

NINA'S CHARACTERIZATION REFLECTED IN THE SPEECH ACTS IN *BLACK SWAN* FILM

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Abstract

This thesis entitled Nina's Characterization Reflected in the Speech Acts in *Black Swan* Film. Question of the research are what kinds of speech acts which show Nina's double characters in the film "*Black Swan*", what are the intended meanings of those speech acts and why does Nina use those speech acts in film "*Black Swan*". This study is aimed to find the kinds of speech acts which show Nina's double characters in the film "*Black Swan*", to analyze the intended meanings of those speech acts, and the last to explain why Nina uses those speech acts in film "*Black Swan*". This study makes reference to Yule, Searle and Taleb theory. This research is qualitative research. The data of the research are the utterances of Nina which have been obtained from the film script. From the data analysis, it is found that 15 utterances which have intended meaning spread by 5 macro classes of speech act : 6 utterances of representative, 5 utterances of Expressive, 2 utterances of directive, 1 utterance of commissive, and 1 utterance of declarative. Beside that, the reason of the use of speech act is because she is getting OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) which can create delusion in herself and destroy her life.

Keywords: Characterization, Speech Acts, Intended meaning

As human being, everybody needs language to make his or her life perfect in his or her daily life. Without language, someone will have difficulties in conveying his or her feeling or giving information which is important to be expressed. In Carrol's view, language uses the vocal apparatus, seemingly arbitrary sign, and means for communicating information, feeling, and emotions (1964:5). It is also cited in McMenamin, "Language is a system of communication" (2002: 3). Based on the statements above, it can be concluded that language as a system to communicate anything which want to express with each other. The misunderstanding of seizing the message from the conversation can be avoided by understanding speech act. In speech act, there are some aspects that can be learned to get the subject matter in conversation. In this case, the writer applied linguistics to discuss about speech act. As postulated by Yule (1996: 47), when people convey their feelings or expressions, they do not only produce an utterance which has grammatical structure but also show their actions through utterances and it is called as speech act. Moreover, the term speech act is used to describe actions such as "requesting," "commanding," "questioning" or "informing." Therefore, speech act is the action performed by a speaker with an utterance (Yule, 2010: 133). For example, if speaker say *I'll be there at six*, the speaker does not only speaking, the speaker seems to be performing the speech act of promising to the hearer and will produce some action from the hearer which becomes the respond or reaction.

In learning applied linguistics such as speech act and especially intended meaning, people can conduct the real activity when they are having communication in social life by taking some media to help them. One of the media is film which can be the easiest and most interesting media, because it is audiovisual and can make people interested in watching it. The researcher considers that film is the best choice to understand and study the real life conversation and to learn about speech act.

One of films which deal with conversation is *Black Swan* especially intended meaning from Nina who is the main character in this film. *Black Swan* is a good and interesting film because there are some implicit meanings from Nina's utterances and attitudes which contain of psychological aspects. Additionally, this film got many awards which become one of the reasons the researcher using this film in this research. Another reason is that the lesson learned in the film is very good for many people. It tells about a story that people can be very ambitious in trying something or making their dreams come

true, however they need to be able to handle and manage themselves in avoiding bad effects of their dreams. Therefore, it is good to understand this film for the society to make them understand and loose boredom with speech act. Because they will feel enjoyment in watching this film after knowing the aspect of speech act which become the main discussion of this research.

On February 27, 2011 this film won best actress of Natalie Portman, on December 12, 2011 won best foreign film. And in another chance, it won in best director, best cinematography, best film, and best original screen play at *Austin Film Critics Association*. There were still many awards in any nomination and any chance. It is one of the reasons the researcher using this film, besides because a good film. In this research, the researcher focuses on the utterance of Nina which occurs changes from good become bad characters. She does many conversation, but it is limited only to three main characters: Thomas (Nina's director), Erica (Nina's mother), and Lily (Nina's rival) which become the source of data of this analysis. All the transformation of Nina has relation with psychological aspect. It is because of the over protectiveness from her mother and her obsession becomes the Swan Queen that caused OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive-Disorder). Later, in theory of Black Swan from Taleb (2007) supposes the cover on Nina's character.

Formulation of the Problem

Based on the fact and background of the research, the researcher formulated four statements of the problem as follows:

1. What kinds of speech acts which show Nina's double characters in the film "*Black Swan*"?
2. What are the intended meanings of those speech acts?
3. Why does Nina use those speech acts in film "*Black Swan*"?

Theoretical Overview

When talking about communication, it will have relation with discourse analysis. According to Paltridge (2006:2), discourse analysis focuses on knowledge about language beyond the words, clause, phrase, and the sentence that is needed for successful communication. From the statement before, it is important to study and learn discourse analysis to make communication running smoothly because it relates language and context. In communication, knowing about what the speakers say is not enough to know the intended meaning of what they say is needed and it is called as context. In the view of McCarthy (2004:5), Discourse Analysis concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the context in which it is used.

Pragmatics is important for people to communicate in society. As cited in Mey (2001:6), pragmatics is the study of the way human use their language in communication. And in Levinson's views, Pragmatics is the study of those principles that will account for why a certain set of sentences are anomalous, or not possible utterances (2008:6). So, an utterance is the basic thing in communication.

Having known about the meaning of the utterances in terms of pragmatics as postulated by Yule (1996:3), it has been concluded that what the speakers said in accordance with whom they are talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances. It means that to know what the real meaning of the speakers and to understand the setting, topic, and participant are needed. Further explanation about context in pragmatics comes from Van Dijk (1977:191), he states that a context is a highly idealized abstraction from such a situation and contains only those facts which systematically determine the appropriateness of conventional utterances. It means that context is one of the important parts in analyzing pragmatic especially speech act. Speech act in the conversation is influenced by the context itself. That is why context is very important when studying pragmatic, especially speech acts.

As postulated by Yule (1996:47), speech acts is an action performed via utterances, which means that utterance is aspect of speech act. As the description from Austin (1962) in

Cutting's book (2002: 16), he defines that speech act as the actions performed in saying something when an utterance is produced can be analyzed on three different levels. In addition, based on Yule (1996:47), it is concluded that on any occasion the action performed by producing an utterance will consist of three related acts: Locutionary, Illocutionary, and Perlocutionary.

According to Kellerman and Burry (2007: 161), Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders (OCD) is a disorder which involves recurrent thoughts or ideas (obsession) or behaviors that must be performed repetitively (compulsions). From the explanation above, the researcher thinks that Nina in *Black Swan* film is experience OCD because she is very ambitious and obsessive to become perfect and there is compulsion from her mother. Moreover, according to O'Dwyer and Marks (2000) in Russell (2012: 6) note that while most OCD patient demonstrate insight into their condition and recognize that the obsessions are irrational, there are a small number of a OCD patients with delusions. According to Russel (2012: 6) "while *Black Swan*'s viewers, and probably Nina, herself, are never entirely sure where delusions end and reality begins, this experience does occur with a small group of patient with OCD.

Method

The data were taken from the film script which is published on January 11, 2010 and downloaded on January 08, 2014. The film was taken from DVD. Read the film script carefully while watched and understood the film. The script was selected and the related utterance with some aspect become segment and then become fragment. And the data in every fragment then analyzed by using descriptive qualitative method.

Analysis and Discussion

Speech Act Showing Kindness

Fragment 1

1. Leroy : So Nina, would you like to be the Swan Queen?
2. Nina : **If you want me to be.**
3. Leroy : Well, if I was just casting the White Swan, she'd be yours.
4. Leroy : But I'm not.

In the middle of Nina's audition dancing Odette's Variation, Leroy observes her and taps his fingers giving sign to stop the music. And then he utters 'So Nina, would you like to be the Swan Queen' (line 1). From Leroy's utterance, he offers her to become the Swan Queen. Then she answers 'If you want me to be' (line 2). Nina's utterance consists of if clause and it shows her doubtfulness towards Leroy's words. Besides, it is also using expression of 'you want' which shows defenselessness to Leroy for choosing her or not. Although she actually has a desire to become Swan Queen, it is shown by utterances in some scenes of the film, such as 'I have to go'. This utterance is said by Nina when she is in a poor condition, even if her mother forbids her to practice dancing. So, this is the speech act of hoping instead of its form which is more submitting defenselessness.

The intended meaning from Nina's utterance 'If you want me to be' (line 2) is that she tries to make Leroy believe that she is a respectful girl and hopes will Leroy choose her. This is included into Representative speech act. She does not use 'I want' or 'I hope' which shows her obsession. That is why Nina uses that utterance. Therefore, she hides her obsession from Leroy to assert her respect to Leroy as the director. From that explanation, it can be seen that Nina is showing her kindness in this utterance.

In the responses of Leroy, he utters 'Well, if I was just casting the White Swan, she'd be yours' (line 3). It consists of 'if' conditional sentence which shows supposition to his casting. Additionally, it also consists 'she'd be yours' which means he will choose Nina because she is good in doing White Swan dance, but he does not choose Nina by saying

'But, I'm not' (line 4) which means that the fact is Leroy does not only cast the White Swan but also Black Swan, and Nina is only good at White Swan, not at Black Swan dance.

Speech Act Showing Brittleness

Fragment 2

1. Erica : How did it go?
2. Erica : You were late, so I called Susie in the office. An audition!
3. : Can't believe he just sprung that on you.
4. Erica : So?
5. Nina : **It is fine**
6. Erica : Just fine?
7. Erica : Oh sweet heart
8. Erica : Shhh, shhh. Can you tell me about it?

When Nina enters to her house after doing training of dance, her mother have been standing there. Erica asks 'How did it go?' (line 1). 'How' is said to ask about the progress of her training. She comes late and it is shown by her mother utterance 'You were late' (line 2). Actually, it does not matter for Erica that she is late, but she is curious about her training and it is seen in utterance 'So?' (line 4). After that, Nina answers 'It is fine' (line 5). This is the speech act of hiding the feeling to keep the mother calm and not sad with Nina's feeling. In this utterance, Nina is not showing a fine condition, but it is the opposite from what is seen in Erica's utterance 'just fine?' (line 6). By using 'just', it shows another condition which Nina feels because her mother knows there is another feeling besides feeling fine. In fact, Nina feels sad and begins to cry by showing in Erica's utterance 'Oh, sweet heart' (line 7), using 'oh' it is showing care of that condition and 'sweet heart' her special nickname from her mother. In addition Erica utters 'Shhh, shhh. Can you tell me about it?' (line 8). By using 'Shhh, shhh', she shows attention about Nina and hopes Nina to stop crying.

In this condition, Nina seems fragile because she cries about her sad feeling. The intended meaning of her utterance is that she tries to hide her feeling to her mother that is sad and trouble condition. Nina is using that utterance because she is avoiding making her mother disappointed to her. But, she cannot do it and her tears keep on falling while hugging her mother. According to Yule (1996: 53), Expressive speech act is the act to express what Nina feels.

Speech Act Showing Anger

Fragment 6

1. Erica : Has he tried anything with you?
2. Erica : He has a reputation.
3. Erica : I have a right to be concerned, Nina. You've been staying late
4. : so many nights. I hope not taking advantage, that's all.
5. Nina : He's not.
6. Erica : Good. I don't want you making the same mistake I did.
7. Nina : Thanks.
8. Erica : Not like that. I just mean as far as my career was concerned.
9. Nina : What career?
10. Erica : The one I gave up to have you.
11. Nina : **You were 28**
12. Erica : So?
13. Nina : And only
14. Erica : Only what?
15. Nina : Nothing.
16. Erica : What?

17. Nina : **Nothing.**

The conversation takes place in Nina's house, when she and her mother sewing ribbon in her shoes. They are talking about Thomas and her mother reputation in the past. Her mother asks about Thomas because she knows if Thomas is naughty boy which have seen in saying 'you've been staying late so many nights. I hope not taking advantage' (line 3 and 4). By using 'hope', her mother gives a warning to Nina to be careful of Thomas and uses 'advantage' which means that Leroy has reputation as a playboy.

When her mother utters 'The one I gave up to have you' (line 10), she uses 'gave' which means that she is lecturing something to Nina. She says 'You were 28' (line 11). This is the speech act of reminding. The utterance consist of '28' which means that her mother get pregnant when she was twenty eight years old. The intended meaning of this utterance is Nina tries to remind her mother that she was a woman who is twenty eight years old. Nina uses that utterance because her mother still considers her as a child whose life needs to be controlled. The utterance of Nina can be classified to Representative speech act. In Yule's view, Representative speech act is the act of stating the truth (1996: 53).

Moreover she utters 'Nothing' (line 15 and 17) loudly, this is speech act of refusing to talk more about her expression. This utterance is showing anger, because she says loudly which has intended meaning she tries to hide something which she wants to say and she is requesting to her mother to do not ask again. It can be classified into Directive speech act. Nina uses this utterance because her mother is inquisitive about her privacy, but it might have an intended meaning to avoid hurting her mother's feeling and disappointment. It is classified to Expressive speech act. According to Yule (1996: 53), Expressive speech act is the act to express what Nina feels. In this condition, Nina still shows her kindness to show a care to her mother's feeling although she says loudly to her mother.

Speech Act Showing Ambition

Fragment 9

1. Beth : What are you doing here?
2. Nina : I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.
3. Nina : I know have feels now. She's trying to replace me. What have I do?
4. Beth : You stole all my things?
5. Nina : I just try be perfect like you
6. Beth : Perfect. I'm not perfect. I'm nothing.
7. Shadow: **Nothing! Nothing!!!**
8. Nina : Beth?!
9. Shadow: **NOTHING!**

This conversation takes place in the hospital at Beth's room. She apologizes to Beth because she steals all her things and asks the suggestion about something which happens to her. When Nina utters 'I just try be perfect like you' (line 5), she wants to be like Beth who is perfect in dancing. And Beth gives response and says 'Perfect. I'm not perfect. I'm nothing' (line 5). It means that Beth is not perfect, because she is actually replaced by Nina to be dancer. After that, Nina's shadow says 'Nothing. Nothing' (line 7 and 9) loudly and repetitively. Nina's shadow is the other side of Nina which is her dark side which handles her mind. This utterance shows that if her double take in grip on herself while stabbing Beth using a small knife which she wants bring back to Beth (it is seen in the scene). This is the speech act showing convincing about real condition.

The intended meaning of Nina's shadow utterance 'Nothing' is her dark side try to make herself believe if there is no one perfect which classified as Representative speech act. Her delusion of her shadow has relation with O'Dwyer and Marks (2000) in Russell theory (2012: 6) that there are some patients of OCD will has delusion and it is seen in Nina's

shadow. Thus, it shows that if Nina obsessive to become perfect and cannot control herself by saying loudly and repetitively. This event is connected to her own distress about her struggle desires being triggered by her ballet role.

Conclusion

Based on the explanation and analysis from chapter four, the utterances Nina in *Black Swan* film have shown the kinds of speech act of hoping, refusing, apologizing, hiding, accepting, reminding, avoiding, ordering, expressing, and convincing. Besides, there is a change from good character becomes bad character. They are kind and brittle to show good character and bad character are ill-tempered and ambitious. Moreover, it has shown intended meaning in his speech act, based on the types of classes are representative, expressive, directive, commissive, and declarative. Representative and expressive are most often occurs in *Black Swan* film and another is only one or two fragment which include it.

From the statement of problem, the utterances of Nina in *Black Swan* film show not only the kinds of speech act which reflect her double characters and intended meaning. But also influenced by the psychology of Black Swan that tells she is unpredictable to around people theory and she might be getting OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive-Disorders). And the effect of OCD is Nina is showing delusion that is destroying and hurting her. It comes from her mother who always forces her to doing well and considers her as a little child, even though she has grown into an adult. So when she has chance, she expresses her feeling by dancing. Besides, she is getting pressure from her editor to loose herself in brittle and innocent for being perfect.

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