

## Main Character's Speech Functions Analysis In The Movie "Turning Red"

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**Abstract.** *The study entitled "An Analysis of The Main Character's Speech Functions in The Movie "Turning Red"". It aims to identify the types of the speech functions and to find out the most prominent speech functions used by the main character named Meilin Lee. The research method used in this study is the qualitative method with the elaboration in the discussion. Furthermore, the analysis of this study used the theory proposed by Holmes (2013) which is the five of speech functions (expressive, directive, referential, metalinguistic, poetic, and phatic functions). The findings show that there are only three speech functions found in the movie Turning Red. They are the expressive function (17 cases), directive functions (34 cases), and phatic functions (26 cases). In addition, the most prominent speech functions used by the main character are the directive functions which serve thirty-four cases, followed by phatic that has twenty-six, and expressive that has only seventeen cases*

**Keywords:** *Movie, speech function, speech function analysis, Turning Red*

**Abstrak.** Studi yang berjudul "Analisis Fungsi Tuturan Karakter Utama dalam Film "Turning Red" bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis fungsi tuturan dan menemukan fungsi tuturan yang paling menonjol yang digunakan oleh karakter utama bernama Meilin Lee. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam studi ini adalah metode kualitatif dengan penjelasan dalam diskusi. Selanjutnya, analisis dari studi ini menggunakan teori yang diajukan oleh Holmes (2013) yang terdiri dari lima fungsi tuturan (fungsi ekspresif, direktif, referensial, metalinguistik, poetik, dan fatis). Temuan menunjukkan bahwa hanya terdapat tiga fungsi tuturan yang ditemukan dalam film Turning Red. Mereka adalah fungsi ekspresif (17 kasus), fungsi direktif (34 kasus), dan fungsi fatis (26 kasus). Selain itu, fungsi tuturan yang paling menonjol yang digunakan oleh karakter utama adalah fungsi direktif yang terjadi dalam tiga puluh empat kasus, diikuti oleh fungsi fatis yang terjadi dalam dua puluh enam kasus, dan fungsi ekspresif yang hanya terjadi dalam tujuh belas kasus.

**Kata kunci:** Analisis fungsi tuturan, film, fungsi tuturan, Turning Red

### INTRODUCTION

Speech functions are under the sociolinguistic study. The study of sociolinguistics examines language in connection to social aspects such as gender, social groups, dialect, and so on. Sociolinguistics may be the key to understanding and delving further into what's going on in today's world between people and their own languages. There are numerous phenomena relating to language use and social life, such as language variety within communities, language

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shift, language death, speech communities, and so on. Because people are naturally given the advantage of talking and interacting socially, a language is constantly implicated during communication and/or interaction, it is difficult to separate humans and individuals with their own languages. Meanwhile, Holmes (2013) introduced the speech functions theory, in which he classified the function of speech into six categories. Those are expressive, directive, referential, metalinguistic, poetic, and phatic functions. In most cases, a single utterance can only have one function, such as in the utterance "Close the window". However, it is crucial to keep in mind that any particular utterance might express multiple functions (Holmes, 2013).

Turning Red is a movie that was released in 2022 on Disney+ Hotstar streaming service. The writer became interested in the movie after watching the movie and found it immensely entertaining. Furthermore, the writer thought that the main character's utterance would consist of the speech functions based on Holmes' theory which will support this study greatly.

Therefore, the idea of examining the speech functions used by the main character in the movie Turning Red arises. According to the background, this study will examine two research questions:

- a. Which types of speech functions are used in the Turning Red movie by the main character?
- b. What is the dominant type of speech function used in the Turning Red movie by the main character?

Hence, the research objectives are as follows:

- a. Identify the types of the main character's speech functions contained in the Turning Red movie.
- b. Examine the most dominant type of speech function used in the Turning Red movie by the main character.

There are some previous literature that are relevant to this research. The first study written by Tarigan in 2018 concentrates on identifying the speech functions used in the movie Moana (2016). Furthermore, qualitative research is used in analyzing the research while theory from Halliday about the speech functions is applied. The results show that Moana used five categories of speech functions namely regulatory, representational, interactional, personal, and heuristic functions. Meanwhile, Maui used more than Moana in which he used six categories of speech functions. Those are personal, representational, regulatory, interactional, heuristic, and imaginative functions. It also shows that Moana used more heuristic and regulatory

functions whilst Maui is dominant in using representational, personal, interactional, and imaginative functions.

The second study comes from an article written by Dewi *et al.* in 2020. The purpose of their research is to find out the functions of the speech acts in the movie and to examine the conversational implicature used by the characters in the movie. The research method is the qualitative research whilst two theories used, they are speech act theory by Levinson (1983) and the speech act functions theory by Searle (1979). The data collection is by transcribing the movie's conversation into text. According to the discussion, there are five speech act functions found in the movie namely the directive, representative, commissive, expressive, and declarative functions.

The study by Andriani in 2018 focused on identifying the speech functions contained and the most dominant one in the cigarette advertisement. Descriptive qualitative method is used for the research design whilst the theory of speech functions by Halliday applied to analyze the cigarettes advertisement. Those speech function types are statement, question, offer, and command. The results show that there are 118 cases in total. The statement is 74 cases (62,7%), question is 14 cases (11,8%), offer is 13 items (11,1%), and command 17 cases (14,4%). The most dominant one is obviously from the statement that has 74 cases which in percentage shows 62,7%. The topic and research method used in her study are relevant to this study. The difference is only the theories being used and the data source since this study apply Holmes' theory of speech functions.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study's analysis will be focused solely on one theory proposed by Holmes (2013), namely the functions of speech. Speech functions are divided into six categories by Holmes: directive, expressive, referential, metalinguistic, poetic, and phatic. Linguists consider the expressive, directive, and referential functions of speech to be the three most important functions of language (Holmes, 2013). According to Holmes, the expressive function is more speaker-oriented, the directive function is more addressee-oriented, and the referential function is dependent on the message or information to be conveyed.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Qualitative method is applied in conducting this research. Qualitative methods offer an effective way of an in-depth enlightenment about a certain topic, especially the topic that will be examined in this research which is the speech functions. Furthermore, the primary data source for this study is the utterance produced by the main character in the movie entitled

Turning Red with a duration approximately 99 minutes long (1 hour 39 minutes). While journals, articles, and so forth are used to be the secondary data. Documentation method is applied for the data collection and note-taking will be the additional method since the writer needs to carefully identify the utterance that will represent six functions of speech by Holmes (2013). The process of analyzing the data is by transcribing the utterance produced by the main character in the movie into texts. The data will be presented using an informal method that includes descriptive elaboration.

Furthermore, limiting the scope of the discussion is crucial in order to avoid the vastness of the topic because the narrower the area of the study, the easier it is to focus on analyzing and examining the research. Therefore, this scope of discussion only concentrates in the main character's utterances, Meilin Lee, in order to observe the types of the speech functions contained and decide which type is the most used in the movie Turning Red.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The animated fantasy comedy film Turning Red was released in 2022 with approximately 99 minutes duration. It was produced by Pixar Animation Studios and published by Walt Disney Studio Motion Pictures. The film follows the main character named Meilin Lee, a 13-year-old girl who transforms into a gigantic red panda when she experiences strong emotions. It occurs because she inherited a genetic curse from her mother's ancestors and must follow a certain ritual in order to rid herself of the giant red panda.

### **Expressive Functions**

Expressive function tends to be speaker-oriented since it is the function where speakers freely express their feelings and emotions. In the Turning Red movie, it is full of emotional turbulence because it tells about a thirteen-year-old girl turning into a big red panda if she experiences such strong emotions, either excitement, misery, disappointment, et cetera. However, the data shows that there are only seventeen (17) cases found for the expressive function of the main character. It happens because in the whole movie, Meilin Lee only shows her strong emotions through the way she acts, not by her utterances for instance when she feels sad, miserable, hopeless, and mad. Furthermore, some of her utterances do not rely on the expressive function because she is in the middle of an argument when she is angry, so the utterances would likely to be more on the context of the things being argued which is far from the expressive function where the speaker express their feelings (e.g. I'm a gross red monster, I'm a freak, and I'm smelly)

**Directive Functions**

In the Turning Red movie, there are thirty-four (34) cases found for the directive function. Directive function is more to be addressee-oriented since the speaker would normally ask individuals or people to do something. There are three types of directive functions, namely the imperative, declarative, and also interrogative. Below are some examples of the data found from the Turning Red movie:

- |                                       |               |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| a. Share the sidewalk, people!        | Imperative    |
| b. Mom, really you don't have to come | Declarative   |
| c. Wouldn't you rather hang with Dad? | Interrogative |

According to the data above, directive functions are more found than the expressive functions because the main character, Meilin Lee, is close with her best friends and mother. In addition, it is also because she faces the turbulence and abundant emotions so she most likely orders or asks people she is close with to do what she wants.

**Phatic Functions**

The last function of speech found is the phatic function. Phatic function shows the sense of belonging and compassion between the speaker and the hearer. It includes chit-chats, small talks, and greetings. This function's purpose is to keep in touch with the speaker's closed ones such as family, best friends, and neighbors. According to the analysis, it serves twenty-six (26) cases. It is quite a lot more than the expressive function since Melin Lee, the main character of the Turning Red movie, is depicted as the vibrant, cheerful, and friendly girl so she would normally greet, have a chit-chat, and small talk to her closed ones. Besides, her mother always demands her not only to perfect her grades at school but also her attitude to be the nice girl where she must help her mother to guide the visitors in her family's temple.

**Total of the Speech Functions****Table 1. Total of the Speech Functions**

No	Speech Functions	Total
1	Expressive Function	17
2	Directive Function	34
3	Phatic Function	26

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

In conclusion, considering the aforementioned analysis and enlightenment, only three speech functions are found among the six speech functions. The expressive, directive, and phatic functions are the three speech functions. Furthermore, the expressive function serves seventeen (17) cases, the directive serves thirty-four (34) cases, and the phatic function has twenty-six (26) cases. The directive functions (34 cases) are the most prominent speech functions in the film *Turning Red*, outnumbering both the expressive and phatic functions. Because the movie genres are Family, Comedy, Animation, Fantasy, and Children's film, there are just three speech functions found in *Turning Red*. It demonstrates that the phatic, expressive, and directive functions are commonly used in family and friend interactions. Furthermore, metalinguistic, poetic, and referential functions are rare to identify in movies of those genres. Furthermore, it is needed to explore more on the speech functions analysis, i.e. bringing up another perspective to the main characters by comparing them and utilize different theories.

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