

## Avoiding the Practice of Social Discrimination by Using Speech Acts in The Novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte

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### **Abstract**

*There are two objectives of this research; 1) to find out the types of speech acts and 2) to describe the speech acts used to avoid the practice of social discrimination. As for the data, they were collected from the quotation from the novel. The result of this research is concluded that illocutionary acts as much as 57% or equal to 51 out of 90 data dominated to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of verbal expression (37%), avoidance (15%), exclusion (4%), and physical abuse (18%). After that, followed by locutionary acts as much as 34% or equal to 31 out of 90 data is also used to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of verbal expression (11), avoidance (4%), physical abuse (18%), and it does not appear at all to avoid exclusion. Lastly, perlocutionary acts as much as 9% or equal to 8 out of 90 data, it less appear to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of avoidance (4%), exclusion (2%), and it does not appear at all to avoid verbal expression, and physical abuse..*

**Keywords:** *Social Discrimination, Speech Acts, Pragmatic, Wuthering Heights*

### **INTRODUCTION**

A human being needs a medium to interact with other people. The medium used by human beings is called language. Communicating using language effectively is an important life skill because, as social beings, people need to communicate in order to satisfy their needs.

Merihue (1980) stated that effective communication is behaviour that is initiated by the addresser and conveys the desired meaning to the addressee. It also influences how the recipient responds. It follows that communicating with others can both convey information and collect information.

Furthermore, people do not always or even usually utter what they mean in communication. Therefore, people need to learn how to assess a speaker's capability for interpreting specific speech situations. By learning about speech acts, people understand an expression well. Speech acts are one of the pragmatic branches of linguistic study that discuss the act of asking others through an utterance. Speech acts have become an important thing in linguistics subject. Austin (1962: 94) stated that speech acts are a theory in which to say something is to do something. It means that when someone says something, it is not only saying something but also using it to do things or perform act. In line with this, Yule (1996: 47) states that speech acts are an action that is performed via utterances. It concludes that speech act is one part of pragmatics that discusses how the speaker gets something from the hearer by asking via utterances.

The phenomena of speech acts not only occur in real life but also can be found in the novel. In this research, the researcher uses novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte as an object. It was published in 1847. This novel represents the social condition of society in the Victorian era influenced by social class. It tells about Earnshaw's family living in *Wuthering Heights*, set in Yorkshire moors in northern England. Mr. Earnshaw, along with the other proprietors, travels to Liverpool one day. On his way home, he comes across a little child who has no family, prompting him to decide to pick him up. His name is Heathcliff. He has a dark complexion. He is an orphan, and no one knows where he came from. He has a different background from Earnshaw's family, like his race and social class.

Social issues can arise in speech acts, such as hate speech. These social issues occur because of background differences between individuals involved in speech acts. In line with this, Pratt (1986) asserts that at archetypal illocutionary events, speakers make conscious decisions about presenting the messages. However, Pratt also emphasizes how some speech acts, such as hate speech, engage in covert or overt tyranny. In *Wuthering Heights*, the speech acts refer to discrimination. The characters with high social status dominant use speech act to command or insult those with lower social status. It can be said that the use of speech acts can be affected by background differences.

Each person has unique traits, including language, ethnicity, and culture. As social beings, humans always reach a consensus on various issues that must be resolved amongst people, groups, or the environment. Conflicts, disagreements, and divisions bring on these issues. Discrimination is the problem that develops in this situation. It indicates that someone behaves unfairly or differently against others. As stated by Theodorson in the quote below:

“Discrimination is the unfair treatment of the individual or groups, based on something, usually definite, or the unique attributes, such as based on race, ethnicity. The terms are usually described as the dominant actions from the

majority concerning minority, so it can be said that their behaviour is not moral to certain social classes (1979, p.115).”

Based on the quote above, it can be said that the term discrimination usually describes an act of the majority of the more dominant than the minority to act arbitrarily. Furthermore, according to Krieger (1990), social discrimination deals with unreasonable negative behaviour by which members of society in a different way because of their membership in a particular group based on race, skin color, ethnicity, family status, or membership social class.

It is not new to talk about the social discrimination still being shown today. Surprisingly, social discrimination has been around for a long time. In Victorian Britain, gender roles in society often discriminated against women. This social discrimination is based on the idea that women are the underlying sex in terms of physique and intelligence. Women are seen as housewives, taking care of children, cooking food, and taking care of household needs. In addition to discrimination based on gender, discrimination also occurs because of social class and racial differences.

However, it happens not only in real life, but also in a literary work that makes some authors interested in presenting and revealing the social problems in the line story. It is relevant to Endraswara (2003), explaining that society’s social condition can be a conspicuous target of denunciation in literary work. It draws how discrimination as the social condition in society may be present in literary works.

Based on the problems above, the existence of differences in social class and race can affect the use of the language used by the characters. A speech based on a different background can cause social discrimination. Therefore, the researcher examined the social discrimination problem through the characters' speech acts. The researcher chose speech act as the problem of this research because speech act is interesting linguistic research. The use of speech acts can reveal the intended intent or the intent of the speaker's speech. Therefore, the researcher focuses on how speech acts are used to avoid social discrimination.

The researcher examines the speech acts that used to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the novel *Wuthering Heights*. To analyze the novel, the researcher use a speech acts theory by J.L Austin and social discrimination theory by Newman for the supporting theory.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The researcher outlines the theories employed in analyzing this research in a theoretical review. There is speech acts by J.L. Austin to find the types of speech acts that are used in the novel and supported theory of social discrimination by Newman to find the form of social discrimination and to know how the speech acts are used to avoid the practice of social discrimination.

## **SPEECH ACTS**

Speech act is the activity done by uttering meaning. Austin (1962: 94) stated that speech acts is a theory in which to say something is to do something. It means that when someone says something, they are not only saying something but also using it to do things or perform act. Speech act is one of the pragmatics discussions related to what a specific utterance or sentence possesses a particular act within it. Speech acts express a certain attitude in communication, such as expressing a statement as a belief. Austin's theory was based on the idea that speakers use language to say things and accomplish things and that these utterances could be considered speech acts. Austin (1962: 108) stated that a speaker can do three acts at once when making an utterance. Speech acts are divided into three types: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary.

### **Locutionary**

Locutionary acts as utterances that simply contain a meaningful statement about objects. According to Austin (1962: 108), the locutionary act is roughly comparable to saying a specific sentence with a specific meaning and reference, roughly equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense. For the example: "Leave the room, Ellen!" she repeated, trembling all over." (Bronte, 2003, pg. 71).

### **Illocutionary**

According to Austin (1962, p.108), an illocutionary act is a forceful utterance. It is a method of expressing oneself. It's all about the meaning behind the words. It is the act of performing a function with the use of speech. It is said that illocutionary is an act when a speaker speaks; they do not just make random utterances. Examples of illocutionary acts include accusing, apologizing, blaming, congratulating, declaring war, giving permission, joking, marrying, nagging, naming, promising, ordering, refusing, swearing, and thanking. Austin (1962, p.150-151) divides illocutionary acts into five categories: Verdictives, behabitives, commissive, exercitives, and expositives.

### **Perlocutionary**

Perlocution is an act between locution and illocution that produces a specific impact or influences the listener. According to Austin (1962: 108), perlocutionary is the act of attaining specific results by speaking something. It is concerned with the impact a statement may have on the listener. It can be said that perlocutionary acts is a kind of performing an act by saying something. For the example: "Are you going to mak' the tea?" (Bronte, 2003, pg. 12). The utterance implicitly means that the speaker commands the hearer to give the guest drink. If the hearer really does the action of making the drink and gives it to the guest, it is called perlocutionary act.

## **SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION**

Social Discrimination is a form of oppression or unfair behavior that comes from individuals or groups against people who are objects of discrimination based on several, usually categorical, attributes, such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or membership, social class. The existence of this difference makes a person commit

an act of unfair treatment of certain people indiscriminately. Discrimination occurred as a result of unfavourable prejudice and fear of differences. A desire for discrimination refers to a circumstance in which people are willing to give up money, wages, or profits to satisfy their prejudice. In this scenario, prejudice is already a part of the utility function, and it may reflect feelings of hatred, wrath, or other negative emotions against a particular group of people. There are various forms of discrimination, according to Newman (in Miharso, 2009, p.88), in the form of:

### **Verbal Expression**

Discrimination exists in the community and is most commonly manifested through verbal or nonverbal actions. These two issues are starting to attack one other, either directly or indirectly. The verbal expression is usually done by way of insult through words. Another synonym for this expression is 'insulting.' The hated is derived from the words of those who despise another. Even though words have the ability to kill people mentally, insulting them creates a hostile environment and escalates the situation.

### **Avoidance**

Avoidance is the attitude of preventing people who are not from their own community is when they choose to communicate only with members of their own race rather than interact with people from other races. Many individuals believe that avoidance is harmless, yet it breeds hostility. Hatred has the impact of killing individuals rapidly because it turns into a grudge when people harbour hatred for a long time.

### **Exclusion**

Exclusion, this discrimination is done by not including a person or a specific group of people in the group; when a community purposefully excludes people from their race or group, it is referred to as segregation or the exception. In some locations, the largest number of organizations is the leader. This is a common occurrence in education, industry, job, and other settings (housing).

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is done on purpose usually happens because the small mistake only. Discrimination occurs when a person or group who is different from them is hurt, hit, or attacked.

### **Extinction**

Extermination or genocide is a complicated phenomenon compounded by prejudice and hatred. This was the most challenging condition, as it was based on a history of prejudice and discrimination. The leader wields the most significant control over the people. The army will use the bomb to kill them if the leader does not like the race.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The method used in this research is qualitative and described in words. Moleong (2005: 6) says that the qualitative method is a research procedure with the purpose to fulfil phenomena about what is experienced by the subject of the research, for example, behaviour perception, motivation, etc., holistically and descriptively in the form of words and language, in a particular concept and exploit some natural method. The objective of this method is to gain a rich understanding of the problem.

In this research, the researcher uses a novel entitled *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte as data source. The primary data are taken from novel in the form of dialogues. The data are in the form of English words, phrases, and sentences assembled from the conversation used by the characters in the novel that contain three types of speech acts. The researcher reads the novel to get the data. The secondary data supported by references such as books, previous journals written by scholars and universities, and internet resources are used to analyze the data collected from the novel. These secondary data are discussing about pragmatics, socio-pragmatic, speech acts, and social discrimination. Analyzing and interpreting the data is essential to make this research more comprehended. To analyze the data on this research, the researcher classifies the types of speech acts used in the novel *Wuthering Heights*. After that, the researcher chose from these types of acts and classified them into 2 parts: speech acts that refer to discrimination, and the second is speech acts that are used to avoid discrimination. After all the collected information data was selected, only very significant data were used to make this research analysis. Then analyse the data. In this step, the researcher analyses the data showing the types of speech acts according to the theory used and what types of speech acts are used to avoid the practice of social discrimination.

## **FINDINGS**

The researcher provides the findings, which are then analyzed descriptively using J.L. Austin and Newman's theories. The finding show the characters in the novel *Wuthering Heights* used three types of speech act. The three types are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. The second part is related to how speech acts are used to avoid the practice of social discrimination. The findings of this research are in the form of chart.

### Types of Speech Acts in the Novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte

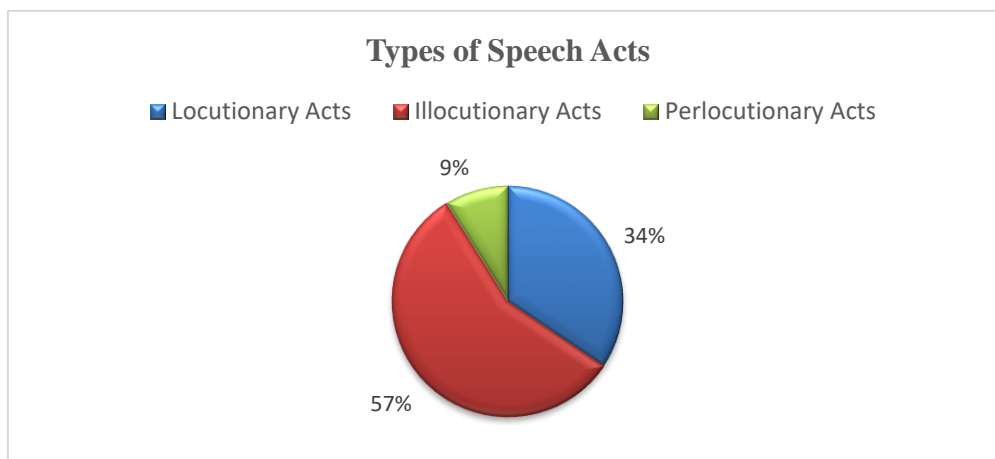


Chart 1: Types of Speech Acts

The pie chart shows the types of speech acts used by the characters in the novel *Wuthering Heights*. It shows that there are 90 occurrences of speech acts used by the characters in the novel *Wuthering Heights*. The first is locutionary acts as 34% with 31 excerpts; there were declarative, interrogative, and imperative. The second is illocutionary acts as 57% with 51 excerpts; there were verdictives, exercitives, behabitives, commisives, and expositives. The last is perlocutionary acts as 9% with 8 excerpts. It shows that the most dominant speech acts used by the characters are illocutionary acts used 51 times out of total 90, while perlocutionary acts is the least used by the characters, which only occur 8 times.

### Avoiding The Practice of Social Discrimination by Using Speech Acts

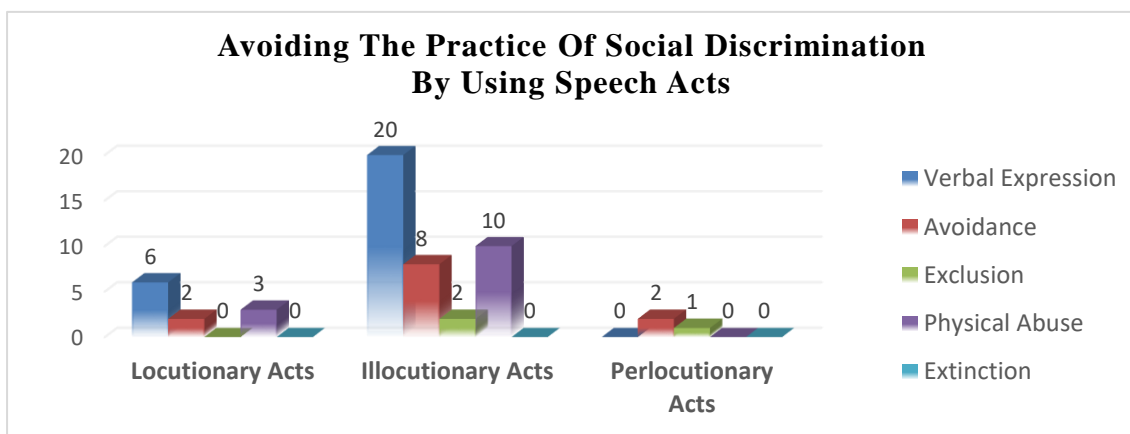


Chart 2 Avoiding The Practice of Social Discrimination by Using Speech Acts

The column chart shows how the characters use speech acts to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of verbal expression, avoidance, exclusion, and extinction. Based

on the findings, the researcher found that the most frequently appears data is illocutionary acts as much as 57% dominated to avoid verbal expression (37%), avoidance (15%), exclusion (4%), and physical abuse (18%). Followed by locutionary acts as much as 34% is also used to avoid verbal expression (11%), avoidance (4%), physical abuse (18%), and it doesn't appear at all to avoid exclusion. Lastly, perlocutionary acts as much as 9% less appear to avoid avoidance (4%), exclusion (2%), and it doesn't appear at all to avoid verbal expression and physical abuse.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **TYPES OF SPEECH ACTS**

Based on the findings, the characters use three types of speech acts. They are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts.

#### **Locutionary Acts**

**“Thrushcross Grange is my own, sir,” he interrupted, wincing.** ‘I should not allow any one to inconvenience me, if I could hinder it—walk in!’  
(Bronte, 2003: 3)

In the excerpt, this dialogue was between Mr. Lockwood the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange with Mr. Heathcliff. The dialogue happened in Thrushcross Grange. Mr. Lockwood has just returned from visiting his landlord. When he met Mr. Heathcliff, he made sure he did not disturb Mr. Heathcliff with his tenacity to hire Thrushcross Grange. Heathcliff as a speaker, tells his speech partner that Thrushcross Grange is his, so he will not let anyone bother him if he can stop it.

The researcher found that Mr. Heathcliff used locutionary act as declarative. A form of declarative is generally used by speakers to make statements so that its content is to inform to the speech partner. The type of declarative is the same as the form of the statement that functions only to notify information to other people. It can be seen from his utterance, *“Thrushcross Grange is my own, sir.”* The utterance was spoken by the speaker above only intended to inform his speech partner, Mr. Lockwood that Thrushcross was his.

#### **Illocutionary Acts**

**“Are you going to mak’ the tea?”** demanded he of the shabby coat, shifting his ferocious gaze from me to the young lady.  
“Is *he* to have any?” she asked, appealing to Heathcliff. (Bronte, 2003: 12)

In the excerpt, this dialogue was between Mr. Heathcliff and Mrs. Heathcliff, his daughter-in-law. The dialogue happened when Mr. Heathcliff talked to his guest, Mr. Lockwood. In the middle of the conversation, he reprimanded Mrs. Heathcliff, who had not served anything to his guest.



The researcher found that Mr. Heathcliff, the speaker, used illocutionary acts of exercitives form. It can be seen from his utterance, “*Are you going to mak’ the tea?*”. The speaker intends this sentence to instruct the speech partner to serve drinks to his guest.

### **Perlocutionary Acts**

*“I want to drink,” he exclaimed fretfully, turning away. ‘Zillah is constantly gadding off to Gimmerton since papa went: it’s miserable! And I’m obliged to come down here—they resolved never to hear me upstairs.’... **Cathy began searching for some water; she lighted on a pitcher in the dresser, filled a tumbler, and brought it.** He bid her add a spoonful of wine from a bottle on the table; and having swallowed a small portion, appeared more tranquil, and said she was very kind.” (Bronte, 2003: 237)*

From the excerpt, Linton asked the listener (Cathy and Nelly) to give him water by saying, “*I want to drink,*”. This expression has a specific intention that he wants Cathy or Nelly to do. He said that to tell them that he was thirsty with the intention to order one of them to take the water, and as a result, Catherine responded to him by giving him the water. This expression can be categorized as perlocutionary act since it has a particular intention within the expression, and the listener, in this case, Catherine, responded to what Linton ordered her.

### **AVOIDING THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION BY USING SPEECH ACTS**

Based on the findings, the researcher found four forms of social discrimination that were avoided using speech acts. There are verbal expression, avoidance, exclusion, and physical abuse. The findings show that the speech acts used by the characters are dominated to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of verbal expression (37%) or equal to 20 out of 54 data.

#### **Verbal Expression**

*‘What! the gipsy—the ploughboy?’ he cried. ‘Why did you not say so to Catherine?’*

*‘Hush! you must not call him by those names, master,’ I said. ‘She’d be sadly grieved to hear you. She was nearly heartbroken when he ran off. I guess his return will make a jubilee to her.’ (Bronte, 2003: 95)*

In the excerpt, this dialogue was between Nelly and Mr. Linton. This conversation occurred when Heathcliff came to visit Thruscross Grange to meet Catherine. Nelly was surprised to see the arrival of Heathcliff, who after several years disappeared and then suddenly appeared in Thruscross Grange. Then, Heathcliff asks Nelly to tell her that he wants to meet her. When Nelly delivered the message to Catherine, Mr. Linton asked who the guests were.

The researcher found that through the speech acts of behabitives that she used, she had committed to avoiding the practice of social discrimination in terms of verbal expression.

That can be seen from her utterance, *“Hush! you must not call him by those names, master,”*. From her utterance, this is the behavioristic act of challenge in terms of protest. The context is the discrimination that occurs in the family environment between Mr. Linton with Heathcliff. Family is part of society, that's why it is called social discrimination. The social discrimination occurs because Mr. Linton called Heathcliff a *“gipsy”* which was an insult. This term can be considered a negative connotation. A gypsy is a member of a race of people who travel from place to place in caravans rather than living in one place. Some people object to this name and prefer to be called Romany.

Nelly, who heard Mr. Linton, protested because he thought he should have called him *“Heathcliff”* not with a label indicating that Heathcliff was different from the people around him. Therefore, it can be concluded that Nelly's speech acts include efforts to avoid discriminatory practices by protesting against discriminatory actors.

### **Avoidance**

*“Shall I tell him to come up?”*

*‘Here,’ he said, ‘into the parlour?’*

*‘Where else?’ she asked.*

*He looked vexed, and suggested the kitchen as a more suitable place for him. Mrs. Linton eyed him with a droll expression—half angry, half laughing at his fastidiousness.*

***‘No,’ she added, after a while; ‘I cannot sit in the kitchen. Set two tables here, Ellen: one for your master and Miss Isabella, being gentry; the other for Heathcliff and myself, being of the lower orders. Will that please you, dear? Or must I have a fire lighted elsewhere? If so, give directions. I’ll run down and secure my guest. I’m afraid the joy is too great to be real!’*** 77 *She was about to dart off again; but Edgar arrested her.”*  
(Bronte, 2003: 95)

In the excerpt, this dialogue was between Catherine and Mr. Linton. The situation in this dialogue is still the same as the situation in the previous excerpt. After knowing that Heathcliff was coming, Catherine asked Mr. Linton to invite him in. However, Mr. Linton suggested that Heathcliff should be in the kitchen rather than in the living room. Catherine, who does not accept Linton's treatment of Heathcliff, also rejects the advice given by Linton. So she asked Nelly to set up a different table for Linton with her and Heathcliff because of their different social status.

The researcher found that through the speech acts of behavioristic that she used, she had committed to avoiding the practice of social discrimination. That can be seen from her utterance, *‘No,’ she added, after a while; ‘I cannot sit in the kitchen. Set two tables here, Ellen: one for your master and Miss Isabella, being gentry; the other for Heathcliff and myself, being of the lower orders’*. From her utterance, this is the behavioristic act of challenge in terms of protest. The social discrimination occurs because Mr. Linton thought Heathcliff deserved more in the kitchen than in the living room, which insulted social status. Catherine protested to Mr. Linton because she thought he should not discriminate

against Heathcliff like that just because of his lower social status. Therefore, it can be concluded that Catherine's speech acts include efforts to avoid discriminatory practices by protesting against discriminatory actors.

### **Exclusion**

'See here, wife! I was never so beaten with anything in my life: **but you must e'en take it as a gift of God**; though it's as dark almost as if it came from the devil.' (Bronte, 2003: 36)

In the excerpt, this dialogue was between Mr. Earnshaw and her wife, Mrs. Earnshaw. The dialogue happened in their house in Wuthering Heights. Mr. Earnshaw has just returned on his way from Liverpool. He did not return home alone but with a strange boy who looked different from the others, dirty, tattered, and black hair. His name was Heathcliff. Mr. Earnshaw explained that he saw the boy hungry and homeless and virtually mute on the streets of Liverpool, where he picked him up and looked for his parents. No one there knew him, and he thought it would be best to take the boy home straight away because he was determined not to leave the boy in the condition he found him. As the head of the household, Mr. Earnshaw tells his wife to accept Heathcliff's presence.

The researcher found that through the speech acts of exercitives that he used, he had committed to avoiding the practice of social discrimination in terms of exclusion. That can be seen from his utterance, "*but you must e'en take it as a gift of God*". From his utterance, this is the exercitives act of ordering. The social discrimination occurs because all of Mr. Linton's family thought Heathcliff doesn't deserve to be in their house. Heathcliff's different appearance from them made him not accepted and disliked by Mr.'s family. Linton. Mr. Linton as head of the family and as the one who brought Heathcliff, asked his wife and children to accept Heathcliff even though he was different from them. Therefore, it can be concluded that Mr. Linton's speech acts include efforts to avoid discriminatory practices by ordering his family to accept Heathcliff

### **Physical Abuse**

'Off, dog!' cried Hindley, threatening him with an iron weight used for weighing potatoes and hay. '**Throw it,**' he replied, standing still, '*and then I'll tell how you boasted that you would turn me out of doors as soon as he died, and see whether he will not turn you out directly.*' (Bronte, 2003: 39)

In the excerpt, this dialogue was between Hindley and Heathcliff. The incident happened on the terrace when Hindley argued with Heathcliff. They took issue with a horse given by Mr. Earnshaw. Heathcliff wanted to exchange his horse with Hindleys', but Hindley refused and immediately hit Heathcliff.

The researcher found that through the speech acts of behabitives that he used, he had committed to avoiding the practice of social discrimination in terms of physical abuse. That can be seen from his utterance, "*Throw it,*' he replied, standing still, '*and then I'll tell how you boasted that you would turn me out of doors as soon as he died, and see whether he will not turn you out directly*". From his utterance, this is the behabitives act of challenges.

Hindley, who was displeased with Heathcliff, wanted to throw him with an iron weight. Heathcliff challenged Hindley and said that if he dared to do this he would snitch to Mr. Earnshaw that he's been hitting Heathcliff many times. Therefore, it can be concluded that Heathcliff's speech acts include efforts to avoid discriminatory practices by daring to fight people who will discriminate in the form of physical abuse against him.

## CONCLUSION

The result of this research, based on the findings, is concluded that illocutionary acts as much as 57% or equal to 51 out of 90 data dominated to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of verbal expression (37%), avoidance (15%), exclusion (4%), and physical abuse (18%). They appear when the characters create an utterance with a specific purpose, including blaming, cursing, joking, nagging, naming, promising, ordering, refusing, swearing, etc. After that, followed by locutionary acts as much as 34% or equal to 31 out of 90 data is also used to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of verbal expression (11), avoidance (4%), physical abuse (18%), and it doesn't appear at all to avoid exclusion. It happens when the characters make certain sounds or marks, using specific words and using them following the grammatical rules of a specific language, as well as with certain senses and references as determined by the rules of the language from which they are drawn, such as prohibitions, command, inform, etc. Lastly, perlocutionary acts as much as 9% or equal to 8 out of 90 data, it less appear to avoid the practice of social discrimination in the form of avoidance (4%), exclusion (2%), and it doesn't appear at all to avoid verbal expression, and physical abuse. This happens when the character attains specific results by speaking about something. It is concerned with the impact a statement may have on the listener. It means the oppression of unfair behaviour that comes from individuals or groups can avoid by using locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts in daily life. The speech acts frequently appears in used to avoid verbal expression. It is because some speech act terms have vulgar and rude meanings. The lack of awareness of discrimination is one of the triggers for social discrimination, so only a few people are aware of sorting out their words to avoid the practice of social discrimination to maintain social relations among living beings.

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