

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

As a system of communication, language functions not only as a medium to convey words but is also as a means for performing actions through linguistic expressions, which is known as speech acts. Speech acts theory, developed by a philosopher J.L. Austin (1962) argued that language is used 'to do things' other than just refer to the truth or falseness of particular statements. The central issue underlies the relationship between the literal meaning of what someone says and what he/she intends by what he says (Searle, 1976). In other words, Tutuarima et al. (2018) stated that speech act is related to the communicative intention of the speaker producing an utterance, emphasizing how individuals use language to convey specific meanings or intentions that correspond to the situational and conversational contexts. In the context of conversation of a talk show, language serves not only as means of communication but also as a tool for building connection between host, guest, and audience. A talk show is one of the mass media format that plays an important role in sharing information, shaping public opinion, and entertaining audience in an interactive way. Talk show aims to discuss current issues that are relevant to people's lives. The topics raised in talk shows are usually very varied, including political, cultural, lifestyle, and entertainment issues. The guests invited by the host often include celebrities, public figures, experts in certain fields, to individuals with unique and inspiring experiences.

One of the most popular talk shows on American TV is the Ellen show hosted by a comedian, actress, writer, and producer whose name is Ellen DeGeneres. This talk show has lasted since 2003. In addition to watching on TV, people can also see this show on the TheEllenShow YouTube account. Ellen is known for her personality in bringing the show in a relaxed and humble ways, her interaction with the audience creates a warm and familiar atmosphere. The theme of the talk show focuses on entertaining and meaningful interaction, where humor, warmth, and empathy serve as the foundation of communication between host, her guest, and the audience. In addition to the interview, this show also features a comedy segment, music performances, and games that make this talk show different from others. As one of the longest-running talk shows, its influence on culture and media is very significant. The interaction of Ellen with her guests can be analyzed to provide insight into the dynamics of communication in the context of the media. Particularly, how celebrities use the media as a tool to build their self-image. Ellen invited celebrities and many famous people around the world as her guests to talk about their lives. Some of them were Adele, Justin Bieber, Barack Obama, Beyonce, Taylor Swift, and many more. One of the celebrities who often appears on this show is Taylor Swift. The reason why this study selected Taylor Swift because she is a multitalented singer and songwriter, known for her biographical songwriter and record producer who started her career in country music before transitioning to pop and indie. Swift has won 15 Grammy awards throughout her career.

Taylor Swift has been the subject of previous research in Linguistics. For examples, Taufik & Cahyati (2022) analyzed figurative language in Taylor Swift's album. Chuyi (2020) discussed the role and meaning of metaphors in Taylor Swift's song lyrics. Alek et al. (2020) used critical discourse analysis approach to reveal the meaning of figurative in song lyrics and interpret the symbolic signs and gestures conveyed in the popular video clips of Taylor Swift. Deameysa et al. (2023) analyzed feminism elements in Taylor Swift's song by using stylistics approach. Gawa, et al. (2023) investigated the unique of speech acts used in of Taylor Swift song lyrics in the Theme of Life Lessons. Whereas all of the aforementioned research related to Taylor Swift employed song lyrics in different linguistic theories, the present study is distinctly different as it focuses on the categories of expressive speech acts and adjectives found in the expressive speech acts in Taylor Swift talk show.

The main goal of expressive speech acts is to express what the speakers' feeling, convey emotional relationship and responses in everyday life. These can improve mutual understanding in society because the hearer understands what the speakers are feeling at that situation based on the context. Thereby, it is preventing misunderstandings between the speaker and the listener. By understanding expressive speech acts, people can better interpret the nuances of communication and improve communication skills in a variety of contexts, both formal and informal. Expressive speech acts are used "to convey the emotional or psychological state of the speaker, such as pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy, or sorrow" (Yule,1996, p.53). Expressive speech acts are closely related to adjectives that convey a speaker emotional state. According to Deichakivska (2024), "adjectives have an important pragmatic function

because they can show the emotions and expressions of the speaker". The importance of researching adjectives in expressive speech acts is that it provides specific evidence that in expressive speech acts there are adjectives as linguistic features.

This research not only fills the gap on expressive speech acts of pragmatics study in celebrity talk show but also offers an interesting focus on the adjectives used in those expressive speech acts. The categories of expressive speech acts proposed by Ronan (2015) and the types and functions of adjectives by Sinclair (2017) are adopted to answer research questions. In addition, studying expressive speech acts in talk show is important because it helps explore how Taylor Swift uses language to shape her public image and show her emotional resonance to audiences. Analyzing expressive speech acts can also reveal how media platforms influence the affective relationship between the celebrities and their fans.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

In this research, the utterances of the guest in 'TheEllenShow' talk show as seen on YouTube was analyzed by using pragmatics approach. The utterances containing expressive speech acts uttered by Taylor Swift become the data in this research. The research questions are formulated as follows:

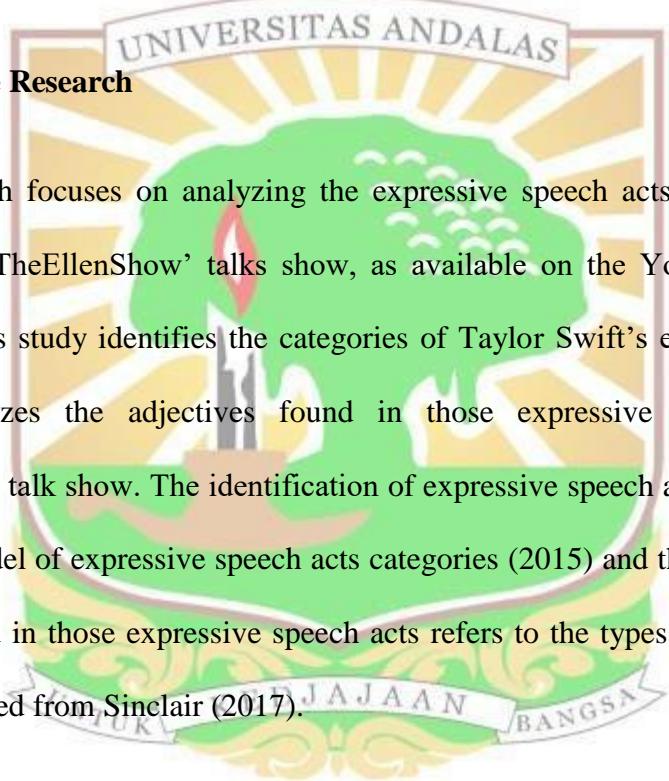
1. What are the categories of expressive speech acts used by Taylor Swift in the "The Ellen Show" talk show?
2. How adjectives are manifested in Taylor Swift's expressive speech acts on the "The Ellen Show" talk show?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Research**

The objectives of the research are stated as below:

1. To identify the expressive speech acts categories uttered by Taylor Swift in the “The Ellen Show” talk show.
2. To analyze the types and functions of adjectives in the expressive speech acts uttered by Taylor Swift in “The Ellen Show” talk show.

### **1.4 Focus of the Research**



This research focuses on analyzing the expressive speech acts in Taylor Swift interviews on ‘TheEllenShow’ talks show, as available on the YouTube platform. Specifically, this study identifies the categories of Taylor Swift’s expressive speech acts and analyzes the adjectives found in those expressive speech acts on ‘TheEllenShow’ talk show. The identification of expressive speech acts is assisted by the Ronan’s model of expressive speech acts categories (2015) and the analysis of the adjectives found in those expressive speech acts refers to the types and functions of adjectives adopted from Sinclair (2017).

### **1.5 Methods of the Research**

This study employs qualitative research to analyse the use of expressive speech acts in Taylor Swift’s interview with Ellen. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative descriptive research focuses on an in-depth exploration of social and linguistic phenomena through descriptive analysis. This method is selected because it examines

and describes expressive speech acts linguistically in real interactions within their social contexts without the constraints of numerical data.

The source of data in this study is Taylor Swift's interview video uploaded on the TheEllenShow YouTube Channel. These videos were intentionally selected interactions between Taylor Swift and Ellen. There three videos analyzed are, *Taylor Swift's Full Interview with Ellen (18.45 minutes)*, *All of Taylor Swift's speak now era interviews (12.23 minutes)*, and *Taylor Swift's deepest fear (03.06 minutes)*. There were many Ellen talk shows with celebrities since 2013, however, there were three videos selected as they represent Taylor Swift's most recent interviews on the Ellen talk show that were available on YouTube. The theme of talk show revolves around a blend of new music promotion and creative process, personal revelations, and reflecting on her past viral moments on the show.

Taylor Swift is one of the most influential figures in pop culture. Her interview and public appearances reflect evolving celebrity fame and media representation. It means that media will increase their rating by sharing her personal stories and engage directly with her fans. The interview videos are found to have a lot of verbal interactions that occur naturally, where expressive speech acts can be observed directly. Taylor Swift and Ellen DeGeneres' interview is based on the dynamic nature of their conversations, which often involve humor and emotional expressions. As a well-known public figure, Taylor Swift's speech provides insight into how celebrities use language in media interviews. Ellen's interactive nature, which is known for her relaxed and spontaneous nature, is an ideal environment for identifying expressive speech acts of her guests.

### **1.5.1. Data Collection Procedures**

The data sources were the videos of talk shows. The videos were selected based on purposive sampling technique. "In qualitative research, researcher uses non-probability sampling techniques because she/he intentionally selects data that are most relevant to the research objectives, allowing in-dept analysis" (Mills & Gay, 2012, p.168). The data were selected based on needs with the purpose of the study, that is, the utterances containing expressive speech acts and adjectives found in the expressive speech acts which convey emotional resonance. Therefore, the selected data is considered relevant to answer the research question.

There are several steps in the data collection process carried out in this study. First, the videos were searched on YouTube by typing the keywords related to the video *e.g. Taylor Swift interview with Ellen DeGeneres*. There were three videos of Taylor Swift recently appeared in 'TheEllenShow'. Therefore, those all videos were selected as the data source in this study. Second, the videos were downloaded. Third, the videos were repeatedly watched to be accurately transcribed into texts. Fourth, all of the utterances containing expressive speech acts were highlighted. These become the data in this research.

### **1.5.2. Data Analysis**

There are several data analysis procedures in conducting this research. First, the transcription was thoroughly read and examined to obtain the expressive speech acts and understand their contexts. Second, the expressive speech acts found were

selected and classified based on the expressive speech acts categories by Ronan (2015) to answer the first research question, which focuses on identifying the categories of expressive utterances. Third, as for the second research question, the selected speech acts were analysed by using the semantic type of adjectives (to identify adjective types) and syntactic functions (to identify the functions of adjectives) as found in Sinclair (2017). Then, the results of analysis were presented in the form of tables to showcase the categories of expressive speech acts, the types and functions of adjectives. The discussion incorporates existing research on expressive speech acts and the adjectives found in those expressive speech acts, providing a comprehensive understanding of how these speech acts contribute to building relationships, maintaining politeness, and conveying emotions in an interview context.

The sample of analysis can be depicted as follows:

Ellen : you can do anything you want Taylor Swift

Taylor : **thank you** for saying that

The dialogue above was selected from Taylor Swift interview with Ellen in ‘TheEllenShow’. Taylor Swift expresses her gratitude for the compliment and support given by Ellen. The utterance of ‘thank you’ is categorized as a type of thanking that means the expression of gratitude. The function of thanking is to express gratitude for something that is beneficial to the speaker. When Taylor Swift says ‘thank you’ to Ellen, she acknowledges the kindness of Ellen who reassures her with an utterance “you can do anything you want Taylor Swift”. Thanking also serves an important social

function for both the speaker and the hearer. It maintains social harmony and strengthens interpersonal bonds. In this context, saying “thank you” to someone who have already given an appreciation to you is also to fulfill cultural expectation in Western culture.

