

## THE EXPLORATION OF PERLOCUTINARY ACTS IN KINGSMAN: THE GOLDEN CIRCLE FILM SCRIPT

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### Abstract

*Using descriptive qualitative research, this study investigates the perlocutionary acts found in the film script of the 2017 film Kingsman: The Golden Circle by Matthew Vaughn. The objectives of this study are to explain the types and the context of the perlocutionary acts found in the dialogues of the film script. Pragmatic approach is applied and a total sum of 10 data in form of dialogues were found, which were categorised based on Searle's 1969 Speech Act theory. Furthermore, the context of situation of all the data were explained with the basis of pragmatic approach supported by Yule's theory 1996. Miles & Huberman's theory (1994) is assigned in analyzing the data. Thus, this study concluded that the five types of Perlocutionary Acts appear in the film script, with Directives acts to appear most often, followed by Assertives, and finally Commissives, Expressives and Declaratives. However, the reader must have a deep understanding in context of situation to understand the meaning of the text. This study contributes to give a new insight in perlocutionary acts based on context of situation. Authors suggest to futher researcher to analyze perlocutionary act in gender context and to apply context of situation in avoiding misinterpretation and misact.*

**Keywords:** *film script, perlocutionary acts, speech acts.*

## INTRODUCTION

The original notion of perlocutionary act can be traced back to the speech act theory coined by J. L. Austin in 1962. Perlocutionary acts has a distinction that sets itself apart from both locutionary and illocutionary act, in which it is a natural act, not conventional (Austin, 1962). The problem with Austin's theory is, there is no further accounts that is systematic nor definite enough for perlocutionary acts (Gustafsson, 2020). Researchers argue that this is in fact understandable as Austin's research itself focuses on the topic of illocutionary act, noting that Austin's idea of speech act being classed into locutionary, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act, is intended to refer to illocutionary act (Searle, 1969).

This paper aims not to criticize Austin of this somewhat imperfect conception, rather to investigate an example of literature in which a more refined conception of perlocutionary act is suggested. The concept in question is J. R. Searle's 1969 speech act theory. Speech act, as the umbrella for perlocutionary act can be divided into five classes, namely assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives (Searle, 1969). This classification acts as a refinement of the original idea proposed by Austin in 1962. In this concept, the perlocutionary act can be classed based on their function in an utterance.

Naturally, perlocutionary act acts as the response to an illocutionary act, as Austin himself established that every utterance contains an action. However, some researchers claim that perlocutionary act results from the locution, not the illocution (Wahyudiantari, 2021; Juliantina, 2020). With some even found to view perlocutionary act as the act of affecting something (Gunawan, 2022).

These claims beg a question that might be answered by looking back into the nature of speech act as a subtopic of pragmatics. Pragmatics, in itself, can be frustrating, as it deals with the audience's interpretation, meaning whether or not an idea can be delivered to an audience as intended depends not only on the writer, but also the audience (Yule, 1996). Furthermore, pragmatics deals with the meaning of utterances and correlating said meaning not only as intended by the speaker, but also with the listener as well (Islami & Ramdhani, 2023). It can then be concluded that pragmatics deals with the spoken and contextual meaning, as well as how what gets communicated can sometimes not be limited to what is spoken (Kumala, 2018; Rahayu, 2021). With this notion, we can somewhat see that

perlocutionary act can not be ruled, nor can it be confirmed (Saifudin, 2019; Annisa & Suparto, 2022). Furthermore, it is a natural act and deals with the causative relationship between the concerning events (Inderasari, Kusno, & Kusmanto, 2022).

Perlocutionary act itself is one of the three categories of the original idea of speech act, alongside locutionary act and illocutionary act (Austin, 1962). However, to set itself apart perlocutionary act is described to be the consequent effect on the hearer which the speaker intends should follow from his utterance (Zahada & Sofian, 2021; Stevani, Tarigan, Sawalmeh, & Ginting, 2023). Especially crucial for the masses, this notion focuses on the listener's ability "read the room" and their understanding of the context of situation. Furthermore, pragmatics, as the umbrella of perlocutionary act also concerns non-linguistical situation in a communication, which in this case, focuses on the relation between language and action (Saifudin, Konteks dalma Studi Linguistik Pragmatik, 2018). Therefore, the perlocutionary effect of an utterance is not dependent on the utterance's effect on the interlocutor (Saifudin, Teori Tindak Tuter dalam Studi Lniguistik Pragmatik, 2019). In this sense, perlocutionary acts have been a popular topic of study as it means that it is the building blocks of concern in topics such as euphemism (Wahyuningsih & Nirmala, 2020; Chairani, Sofyan, & Hardiah, 2020).

In order to get a better understanding of this matter, this article aims to study the perlocutionary acts found in the film script of a 2017 box office *Kingsman: The Golden Circle* by Matthew Vaughn. Naturally, speech acts and especially perlocutionary acts occurs in practical conversation. However, many researchers agreed that literature is a reflection of reality (Nurhamidah, Purwanto, & Ekaningsih, 2019). Therefore, the occurrence of speech acts can also be accurately reflected in literary works (Rismayanti, 2021).

To tackle the problem of this study, this article aims to explain the categorisation and the context of the data found in the film script of the aforementioned film. The data itself is taken from the dialogues of the characters in the film, found in conversations across varying situation and conditions. Considering the type of data, this study uses a descriptive qualitative research approach, aiming to explain the data in detail, with reference from speech act and pragmatic theories. With this consideration, people need to understand a way to

look into things holistically before making an appropriate judgment in order to avoid misinterpretation and misact.

## METHODS

Referring back to the aim of this study, that is to explain the categorisation and context of situation of an utterance, quantitative research design is automatically out of the question. Hence, this research adopts descriptive qualitative research method, as a type of study that focuses to explain and understand the subject of the study (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailer, 2020). This includes qualities such as the behaviour, phenomenon, perception, action, and motivation of the subject. Furthermore, the one particular distinction that renders this research unsuitable for quantitative research is that unlike quantitative research, qualitative research does not present numerical data as the research subject (Aurini, Heath, & Howells, 2021). The fact that this research does not present the research subject in the form of numerical data and that this research aims to describe and explain, instead of calculate, makes descriptive qualitative research design suitable for this research.

Following the descriptive qualitative research design, a special priority is given to the process of data analysis rather than the result of the research (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). With this consideration, this research adopts qualitative data analysis, consisting of data reduction, data display, and data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction refers to the process of data collection all the way to the data selection, simplification and condensation. Following data reduction are the process of data display and data analysis.

The data itself is sourced from the film script for the 2017 box office *Kingsman: The Golden Circle* by Matthew Vaughn. The data came in form of utterances inside the dialogues between the characters in the film. The data collection involves scanning of the film script for dialogues. The selected dialogues, following the data simplification and condensation method, are then simplified and observed for their speech acts. Following the speech act theories as mentioned in the literature review, the condensed data are displayed to be later analysed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As previously stated, that one of the main concerns of this study is to identify the types of perlocutionary acts and the context of situation of each dialogue, the data is presented in two different section each addressing their respective problems.

The types of perlocutionary acts found in the dialogue of this film script is divided into their respective categories, namely; assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, declaratives.

First type is assertives. The original idea of assertives states that assertives refers to speech acts that are intended to assert the speaker's idea to the listener, be it true or false (Searle, 1969). With this in mind, the following is the findings in this study.

Data 1

Harry: She's OD'd. You gave her too much.

Eggsy: Did I? You know, I really don't have as much experience with all this drug stuff as people think.

Eggsy, the speaker of the utterance is speaking in response to a remark made towards his background. The remark came from Eggsy's background in which he came from a lower-class family and was involved with petty crimes. With this idea, Harry stereotypes Eggsy as being someone with a history of drug abuse. In response, Eggsy's reply comes in an assertion that despite his street kid background, he doesn't really have much experience in handling drugs.

Data 2

Eggsy: We're from the Kingsman tailor shop in London. Maybe you've heard of us?

Tequila: Oh, the Kingsman. That's where y'all got them fine suits and them fancy spectacles y'all got on?

Eggsy stated that they came from the Kingsman tailor shop in London. In response to this statement, Tequila concludes that Eggsy got his outfit from the Kingsman tailor in London. This form of utterance came as a response to the assertion made by the previous speaker, in which it acts as a conclusion, concluding something off the other speaker based on their statement. Conclusion itself falls into the category of assertives, as it asserts the speaker's conclusion whether it is true or not.

Next, directives are speech acts a speaker uses to make their listener do something for them. Utterances that fall into this category includes commands, orders, requests, and suggestions (Searle, 1969).

Data 3

Eggsy: His ex-girlfriend. I've been tracking her through social media. We believe she's still in contact with him. And she's going to Glastonbury Music Festival.

Champ: Oh, good. Agent Tequila, break out your dancing shoes.

As a response to the intelligence Champ acquires from Eggsy, he responded in stating to Agent Tequila for him to *break out his dancing shoes*. This utterance, in an apparent directive, as Champ explicitly states that Agent Tequila breaks out his dancing shoes. What Champ means in this utterance is he is giving Agent Tequila the order for him to go on a mission involving him needing to *break out his dancing shoes* as the two agents, Eggsy and Tequila, are required to attend a music festival.

Data 4

Clara: Follow my finger.

Whiskey: What are we doing?

Clara: Swiping to the left. What, you don't do Tinder in America?

Clara, the target that Whiskey plans to approach, instructs him to *swiping to the left*. In itself, this utterance is a directive, in which Clara orders Whiskey to get away from her, as a response for his expression "What are we doing" from the line before. Swiping to the left in this utterance refers to the mechanics of the popular dating application *Tinder*, in which the users could *swipe left* on their smartphone to reject a *match*.

Then, commissives are speech acts that show the speaker's commitment to a form of future action, or put simply, promises. Speech acts that fall into this category are threats, pledges, and refusals

Data 5

Harry: You alright? What was that phone call you got?

Eggsy: Let's not, Harry. I don't think you'd sympathize... and I'm not really in the mood for a lecture.

Eggsy, in this utterance responses to Harry's question about the phone call he had earlier, with a refusal. Seen in the utterance, Eggsy said to Harry that he is not in

the mood for a lecture and that he doesn't think that Harry would sympathise, therefore he would rather not talk about it. Eggsy's response for Harry's question act as a refusal as it shows the commitment that he would not talk about the matter during that time, rendering this data into the commissives category.

Data 6

Eggsy: Whiskey. We are all on the same side here. You've had a head injury. The exact same thing happened to Harry. You're havin' some sort of brain glitch.

Whiskey: Nope. My brain's all good, kid. And you know what? I reckon the same was true for your friend Harry over here. Real fine instincts, I'll give him that. So stay still... or I'll dice him up so small, you can take him home in a bucket... and still have room for what's left of your buddy, Merlin.

*So stay still... or I'll dice him up so small, you can take him home in a bucket... and still have room for what's left of your buddy, Merlin* is the utterance Whiskey says to Eggsy's statement that there is something wrong with his brain and that he is imagining things. Whiskey's initial response is to assert that Eggsy's statement that he is wrong, followed by a threat, which can be identified by Whiskey's intention to murder someone, presumably a hostage, had Eggsy does anything.

Searle in Yule (1996) states that expressives refer to the speech acts which the speakers use to express a certain psychological state. These expressions can vary from happiness, sorrow, apology, and so on.

Data 7

Merlin: Yeah. Unfortunately, Galahad, you also saved Charlie. When you electrocuted him, you damaged his implant. Instead of his head exploding, he only lost an arm and his vocal cord.

Eggsy: Fucker should be thanking me.

In this dialogue, Merlin states that Eggsy involuntarily saved his archnemesis his life by causing his implant to target non vital organs. In response, Eggsy can be seen to be highly irritated and expresses it in his speech. The way the characters handle situation such as this can sometimes be seen to be not very expressive, given the context that the characters are portrayed as British and tend to be very polite and gentleman-like. Therefore, this speech which on the surface could look

like it has other meaning, like joking, can act as an expressive by considering the context.

Data 8

Tilde's father: You may address my daughter as "Your Highness." Please address the Queen and myself with "Your Majesty."

Tilde: Pappa, this is a family dinner... not some state function.

Taking a look at the film and especially the character, we can infer first and foremost that Eggsy does not have a royal blood, implying that he must not be used the royal etiquette. Seen in this dialogue, Eggsy is having a dinner with his partner's family, in which Tilde's father corrected his etiquette. In response, Tilde expresses her irritation to her father that this is a family dinner and her father should've not been too strict. This response, falls into the category of expressives as it expresses the speaker's feeling.

As the term suggests, declaratives cover speech acts that aims to declare a certain occasion, effectively changing a status of something, or as commonly coined, to change the world via the utterances. Declaratives tend to be a very occasional occurrence due to its nature of requiring the speaker to have an appropriate authority or institutional status in order for it to count as a declaration. The obvious example of declaratives are declarations, as well as nominations, announcements, and sentences, among others.

Data 9

Ginger: Champ... I'd like to throw my hat in the ring.

Champ: All right! Statesmen, the vote. Looks like she's in. Have a seat.

This dialogue portrays a request and a response. Ginger first of all requests Champ for a position, to "throw her hat in the ring." In response to this, Champ first gathers the vote from the other agents in the room before uttering "Looks like she's in," which signifies her entry for said position. In this utterance, Champ is portrayed as the superior, meaning the one with the appropriate authority to declare or deny the request. Therefore, when finally stated that Ginger is in, Champ's utterance acts as a declaration.

Data 10

Merlin: Well, well. I suppose I should cancel that taxi.

Harry: Yes, if you don't mind... Merlin.

Merlin: Welcome back, Galahad.

As a member of surviving agents, Merlin now holds the authority of admitting entry into the Kingsman, which he exercised in this dialogue. With the context, we could tell that Harry has been absent for quite some time from the Kingsman due to the incident he had. During this dialogue, however, Harry finally recovered from his condition and Merlin welcomes him, with his declaration, and reposition him as an agent.

The context of Dialogues data are discussed below;

Data 1

Harry: She's OD'd. You gave her too much.

Eggsy: Did I? You know, I really don't have as much experience with all this drug stuff as people think.

The idea behind this dialogue is to administer the same drug the villain used to take the world hostage to herself, to lower her guard and effectively making the villain a hostage herself. During this scene, Eggsy managed to give her the drugs, but unbeknownst to him, the dosage he administered was way too high, causing the villain to overdose. The context that needs pointing out is that Eggsy is depicted as being some street kid from London, stereotypically associated with petty crimes and narcotics. Therefore, it is only normal for Harry to assume that Eggsy must've had some experience with drugs.

Data 2

Eggsy: We're from the Kingsman tailor shop in London. Maybe you've heard of us?

Tequila: Oh, the Kingsman. That's where y'all got them fine suits and them fancy spectacles y'all got on?

In order to convince Tequila that Eggsy and Merlin is led to them, Eggsy started to inform Tequila of their institution, which is Kingsman, in hope that it will ring a bell.

Data 3

Eggsy: His ex-girlfriend. I've been tracking her through social media. We believe she's still in contact with him. And she's going to Glastonbury Music Festival.

Champ: Oh, good. Agent Tequila, break out your dancing shoes.

In a meeting between Eggsy and Champ, Eggsy reveals that he has an intel on their targets. During said revelation, the room agree that Eggsy's intel is the way to proceed on their goal, to which Champ orders Tequila to go on a mission alongside Eggsy.

Data 4

Clara: Follow my finger.

Whiskey: What are we doing?

Clara: Swiping to the left. What, you don't do Tinder in America?

This dialogue holds another example of misunderstanding without proper knowledge of context. The motion of *swiping to the left* refers to the mechanics of the popular dating application *Tinder*, which users can swipe to the right on their smartphone to accept a *match*. What Clara is trying to imply in this dialogue is that she is not interested in Whiskey, and requests him to leave her.

Data 5

Harry: You alright? What was that phone call you got?

Eggsy: Let's not, Harry. I don't think you'd sympathize... and I'm not really in the mood for a lecture.

In this dialogue, Harry confronts Eggsy of the phone call he had earlier that day, which was from Eggsy's girlfriend, Tilde. As the Kingsman operate within the rule that agents shall not have any relationship, Eggsy feels as if Harry wouldn't sympathise with him therefore denying his request.

Data 6

Eggsy: Whiskey. We are all on the same side here. You've had a head injury. The exact same thing happened to Harry. You're havin' some sort of brain glitch.

Whiskey: Nope. My brain's all good, kid. And you know what? I reckon the same was true for your friend Harry over here. Real fine instincts, I'll give him that. So stay still... or I'll dice him up so small, you can take him home in a bucket... and still have room for what's left of your buddy, Merlin.

For context, Whiskey was involved in a same situation as Harry where he develops a retrograde amnesia. Eggsy tries to exploit this and protect Harry whom he held

hostage. Whiskey then revealed that he is perfectly aware of the situation and that he is the one who is running his personal agenda.

Data 7

Merlin: Yeah. Unfortunately, Galahad, you also saved Charlie. When you electrocuted him, you damaged his implant. Instead of his head exploding, he only lost an arm and his vocal cord.

Eggsy: Fucker should be thanking me.

This data is the follow-up of the debriefing about Eggsy's encounter with Charlie in the opening of the film. The context of this data is, in order for the room to understand the extent of what happened the night before the debrief, Merlin informs the room of the events in the previous film where they managed to cause Charlie to lose an arm and his vocal cord, while saving his life in the process.

Data 8

Tilde's father: You may address my daughter as "Your Highness." Please address the Queen and myself with "Your Majesty."

Tilde: Pappa, this is a family dinner... not some state function.

The event of this utterance is when Eggsy joins Tilde to a family dinner with her parents, who happen to be the king and queen of Switzerland. During the dinner, being someone of a royal status, the King, i.e., Tilde's father talks to Eggsy in such a formal manner, fit for a state affair, much to his daughter's annoyance, who sees this occasion as a family dinner.

Data 9

Ginger: Champ... I'd like to throw my hat in the ring.

Champ: All right! Statesmen, the vote. Looks like she's in. Have a seat.

This dialogue happens during the closing scene of the film. As the agents, both Kingsman and Statesman, were debriefed about the joint venture between Statesman and Kingsman as well as the passing of agent Whiskey, both the Kingsman agents are offered the position to replace agent Whiskey, to which they politely declined. After this, agent Ginger Ale, the former strategy executive of Statesman, offers to take up the position as a field agent under the alias "agent Whiskey."

Data 10

Merlin: Well, well. I suppose I should cancel that taxi.

Harry: Yes, if you don't mind... Merlin.

Merlin: Welcome back, Galahad.

Before this event, Harry has developed a retrograde amnesia as well as regression to his younger self as a result of a head injury he sustained in the previous film. In the present time, Harry is held by the Statesman agents in this state. Long story short, after some attempts to jolt his memory back, the Statesman agents finally succeeded to do so. However, one of the attempts of bringing back his memories proved too traumatic for him, prompting him to demand leaving the Statesman's facility and Merlin to order a taxi bound for the airport. During this scene, where the Eggsy finally brought back Harry's memories, Merlin came back to his chamber and finally declares his return to the Kingsman.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This pragmatics study investigates the categorisation of perlocutionary act occurring in practical conversation and the context as well. The dialogues gathered from the film script provide a test mule in which it was found out that perlocutionary acts does not only occur in response to the locution. Some dialogue also exhibits the fact that many utterances contain illocution that requires the audience to take into account many other variables in order to acquire an accurate interpretation.

This study discovered two findings based on data analysis: types of perlocutionary acts and dialogue context. All types of perlocutionary acts are found within the film script, namely; assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives, in line with John Searle's speech act theory. In practical conversation, the speakers apply all types of perlocutionary act. It means that the speakers assert the speakers' idea to the listeners, make the listeners do something for them, demonstrate the speakers' commitment to a form of future action, express psychological states such as happiness, sorrow, apology, and so on, and declare a specific occasion, effectively changing the state of something.

Furthermore, all dialogues seem to require the reader to have a deep understanding of the underlying context of situation, supporting George Yule's pragmatics theory. The context of the situation is intended to avoid misunderstanding and misbehavior. Thus, in a film script, speakers in a practical

conversation receive all types of perlocutionary acts and the situation's context. People must understand how to look at things holistically before making an appropriate judgment, as stated earlier in the discussion. Future researchers should look into the context of dialogues and how male and female perlocutionary acts can be classified, according to the findings of this study

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