

THE STUDY ON THE ASSERTIVE ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN *MY SISTER'S KEEPER* MOVIE SCRIPT BY NICK CASSAVETES AND JEREMY LEVEN,

(*STUDI TINDAK TUTUR ILOKUSI ASERTIF PADA PEMERAN UTAMA DALAM NASKAH FILM MY SISTER'S KEEPER OLEH NICK CASSAVETES DAN JEREMY LEVEN*)

Viajeng Indraswuri, Syamsul Anam, Agung Tri Wahyuningsih
English Department, Faculty of Letters, Jember University
Jln. Kalimantan 37, Jember 68121
E-mail: viajeng.indraswuri@gmail.com

Abstract

This research discusses the use of assertive illocutionary acts uttered by the main characters in *My Sister's Keeper* movie script by Nick Cassavetes and Jeremy Leven. It explores how the acts of assertives are conveyed by the main characters in the whole movie script. The purposes of this study are to find the types of assertive acts uttered by the main characters, the intended meanings of utterances, and the main characters' purposes in using such assertives. This research applies speech act theory to analyze the use of assertive act in conversation. This study is a qualitative research and it uses document as the source of the data that is *My Sister's Keeper* movie script. The results of this study show that there are six types of assertive uttered by the main characters. The main characters' purposes in uttering those assertives are because they have different thoughts which are showed through assertive utterances. Those utterances have the intended meanings that are influenced by the context of situation in every phenomenon. Mostly, the utterances are intended to make the hearer understand and consider something which happens in speakers' life.

Keywords: *Assertive illocutionary act, types of assertive, intended meaning, speakers' purposes, context of situation.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas tentang penggunaan tindak tutur ilokusi asertif yang dituturkan oleh tokoh utama dalam naskah film *My Sister's Keeper* oleh Nick Cassavetes and Jeremy Leven. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bagaimana tindak tutur asertif disampaikan oleh tokoh utama pada keseluruhan naskah film. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui jenis tindak tutur asertif yang dituturkan oleh tokoh utama, makna yang terkandung dalam tuturan tersebut, dan tujuan penutur dalam menggunakan tindak tutur asertif. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan dokumen sebagai sumber data yaitu naskah film *My Sister's Keeper*. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan terdapat enam tipe tindak tutur asertif yang digunakan oleh tokoh utama. Tujuan tokoh utama dalam menuturkan tindak tutur asertif tersebut dikarenakan tokoh utama memiliki perbedaan pemikiran yang ditunjukkan melalui tindak tutur asertif. Tuturan tersebut memiliki maksud tertentu yang dipengaruhi oleh konteks situasi di setiap fenomena. Sebagian besar, tuturan asertif tersebut dimaksudkan agar mitra tutur memahami dan mempertimbangkan sesuatu yang terjadi dalam kehidupan penutur.

Kata kunci: *Tindak tutur ilokusi asertif, tipe-tipe asertif, makna yang terkandung, tujuan penutur, konteks situasi*

Introduction

Language becomes one of the important parts in communication which concerns with the human activity in society. As Yule (1996:47) states that 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. When people utter something, they have the intentions and it closely relates with the context of situation such as the place, the time, and the way how people utter utterances.

As in daily conversation, conversation that happens in movie can be one of the objects to be analyzed because movie is the reflection of social life. In this occasion, this study concerns with the use of assertive illocutionary acts produced by the main characters in *My Sister's Keeper* movie script by Nick Cassavetes and Jeremy Leven. It is mainly focused on two main characters, namely Sara Fitzgerald as the mother and Anna Fitzgerald as the youngest child. In this movie, there are many obvious phenomena that happen and make the characters produce various speech acts in a variety of events, such as telling something, explaining, emphasizing, and reporting which pragmatically indicate the assertive acts. Both characters seem to have different intentions by uttering assertive utterances which are influenced by the context of situation. Therefore, this study is conducted to know the types of assertive uttered by the main characters, the intended meanings of utterances, and also the speakers' purposes in uttering assertive utterances.

Speech act theory provides this research with a mean of the acts performed by the speaker through the words (Yule, 1996:47). In regard to express the feelings, people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structure, but also certain acts performed via those utterances. The speaker normally expects that the act performed through the utterance will be recognized by the hearer. After that, the hearer can give the response as the effect of utterance that has been uttered.

One of the functions of speech act is to convey information to others. Speech act that discusses this purpose is categorized as assertive speech act proposed by Searle. Searle (cited in Levinson, 1983:240) states that assertive is the act that makes the speaker believe in something to be truth in some propositions. For example, "The sky is very cloudy" is the statement that is believed by the speaker as a truth. The acts of assertive are intended to persuade others, attract attention, get someone to think about, make somebody believe in something and so forth.

Some researchers have conducted the researches related to assertive illocutionary act. Firstly, Hamdani (2011) analyzed the kinds of speech act in the dialogue of Peter Morgan's movie script *The Queen* deals with explanation of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts produced by the main characters. This research used the theory of speech act types (Austin, 1983:236) and the theory of illocutionary functions (Searle in Levinson, 1983:240) to probe into brief analysis of the use of speech acts in daily communication. The results showed that there were many

kinds of speech act produced by the main characters. The most dominant illocutionary act was directive.

Secondly, Akinwotu (2013) did a research that investigated the role of language in communication and the interpretation of intentions by examining selected political speeches of presidential candidates in Nigeria. It gave the overview of various ways of language that were used in defending and promoting personal and group interests in subverting the opponents' goals. The researcher adopted Searle's classification of illocutionary acts (cited in Levinson, 1983:240). The results of this study showed that assertive act was the most dominant act performed in this research. Speech was mostly used as mobilization strategy, especially in political campaign which was essential for candidates to persuade their listeners toward a desired goal of winning the election.

Based on those several researches of speech acts in pragmatics scope, the methods and theories that have been employed help the writer to do the research in the same field. Therefore, this study is conducted to analyse assertive illocutionary act on *My Sister's Keeper* movie script which explores the types of assertive, the intended meanings within utterances and the purposes of the main characters in producing assertive.

Research Methodology

This study is a qualitative research. Qualitative research is a research based on descriptive data without using quantification and statistical procedures (Mackey and Gass, 162-163). This research uses document as the source of the data that is *My Sister's Keeper* movie script which is gained from <http://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/moviescript.php?movie=my-sister-keeper> website. In collecting the data, the script is separated into scenes that are completed with the speakers' name in every conversation with the help of the movie. Furthermore, the utterances that indicate assertive acts are given highlight and rewritten to get the clear data. The data consist of 98 assertive utterances. From the data that have been gained, the utterances are classified based on the types. Then it is analyzed further to know the intended meaning, the reasons, and the way main characters produce utterances which are influenced by the context.

Result

The result of this study shows that there are 98 assertive utterances uttered by the main characters in *My Sister's Keeper* movie script. Those are classified based on Searle's theory (cited in Levinson 1983:240) about assertive illocutionary acts which are categorized into some functions namely *asserting*, *reporting*, *explaining*, *showing something*, *suggesting*, and *refusing*. These classifications are presented in the table. It is completed with the total utterances and the percentages of each type. The classification is presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Assertive Classification of the Main Characters' Utterances

Assertive Classifications	Anna	Percentage	Sara	Percentage
Asserting	16	16,32 %	37	37,75%
Reporting	3	3,06 %	1	1,02 %
Explaining	5	5,10%	9	9,19%
Showing Something	4	4,09 %	5	5,10 %
Suggesting	0	0,00%	4	4,08 %
Refusing	6	6,12 %	8	8,16 %
TOTAL	34	34,69 %	64	65,31 %

From the classification of assertive in table 1, it shows that there are significant differences of the number of assertive illocutionary act performed by Sara and Anna. It presents that Sara tends to use assertive utterances more often than Anna in the whole movie script. Anna performs 34.69 % and Sara performs 65.31 %. The difference in the percentage of both characters is 30.62 %.

Both characters convey assertive functions that are proposed by Searle (cited in Levinson 1983:240). Sara uses all categories of assertive illocutionary acts in the whole movie script. Meanwhile, Anna does not apply all functions of assertive that have been mentioned above. It is not found assertive act of suggesting uttered by Anna. Moreover, asserting becomes the most dominant act uttered by both characters with the total number of Anna is counted 16.32 % and Sara is counted 37.75%. It indicates that in certain phenomena, both characters tend to state the statements as the way to claim, declare, affirm, and so forth.

Discussion

As presented in table 1, there are six types of assertive that are found in the data of the research namely *asserting*, *reporting*, *explaining*, *showing something*, *suggesting*, and *refusing*. The discussion below represents the analysis of assertive utterances uttered by the main characters which are elaborated in the form of dialogue, the explanation of context of situation, and the analysis of the utterances.

1. Asserting

Asserting becomes the most dominant act uttered by the main characters, both Anna and Sara. As Hornby (1995:61) defines that asserting is the act of conveying information about the truth and fact. The forms of asserting are claiming, stating, affirming, and so forth. The analysis of asserting act in this movie script is represented below:

a. Asserting Utterance Uttered by Anna

Brian : Everyone be quite. We said she gets the table, she gets the table. Go ahead.
 Anna : Okay, remember how the doctor said, if I didn't do the operation I would have to be careful for rest of my life. But I don't

want to be careful. Who wants to live like that?

Sara : Anna listen ...

Anna : I'm important too. Mom. I'm important too.

Brian : Hey now ...

Anna : Let me go!

b. Context of situation

Field : The conversation takes place in the house. The debate occurs between Anna and her mother in talking about her must to donate the kidney.

Tenor : The speaker is Anna as the youngest child in the family and the hearers are all family members namely Brian as the father, Sara as the mother, brother, and aunt Kelly.

Mode : The utterance belongs to asserting type that is in the form of affirming.

c. The Analysis

Locutionary	Illocutionary	Perlocutionary	The Reason
"I'm important mom. I'm important too."	Anna intends to affirm that she does not want to donate her kidney.	There is no effect from the utterance that has been uttered.	Anna feels that she is not important in her family because she is always asked by her mother to be a donor for saving her sister's life.

Based on the context of situation mentioned in the term of field, it is known that the debate occurs between Anna and her mother in the house. The conversation that takes place in the house is attended by all of the family members. Anna invites her family to discuss about her must to donate the kidney. In this discussion, both Anna and Sara keep talking in defending their thought. Anna as the speaker directly asserts short and clear statement that can be seen in this utterance 'I'm important mom. I'm important too.'. This utterance impliedly means Anna intends to affirm that she does not want to donate the kidney. The presence of all family members that is explained in the tenor helps Anna in affirming her intention. Anna expects that her family can help her to persuade her mother, so the mother does not force Anna to donate part of her body. Therefore, this utterance is classified into asserting type of affirming.

The reason of Anna in uttering asserting utterance is because Anna feels that she is not important in her family. The mother always forces her to donate part of her body for saving her sister's life. As the result from the utterance that has been uttered, Anna cannot embrace her mother to comprehend her feeling. Her mother still insists on her own thought. Therefore, it can be

concluded that Anna’s utterance cannot give effect to the hearer to comprehend her feeling.

2. Reporting

Reporting is one of the functions of assertive illocutionary act that aims to inform something that has been done (Hornby, 1995:993). The speaker tries to embrace the hearer to know about something that happens in speaker’s life. The following is the example of reporting utterance uttered by Sara in the movie.

a. Reporting Utterance Uttered by Sara

- Judge De Salvo : Yes, I’m well aware of Mr. Alexander’s reputation. He once tried to sue God in my court room.
- Mr. Alexander : Jerome Dylan versus the Diocese of California. And I won that one.
- Judge De Salvo : I remember, So?
- Sara : So Mr. Alexander wants to change the law. An 11 years old can’t be emancipated, at least not legally.
- Mr. Alexander : My client is not seeking to be emancipated. he loves her parents and wants to live at home. She doesn’t wanna be cut open anymore.

b. Context of Situation

- Field : The conversation is in the judge’s room. The judge invites Sara and the lawyer to discuss about the case that is proposed to the trial court.
- Tenor : The speaker is Sara and the hearers are the Campbell Alexander as lawyer and the Judge De Salvo.
- Mode : The utterance includes in the reporting type of persuading.

c. The Analysis

Locutionary	Illocutionary	Perlocutionary	The Reason
“So Mr. Alexander wants to change the law. An 11 years old can’t be emancipated, at least not legally.”	Sara intends to persuade the judge to cancel the trial court that Mr. Alexander proposes .	There is not effect from the utterance that has been uttered.	Sara is angry because the lawyer sues her and violates the law.

The context of situation that has been mentioned in the term of field above shows that the judge calls Sara and the lawyer in her room. They discuss about Anna’s case that is proposed to the trial court. In this situation, both Sara and the lawyer try to explain the case to the

judge. From the utterance ‘(So Mr. Alexander wants to change the law. An 11 years old can’t be emancipated, at least not legally.)’, Sara wants to report to the judge that Mr. Alexander violates the law. The intended meaning of this utterance is Sara persuades the judge to cancel the trial court. She thinks that the trial court should not be held because it is not in accordance with the right law. Therefore, Sara’s utterance is categorized in the mood of persuading somebody to do something.

The reason of Sara for uttering reporting utterance is because Mr. Alexander sues her by violating the law. As mentioned in the tenor, the presence of the judge is expected to help her to defend her thought because the judge has more authority than the lawyer. As a result of utterance that has been uttered, Sara cannot persuade the judge to cancel the trial court. The judge decides to take the case and bring it to the trial. It can be understood that reporting utterance that has been uttered cannot give the effect to the hearer to do something.

3. Explaining

According to Hornby (1995:405), explaining is the way to tell something in detail. The speaker usually utters long sentences to describe something. It is the way to make something clear enough to be understood by the hearer. The utterance that includes on assertive act of explaining is presented as follows.

a. Explaining Utterance Uttered by Anna

- Brian : All right, let’s hear it. What’s going on?
- Anna : Forget about the fact that the operation is dangerous, or that it would hurt, or that I might not want to have something cut out of me. But if I only have one kidney, than what happens to me? What if I need it? And am I really never allowed to play sports or be a cheer leader or get pregnant?
- Kelly : Can’t drink.
- Anna : What if I just want to live a long time?
- Brian : Sweetheart, you’re gonna live a long time.

b. Context of Situation

- Field : The utterance takes place in the house. Anna discusses about a must to donate the kidney for her sister.
- Tenor : The speaker is Anna and the hearers are all family members namely Brian as the father, Sara as the mother, the brother, and aunt Kelly.
- Mode : The utterance includes in the explaining type of persuading.

c. The Analysis

Locutionary	Illocutionary	Perlocutionary	The Reason
“Forget about the fact that the operation is dangerous, or that it would hurt, or that I might not want to have something cut out of me. But if I only have one kidney, than what happens to me? What if I need it? And am I really never allowed to play sports or be a cheer leader or get pregnant?”	Anna’s utterance is intended for persuading the family to consider her thought. never allowed to play sports or be a cheer leader or get pregnant?”	Aunt Kelly adds the statement to support Anna’s utterance.	She does not want to donate the kidney for her sister.

As mentioned in the context of situation in the term of field, Anna and all family members gather in the house to discuss about Anna’s must to donate her kidney. In the conversation, Anna utters long utterance for explaining her thought that can be seen in this utterance ‘(Forget about the fact that the operation is dangerous, or that it would hurt, or that I might not want to have something cut out of me. But if I only have one kidney, than what happens to me? What if I need it? And am I really never allowed to play sports or be a cheer leader or get pregnant?). This utterance impliedly means that Anna persuades her family to consider her thought. As explained in the tenor that Anna is the youngest child in the family. The presence of all the family members can help Anna to express her feeling. Therefore, the intended meaning of Anna’s utterance is in the mood of persuading someone to understand something.

The reason of Anna for uttering that utterance is Anna does not want to be the donor. She wants to get the rights of her own body. At last, this utterance can persuade Aunt Kelly to understand Anna’s situation. Aunt Kelly adds the statement ‘(can’t drink.)’ that supports Anna’s explanation. Therefore, this utterance is successful to persuade her family in comprehending Anna’s situation.

4. Showing Something

As Hornby (1995:1093) defines that showing something is the way how the speaker indicates something. Usually the speaker informs, gives a sign or points out on something to be clear. The utterance that

belongs to showing something type is elaborated as follows.

a. Showing Something Utterances Uttered by Sara

- Kelly : Can I ask you something?
- Sara : Sure.
- Kelly : You really think you’re gonna win? You really expect the judge to take Anna’s kidney gainst her will?
- Sara : Well, there’s precedent. There’s Hart v. Brown, Masden v.harrisonn, Strunk v. Strunk.
- Kelly : I Know. Besides, the court should just mind their own business.
- Sara : Why? What’s your point?
- Kelly : Don't start that shit.

b. Context of Situation

- Field : The contention happens in the house. Sara and Kelly dispute about the trial court that Sara will do.
- Tenor : The speaker is Sara and the hearer is Kelly as Sara’s sister.
- Mode : The utterance includes in showing something type of affirming.

c. The Analysis

Locutionary	Illocutionary	Perlocutionary	The Reason
“Well, there’s precedent. There’s Hart v. Brown, Masden v.harrisonn, Strunk v. Strunk.”	Sara affirms that there are same precedents that are ever brought to the trial court.	There is not an effect from the utterance that has been uttered by Sara.	Sara’s sister does not believe that Sara will win in the trial court.

According to the context of situation above, the field mentions that there is a contention happens in the house. Sara and Kelly are disputing about the trial court that will be held. In this conversation, Sara utters the utterance ‘(Well, there’s precedent. There’s Hart v. Brown, Masden v.harrisonn, Strunk v. Strunk.)’. Sara’s reason in uttering that utterance is because Kelly thinks that Sara will not win the trial court. By uttering that utterance, Sara intends to affirm there are same precedents that are ever brought to the trial court. As explained in the tenor, Kelly as Sara’s sister is expected to support Sara. Therefore, the intended meaning of the utterance is in the mood of showing something.

At last, the utterance that has been uttered cannot make Kelly support Sara in the trial court. Kelly still defends her own thought that what Sara does is wrong. Therefore, it can be understood that there is no effect as

the response from the hearer. From the utterances that have been analyzed, it can be concluded that showing something is the way to make people know certain events. Every utterance that has been uttered by the speaker has the intention that can affect the response of the hearer.

5. Suggesting

As Hornby (1995:1195) defines suggesting is the act to say that something to be chosen. In this type of assertive, the speaker usually conveys an idea or a plan to be considered by the hearer. The example of suggesting dialogue is elaborated as follows.

a. Suggesting Utterances Uttered by Sara

Mr. Alexander : What can I do for you, Mrs. Fitzgerald?
 Sara : The legal age or emancipation of a minor is 14 in the state of California. It's the law, you might want to check it. Anna's 11, you're three years early.
 Mr. Alexander : I'm aware, she's challenging.
 Sara : She can't.

b. Context of Situation

Field : The conversation takes place in the lawyer's room. Sara clarifies about the petition letter that she gets.
 Tenor : The speaker is Sara and the hearer is Campbell Alexander as the lawyer
 Mode : The utterance is in the form suggesting of requesting.

c. The Analysis

Locutionary	Illocutionary	Perlocutionary	The Reason
“The legal age for emancipation of a minor is 14 in the state of California. It's the law, you might want to check it. Anna's 11, you're three years early.”	Sara requests Mr. Alexander to check the right law.	There is not an effect from the utterance that has been uttered by Sara.	Mr. Alexander misapplies the law.
Sara requests Mr. Alexander to check the right law.			

According to the context of situation that has been explained before, the field mentions that Sara comes to

the judge to clarify the petition letter that she gets. The contention happens between Sara and the lawyer. In the conversation, Sara utters the utterance ‘The legal age for emancipation of a minor is 14 in the state of California. It's the law, you might want to check it. Anna's 11, you're three years early.’. By uttering this sentence, Sara intends to ask Mr. Alexander to check the law that should be. Sara thinks that Mr. Alexander has violated the right law and Anna is too young to be emancipated. As explained in the tenor, Mr. Alexander as the lawyer is expected to maintain the right law. Therefore, the intended meaning of that utterance is in the mood of request that is for asking someone to do something.

As the result from the suggesting utterance that has been uttered, Mr. Alexander still insists on his own way. He is consistent to sue Sara in the trial court. Thus, it can be comprehended that the utterance that has been uttered cannot give effect to the hearer.

6. Refusing

Refusal is the act to say that someone will not do something that has been asked to do (Hornby, 1995:98). There are different cases and situation that compel each character to make decision about something. In this example of dialogues, the character utters refusal utterance to express her thought to be considered by the hearer. It is presented as follows.

a. Refusing Utterances Conveyed by Anna

Sara : Anna, what is this? Is this from you?
 Anna : Yeah, I got a lawyer.
 Sara : You're suing us? Well, honey, what the hell is going on?
 Anna : I don't want to do it anymore. Mom.
 Sara : You don't want to do it anymore? That's it? You don't want to do it?
 Anna : No

b. Context of Situation

Field : The debate occurs between Anna and Sara in the hospital. Sara gets the petition from the court in accordance with Anna's report to the lawyer.
 Tenor : The speaker is Anna and the hearers are Sara as the mother, Kate as her sister, and aunt Kelly
 Mode : The utterance belongs to the refusal type of threatening.

c. The Analysis

Locutionary	Illocutionary	Perlocutionary	The Reason
“I don't want to do it anymore, Mom.”	Anna intends to threatening her mother.	Sara stops in insisting her argument.	Anna does not want to be the donor for saving her sister's life.

Based on the field that has been mentioned in the context of situation above, it is known that the contention occurs between Anna and Sara in the hospital after Sara gets the petition letter from the court. In this situation, both Anna and Sara insist on their arguments. Anna as the speaker directly utters '(I don't want to do it anymore, Mom.)' that shows her refusal to be the donor for her sister. Anna's reason in uttering this utterance is because she does not want to donate parts of her body. She wants to be emancipated from her mother.

The intended meaning of that refusal utterance is that Anna threatens her mother with suing her if she still forces Anna to donate part of her body. This intention is categorized in the mode of threatening. Moreover, the presence of Kate and aunt Kelly that is explained in the tenor helps Anna in conveying her intention. As the result, the mother does not insist on her want because it can make Kate's condition become worse. It can be concluded that the utterance that has been uttered by Anna gives the effect to the hearer.

Conclusion

This study is conducted to analyze the assertive illocutionary acts in *My Sister's Keeper* movie script. It discusses the types of assertive, the intended meanings within utterances, and speakers' purposes in uttering assertive utterances.

The results of this study show that there are six types of assertive illocutionary acts uttered by the main characters in the whole movie namely *asserting, reporting, explaining, showing something, suggesting, and refusing*. Both characters have different intentions in uttering assertive utterances. It depends on the context of situation that influences the purposes of the speakers in uttering assertive utterances. The reason of the main characters in producing assertive act is because the main characters have their own thoughts which are conveyed through assertive utterances. The main characters feel right to do something and to take the decision. Moreover, the theory proves that main characters' intention in producing assertive utterances are used to convey information about something that happens in their life. They try to embrace and persuade the hearers so that the hearers can comprehend and believe speakers' feelings.

In conclusion, this study is expected gives a clear comprehension about the use of assertive illocutionary act. The speaker can adjust how they assert something in different context, so that the hearer can interpret speaker's intention appropriately. By comprehending this way, a good communication will be maintained between the speaker and the hearer.

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