# Realization of Assertive Acts by Nemo in *Finding Nemo* the Movie

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## Abstract

*This article is focused on the function of assertive act and the delivery strategies used by Nemo in Finding Nemo the movie. The data was collected by using documentation method and note taking technique. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive qualitative method and was presented using informal method. The theories applied in this article were a theory of illocutionary act proposed by Searle (1976) to classify the functions of assertive act and a theory of delivery strategies proposed by Parker (1986). The result of the analysis showed that there were six functions of assertive act found in Finding Nemo the movie, those are affirming, predicting, claiming, agreeing, informing, and denying. However, there are only three strategies used by Nemo to deliver the messages of his utterances.*

## INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics can be described as the study of speaker meaning differ from word or sentences meaning (Horn, 2006). The main focus of pragmatic is on the relationship between the language and the context of situation. In expressing themselves, the speakers are not only producing utterances but also performing actions through those utterances. In this case, the utterances are seen as functional unit in communication which is known as speech act.

Speech act can be described as the actions done through utterances. It means that by saying the utterances, people are not only saying something but also uses them to perform an action. There are three types of speech act namely locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act. The textual meaning of an utterance is known as locutionary act, meanwhile the contextual meaning of an utterance is known as illocutionary act. The acts produced by speaking is described as perlocutionary act. (Searle, 1969)

Types of speech act are related to one another. Those types determine whether a communication is successful or not. A communication is successful if the locutionary and illocutionary act can be understood by the hearer, so that the perlocutionary act will occur. If the

utterances cannot make the hearer do an action, therefore, the aim of the communication is not reached.

Illocutionary act is seen as the basic of pragmatics since the purpose of an utterance will never be known if illocutionary act does not exist. There are five types of illocutionary act, namely assertive, directive, commissive, declarative, and expressive act. Each of those types has their own functions (Sealre, 1969). In the current era, all of those types can easily be found in daily life conversation, both direct and indirect. It can also be found in electronic or printed media. For instance, it can be found in a movie.

According to the introduction above, therefore, analyzing illocutionary act is really interesting since it can help people to understand the function and intended meaning of the utterances. This article is aimed to identify the function of assertive act found in a movie entitled *Finding Nemo* and the strategies used by Nemo in delivering the message of the utterances.

**METHOD AND THEORY**

The data of this article was taken from an adventure movie directed by Andrew Stanton entitled *Finding Nemo* the movie. The movie tells about Nemo, a young and cheerful clownfish, who tries to find a way after caught by humans because he plays to close with the surface of the sea. This article uses this movie as the primary data since it contains many types of assertive and directive act. Moreover, Nemo, as the main character, mostly implies the meaning of his utterances which results in other characters doing an action.

In collecting the data, this article used documentation method and note taking technique. It consists of several steps. First, the data was collected by watching the movie. Second, reading the

English subtitles. Third, listing and typing the related data in bold.

The data of this article was analyzed qualitatively. It means that the data was described descriptively based on the theories applied. The theories applied in this article are a theory proposed by Searle (1976) to analyze the types of illocutionary act, especially assertive act, and a theory proposed by Parker (1986) to analyze the strategies of delivering the messages. Furthermore, the results of the analysis were descriptively presented into their types by using sentences without inserting any statistic form.

**Review of Literatures**

Analyzing assertive act is not a new topic of discussion. There are some studies which has similar topic with the current study reviewed in this section. Those studies were reviewed to support the process of this article.

Setiawan (2016) analyzed that Illocutionary act is considered as more complex than other types of speech act. It means that people have to pay more attention with the context which is already there in the dialogue to find out the message. Putri (2019) and Orin (2016) discussed that assertive act can be classified into five functions namely, boasting concluding, claiming, affirming, and informing. Moreover, Rohid (2018) stated that the functions of assertive act are affected by the context of situation, means that context of situation decided when and where to use the functions. Nagane (2015) stated that the functions of assertive act are used differently according to the social relationship of the speakers.

A study proposed by Firdaus (2019) defined six functions of assertive acts, those are stating, suggesting, reporting, insisting, showing, and mentioning. Other studies proposed by Petriandy (2018) and Nurhayati (2016) discussed

that the function of assertive acts was mainly giving description, claiming, requesting, and commanding. However, the analysis proposed by Ramadhani (2019) and Anam (2019) showed that the main function of assertive act is to convince the hearers. The analysis done by Ilyas (2012) shows another type namely poetic verses which uses to express a variety of emotions.

Some previous studies (e.g. Kiuk, 2018; Kumala, 2018; Listya, 2015; Ramayanti, 2018; Istiningdias, 2014) did not directly discuss about assertive act. However, those studies analyzed about all types of speech acts. Unlike those studies, a study by Pratiwi (2018) mainly analyzed about assertive act. The article is focused to find out the function and meaning of the assertive act found in an inaugural speech. However, this article also discussed the function of commissive act, meanwhile the current study only focused on assertive act.

## Theory of Illocutionary Act

This article uses the theory of illocutionary act proposed by Searle (1976). He defined illocutionary acts into five types namely, assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative act. Since this article focused only on assertive act, therefore, the explanation can be seen as follow.

### Assertive Act

According to Searle (1976: 10), assertive act shows the speakers' effort to give a statement of convey the truth to the hearer. It aims to commit the speaker to something being the case. There are at least ten functions of assertive act. Those are, agreeing, denying, affirming, believing, complaining, informing, insisting, predicting, suggesting, and announcing.

## Theory of Delivery Strategies

According to Parker (1986: 17), delivery strategies refers to how the intended meaning of an utterance is transferred. There are four strategies, those are presented below.

### Direct Strategy

According to Parker (1986: 17), direct strategy is a strategy in which the types of a sentence is used according to its function. For instance, declarative sentence is used to give information.

### Indirect Strategy

According to Parker (1986: 18), indirect strategy is a strategy in which the types of a sentence is used different from its function. For instance, declarative sentence is used to give a request.

### Literal Strategy

According to Parker (1986: 18), literal strategy is a strategy in which the intended meaning of the speaker clearly can be seen from the utterances.

### Non- Literal Strategy

According to Parker (1986: 18), non-literal strategy is a strategy in which the speakers imply the meaning of their utterances.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first discussion concerns with the functions of assertive act. Meanwhile, the second discussion concerns with the delivery strategies used by Nemo in *Finding Nemo* the movie.

## The Functions of Assertive Act Used by Nemo in *Finding Nemo* the Movie

Searle (1976) defined assertive act into ten functions; agreeing, denying, affirming, believing, complaining, informing, insisting, predicting, suggesting, and announcing. Further analysis can be seen below.

**[4-1] Affirming**

MARLIN       : Are you sure you wanna go to school this year? 'Cause there's no problem if you don't. You can wait 5 or 6 years.

**NEMO                : Come on, dad. It's time for school.**

The dialogue above happens in a morning at Nemo's house. Marlin asks Nemo whether he really wants to start school this year or not. He does not want to force his son to go to school if he is not ready yet. From the answer, Nemo affirms that he really wants to start school this year by inviting his father to go to school as soon as possible. Therefore, Nemo's illocutionary act above is assertive which describes some state of affairs.

**[4-2] Predicting**

**NEMO         : Dad, maybe while I'm at school, I'll see a shark.**

MARLIN       : I highly doubt that.

The conversation occurs during their way to go to Nemo's school. Nemo is really excited to see a shark since his mother, Coral, and his siblings are eaten by the shark and only him survive from the attack. The utterance shows Nemo's prediction to see a shark during his time in school. By saying in advance what is expected to happen, Nemo wants people, especially his father, to believe a case in which he will see a shark.

**[4-3] Informing**

**NEMO                : Okay, I'm done.**

MARLIN       : You missed a spot.

The dialogue sets in a morning at Nemo's house. At that time, Nemo and Marlin will go to Nemo's school. Nemo, who is really excited to go to school for the first time, does not want to brush. However, Marlin forces Nemo to brush his body or he will not accompany him to school. After finish, Nemo tells his father by saying *"Okay, I'm done"*. From the utterance, Nemo informs Marlin that he has finished brushing himself and he ready for school.

**[4-4] Claiming**

GILL  : I just wanna see him do it, okay? Calm down. Alternate wiggling your fins and your tail

**NEMO : I can't. I have a bad fin.**

The conversation takes place at an aquarium in the dentist's room. Nemo is afraid with Darla since she likes to kill the fish that she has. When Darla comes near the aquarium, Nemo becomes panic. He does not realize that he is sucked up into a pipe in the aquarium. He asks help to Gill, however, Gill forbids anyone to help him because he believes that Nemo can do it by himself. The answer given by Nemo is a claim. He claims that he cannot save himself since he has a bad fin.

**[4-5] Denying**

MARLIN : You were about to swim into open water!

**NEMO                : No, I wasn't go out.**

The dialogue takes place at Nemo's school. Marlin worries about Nemo's safety, especially when he sees Nemo swims close to the boat. He swims close to Nemo and avoid him. However, Nemo does not listen to the warning given by his father. He denies his father by saying that he is not going out into the open water. Denying is a word that is used to say something is not true or false.

**[4-6] Agreeing**

GILL : He's fine, he can do this. So Sharkbait, what do you think?

**NEMO : Let's do it.**

The dialogue sets at the aquarium in the dentist's room. At that moment, Gill and other fish plans to escape from the aquarium. In order to succeed that plan, he wants one of the fish to take a pebble inside the filter and jam the gears. Nemo can get in and out of that filter easily since he is the smallest fish compare to other fish in the aquarium. Therefore, Gill requests him to swim into the filter and take the filter inside it. Nemo, who wants to go out from the aquarium, agrees the request. His agreement can be known from his utterance, *"Let's do it".* His utterance is not only an invitation to do the plan but also a statement of agreement.

**The Delivery Strategies Used by Nemo in *Finding Nemo* the Movie**

The analysis of functional simile was clearly explained above. Furthermore, delivery strategies were analyzed based on theory proposed by Parker (1986) that defines delivery into four types. However, in this article each of those four types are appeared together with another types.

*Direct – Literal Strategy*

Direct – literal strategy refers to the combination of direct and literal strategy. Therefore, the meaning is the speaker's strategy which uses the same sentence types and arrangements.

**[4-7] NEMO : Dad, maybe while I'm at school, I'll see a shark.**

Nemo's utterance above is using the declarative sentence where the form and the function of the sentence is the same. Moreover, Nemo's intention is clearly can be seen from his utterance in which

Nemo wants to see a shark and he wants his father to give a response to his utterance. Therefore, it can be concluded that Nemo applies direct-literal strategy to give an information to his father about his intention to see a shark.

**[4-8] NEMO : Okay, I'm done.**

The dialogue above shows that Nemo applies direct-literal strategy. It is because he uses declarative sentence and the meaning of his utterance is literally stated. Declarative sentence uses by Nemo in that dialogue is *"Okay, I'm done."* The function of declarative sentence used by Nemo is to give information to his father that he is finish brushing himself. As the type and function of the sentence is the same, therefore, Nemo uses direct strategy. Meanwhile, Nemo's intention can be seen clearly, in which he wants his father to quickly accompany him to school after he done brushing.

**[4-9] NEMO : No, I wasn't go out.**

From the dialogue, it can be seen that Nemo applies direct-literal strategy since he uses declarative sentence and the meaning of his utterance is literally stated. The function of declarative sentence used by Nemo is to give information to his father that he is not swimming into the open water. As the type and function of the sentence is the same, therefore, Nemo uses direct strategy. Meanwhile, Nemo's intention can be seen clearly, in which he wants to show his disagreement toward his father opinion.

*Direct – Non Literal Strategy*

Direct – non literal strategy refers to the combination of direct and non-literal strategy. Therefore, the meaning is the speaker's strategy which uses the same sentence types but different word arrangements.

**[4-10] NEMO : Come on, dad. It's time for school.**

Directive sentence uses by Nemo above has the same function as its type which is to give an information. However, from the dialogue, it seems like Nemo does not answer his father question literally. His utterance which states, *"It's time for school"* is non-literally answer Marlin's question. Nemo implies a meaning from his utterance in which he does not want to wait for 5 or 6 years later to start school. Therefore, it can be concluded that Nemo applies direct-non literal strategy to answer his father question because he does not agree with his father who always sees him as a kid.

**[4-11] NEMO          : I can't. I have a bad fin.**

Nemo applied direct-non literal strategy since he uses declarative sentence and the meaning of his utterance is non-literally stated. Declarative sentence uses by Nemo in that dialogue is *"I can't. I have a bad fin"* The function of declarative sentence used by Nemo is to give information to Gill that he has a bad fin. As the type and function of the sentence is the same, therefore, Nemo uses direct strategy. Meanwhile, Nemo's intention is implied in his utterance. By informing that he has a bad fin, he wants Gill and other fish in the aquarium to help him.

**Indirect–Literal Strategy**

Indirect – literal strategy refers to the combination of indirect strategy and literal strategy. It means that the speaker's intended meaning is delivered by using the difference sentence types without implying the meaning.

**[4-6] NEMO : Let's do it.**

The context shows that Nemo and other fish in the aquarium planned to run away from there. From the dialogue above, it can be seen that Nemo responses to Gill's question by using declarative sentence. However, the declarative sentence in the dialogue indicates a different function. It is use to instruct other fish in the aquarium to do the plan. The meaning of the utterance is literally stated by Nemo. It is because by saying *"Let's do it"* means that Nemo agree to do the plan and wants the other fish to follow him. Therefore, it can be concluded that the strategy uses by Nemo in his utterance is indirect-literal strategy.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the foregoing analysis, the conclusion can be drawn as follow.

Assertive act is used by the speaker to give information or to state the belief of the speaker. Nemo as the main character mostly uses assertive act in his utterances to make the hearer believe in him. The analysis showed that among ten functions of assertive acts, there were only six functions found in *Finding Nemo* the movie. Those are, affirming, predicting, claiming, agreeing, informing, and denying.

In order to deliver the message in his utterance, Nemo applies four types of strategies, namely direct, indirect, literal, and non-literal strategy. However, those four types of delivery strategies occurred together in Nemo's utterances. Therefore, delivery strategies used by Nemo in *Finding Nemo* the movie could be classified as direct-literal strategy, direct-non literal strategy, and indirect-literal strategy. Meanwhile, indirect-non literal strategy did not use by Nemo.

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