

## Characterization of the Main Character (Theodore Finch) Through Directive Speech Act Analysis

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**Abstract:** *"All the Bright Places" (2015) is a famous novel written by Jennifer Niven. This novel tells about the story of teenagers and their life. Several aspects of linguistics can be used to analyze the novel. This study aims to identify the characterization of the main character using directives speech act analysis. A mixed-method was used to analyze how the characterization is built. A mixed-method by Sudaryanto is utilized to collect the data using non-participant observation methods and analyze the data with referential identity and pragmatic methods. The results show that the main character is a caring, brave, and adventurous person. The characterization is based on the speech acts used. The speech acts used represent his caring, brave, and adventurous character.*

**Keywords:** *Pragmatics, Speech Act, All the Bright Places, Jennifer Niven, Characterization*

**Abstrak:** "All the Bright Places" (2015) merupakan sebuah novel yang terkenal karya Jennifer Niven. Novel ini menceritakan tentang kisah remaja, Theodore Finch, Violet Markey dan kehidupan mereka. Ada beberapa aspek dari linguistik yang dapat digunakan dalam menganalisis novel ini. Tujuan dari penelitian ini untuk mengidentifikasi karakterisasi dari karakter utama didalam novel ini menggunakan analisis tindak tutur directive. Metode campuran digunakan untuk menganalisis bagaimana sebuah karakterisasi itu dibentuk. Metode campuran oleh sudaryanto juga difungsikan untuk mengumpulkan data dengan teknik simak bebas cakap dan menganalisis data menggunakan teknik metode padan referensial pragmatic. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tokoh utama memiliki karakter sebagai orang yang peduli, berani, dan petualang apabila dilihat dari tuturan yang digunakan ketika berkomunikasi dengan patnernya yang bernama Violet.

**Kata Kunci:** Pragmatik, Tindak Tutur, All the Bright Places, Jennifer Niven, Karakterisasi.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A character is an essential component in a novel. To build a character, we have to compile the idea from the background of the story and aspect of the novel, to express the emotion and character value (Seger, 1990:23). A character from the story can be displayed with several background characteristics such as age, posture, job, and education to unveil the character's psychology and uncover his or her characterization (Seger, 1990:42). The focus from the writers will be poured into the analysis of the characterization from Theodore Finch.

Characterization as an intrinsic factor of a novel can be depicted through social condition, physically, and his behavior in a story (Nurgiyantoro, 2002:13). Characterization has many ways to analyze. For instance, we can analyze the characterization through psychoanalysis, but in this section, we will find the evidence of the characterization with directive illocutionary speech act, and it has the aims to know the characterization of Theodore Finch. When determining a character, the writers need to analyze from his utterances. The limitation of the utterances has been set into the utterances that contain directive illocutionary act. Therefore, directive illocutionary act analysis will support the writers in finding the characterization from

the main character because it can show how the character performs an utterance and influences the hearer. The research question of the analysis is to explain Finch's characterization in this novel.

Based on that problem, related previous studies will support the writers in finding the research gap between current research and previous research. Citra, in 2017 has developed a study about *Great Gatsby* and his characterization through his American dream entitled "American Dream in Jay Gatsby as the Main Character of the *Great Gatsby* Novel." Her analysis aims to find the characteristics of the character and how the character reaches his American dream. Psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud is used to explore the characteristic of the main character. The data were collected from the novel by Fitzgerald with the title "The *Great Gatsby*" and analyzed using sociohistorical and qualitative approach. To sum up, the main character has characteristics of his American dream, such as seeking happiness and persistence. To reach his dream, individualistic and self-reliance are used by the main character to achieve his American dream.

Bramaditha and Womariana in 2020 have built an analysis about conflict of the main character through with the title "The Analysis of Conflict of the Main Character in the Movie "I am Sam." They have built the characters with the theory by Wellek and Warren into two types: static and dynamic. The research aims are to find the conflict of the story and elaborating the character of the main character. The data were taken from the movie "I am Sam" and analyzed using a qualitative approach. The research results illustrate that sam has a mental disorder, and he has such a nice person, a hard worker, and an honest person.

The last previous study was conducted by Ramayanti and Marlina in 2018 entitled "The Analysis of Types Illocutionary Acts in "Tangled" Movie." This analysis aims to find the types of speech acts by the characters in this movie. The utterances from the movie script were analyzed using Searle's theory and mixed-method approach. To conclude the scrutinization of this movie script, the most prominent use of illocutionary act is directive speech act with 44% percentage and it functions to make the other characters perform a performance as the speaker said to them.

From the previous studies, the characterization of the main character of "All the Bright Places" using directive illocutionary acts could not be found. Therefore, this current study will present the characterization through the speech acts, especially directive speech acts, that is the acts of making other people do something.

The personality of the character can develop the characterization of the character. In accordance with character development, we need to know about the character's background story to provide some information about the character's biography. For example, physiology of the background character will be explained about how old he is, his posture and appearance, and heredity. On the other side, sociology background that can develop the character are his class in social life, what job that he takes, education, etcetera. Finally, psychology of the character can be depicted through character ambitions, traits of the character, and attitude (Seger, 1990:42).

The character can be distinguished into the main character and peripheral character. Here, Finch comes as the main character of the story. He is dominant to build the story in this novel through his utterances to the hearer. According to the characterization, a character can be categorized as a flat character and a round character. As stated by Nurgiyantoro (2002:181-182), a flat character is a character that has certain characterization. A character lay on his or her characterization as a flat person. For instance, "She is poor, but she is grateful." Abrams in Nurgiyantoro (2002:184) has explained that a round character has a complexity of his or her personality. The character has capability to make unexpected characterization and behavior.

Finch, as the main character, owns several traits that can develop his characterization in this novel. Even though he was not interested in school, when he has to do geography assignment, he declares his excitement to advise his teacher to make the assignment into a wandering project. Finch intends to gain excitement to make himself alive. According to his preparation before any activities, he always prepares for where they have to go. Based on Edelstein's book in 2006, Finch's traits depict the adventurer character. To make a statement when someone owns the adventurer character, she said that someone needs to own internal and interpersonal psychology criteria, such as excitement, independence, and likes to perform.

According to the dramatic technique character analysis by Nurgiyantoro (2002), how the character speaks in a conversation is also beneficial to determine the characterization of the character. For instance, in a conversation, a man stated that he wants to marry a girl who has been together with him for seven years. He is a gentleman through his utterance because after seven years together with the woman, he finally decided to marry her. Behavior analysis of the character, even verbal or non-verbal, can be classified as characterization, such as reaction, traits, and response. Feeling from the character is also beneficial as the parameter to determine the characterization. For instance, when someone expresses his kindness to each other, it can conclude that he or she has a big kind-hearted person

The characterization of Finch as the main character of this novel can be portrayed through several scenes in this story. His willingness to love Violet and his intention to always helps her show that he cares about Violet. For instance, when he always wants to reduce Violet's trauma, attention to detail about what she did and helps her to be confident show that he has a caring personality. Nevertheless, what makes those traits become strength evidence to show whether he is genuinely caring and adventurous. To strengthen the characterization analysis of Theodore Finch, the writers will use the benefit of directive speech act analysis to know the impact of his utterance on the hearer. So that makes the writers easier to attest the evidence of directive illocutionary act for characterization of the main character.

An utterance is a part of speech act. When someone says something, it is actually perform a speech act (Austin in Parker and Riley, 1994:14). Based on the theory from Yule (1996), the classifications for the types of speech act are locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act. Locutionary act happens when there is no intention from the utterances spoken by the speaker. For instance, someone standing in the middle of Sahara desert says, "it is tremendously hot" this utterance is just stating the condition at Sahara desert. It is easy to find hidden meaning through an utterance, especially toward illocutionary act. This speech act is where the speaker has an intention when producing the speech act. We can see from this example the weather is quite cold in the middle of winter. Suze needs help from someone to turn on the room heater. She says to Billy, "Oh my god, is cold here" Suze has produced an illocutionary act to him. If Billy is agreed to turn on the heater, the purpose of perlocutionary act is achieved by Billy, because he got an effect from Suze's utterance.

In line with the analysis of the utterances, the writers will focus on the characterization of the main character through directives speech act analysis. According to Searle (1979:21-23), there are five types of illocutionary act that can be used to scrutinize speech acts: directives, commissives, expressives, declarations, and assertives. Command, Ask, Request, Order, Beg, Plead, Entreat, Pray, Permit, and Advise are the categories that will classify the utterances based on the type of directive illocutionary act.

Indirect and direct speech acts function to determine whether it has intended meaning behind the utterances. For example, if someone states "Close the door!" with imperative sentence, it can conclude that he or she creates a direct speech act with clear meaning (Black, 2001:19). Indirect speech act means if the hearer receives another meaning, but the speaker does not say

about that (Searle, 1979:31). For instance, if X, as the speaker says, "Let's hang out together on Friday," and Y as the hearer answers, "Sorry, I have to go to Brazil on Friday".

IFIDs is a measurement for successful speech act to know whether the directive speech act is felicitous or infelicitous. Preparatory condition is when the speaker has a prediction that the hearer able do what he utters. Then, sincerity condition is the desire from the speaker to make the hearer performs the future act. Propositional content of the directive speech act happens if the hearer performs future act based on what the speaker wants (Searle, 1979:44). Based on Searle in Vanderveken (1985:37), directive point of directive speech act is to make the hearer performs an action. Command and order of directive speech act maybe look the same, but in fact degree of strength when specifying the act is different. It is according to the desire and power when uttering the utterance. The way to achieve the goal of illocutionary act is portrayed through mode of achievement (SearleVanderveken, 1985:15).

## 2. METHODS

To show the characterization of Theodore Finch, the researchers used mixed methods, i.e., quantitative and qualitative methods. Mixed methods are applied in this analysis because the writers need to know about the frequency of the data used to depict the characterization of the main character and describe the utterances that contain directive illocutionary act by Theodore Finch. A quantitative approach refers to a method of data analysis based on variables and instruments used as parameter of analysis (Cresswell, 2014). According to Denzim and Lincloln (2018), to uncover the meaning of the phenomena, qualitative approach is used to analyze the utterances. These methods are used to help the researchers analyze the characterization of the main character.

As the primary data source, the novel was downloaded from Internet and aimed to be the source of the analysis. The data were collected using non-participant observation, considering that the writers function as the novel observant. Note-taking technique is also taking the job to categorize the criteria of the utterances that will be analyzed into several parts of categorization of directive speech act. The categorizations of the speech act have limitation. The samples were chosen purposively, that is only the utterances containing directive speech acts

To analyze the utterances of the main character of the novel, the writers used pragmatic identity method. The utterances were analyzed using IFIDs and Felicity Conditions proposed by Searle (1979).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of characterization through directive illocutionary acts, Finch, as the main character, has characterization such as caring, brave, and adventurous. He is a teenager who lives in Indiana since he was born. He is seventeen, and he is taking his education at Bartlett Highschool. Finch got brown hair and blue eyes. The writer has written his character as a boy who has unstable emotional because his father left since he was ten, and it gives Finch and his family an impact after the divorce. Some people called him a freak.

At the moment in the Purina Tower, he met violet. She seems to fall from the bridge with no reason and blank vision. This is the first time they meet, and Finch wants Violet to stay alive and not jump from the ledge. The story begins after all the students at school think that Finch is the one who wants to fall from the ledge, even though it is not him but Violet. One time at geography assignment, the moment of Finch approaches Violet is starting. They got into the same group to finish geography assignment. The unforgettable memory about them will start here, and his utterances spoken by him can be the evidence for his characterization in this analysis.

**Table.1** Total of Direct and Indirect Speech Act

No	Directives Act	Direct	Percentage	Indirect	Percentage
1.	Command	2	10%	1	5%
2.	Ask	5	25%	2	10%
3.	Order	2	10%	4	20%
4.	Request	2	10%	0	0%
5.	Entreat	1	5%	0	0%
6.	Advise	1	5%	0	0%
Total		13		7	

As seen in Table.1, there are twenty data of utterances from Theodore Finch contain directive illocutionary acts. Qualifications of the directives illocutionary acts are divided into six parts: command, ask, order, request, advise, and entreat. Indirect and direct speech is also the qualifications to determine the natural character of the main character in the novel, and it has a function to uncover his caring characterization for Violet and conveying his adventurous soul. Every utterance spoken by the main character is categorized as an action produced by the speaker. Those actions through the main character's utterance can portray how his characterization through what he utters as the main character. Here is the explanation of the characterization of Theodore Finch according to his utterances that he utters to his interlocutors:

### 3.1. *Caring*

There are many reasons for someone to feel caring to another person, especially if she or he has a special feeling for the interlocutors. His caring behavior in this novel is classified into affectionate, loving, attentive, attention to detail, and respectful to Violet. His caring characterization can be shown in his behavior toward Violet when he likes to know more about her background story. He always be the person who always around violet and helps her in every condition.

Finch: "What are you most afraid of?"

Violet: "Dying, losing my parents. Staying here for the rest of my life. Never figuring out what I'm supposed to do. Being ordinary. Losing everyone I love."

Violet: "What about you?"

Finch: "I think I'm most afraid of just be careful. I'm most afraid of The long drop. I'm most afraid of asleep and impending, weightless doom. I'm most afraid about me."

( Niven. 2015:166)

A glimpse of Finch's conversation depicts an "asking" directive illocutionary act for Violet. His caring behavior is illustrated when he wants her to explain the things that make her terrified. At this moment, maybe he can get the information whether she is a brave person or vice versa. This scene portrays that Violet is scared about losing his closest person in her life. From this point, Finch's utterances declare that he wants to know each other fear factor, at least Finch understands what factor that she cannot cope with herself.

Finch: "**Tell me** about her."

Violet: She stares out the window. "She was smart, stubborn, moody, funny, mean when she lost her temper, sweet, protective of the people she loved. Her favorite color was yellow. She always had my back, even if we fought sometimes. I could tell her anything because the

thing about Eleanor was that she didn't judge. She was my best friend."  
(Niven, 2015:95)

Because her statement above shows that it is irritating when Violet loses the closest person in her life, through his command directive speech act, he produces a command for her to retell about her sister. He really wants to understand how hard it is for someone who loses her sister within a flash car crashed accident. When she intends to elaborate about how it affects Violet's life. Finch got a brief explanation that Eleanor is meaningful for Violet, and he cares about that.

Finch: "Do you remember Eleanor Markey?"

Kate: "Sure, she was in my class. Why?"

Finch: "She got a sister."

Kate: "Eleanor was okay. A little full of herself. She could be fun. I didn't know her all that well. I don't remember her sister."

(Niven, 2015:51).

In this section of the conversation between Kate and Finch, Finch wants to dig information about Violet's closest sister, Eleanor. In the previous analysis of caring characterization, she said that she does not want to lose her closest person. From that point, Finch tries to know whether Eleanor looks like in real life through his sister (Kate) since Finch's sister is in the same grade as Violet's sister. Finch's actions when asking about who Eleanor is, are explained that she cares about Violet and wants to know how the person is impactful for her.

Finch: "How's this?"

Violet: "Great"

Then he added the speed into thirty-five. The situation is tensed up.

Finch: "How about now?"

Violet: "Stop asking me."

(Niven, 2015:94)

Traumatized after the car crashed incident made Violet is worried about driving again even though she is just a passenger in a car. In the meantime, she has to go to Finch's house because Finch's bike is over there. "How's this" utterance asks about whether being in a car makes her scare or not, so he adds the speed step by step to make her comfortable in a car. It is hard to build a trust and believe about something after the worst happened to Violet which is the accident that happened to Eleanor. Especially the victim is already seen how the accident happened to them and another passenger is dead before that.

Because of hard situation to drive again and at that time there is only an SUV that can bring them to Finch's home, it makes Violet confused. She confuses about whether she has to go with Finch or not. After few minutes of contemplating, she is agreed and climb the car. He always ask since the engine has revived just to make sure that Violet is comfortable to the car ambience. He raises the speed step by step and ask her before he adds the speed. Sometimes the question is repeated. He is worried if the speed is too high for Violet and she scares about the ride. Because of his treatment to Violet. It can be concluded that he has a caring personality for Violet to make her comfortable and safe when driving in a car again. Violet high tensed voice confirms that it is okay to increase the speed and she tries to deal with it.

### 3.2. *Brave*

His brave soul is depicted when he always out of the box when exploring the place with Violet, and he lives in the moment when they got into the new place for wandering. The explanations below are the characterization of Theodore Finch.

Finch: "Let's jump!"

Violet: "Are you sure? It is the high point of Indiana."

Finch: "I'm sure. It's now or never, but I need to know if you're with me."

Violet: "Okay."

Finch: "Ready?"

Violet: "Ready"

Finch: "On three."

(Niven, 2015:71)

They jump to the land from the stones

Finch: "We are professional. Whatever you do, don't try this at home."

(Niven, 2015:71)

This is the moment when they start their first wandering in Indiana, the place named Hoosier Hills. They have planned to cruise Indiana and complete their pairwork to Mr. Black. As a partner, Finch creates an idea to follow the route into the Hoosier Hills. Finch makes an utterance, "Let's jump!", his utterance act as an order to Violet, and he wants her to jump together with him to feel the ambiance of the moment with him. Violet does not entirely familiar with this place. In the beginning, Violet worries about jumping from the rock sign, but Finch assures that this is the one time that you need to enjoy. It is like once in a time. When he declares the utterance and action, it shows that he has a brave soul to make people believe and brave to try new things that she never experienced before.

### 3.3. *Adventurous*

Finch: "I suggest a field trip. We need to see the wondrous sights of Indiana while we still can, because at least three of us in this room are going to graduate and leave our great state at the end of this year, and what will we have to show for it except a subpar public school education from one of the worst school systems in the nation? Besides, a place like this is going to be hard to take in unless we see it. Kind of like the Grand Canyon or Yosemite. You need to be there to really appreciate its splendor."

Mr. Black: "Theodore is correct that some ... of you will leave ... here at the end of ... this school year to go ... somewhere else. You'll be departing our ... great state, and before ... you do, you should ... see it. You should ... wander..."

(Niven, 2015:19)

His adventurous soul is depicted when he suggests to Mr. Black, this assignment better with a pairwork assignment to do a wandering project. As the place that he was born in, Indiana gives an idea for his teacher to make the initiation to explore this place. He assures that this will be the best moment to explore Indiana before graduation because some people will miss this place. Finch interpersonal character has prepared for the next adventurous project in

Indiana, so he planned an idea and declaring his idea to him. Meanwhile, his confidence to reveal the idea that no one thinking about it has conducted a new challenge for the class. Through his idea of the wandering project, it is beneficial for Mr. Black to follow his idea and make his assignment more interesting. To sum up, his adventurous soul that is unveiled through his "advise" has strengthened his characterization as an adventurous person.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As seen from the research results, there are twenty data that support the analysis of characterization from Finch. His caring, brave, and adventurous character are illustrated through his traits and behavior from the novel's scene. His caring characterization when he cares about Violet's mental health, and he wants to dig more information about the story behind Violet. Meanwhile, his adventurous and brave soul are depicted through the moment when he intends to order her indirectly to follow what he wants to explore and makes her believe the world is better to explore. The analysis of utterances spoken by Finch with his hearer is functioned to strengthen his characterization through what he speaks.

The most used illocutionary act by Theodore Finch is direct ask, and the indirect speech act is order. The classifications of directives speech act used by him are divided into six parts. Among the limitation of this study, to achieve the best result of the study, the suggestion for the following research who have the same scope with this analysis is to explore more about the analysis with cooperative principle. The next researcher can add maxim of manner by grace and explaining about literal and non-literal meaning of the utterances so that can support to strengthen the analysis.

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