

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

All of us know that language serves as an instrument of communication. However, we simply do not know how language originated. Jespersen's proposal that human language originated while humans were actually enjoying themselves is one of the more endearing speculations concerning the origins of language. Here is what Jespersen says: (Yule, 1985:1)

The genesis of language is not to be sought in the prosaic, but in the poetic side of life; the source of speech is not gloomy seriousness. But merry play and youthful hilarity... In primitive speech I hear the laughing cries of exultation when lads and lassies vied with one another to attract the attention of the other sex, when everybody sang his merriest and danced his bravest to lure a pair of eyes to throw admiring glances in his direction. Language was born in the courting days of mankind.
Otto Jespersen
(1921)

Everyday, people communicate to make them understood by others. In communicating, people use language, which is understood by others, to achieve their purposes. In other words, we can say that a person needs others to communicate. A person cannot be separated from other people because a man is both an individual and a social being. When a person talks to someone, it means that the person wants to express idea, asks someone to do something, gives information, asks information, etc. Every utterance that someone says has a meaning that wants to be transferred to other people.

People are interpreting other people's language and expecting other people to interpret their own. That situation always happens in a communication. In order to make a good communication, we not only interpret the meanings of utterances or sentences that the speaker of those utterances or sentences intended to convey but also know how the speaker intends us to take or interpret the function of what he says. Knowing the meaning of an utterance implies being able to understand it when other people use it and being able to use it appropriately oneself. The crucial part of communication is when the listener can interpret the function of what the speaker says. To know whether the speaker's utterance is understood or not by the listener is through the listener's response toward the speaker's utterance. For example, a visitor to a city stops a passer-by:

Visitor : Excuse me; do you know where the Rainbow Hotel is?

Passer by : Of course, I know where it is. (And walks away)

In the conversation above, the passer-by can interpret the meanings of the visitor's utterances by answering the visitor's question, but he cannot interpret the function of what the visitor says. Actually, the visitor's utterance is indirect request, which is considered more polite in our society. The situation of the conversation above can happen in the teaching learning activity, especially, if the students have different culture with the teacher or vice versa.

For this thesis, the writer is eager to know what kind of language function is mostly used in literary work such as novel. The reason of choosing novel than other literary work is because, from writer's point of view, most people or the English Department students prefer to read both English and Indonesian novels to

other literary works. Here, the writer chose the novel of a famous Indonesian author, Mira W. entitled “Firdaus yang Hilang”, which was published in 1999. Moreover, the reason of choosing an Indonesian novel not an English novel is that the writer hopes to avoid misinterpretation in analyzing language function of the main character. In analyzing language function, the writer must be familiar with the words and the culture behind it.

In this thesis, the writer would like to analyze the utterances of the main character in the novel. In “Firdaus yang Hilang,” the story tells about Lestari, the main character from this novel, who wants her paradise to come back to her life. She cannot avoid the force of her father to marry a man who has been determined by her father. Although her father knows that she has already had a boyfriend and she does not love her father’s choice, he keeps forcing his daughter to do his words.

Based on the reasons above, the writer is eager to find what kinds of language function that the utterances of Lestari, the main character in the novel, have. Besides, the writer is also eager to analyze whether the utterances conveyed by the main character are understood or not by her interlocutors.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In line with the background of the study, the writer is concerned with the language function found in the utterances of the main character in Mira. W’s novel entitled “Firdaus yang Hilang.” The questions that she would like to put forward are:

1. What kinds of language functions are found in the utterances of the main character of “Firdaus yang Hilang”?
2. Are the utterances conveyed by the main character understood by her interlocutors?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In line with the problem statements above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. to find out what kinds of language functions are found in the utterances of the main character of the novel.
2. to analyze whether the utterances conveyed by the main character are understood or not by her interlocutors.

1.4 Significance of the Study

As what the writer has discussed in the background of the study, the writer expects this thesis can be a good contribution for the readers. It is expected to give additional knowledge to make the readers able to build a good communication in the society. Moreover, the writer hopes this thesis can be a good reference for the English department students who want to analyze language functions in one's utterances.

1.5 Scopes and Limitation

In the study, the writer is not going to use all the utterances in the conversations of the novel. She takes only the utterances of the main character, Lestari, as the representative of the novel. The utterances, which are going to be analyzed, are taken only from some chapters randomly. Furthermore, the utterances of the main character are classified into three categories. They are:

1. Utterances to herself
2. Utterances to the listeners, which are divided into:
 - a. those to close people, such as Lestari's father, Harliman, and Rahmat
 - b. those to friends, such as Hamid
 - c. those to outsiders, such as police, and laboratory employee
3. Utterances to God

In analyzing those utterances, the writer applies the five kinds of language function. She will also explain the main character utterances, which contain the language function theory. The utterance, which is said, is determined by the language function of utterance, the meaning of utterance, and the response of utterance. Moreover, she will also look whether the utterances of the main character are understood or not by the listener through the listener's response.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

In this section, the writer will define the key words taken from the title of the thesis. Those words are:

- a. Language function

As far as language is concerned, a functional theory is one, which defines language as a form of communication, and therefore is concerned with showing how language works within the larger system of human society. According to Geoffrey Leech (1974:47-48), there are five kinds of language function. They are informational function, expressive function, directive function, aesthetic function, and phatic function.

b. Novel

According to Little (1966:68), novel is the longest form of prose fiction, in which we may find most extraordinarily wide range of writing.

c. Firdaus yang Hilang

This is the title of the novel, which means The Lost Paradise. This novel was published in 1999. It is about a woman who loses her love and happiness, and tries to find her lost paradise. The background of the story is taken in Jakarta and Jambi. Here the main character is Lestari who always tries to find her lost paradise.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with the introduction, including the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope limitation, and the last, definition of the key terms. Chapter II deals with the review of the previous related study and the theoretical framework covering language function theory and speech act theory. Chapter III deals with the methodology of the study, which describes the research

design, source of the data, form of the data, research instrument, procedure of the data collection, and techniques of the data analysis. Chapter IV deals with the data analysis and finding. The last chapter, Chapter V, deals with the conclusion.