

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **I.1. Background of the Study**

Commonly, people use a language to communicate with others by giving information, asking someone to do something, asking for information and expressing strong or sudden feeling. This fourfold distinction is reflected in the grammar of the language. Furthermore, language plays an important role in all aspects of human life. Through language people impart their knowledge to others. By means of language people pass on information to the other and develop science and technology.

Knowing a language means knowing how to produce sentences, so it also means knowing how to use them. Language is used to explain, describe, criticise, amuse, deliver opinions, get others to do things, and so forth. Language is assumed to inform a hearer or to enjoin some actions upon him. There will be unfortunate consequences in the real world if the message is not properly understood by a recipient, for example, when a doctor tells a nurse how to administer medicine to a patient, or a

policeman gives directions to a traveller. In each case it matters that a speaker should make what he says clear.

The speaker utters sentences based on a certain purpose. Many speakers 'say' one thing and 'mean' another. In analysing a discourse, we examine how humans use language to communicate and how addressers construct linguistic messages for addressees and how addressees work on linguistic messages in order to interpret them (Brown and Yule, 1983:1). The listener has an important role in understanding and interpreting sentences. There are at least two factors of understanding and interpreting speaker's utterance, which are pragmatic and speech acts. Pragmatic is part of linguistics that deals with language use. The second factor is speech acts. When we talk about meaning in human language, it involves the type of act associated with the utterance of the sentence. There are three basic kinds of speech acts, namely, the locutionary act which is the act which corresponds to the utterance of a sentence with particular meaning. The illocutionary act is the act which reflects the intention of the speaker in uttering a sentence (criticise, warn, promise), and the perlocutionary act which involves the effect that the speaker has on his or her addressee in uttering the sentence (O'grady and Dobrovolsky, 1984:184).

For example, a doctor who is having trouble in maintaining order in the hospital utters the sentence :

(a) You have to stay until you are healthy

in uttering such a sentence, the doctor is producing three speech acts. As locutionary act, it involves utterance of a sentence with the meaning :

(b) You have to stay until you get better

As an illocutionary, sentence (a) is a warning. Whereas as a perlocutionary act sentence (a) has an effect to the patient to rest in the hospital until getting better.

From the three basic speech acts, I am interested in analysing illocutionary acts which occur in conversations or dialogues in a play. Illocutionary acts are classified into a small set of functions. In Searle's (1969) theory these include directives, commissives, representatives, declaratives, expressive, and verdictives.

I take one of Tennessee Williams's plays as the source of my data because I am interested in Williams's plays. He was successful in his *A Street Car Named Desire*, which was first performed at the Ethel Barrymore Theater . He got his first Pulitzer Prize for drama. William's plays deal with social problems which, in his days, were shocking. He deals with contemporary issues such as the place of women in society, like modern day television drama on suicide, child abuse, and wife battering.

William was one of the first American dramatists who concerned with social problems. In this analysis, I take One of Tennessee Williams's plays entitled *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The examples below are quotations from Williams's play to show how functions of illocutionary acts are applied.

Uttering sentence for 'thanking'. Thanking is an expression of gratitude. Most people use the verb 'thanks' while they are thanking, for example :

Blanche : No  
Negro woman : I'll go tell her you come  
Blanche : thanks  
Negro woman : You welcome

The characters in this play are Blanche Dubois , a sensitive woman who after having lost her family's estate, her reputation and her job as an English teacher all force her to seek refuge in a lower-class flat with her sister, Stella and brother-in-law, Stanley. She progressively loses her sanity until the end of the play, after her brother-in-law has raped her.

## **I.2. Statement of The Problem**

Based on the background of the study above, the problem that will be solved is :

1. How are Illocutionary acts applied in *A Streetcar Named Desire* ?
2. What functions of Illocutionary Acts are applied *in A Streetcar Named Desire* ?

## **I.3. Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study concerning with the problem above, is to find out how Illocutionary acts are applied in the dialogues of *A Streetcar Named Desire* which are used by the characters while they are making utterances.

## **I.4. Significance of The Study**

I hope that this study can be used as an additional reference for those who are interested in studying the discourses of the characters in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and some other plays.

In addition, this study is expected to give meaningful contribution to linguistic studies, especially discourse analysis. It is particularly hoped that this study is also useful for students of the English Department to give further clarification about illocutionary act.

### **I.5. Scope and Limitation**

The study focuses on illocutionary act. The sources of data are Tennessee William's plays entitled *A Street Car Named Desire* that consist of eleven scenes.

The discussion of illocutionary acts will be limited to six functions which are directive, commissives, declaratives, verdictives, representatives and Expressive.

### **I.6. Theoretical Background**

In analysing this study, I use the theory which are closely related and relevant to this study. Brown and Yule (1983:1) state :

“the analysis of discourse, is necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs”.

Austin in the book of Searle (1969) proposed the study of this issue as the study of speech acts. There are three basic kinds of speech act, namely, the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary act.

“The locutionary act is the act which corresponds to the utterance of a sentence with a particular meaning. The illocutionary act is the act which reflects the intention of the speaker in uttering a sentence (criticise, warn, promise), and the perlocutionary act is the act which involves the effect that the speaker has on his or her addressee in uttering the sentence” (O'Grady and Dobrovolsky, 1984:184).

Austin in the book of Traugott, E.C. & Pratt, M.L.(1980) states that illocutionary act is one part of speech acts. Promising, warning, greeting, reminding, informing, and commanding are all distinct illocutionary acts which are classified as follows :

1. Representative. Illocutionary acts that undertake to represent a state of affairs, for example, insisting, stating, claiming, hypothesising, describing, predicting, telling, insisting, suggesting, or swearing.
2. Expressive. Illocutionary acts that express only the speaker's psychological attitude toward some state of affairs, for example, congratulating, thanking, deploring, condoling, welcoming, greeting.
3. Verdictives. Illocutionary acts that deliver a finding as to value or fact and thus that rate some entity or situation on a scale, such as assessing, ranking, estimating, and all other judgmental acts.
4. Directives. Illocutionary acts designed to get the addressee to do something, for example, requesting, commanding, pleading, inviting, questioning, daring, and insisting or suggesting that someone do something.
5. Commissives. Illocutionary acts that commit the speaker to doing something, for example, promising, threatening, vowing.
6. Declaratives. Illocutionary acts that bring about the state of affairs they refer to, such as, blessing, firing, baptising, bidding.

## **I.7. Methods of The Study**

### **I.7.1. Definition of Key Terms**

It is necessary at this point to define five terms that will be used in this study

1. **Utterances** are spoken words. They express or utter things in word (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 1989:1408).
2. **Speech acts** are how we do things with speech or sentence. Austin (1962) isolates three basic senses in which saying something, one is doing something, and therefore three kinds of acts that are performed as locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. (Troughott and Pratt, 1980 :229).
3. **Illocutionary act** is the attempt to accomplish some communicative purpose. Promising, warning, greeting, reminding, commanding, informing are all distinct illocutionary acts. (Ibid, 1980 : 229).

### **I.7.2. Technique of Data Collection**

This study uses library research to get the information dealing with the problem. The sources of data are Tennessee William's play entitled *A Street Car Named Desire* which has eleven scenes. The play will be referred to whenever any quotation is used for the analysis. First, I will read the dialogues in William's play carefully and then selected those



which contain functions of Illocutionary act, and made a list of the relevant data from every scene of this play according to each function of the Illocutionary act. Therefore, the procedures of the data collection are as follows :

1. Reading the play and marking the ones which have the functions of the Illocutionary Acts.
2. Making a list of the dialogues containing any of the representative, expressive, verdictive, directive, commissive, declarative functions.

### **I.7.3. Technique of Data Analysis**

The writer uses the descriptive approach in analysing the data which have been obtained, in order to find the answer to the problem of this study. I tried to find the functions of illocutionary act namely representatives, expressive, declaratives, commissives, directives, and verdictives found in Tennessee William's *A Street Car Named Desire*.

The technique of data analysis, are stated below :

1. Examining the relevant data based on the functions of illocutionary act.
2. Classifying the data according representative, expressive, declaratives, commissives, directives, and verdictives functions from scene one until scene eleven.

3. Making a table of all the functions.

### **I.8. Organisation of the Study**

The whole paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is introduction which consists of seven points : background of the study, statement of the problem, objective the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, method of the study, and the organisation of the study.

Chapter II discusses about the general description of the object of the study and the synopsis. Chapter III is the presentation and analysis of the data. The last chapter is the conclusion which contains the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT OF THE STUDY**