive visuals in this action series. Apart from that, there are several differences in story, plot, scene, background, settings and so on that differentiate between the live action series and the cartoon version.

Furthermore, when this live action series was first released, so many people were interested in this series, based on the Netflix platform where this Netflix series is broadcast 82% people like *Avatar: The Last Airbender* Netflix series. Quoted from several audience reviews of the *Avatar : The Last Airbender* series on the IMDb platform, *Avatar: The Last Airbender* is one of the most popular movie since 2010 the audience cant wait for the real action series because they wanted to remember their childhood when watching this series, but with the differences and technological developments that made this series presented in an interesting and good visual manner. This series aired 1 season or 8 episodes. *Avatar : The last airbender* tells about the journey of an avatar who has been trapped in an iceberg for 100 years which made 4 countries destroyed because there was no savior who could stop the Fire Nation from attacking 3 nations, namely the air kingdom, the water kingdom and the land kingdom, the Fire Nation wanted controlled all the kingdoms by attacking and destroying their kingdoms in a very inhumane way. After 100 years the avatar disappeared, he reappeared and was found by Sokka and Katara in the Water Nation. Then, he realized that the world needed him but instead he disappeared with a feeling of guilt. Aang began to travel with Sky Byson, Katara

and Sokka. Aang wants to learn about the 4 avatar elements, namely air, water, earth and fire to save the world. this series tell about how Aang's persistence and adventure together with his friends learned the 4 elements to save the world from the Fire Nation attack. Therefore, the author sees that there is speech act analysis in this series.

The writer analyzes the speech acts in the *Avatar : The Last Airbender* Netflix Series because this action movie genre of course contains many speech acts conveyed by the characters in this series directly or indirectly. The writer is interested in how this movie convey a message to the audience with the actions carried out by the characters in the series. Therefore, the writer took research with a pragmatic approach with the aim of analyzing and describing the speech acts conveyed in communication and actions between the characters in this series. The representation of communication in this movie is what became the writer's attention in choosing research using the theory of speech acts approach, how each other communicates, the messages conveyed, understood and responded.

1.2 Research Questions

The writer questions were formulating as the following :

1. What are the types of speech acts used in the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* Movie?

2. What are the functions of illocutionary act used in the *Avatar The Last Airbender* Movie?

1.3 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research was to identifying speech acts in the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* Movie.

a. To describe the speech acts used in the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* Movie

b. To describe the functions of illocutionary act used in the Avatar: *The Last Airbender* Movie

1.4 Limitation of the Research

Based on the background of the research, the writer used *Avatar: The Last Airbender* Netflix series that released on February, 2024. speech acts depicted by *Avatars: The Last Airbender* series which is close to the pragmatics approach. Many speech acts are said and carried out by the characters in this *Avatar: The last Airbender* Netflix series. For this research, the writer only focused on the characters Aang, Katara, Sokka and Zuko. The writer only anlyzes some important characters in this movie because they play the most roles in the *Avatar : The Last Airbender* Netflix series. The theory of speech acts classification according to Searle (1976) such as representatives, directives, commissive, expressive and declarations is applied. Then, the writer also used Leech's (1989) theory functions of illocutionary act such as competitive, convivial, collaborative and conflictive. Therefore, the writer analyzes the pragmatic approach which is related to meaning based on context and speech acts.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The result of this research is expected to be very useful for the next writers and students. For the next writers, the information and identification of speech acts theory can be used as references for similar research. For students, the data and the example of speech acts theory can be used as knowledge and understanding of part in communication. This research related to pragmatics analysis, especially speech acts classification such as, assertive (representative), directives, commissive, expressive, and declaratives. Then, the functions of illocutionary act such as competitive, convivial, collaborative and conflictive.