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Speech Act Analysis of the Narrator and Tyler Durden in the Film *Fight Club*

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This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of English in Applied Linguistics and the Teaching of English, College of Graduate Studies, Hebron University.

2020

I confirm that this paper was solely undertaken by me. Any quote, idea, concept, or any other piece of information that was developed by someone other than the author of this paper was duly referenced.

## Dedication

To those who believe that good films could make our lives better.

### Acknowledgment

By far, the *Stylistics* course is my favorite course in my 19 years of learning, and from there the idea of this paper sprang. To the professor of that course and my thesis supervisor Dr. Nimer Abuzahra, I must acknowledge my sincerest gratitude. I would also like to thank my instructors at Hebron University, colleagues at work, and my family and friends for giving me the support and guidance I need.

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## Abstract

The thesis attempts at identifying several characteristics of the two main characters of the film *Fight Club*, the Narrator who is diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder and his alter-ego Tyler Durden, through analyzing their speeches. To do so, the researcher adopted speech act theory as a framework. The researcher qualitatively analyzed all the speech acts performed by one or both the characters. In addition, the researcher applied the quantitative approach as all the speech acts are categorized in three tables. The first showed the speech acts performed by the speakers with the times of occurrence. The second table demonstrated the speech acts that go under the direction of fit of word to world, whereas the third table demonstrated the speech acts that go under the direction of fit of world to word. Results showed that each character has a different idiolect which mirrored different characteristics. Analysis emphasized on what literature described the two characters as that the Narrator is bored with his life and that his alter ego, Tyler Durden, was created to change the world around the Narrator.

## ملخص

يحاول البحث تحديد عدة خصائص تمتلكهما الشخصيتان الرئيسيتان في فيلم "نادي القتال"، الراوي المصاب باضطراب الهوية التفارقي والشخصية المختلفة تايلر ديردن، من خلال تحليل خطابتهما. ولفعل ذلك تبني الباحث نظرية الأفعال اللغوية. حلل الباحث الأفعال اللغوية المستخدمة من قبل شخصية واحدة أو اثنتين نوعياً. بالإضافة إلى ذلك طبق الباحث الأسلوب الكمي حيث صنف الأفعال اللغوية في ثلاثة جداول. عرض الأول الأفعال اللغوية المستخدمة مع مرات تكرارها. وعرض الثاني الأفعال اللغوية التي تناسب اتجاه "الكلمة للعالم" بينما عرض الجدول الثالث الأفعال اللغوية التي تناسب اتجاه "العالم للكلمة". بينت نتائج التحليل أن لكل شخصية لغة متفردة أبرزت الاختلافات بينهما. ركز التحليل على الوصف العام الذي تقدمه الدراسات المختلفة حول الشخصيتين: الراوي الملول بسبب حياته، وتايلر ديردن القائد ذو الشخصية المميزة الذي اخترعه الراوي ليغير الحياة من حوله.

## Chapter One: Introduction

The first two rules of *Fight Club* are “you do not talk about *Fight Club*” repeated twice. However, in this thesis, the researcher will break these rules since the *Club* is not only mentioned here, but thoroughly discussed too. Tyler Durden, one of the two founders of the *Club* set this rule, and repeats it too as the second rule of *Fight Club* to assert its importance. Despite that Tyler is described as ‘the coolest fictional character named Tyler’ by Dsimovic (2018 )written for Mandatory.com; yet it is not mandatory that we obey what he says.

*Fight Club* is a film produced by 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox which chose the American actor Brad Pitt to play the antagonist. The director, David Fincher chose the other two actors: Edward Norton and Helena Bonham Carter to play the unnamed Narrator and Marla Singer respectively. Cormier (2015) claims that Fincher chose Norton after his performance in *The People Vs. Larry Flynt*. However, I believe that Norton was suitable for the part after his brilliant performance in his debut film, *Primal Fear* (1996), especially that he depicted a mentally ill young man. In truth, Norton was nominated for the Academy Award for best actor in a supporting role in 1997 for his part in the aforementioned film (IMDb). Despite Norton being already an Academy Award nominee when he signed to do the role of the Narrator in *Fight Club*, he still received only one seventh of the salary that Pitt received. Norton received 2.5 million dollars while Pitt was paid an astonishing amount of 17.5 million (Cormier, 2015). Being based on a novel, the adapted script went through several revisions by the director, the screenwriter, actors, and Chuck Palahniuk, the author of the novel (Ferklová, 2011).

The film premiered at the Venice Film Festival in 1999 before its theatrical release in the United States in the same year (Hunter & Singh, 2015). The film was convoluted with



controversy for its vulgarity and violence. Besides, the themes of the film, such as capitalism and masculinity were rather handled cynically (Reed, 2016). This controversy might imply that the film will attract millions of viewers to come to theaters to see the film, especially with the star power it has got. Nonetheless, the film didn't have a huge success at the box office.

The topic of this paper is essential when it comes to knowing the two men who started *Fight Club* better since that through analyzing one's language we can dissect people's reasons for doing something or sustaining from doing it to a high degree. Therefore, people would be more apt to be understood if their idiolect, which is the language of the individual, is analyzed. The means that the researcher will use in his endeavors is analyzing the speeches of the two characters. To do so, the researcher will adopt Speech Act Theory as a framework to analyze the speeches performed by Tyler Durden and the unnamed homodiegetic Narrator who is both the narrator in the film and one of the two main characters. The Narrator, however, refers to himself as Jack, which is the name of a character in a series of articles that the Narrator loves to read. The fact that the Narrator refers to himself sometimes as Jack is one of the differences between the novel and the film, since that in the novel the name is not Jack, but Joe.

The framework the researcher is adopting in analyzing the speeches in this paper is Speech Act Theory which is a field in the philosophy of language which deals with linguistic context. Here, context refers to what the speaker and the addressee are doing or trying to do. The theory was first introduced by Austin. However, Bach and Harnish who reformulated the theory in 1979, asserted that the success of a speech act relies on the mutual understanding between the speaker and the listener (Sbisà, 2002). For instance, when the Narrator and Tyler have a drink at the bar the night the Narrator's condo blew up, the Narrator says he has to find a hotel, however,

Tyler understands that the Narrator is looking for a place other than a hotel to stay at. So, Tyler invites the Narrator over, and from this instance of mutual understanding between the two characters they start living in the same house, where they truly start *Fight Club*.

According to Baktir, (2012); Dejica-Cartis & Simon (2015) Austin, the founder of Speech Act Theory, suggests that there are three parts of acts that are performed when a sentence is uttered.

1- Locutionary act: the actual performance of the speech.

2- Illocutionary act: the intended meaning of the locutionary act without naming it.

3- Perlocutionary act: the effect caused by the performance of the speech.

An example of these parts is, for example, a goalkeeper in a football team tells his teammates, "I will not let the other team score!" This is a locutionary act which was performed to make a promise, an illocutionary act. The effect of this act on the goalkeeper's teammates is the perlocutionary act, which is in this case, confidence.

Analyzing one's idiolect, which is the individual's unique use of language, is helpful in order to have an insight into the speaker's mentality as it gives the one who is analyzing the speeches a clear picture of the various backgrounds of the speaker's (Cardiff, Panicheva & Rosso, 2010; Heck, Jr., 2006). For example, in the film, the two characters have different backgrounds that are very distinct in nature. In truth, both characters can be seen as opposites: the Narrator as the reclusive and reluctant adult, and on the other hand, there is Tyler, the spontaneous figure but who has some method to his madness (Barnett, 2019; Nouhy, 2017; Stark, 2012). However, analyzing their speeches can make the task of defining the blurry lines that separate their characters more feasible.

Speech Act Analysis could be used in different ways in the realm of films. For instance, it could be used to analyze a character's speech through a film. In truth, the character whose speech acts are analyzed doesn't necessarily have to be the protagonist. And with this wider range of characters, primary or secondary, there is an abundance of choices that analysts could choose from to analyze. Therefore, research papers adopting Speech Act Theory as framework are likely to be conducted frequently. Moreover, the film under analysis could be an animated one. For instance, Isnawati, Anam, and Diana (2015) analyzed Shrek's speeches in the animated movie *Shrek* in the paper entitled *Speech Acts Analysis of the Main Character in Shrek Movie Script*. However, in the mentioned research, the analysis is conducted to reach a conclusion regarding the types of speech acts performed, nevertheless, in this paper, the analysis focuses on the speech act itself, and not the category or type it belongs to.

Besides, the researcher has the choice to focus on the act itself and not the performer of that act. Researchers can also try to analyze speeches that express or have a certain effect on the listener. Istiqomah (2013) for instance, wrote a paper about analyzing anger in *Speech Act Analysis of Anger in the Film Entitled Something the Lord Made*. In this study, however, the analysis focuses on one character with multiple personalities in order to draw a line between the two personalities, or perhaps pinpoint some similarities between the host and his creation, the alter-ego.

The Narrator is unreliable whose narrative doesn't correspond in its entirety to what the audiences know that the narrator actually knows. Therefore, his credibility is questioned (Raj, 2015). Nonetheless, there are more than one type of unreliable narrators as Willian Riggan, as cited in (Raj, 2015) lists 5 types of unreliable narrators which are the Picaro, the Madman, the

Clown, the Naif, and the Liar. Riggan claims that the Madman is a narrator that might be suffering from a mental illness, a description that fits the protagonist of *Fight Club*. So, the Narrator is not only unreliable, but also could be seen as mad. Actually, the narrative of the film is rather distorted, that is, it doesn't follow a linear timeline. For example, the film starts with the final scene where the Narrator and Tyler are waiting for the bombs to blow, then it cuts to the time where the protagonist was in one of the support groups he likes to go to, way before knowing Tyler. After that, the narrative jumps even further back to the time where the Narrator had insomnia, which was cured by his constant visits to these support groups. Moreover, the Narrator shifts his use of point of view between the first and second person. For instance, the first thing he says in the film is in first person when he says "people are always asking me if I know Tyler Durden." However, he immediately shifts to the second person in the following sentence, "With a gun between your teeth you only speak in vowels." This distortion in narrative reflects the distortion of the Narrator's mind (Dawson, 2013). As John Milton suggests in *Paradise Lost* in the line "The mind is its own place and in itself, can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven," that through one's mind and how people deal with problems is an important factor in determining the life they live. Therefore, differences in perception among people is essential in determining the way people react to the world. The Narrator's mind makes it even more interesting to analyze, mainly, because he has more than one mind.

The film under discussion is *Fight Club* (1999) directed by David Fincher and its screenplay is written by Jim Uhls. The film is adapted from the novel with the same name that was published in 1996 by Chuck Palahniuk. The novel was published by W. W. Norton, which was on its own right based on a short story with the same title before Palahniuk extended it into a

novel which won an Oregon Book Award and a Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Award. However, this critical acclaim didn't assure the novel good sales. Nevertheless, it was good enough to attract the attention of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox (Ferklová, 2011). The last two 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox films to get a rating of 7.5 and higher on IMDb before *Fight Club* are: First, *Office Space* (1999) with a current rating of 7.7. The film tells the story of three coworkers who decide to rebel against their boss at the company they hate. The layout of *Office Space* is close to the Narrator's own feelings toward his work and boss. The second film is the war action-drama film *The Thin Red Line* (1998) which stands at 7.8. The two films, the first with the theme of rebellion against one's boss, and the second with its action scenes, share a lot with what the novel *Fight Club* promised to deliver to the big screen. Therefore, based on the latest successful films made by 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, the novel had the potential to become a critically acclaimed film in case of being adapted into one.

The film stars Edward Norton as the unnamed Narrator, who refers to himself as Jack and is an office worker who suffers from Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) which is a disorder that used to be known as multiple personality disorder. As its name suggests, it is a disorder that is characterized by the existence of more than one personality state that are distinct, and these personalities take control of an individual alternatively (Verhulst, 2017). The other star is Brad Pitt as Tyler Durden, the soapmaker, who is the Narrator's alter personality.

Surprisingly, the film flopped at the domestic box office as it only gained 37 million against a budget of 63 million. Actually, the film gained in DVD and blu-ray sales more than it did at the box office in the U.S. with approximately 42 million, according to [www.m.the-numbers.com](http://www.m.the-numbers.com). Nevertheless, after two decades of release, the film's rating on IMDb

proves that viewers were not quite right not to fill theaters when the film was first released as it has an astonishing rating of 8.8 on the website, with only nine titles preceding it (IMDb).

In truth, David Fincher was not the first choice to direct the film after the rights of the novel were bought by the executive producer Laura Ziskin for 10 thousand dollars (Sharf, 2019). The first director was David O. Russell who claimed he didn't get the book (Raftery, 2018). However, the other David, Fincher that is, was the filmmaker destined to make *Fight Club*.

The release of the film was a main factor of the novel's success (Jacobsen, 2013) at least financially, however the film itself lasted for less than a month in the top ten at the box office. Although that, as Giroux, as cited in (Lindgren, 2011) the film discusses versatile topics that can be viewed differently by different people, still it failed to maintain a good position among the most grossing films for a long time. In truth, its revenues dropped almost 43% after only one week of debuting in first place despite that the number of theaters that played the movie slightly increased in the second week of the film's release (boxofficemojo.com).

Even though it is very hard to expect how a film is going to perform at the domestic ticket sales before its release, there are factors or areas that can indicate the film's performance at the box office. According to Litman, as cited in (Pangarker & Smit, 2013). These areas are mainly, creativity, release pattern and date, and marketing.

First, the story is based on a critically acclaimed novel which is assuring that the story is original and captivating. Besides, Anast, as cited in (Pangarker & Smit, 2013) claims that there is a positive correlation between film revenues and the violence it contains, which suits *Fight Club*. In truth, the two most profitable films in history are *Avengers: Endgame* (2019) and *Avatar* (2009) respectively, which are action films. As for the second area, release pattern that is, it is

true that the film was not released during summer, Christmas, Easter, or new year, which are the best times to attract a wider set of audiences, according to Litman, as cited (Pangarker & Smit, 2013). However, its release pattern was promising to bring in more profits as the number of theaters increased after the first week (boxofficemojo.com). Alas for the filmmakers, the earnings dropped almost to the half after the opening week (ibid). The second point correlates with the third, marketing, as the film had a good debut as it opened in first place. Nonetheless, De Vany & Walls, as cited in (Pangarker & Smit, 2013) suggest that star power does not guarantee a long term prominence at the box office, however, they can attract theaters to show the film on its opening screening. Besides, the stars of the film have a magnetic effect on viewers. Nevertheless, this effect starts to fade away after the first week of release.

After the first few days of release, the importance of the marketing campaign begins to decline as the major role turns to the audience who saw the film (De Vany & Walls, as cited in Pangarker & Smit, 2013). Therefore, the good initial reception of the film is critical to ensure a lasting period at the highest positions at the box office as viewers tend to tell others about the film they see, and if it is good, recommend it to them. The fact that the second week witnessed a massive decrease in revenues for the film (boxofficemojo.com) suggests that audiences had a role in this drop of ticket sales. According to Nunziata (2016) the film was marketed as an action flick with characters who exchange cool dialogues. Indeed, watching the film's original trailer gives the impression that the studio tried to sell it as merely a film full of action neglecting the philosophical questions it poses. When the film hit theaters, audiences expected a straightforward action film and when they knew it was almost two hours and a half long, they probably thought it was too long for an action film. Therefore, the ones who saw it the first week didn't recommend

it to their friends. Moreover, Thrillist Entertainment (2018) suggests that the studio pushing back the release date several times was a factor in an overall unsuccessful marketing plan for the film. Nonetheless, the high rating that the film stands at today proves that audiences sometimes do change their opinions.

Although signs were promising that the film will be a hit at the box office since it is directed by a renowned director and starring three major Hollywood stars, reality showed that it was a flop. This suggests the difficulty of expecting the performance for an upcoming film when it comes to its ticket sales. According to (Albertson, Anderson & Shavlik, 2004) there was a noteworthy decline in the number of moviegoers between 1946 and 2002, a period in which *Fight Club* was released in. Moreover, even in this period of relatively smaller numbers of people going to movies, *Fight Club* didn't get a fair amount of viewers who could've filled theaters. It is true that many seats in the theaters where *Fight Club* was shown were left empty, but several articles were written on the film and on why it was a flop at the box office such as *Box Office Flops That Were Great: 'Fight Club'* by Nick Nunziata (2016) and *50 Box-Office Bombs That Are Actually Great* by Thrillist Entertainment (2018). This fact suggests the near impossibility of accurately expecting and analyzing how a film will do when it is released. On the other hand however, with a suitable framework, speeches can be analyzed and interpreted fairly accurately.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

It is plausible that movie goers, who are not well acquainted with psychology, might ask if we should expect that the manner of speech of a dissociative identity disorder (DID) patient to



differ from time to time depending on the personality taking over. Science answers this as that abnormalities in speaking, communication, and thought are all symptoms of dissociative disorder (Sar & Öztürk, 2009). Therefore, it is expected that a DID patient would talk in different ways depending on the personality taking over. Therefore, analyzing the speeches of the two characters will help identify many of their characteristics.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The importance of this study comes mainly from the relative scarcity of speech analyses for characters in films as the majority of analyzed speeches are political or literary. Therefore, this analysis would be a valuable addition to the field of discourse analysis, especially analyses adopting Speech Act Theory as the main framework.

More specific reasons that made the researcher choose the film instead of the novel were that films give viewers a place similar to a seat in a front row in a theater (Decherney, 2016) which in the researcher's opinion makes analyzing films a challenging task as to analyze something so close to reach a result that might not be clear to viewers. Besides, the novel is rather confusing when trying to figure out whether the homodiegetic Narrator is speaking with other people or himself. And since the research is concerned with identifying the addressee, as it is one of the three parts of Speech Act Theory, i.e. locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, talking to oneself poses a problem in case readers are confused and therefore cannot identify if the Narrator is talking with himself or others for sure. This issue however is solved by reading the screenplay which shows exactly who and how each dialogue is spoken. Moreover, the reactions made by the actors will help the researcher interpret the associated speech to their

reactions. By doing so, the researchers would help unravel many characteristics that the two characters have. In addition, the film wasn't given the appreciation it deserved when it first premiered in 1999, and the researcher believes that writing a paper about it is some sort of minor compensation from the viewers' part toward the film and its makers.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

There are several objectives that the study aims to achieve. First, it aims to analyze the speeches performed by the two main characters in the film *Fight Club* adopting Speech Act Theory as framework. Then, compare the speech acts performed by each character and find if these speech acts either assert what the literature already describes the two speakers or not. For example, (Barnett, 2019; Nouhy, 2017; Stark, 2012) claim that the Narrator is a reclusive and reluctant adult and who is bound in the materialistic life he leads and on the other hand, Tyler Durden is the charismatic leader who was created by the Narrator to free the first. Moreover, analyzing the direction of fit, either word to world or world to word, that the speech acts the two characters perform belong to would help identifying what character yearns to make a change in his life and who is not willing to do so. Besides, analyzing a film will help, even for a bit, to look more seriously at films, which can be pieces of art that exceed the sole purpose of entertainment as many people claim, thinks the researcher.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

- Does the analysis of the speech acts of the two characters conform to their description in the literature?

- What does the analysis of direction of fit, either word to world or world to word, of the speech acts performed by the two characters reveal about their personalities?

## **1.6 Limitations**

Based on the previous courses and readings that the researcher had, there was an abundance of papers written on Speech Act Theory and papers that used the theory as the framework in speech analysis. However, these papers focused on literary and political speeches and there wasn't any film analyzed. Thus, the researcher had to spend more time reading literature that aims at analyzing speeches in films. Another limitation that faced the researcher is the length of the screenplay which is more than a hundred pages long. That means that it will take much time to analyze the speeches, especially that the researcher will have to turn back to the film in order to get the reactions of the actors which will help the researcher interpret the speeches. Moreover, the researcher faced some hardships when looking for the screenplay for the film. Although there are many results on the internet, however, they were not accurate, especially regarding the spoken language. Therefore, the researcher had to rely on an open subtitle file for the film and adjusted it to become accurate so he could analyze the speeches exactly as they were in the film. The subtitle file is a file that is attached to a video in order to show the subtitles. And if this file was detached from the video the subtitles will not be shown. When this file is opened in a program specialized for editing texts, the user can see the text and the time it appears on the video in case the file was attached to that video. Fortunately, the researcher was able to open and edit the file.

## **Summary:**

The introduction explores the pre-production, during production, and post-production stages of the film with highlight on casting. It also focuses on the issue of *Fight Club*, the novel, and how it was finally turned into a film. In addition, it studies the factors that might determine a film's fate at the box office. Then, the introduction discusses the reasons that might be the cause of *Fight Club*'s relative failure at the box office despite being one of the most renowned and highest rated films in history based on IMDb.

Moreover, the introduction sheds light on the importance of words in reflecting the personality of people and how each idiolect, the language of the individual, could be a distinctive characteristic that distinguishes people. In addition, the introduction discusses the significance of words in films as the industry developed starting with silent films up to the time where sound was used in all films as the technology of sound recording also progressed through the years. The introduction also argues that the silent films couldn't stand against the success of the films that used sound.

The introduction describes Speech Act Theory, which is the theory adopted as a framework to analyze the speeches of the intended characters in the film to clear blurry lines that might hinder viewers from understanding the two characters under discussion accurately. Moreover, the introduction explains how viewers could understand the characters better if they analyzed their speeches particularly that the two characters are rare in films since one is a mentally ill adult who's suffering from Dissociative Identity Disorder and the other is the alter-ego of the patient. The disease is briefly introduced in the first chapter with relation to the narrative reliability of the Narrator.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### 2.1 Literature Review

The researcher reviews several papers related to the title of the thesis. Mainly, papers on films, especially films about the period where films incorporated human voice, are reviewed. Moreover, films that are similar to *Fight Club* in the issue of having a protagonist with DID are reviewed also. The researcher compares between the protagonist of *Fight Club* and protagonists of other films in order to understand people with DID better. In addition, papers on the disease are discussed in the highlight of *Fight Club*. Besides, the researcher states similarities and differences regarding the use of speech act theory in analyzing characters in films in this thesis and other papers.

As the old adage goes “actions speak louder than words,” which implies that it is not necessary for what people say to accurately reflect what they feel. A fun fact from the history of cinema to support this claim is that the longest duration of standing ovation for an Academy Award recipient is registered when the crowd applauded Sir Charlie Chaplin for outstanding 12 minutes during the Academy Awards Ceremony in 1972. What is special about that is that Chaplin was a pioneer in the silent-movie era as he used his body language as the only means of communication (Pease & Pease, 2005). However, the silent-movie era soon faded as films starring actors with not only non-verbal skills, but also verbal became prominent. This transitory period was presented through the immaculate acting of Jean Dujardin and Berenice Bejo in the Academy Award winner film *The Artist* in 2011, a film that won Dujardin his first Oscar for his role, a role in which he didn't speak a single word except in the final scene of the film to stress the importance of words, both in films and human interaction. Another film that presented this

huge step in the history of filmmaking is the classic romantic-comedy *Singin' in the Rain* (1952) starring Stanley Donen and the co-director Gene Kelly.

The premise of *Singin' in the Rain* is close to that of *The Artist* as both films are about filmmakers who struggle to find their place in the industry as sound makes its way into it. Especially, that with shooting clips with sound, studios needed soundproof equipment which the price of was too high for several filmmakers (Lewis, 2015). The fact that there is more than half a century between the two Academy Award winner films proves that the topic of the immersion of sound in the film industry is monumental.

With Socrates saying “speak so I may see you,” he suggests that idiolect is one of the most prominent components of someone's character. Hence, different people are likely to speak in a different manner from each other. According to (Cardiff, Panicheva & Rosso, 2010; Heck, Jr., 2006) an idiolect reflects one's personal traits and various backgrounds like the occupational and educational backgrounds. Thus, each individual's idiolect is unique since that each person is different from anyone else. However, this difference couldn't be broken down into separate parcels as Amin Maalouf (2000) suggests, “The identity cannot be compartmentalized; it cannot be split in halves or thirds, nor have any clearly defined set of boundaries. I do not have several identities, I only have one, made of all the elements that have shaped its unique proportions.” Ergo, this uniqueness in identity is expressed also through unique use of words.

The uniqueness of a person's idiolect could be helpful to have an insight into the speaker's attitudes toward many things. Sigmund Freud used a specific technique to make his patients express themselves where he allowed them to speak as they wanted while they were awake. He believed that through speaking the unconscious can come up to the surface which would allow

him to know his patients better (Pick, 2015). As proven by Freud's sessions with his patients, words can be a pathway that leads to analyzing characters. Therefore, and in order to help analyze the two main characters in the film *Fight Club*, the researcher will analyze their speeches using Speech Act Theory.

*Fight Club*, as the title suggests, is an action film painted with violence and crime. The fights that the members go into in the basement of the bar or even with people who are not members of the *Club* outside the basement proves that every single member of the *Club* is committing acts of violence, especially that there is a rule stating that every member should fight. According to Decherney (2016), gangster films that were made by Warner Bros. nearly a century ago were loved by the working-class. With the fact that the film is concerned with exploring themes such as urbanicity and consumerism, it will be watched mainly by those who are interested in the discussed issues in the film. And from the history of cinema viewers learn that the film is more apt to be successful if it explores issues that are related to the audience (Decherney, 2016).

As mentioned above, the researcher attempts at analyzing the speeches of the two main characters in the film. Therefore, it is wise to try and answer the question "Why are there two characters in the first place?" The homodiegetic Narrator, who refers to himself as Jack, suffers from Dissociative Identity Disorder, or multiple personality disorder, which is a mental disease that is described as the existence of two different personalities or more within the same body. The differences between these personalities within the same body include differences in consciousness, memory, and behavior (Verhulst, 2017). Therefore, the researcher considers and deals with both the Narrator, the host, and his alter personality, Tyler Durden, as two distinct

characters. Despite that there are some differences between the film and the novel regarding some incidents, for example, how the two characters first meet, nonetheless, the characters in the film are adapted from the novel with no major changes. For example, the Narrator refers to himself as Jack, though it's not his real name, in the film, but in the novel it's Joe. However, characters in the novel seem darker than in the film and this gloomy visage in the novel appears in incidents that are left out or changed in the screenplay adaptation. Perhaps the most drastic change in the plot is the final scene. Unlike the film where the Narrator is reunited with Marla, in the novel, he wakes up in a mental institution.

One of the differences between the two characters is that Durden is outrageous and on the other hand, the Narrator is rather an introverted adult. Hodges (2014) claims that the Narrator is miserable. Indeed, the researcher agrees with Hodges as the Narrator tries to change his lifestyle. However, the Narrator's loneliness makes it hard for him to express himself directly. Thus, he occasionally relies to say things indirectly. Speech Act Theory pays attention not only on direct speech acts, but also on indirect ones as well (Smith, 1991). This makes the theory convenient to be used by researchers to analyze speeches that have intended meanings that lie below the surface level of the performed act.

The film was released in 1999, based on Palahniuk's novel with the same title which was published three years earlier. That was a period in which the diagnosis of DID increased as a result of finding a link between the disease and child abuse (Verhulst, 2017). Perhaps not so coincidentally, the Narrator also suffers from the absence of the fatherly figure.

In *Split* (2016) a film written and directed by M. Night Shyamalan, the protagonist who is played by James McAvoy is a dissociative identity disorder (DID) patient. What is more unique



about the protagonist of *Split* compared to the other DID characters presented in cinema is that he does not have only one alter personality, but 23. What is even more surprising, and perhaps shocking, is the versatile alter personalities that the protagonist has. Moreover, his alter personalities are not limited to only one age or even one sex. For example, one of the 24 personalities is Hedwig, a nine-year old boy who is easily terrified, suggesting the abuse that the protagonist might have suffered from when he was a child. Another personality that solidifies this suggestion is Patricia, an adult woman who is an alter personality that the presence of which could be interpreted as the feeling of depriv of parental care that the protagonist feels. The fact that the protagonist actually suffered from child abuse is proven when he identifies himself with another character in the film, Casey, a teenage girl who was molested by her uncle when she was still a child.

The child abuse that the protagonists of *Fight Club* and *Split* suffered from supports the belief that there is a link between child abuse and Dissociative Identity Disorder. In *Split*, the protagonist is a sexual assault survivor who is traumatized by this incident. The protagonist of *Fight Club* also is suffering from an incident of child abuse. In *Fight Club*, the protagonist didn't get over his father leaving him at an early age. The scene where the Narrator and Tyler are talking about their fathers indicate that the two of them are affected by the absence of the fatherly figure. For Tyler, he even takes this matter a step further when he questions God's caring for him since he used to see his father as a symbol for God, nonetheless, his father left him. Therefore, Tyler doesn't believe in the goodness of God based on his personal relationship with his father. Both *Split* and *Fight Club* show that child abuse, either a physical assault or neglect, can have detrimental effects on the victims.

Scientific research on the disorder, for example (Brand, Bethany & Loewenstein, Richard & Lanius, Ruth., 2014) suggest that there are different causes for it. Among these are environmental factors happening in urban regions. Yourdictionary.com defines urbanicity as “The quality or fact of (an area) being urban.” According to Mondal (2014) there are several shared characteristics between urban life and the life that the protagonist leads, most notably that in an urban community relations are not based on affinity but rather on formal interests which makes an urban area crowded with people but who are actually distant from each other. Indeed, the fact that the protagonist calls a man whom he has just met after his apartment is burnt suggests that he has no close relations. And the valet’s question to the Narrator, “Do you have somebody you can call?” which was asked only moments after the latter had found out about his apartment makes the reality of his loneliness clearer.

Both *Split* and *Psycho* succeed in presenting convincing characters who are diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder caused by parental neglect or abuse, however, *Fight Club* succeeds in adding a second factor for causing DID which is urbanicity. Besides, the film doesn’t only present urbanicity as a cause for mental disease but also presents it, in Tyler’s point of view, as a tumor that hit society. The film suggests through Tyler’s speeches and actions that this tumor should be eradicated if society desires to be healthy again.

The Narrator, who works for a car company and goes on many business trips which caused him to suffer from insomnia. According to Semple and Smyth (2013) people suffering from insomnia are expected to get distressed. It also increases the chance that their occupational and social lives get affected. That in turn, makes him more anxious about his condition and tries to find external help. In the film, he asks a doctor to help him. The doctor tries to hint to the

Narrator that insomnia is not as dangerous as the latter thinks it is. Nonetheless, the Narrator insists that his condition is serious, telling the doctor, “Maybe I already died. Look at my face.” He also asks for any sort of medicine pleading, “Can you give me something?” These two lines suggest the fact that the Narrator is attached to the tangible world and tries to find salvation through things that are perceived through his physical senses.

The Narrator lives in a condo furnished with expensive furniture. And he doesn't refute this fact as he himself says in voice over, “Like so many others, I had become a slave to the IKEA nesting instinct... If I saw something clever like a little coffee table in the shape of a yin-yang, I had to have it.” Here the Narrator admits that he's a slave to mundane commodities. He even expresses his relationship with materialistic goods further when he declares, “I'd flip through catalogs and wonder: What kind of dining set defines me as a person? I had it all. Even the glass dishes with tiny bubbles and imperfections.” It is evident from these two excerpts that the Narrator does not only imply that he is a slave to products, but also his incapability of setting himself free from the grip of the commodities he buys.

Freud divides the human brain, or as he puts it, ‘psyche’ into three parts: id, the ego, and the superego ([www.simplypsychology.org](http://www.simplypsychology.org)). Although the Freudian psyche consists of three parts, one should not forget that these parts are interacting. However, despite this interaction, Freud suggests that the highest density of the human brain lies in the unconscious (Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman, & Willingham, 2005). Nonetheless, we should bear in mind that these parts are not tangible which entails that we cannot physically separate one part from the other two. Each part of the Freudan psyche is represented in *Fight Club* as follows:

1- Id is governed by the pleasure principle. It is the completely unconscious part of the psyche and it contains desires and passions that human beings inherently have. Indeed, through many recorded cases, Freud indicates that we don't have complete control over our actions. In truth, he suggests that most of our actions are driven by our unconscious (ibid). Id demands that these desires are immediately met and if it was not suppressed it could lead people to extreme situations including self-destruction (Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman, & Willingham, 2005); Pick, 2015; [www.simplypsychology.org](http://www.simplypsychology.org)). Tyler's actions indicate that he wants to satisfy his desires no matter what the cost is. Therefore, we can say that Durden's actions are somehow a response to the impulsive id. Besides, Tyler tells the Narrator in one scene, "Self-improvement is masturbation. Now, self-destruction." Tyler also emphasizes on the importance of self-destruction from his point of view when he says, "Without pain, without sacrifice, we would have nothing." These two quotes indicate that Tyler represents the id which can go all the way down without the slightest regard of law, society, morals, and even oneself.

2- The ego, which is the person's sense of reality that serves as a regulating agency which helps in saving the person from self-destruction which could be driven by the id. Unlike the chaotic id, the ego is controlled by the reality principle which perceives and processes reality. Therefore, it is affected by the external factors of the world, which results in the ego becoming reasonable (Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman, & Willingham, 2005); Pick, 2015). Tyler, who aims at destroying the civilized world, is actually attempting to remove any external factors that could affect his way of life. Hence, Durden's actions are driven by the id. The Narrator on the other hand, is a person who goes to see a doctor when he feels sick, such as when he seeks medical help when the former gets insomniac. It is obvious that the Narrator is realistic when it

comes to his occupational and social lives and does not act based on his impulses. Indeed, both Tyler and his host, the Narrator, represent the two distinct poles that people have: the first is being driven toward satisfying one's passions and the second, revising each decision before it is made in order to avoid confronting oneself after being susceptible to his or her desires.

3- The superego. According to Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman, and Willingham (2005) the superego serves as a guard for the society from the destructive impulses of the id. It is therefore governed by the morality principle. If people were able to do this highly moral task, they could do it after a lot of lessons that they've learned in their lives. Worldwide, the major source of morals is religion. And for those who are atheists or agnostic, their parents usually play an important role in teaching them good manners. However, Tyler rhetorically asks the Narrator, "Shut up! Our fathers were our models for God. If our fathers bailed, what does that tell you about God?" This question indicates that these two sources of moral teaching are indeed absent when it comes to Durden.

A point to consider is that these 'parts' of the human psyche are not tangible, meaning we can't distinguish them anatomically. Rather, they are more like systems that govern the way that the human brain functions. So, everybody might have id, ego, and superego, but not everyone can reach the point in which he or she can truly subside the natural instincts and control them through the ego and the superego.

Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) is another film that the outline of which could be understood as a representation of the three-part psyche that Freud suggested. In *Psycho*, the strict mother who reprimands her son, Norman Bates, represents the superego. The foyer of the motel where Bates is a receptionist who interacts with customers suggests the interaction between

Bates and the outer world. Therefore, it is the ego. The last part is the id, presented as the basement of the house juxtaposition to the motel, a basement that hides a shocking surprise, even to Hitchcock's standards (Pick, 2015). A significant similarity between *Psycho* and *Fight Club* is that the two protagonists of the two films don't have their fathers around.

The aforementioned instances from *Fight Club* distinguish the behavioral patterns of the two personalities. Fincher, the director, succeeds in presenting two distinct images of the same person as being two different people. Indeed, Tyler seems as one of the impulses of the Narrator's id that yearns to resist the mundane and materialistic world, but can't do this and is bound to live in such a world. Therefore, the Narrator's subconscious created Tyler to fulfill 'their' goal, regardless of Tyler's extreme methods that he adopts to achieve this. The extremity of Durden's methods is manifested in the operation he leads, Project Mayhem. This secret operation is undertaken by the members of *Fight Club* and aims at destroying, literally, credit card office buildings in order to reset the debt that American workers owe to rich corporations.

The Narrator's urbanicity might be one of the reasons that led the protagonist to become a DID patient. The Narrator, depressed and insomniac, tries to escape the banality of life which he spends most of at work, one that he hates. He finds what he's looking for in Tyler Durden's character, an anti-consumerist who tries to convince the Narrator of leaving, even destroying, the urban life the Narrator has used to live in. However, his endeavours will not be achieved without succeeding in Project Mayhem which could not be achieved without resorting to crime. Crime in this project is not only limited to breaking the law without physical harm to others, but exceeds it to the point where physical damage to the offended takes place. This damage can reach the point of murder.

This violent nature of crimes committed by the protagonist should not be unexpected as research claims that there is an association between crime, especially the violent ones, and mental disorders (Stevens, 2013). Stevens also claims that crime is more common among the mentally ill than people who are not. Nevertheless, it should be noted that being mentally ill does not determine that this patient will definitely commit crime, however, it just increases the chances of occurrence of crime (Vogel, 2014).

Before indulging more in the issue of the mentally ill protagonist with crime, the researcher thinks it's better to present a general definition of mental illnesses in order that readers know the protagonist better. The American Psychiatric Association describes mental illness as health conditions that cause the patient to have changing emotions or behaviors or a combination of these. In addition, these changes are related to problems in the social and family life of the patient (Stevens, 2013). Although there is a description for mental illness, still they are very hard to be diagnosed as these disorders are not reflected in physical abnormalities (Vogel, 2014). That is, the symptoms of mental disorders cannot be explained medically (Cheung, Longmore, Turmezei & Wilkinson, 2007).

Despite that serious attempts to study mental illness started during the European Enlightenment period, however, specialists know about the causes and treatment of the various mental illnesses much less than they do when it comes to other branches of medicine (Semple & Smyth, 2013). In truth, it was only a century ago that we witnessed the inception of medical psychiatry. It happened when Freud described the unconscious (ibid).

## **2.2 The Protagonist and Mental Illness**

The concept of mental health problems is very vast and even growing through the years as specialists come to new discoveries in the field (Brink, 2016). Among these findings, it was found that there are several shared factors that might lead to mental disorders or/and crime. These factors include unstable families and living in urban areas (Stevens, 2013). And both of these factors apply to the protagonist. Therefore, he becoming a mentally disordered criminal should not be seen as a surprise. Nevertheless, what makes the protagonist more dangerous than other mentally ill offenders is that according to (The Offender Health Research Network, 2012) the mentally ill suffering from personality disorders are more persistent in committing crime. That is, they are more expected to commit crime after being released from prison or hospital than patients with other types of disorders.

Moreover, since Tyler Durden enjoys his chaotic method in living, he adheres to Nietzsche's description of madness as he describes mad people to "enjoy lack of discipline" (Semple & Smyth, 2013). Being mad alone is not necessarily dangerous. Nonetheless, looking at Durden's Project Mayhem we can say that it requires a mastermind to plan such a project. A combination of madness and genius perfectly expressed through the words of Dryden, "Great wits are sure to madness near allied;/ And thin partitions do their bounds divide (ibid).

## **2.3 Dissociative Identity Disorder and Legal Issues**

Before Paracelsus first clinically described Dissociative Identity Disorder in 1646 (Farrel, 2011) cases with similar symptoms that Paracelsus described had been mistaken for demonic possession (Fields, 1994). However, even after about four centuries of development in the field



of psychiatric medicine, DID is still a bizarre phenomenon which is hard to predict (Perr, 1991). And it also challenges those who work in the field as it is considered, among other dissociative disorders, the most severe and chronic (Bancroft, Buchanan & Steinberg, 1993). Moreover, DID does not only challenge those who work in the field of psychiatric medicine but also professionals of other fields.

Dissociative Identity Disorder is controversial not only clinically but it is also so when it comes to legal issues (Farrel, 2011). (Fields, 1994) claims that the criminal justice system is challenged when a case involving a DID patient arrives as the disorder itself is very complicated. (Fields, 1994) also states that there are not a lot of cases that involve DID patients, whether as offenders or victims. This is mainly due to the rarity of the disorder itself.

In this paper, the discussion of DID patients and crimes will be focused on the cases where the patient is the offender and not the victim in order to draw a juxtaposition with the protagonist of *Fight Club*. The use of characters suffering from DID in cinema can be very interesting due to the dramatic nature of the disorder. (ibid) suggests that the disorder is dramatic as a result of the often opposite alter personalities of the patient. Indeed, this is the case with the Narrator and his alter personality, Tyler Durden, as the first is seen to be reclusive and the second as boisterous. However, due to the opposite traits of the alter personalities of a DID patient, it is a hard task for workers in the justice system when they deal with a case involving a DID patient. Surely, however, forensic experts should assess the credibility of the accused in case he or she pled for not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) (Farrel, 2011).

In truth, the question of malingering arises whenever an accused pleads for NGRI, especially claiming that they suffer from DID (Bancroft, Buchanan & Steinberg, 1993).

Although that a few defendants were acquitted for NGRI according to (Farrel, 2011) some defendants rely on their suffering from insanity, whether real or fake, to get acquaintance. They do so depending on the notion that insane people, who are not capable of controlling their actions and/or don't differentiate between right and wrong, are not held responsible for crimes they commit should they occur in a civilized society (Fields, 1994).

History has witnessed some high-profile cases that involved an insane offender. For example, there is Daniel M'Naghten who shot and killed the private secretary of the Prime Minister of England in 1843. In the more recent history, there is the case against John Hinckley, Jr. who attempted assassinating President Ronald Reagan. In both cases, the defendants were found not guilty by reason of insanity (Garvey, 2018).

It might come as a surprise to some that Edward Norton's part in *Fight Club* wasn't his first time to play a character suffering from DID. Three years prior to *Fight Club*, Norton made his debut when he played Aaron Stampler in *Primal Fear*. In the mentioned film, Aaron is a young man who suffers from DID. In the film, viewers get to know glimpses of Aaron's background story. Nonetheless, these few glimpses are enough to show that Aaron was sexually molested several times when he was a child, and still is as he is growing older. He was also left by his parents. According to (Fields, 2014) these features can result in developing a dissociative identity disorder.

Aaron, a DID patient who commits a murder but is acquitted by the court on bases of his mental illness. Regardless the protagonist was malingering the whole time, and actually succeeds in deceiving the court, the circumstances of his life are truly seen as plausible factors that could make a person suffer from DID.

Being not close to parents, is a trait that both Aaron from *Primal Fear* and the Narrator from *Fight Club* share, a trait that is considered an important cause for DID. Nonetheless, the character in *Primal Fear* is acquitted as he's been seen insane. But what about the Narrator, and his alter personality, Tyler? Would they be held responsible for the numerous crimes they committed or would they be found not guilty by reason of insanity? Perhaps, the director David Fincher is rooting for the second possibility as he chose, of all the songs in the world, Pixies' *Where Is My Mind* to play in the closing scene of *Fight Club*, probably to support the notion of the Narrator's insanity.

Ironically, the Narrator calls Tyler 'insane' and adequately, Tyler responds with 'No, you're insane.' Furthermore, the love of the Narrator's life, Marla, also describes him as 'insane' too. Therefore, the three main characters agree, or at least describe the protagonist and his alter personality, in a way, that he is insane. One of the social and economic reasons that paved the way to his insanity as suggested is his way of consuming goods.

Consumerism is consuming goods way over what the human being actually needs to survive (Peter & Lister, 2010). And through the Narrator's previous confessions on his consumption of products he doesn't actually need, it would be safe to say that he is a member of the consumer society, a society that adopts consumerism as a way of life. Lebow (1955) who is one of the founders of the consumerism philosophy says "Our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfactions, our ego satisfactions, in consumption. The measure of social status, of social acceptance, of prestige, is now to be found in our consumptive patterns."

Based on Lebow's definition of consumerism, when looking at all the products that the Narrator buys or tries to buy, and the time he spends cataloguing pieces of furniture for his fancy condo, it is obvious that he is consumerist.

### **Summary:**

This chapter covers a variety of studies related to the paper at hand. It starts with delving into the history of filmmaking, from the silent era films up to this century presenting the major challenges that faced the people related to the industry during this transitory period. Then the chapter explored how speaking could be a gate into one's personality as it reflects the individual's thoughts.

In addition, scientific overview is given regarding the main medical and psychological issues related to the work. Most notably, Freud's structural model of the human psyche is reviewed in light of the film so viewers could understand the psychology of the two main characters more accurately based on scientific research.

The chapter also reviews what the literature has to say about the two main characters in the film. In addition, the chapter describes the Narrator's condition in light of current studies in the field of psychology. It also draws resemblance with other characters suffering from similar conditions from other works. Not only this, but the chapter presents real cases of people suffering from Dissociative Identity Disorder and their status in the eyes of law.

## Chapter Three: Methodology

### 3.1 Methodology

In order to find differences in how the two characters speak, the researcher will adopt Speech Act Theory to analyze all speeches performed by the Narrator and Tyler Durden. Of the many definitions and descriptions we have on Speech Act Theory, a comprehensible description of it is that if readers are reminded that Speech Act Theory is in the first place a theory that is subject to criticism and questioning and different interpretations. Thus, any text analyzed through the framework of Speech Act Theory doesn't necessarily have only one interpretation. Hence, Speech Act Theory is, as the name suggests, a theory that aims at analyzing a speech with focus on the speaker and the behavior of the audience (Spencer, 2004). Hence, the research applies the qualitative method as it depends on the researcher's interpretation of the text. The researcher interprets the use of each speech act performed by either one or both of the characters in correlation to the film. Moreover, the researcher applies the quantitative method as the speech acts performed by the two main characters in the film are categorized in a table based on their times of frequency and percentage compared to the other speech acts performed by the speaker.

Then, the researcher will answer the second question of the thesis by demonstrating the speech acts that go under the direction of fit of both word to world and world to word in two different tables. The researcher will also interpret these results in order to identify some traits that the two characters have.

The theory was founded by Austin as a part of language philosophy, then Austin's student, Searle, developed it (Smith, 1991). The theory is helpful when it comes to focusing on the function of an utterance. The fact that speech act is an act indicates that there is a performer

of this speech, and there should be an audience too. The first part of speech act is the locutionary act which is the actual performance of a speech. The second part is illocutionary act which refers to the intended meaning that the speaker wants to convey to the audience. The intended meaning could be interpreted differently from one addressee to another. The third part is the perlocutionary act and that means the impact of the speech on the related people with that speech (Spenader, 2004).

Searle suggests five broad categories of speech acts. And each category consists of many acts that all serve a purpose related to the bigger category. The five categories are:

1- Assertives: These acts propose a fact of the world which could be true or false. These acts include definitions, assertions, descriptions, predictions, statements, and the act of insisting.

2- Directives: Through these acts, the speaker attempts to tell the addressee to do something. These acts include directions, orders, demands, suggestions, entreats, instructions. These acts can be either obeyed or not.

3- Comissives: These acts are the ones that the speaker uses to make an intention to do something in future. These intentions could be kept or broken. Comissive acts include promises, threats, pledges, vows.

4- Expressives: These acts serve the mission of expressing the speaker's feelings such as apologizing, thanking, congratulating, praising, denying, greeting.

5- Declaratives: These acts assume that there is a change that happened in the world. (Björgvinsson, 2011; Smith, 1991).

Searle suggests, opposing Austin's way of sorting acts, that the acts that are sorted to either category are not definitive. This means that an act could be interpreted through more than

one category depending on the force of the performed speech (Björgvinsson, 2011). Besides, there are indirect speech acts that do not include the locutionary that is literally used to perform an act. Therefore, the focus in this analysis is on the speeches themselves and not the categories they belong to.

### **3.2 Indirect Speech Acts**

Indirect speech acts can be either non-verbal or verbal. For non-verbal acts, it's when someone performs an act but without speaking any word (Björgvinsson, 2011). An example of non-verbal speech act is someone waving his or her hand to salute another person. Here, a communication has been made despite the fact that there were no words spoken.

As for verbal indirect speech, it means that the intended act is different from than the exact spoken utterance (Smith, 1991). For example, two people are on a table having dinner. And the salt is in front of person A. And person B thinks that the food requires more salt then he or she could say, "The food would taste better if it was more salty." This speech act, in the given context, could be expressed as a request for the salt and not a mere statement despite that person B didn't literally request salt. However, for an indirect speech act to be successfully performed, there must be a shared understanding between the speaker and the hearer, a mutual understanding that H. Paul Grice calls the Cooperative Principle (Björgvinsson, 2011).

Nonetheless, in this paper the researcher focuses on the illocutionary act itself and attempts to interpret the intention of the speaker. Speech Act Theory is usually used to analyze speeches of politicians. For example, Dylgjeri (2017) applied Speech Act Theory to analyze the

victory speech of Edi Rama in Albania. Dylgjeri's paper was beneficial to the researcher especially in differentiating between the parts of each speech act.

During the analysis of the speeches performed by the Narrator or Durden, the researcher will tag each speech with the intended act, such as, promising, asking, threatening, etc. Then, the researcher will compare the speech acts performed by either character in order to get an idea of how these acts reflect the mental and emotional states of both the Narrator's and Durden's.

### **Summary:**

The third chapter explores the history of Speech Act Theory and refers to several studies that adopt the theory as a framework in analyzing speeches. The chapter also clarifies the theory to make it easier for readers to understand. Furthermore, the researcher clearly describes the method he intends to follow in order to analyze the speeches of the main characters in the film.

The researcher separated speeches according to the purpose they serve. For example, if a character talked continuously for a minute, that speech was not taken as a whole, but broken down into parts where each part serves a different purpose. However, this fact doesn't mean that lengthy conversations with a sole purpose don't exist.

A noteworthy point is that the few speeches that the Narrator remembers as a flashback in the confrontation scene with Tyler at the hotel are not analyzed for two reasons: First, they are not spoken by only one character as the shape of the speaker shifts quickly between the Narrator and Durden while uttering the speech in order to show that the two characters are in reality one person. Second, these few speeches are analyzed in their first appearance in the film, before the Narrator's realization that is.



After that, the researcher tagged each separate speech with the illocutionary act it served in the context of the film. Some speeches could be interpreted to have more than one intended meaning, nevertheless, the researcher chose to tag each speech with only one intended act.

In order to analyze these acts, the researcher adopts the qualitative and the quantitative approaches. He uses the first to interpret each speech act, and the latter to numerically reach a result regarding the use of each speech act and its direction of fit in three different tables. The first table to show the speech acts performed in the film. The second and the third tables show the direction of fit of the performed speech acts, word to world and world to word respectively.

## Chapter Four: Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Results and Discussion

The two characters under study, the Narrator and Tyler Durden, did not have the same number of speeches in the film. In truth, Tyler doesn't speak a word until the 22<sup>th</sup> minute. Besides, the Narrator breaks the fourth wall every now and then allowing him to speak to viewers. Thus, the number of speeches spoken by the Narrator is bigger than that uttered by Durden. So, the percentage of each act is given against the number of all speech acts performed by either of the two characters.

The Narrator performed 696 speeches and Tyler has only 373. The main reason for the big number of speeches performed by the Narrator is that he sometimes explains things narratively to viewers. Besides, his screen time is longer than that of Tyler's.

The researcher ordered the illocutionary acts according to the times they are used from the total of 1069 speeches performed by the two characters. However, the percentage of speech act use is written next to the times it is performed by a single character. Nonetheless, acts that occupy less than 3% of the total speech act use by a single character are left without a percentage. The following table shows the illocutionary acts and the percentage of each one for the two characters.

Table 1

Speech Acts Times of Occurrence and their Percentage

Speech act	the Narrator	%	Tyler Durden	%
Statement	164	24	61	16

Question	118	17	68	18
Assertion	50	7	46	12
Answer	53	8	21	6
Ordering	20	-	34	9
Description	34	5	10	-
Instructions	8	-	30	8
Suggestion	14	-	16	4
Surprise	20	-	6	-
Anger	18	-	7	-
Demand	17	-	6	-
Entreat	21	3	1	-
Request	18	-	3	-
Fear	21	3	-	-
Insisting	11	-	8	-
Refusal	12	-	6	-
Threat	6	-	11	3
Deny	16	-	1	-
Acceptance	14	-	1	-
Excitement	2	-	12	3
Complaint	9	-	4	-
Thanking	9	-	2	-
Greeting	9	-	1	-

Promise	4	-	4	-
Pledge	6	-	1	-
Welcoming	1	-	5	-
Mockery	1	-	4	-
Prediction	5	-	-	-
Relief	4	-	-	-
Pain	3	-	-	-
Apologizing	3	-	-	-
Praising	1	-	1	-
Regret	2	-	-	-
Direction	-	-	1	-
Hesitation	1	-	-	-
Embarrassment	1	-	-	-
Convince	-	-	1	-
Congratulating	-	-	1	-

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A quick look at the table above is sufficient to show that the two characters are different based on their speech acts. However, these numbers are not definite to analyze a character without a deeper look into the context in which these speech acts are performed. For instance, if we learn that a person gives 25 orders a day we will probably tell that that person is authoritative. Nonetheless, would we still have the same notion about that person being authoritative if we learn that not a single order of the 25 was obeyed?

The researcher discussed the most used acts in separate sections in order to put readers in the environment of the text as presented in the film. Therefore, the reasons that made a character perform a certain speech are sometimes analyzed. Moreover, the consequential results of certain acts in pivotal scenes are also demonstrated.

### **Statement and assertion**

Both statement and assertion fit the direction of word to world, which refers to using speech acts that fit the current state of the world. The difference here is not big between the times the Narrator and Tyler use speech acts to state or assert. However, the degree of strength is stronger for Tyler, suggesting his adamant position.

### **Question**

I believe that the Narrator stating that he knows something because Tyler knows it, “I know this because Tyler knows this,” in the first scene of the film suggests that their mental capacity is the same. In truth, everything Tyler knows the Narrator already knows except the fact that they are actually one, a fact that the Narrator learns later in the film.

Since the knowledge they both have is the same, it is logical that their need for new knowledge is also the same. Hence, an integration between the two personalities occur when they are looking for new information. R. P. Kluft, as cited in International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (2011) defines integration as: “ongoing process of undoing all aspects of dissociative dividedness that begins long before there is any reduction in the number or

distinctness of the identities, persists through their fusion, and continues at a deeper level even after the identities have blended into one.”

### **Answer**

It makes perfect sense that the two answer a lot of questions because simply they are asked very often. Besides, the order of the two acts, questioning and answering is very close. However, sometimes the answers of the two characters are not literally answers. In truth, in their first meeting the Narrator asks Durden, “What do you do for a living?” Durden replies with a simple question, “Why?” before telling the Narrator that he works as a soap manufacturer. This suggests that Tyler Durden might answer the questions he is asked, but not before he knows the reason behind asking these questions.

### **Ordering**

Almost one of ten speech acts that Tyler performs is an order. I believe that that is suffice to say that he is in a position of leadership, especially that his orders are obeyed. The Narrator on the other hand gives 20 orders in the film. What is interesting about this number is that all of the acts of ordering performed by the Narrator occur after the first hour of the film. In truth, the first time that the Narrator orders someone is when he, what comes next might sound paradoxical, orders his boss that they have to talk. This act is performed in the 66<sup>th</sup> minute. That is, after spending much time with Tyler.

## **Description**

Five percent of the acts performed by the Narrator are used to describe. The scene where the Narrator describes the furniture he has in his condo is suggestive of his attachment to commodities. This attachment is one of the major factors that led him to create his alter-ego, Tyler Durden, who frees the Narrator from the chains of commodities by blowing up his condo. This important and distinctive characteristic for the Narrator can be noticed if the viewer pays attention to the times that the Narrator describes the commodities around him. Frankly, the Narrator's job demands he describe the car accidents he reports and the fact that this job is one of the reasons that made the Narrator feel bored with his life makes the idea of the Narrator hating his boss not for who he is but for what he represents a considerable idea.

## **Instructions**

Tyler does not only order people to do something, but also instructs them. And giving instructions implies that his intentions will not be met through hasty actions but through well-thought plans. Actually, the Narrator also believes so and states it after the scene where Tyler orders Raymond to get back to school. The specific rules and instructions that Tyler set for *Fight Club* then Project Mayhem prove his ability of planning something very intricate. Besides, they show that he is patient when it comes to expecting results.

## **Suggestion**

Tyler also makes a respectable number of suggestions, implying that he usually knows what to do next, or what others should do in future. Sometimes Tyler makes a suggestion just to

incept an idea in the hearer's mind so it develops to become a belief for the hearer. For instance, after the Narrator's condo blows up he goes to meet Tyler at a bar where the latter tells the Narrator that being attached to commodities can be disastrous. Then he suggests to the Narrator that he is free to believe the idea that Tyler proposed about commodities or not. In truth, it started as a suggestion from Tyler, however, it turned out to be an important reason for the Narrator to start *Fight Club*.

### **Surprise**

It makes sense that the Narrator uses acts that indicate surprise more than Tyler, as the latter is considered the man with the plan. Therefore, it is likely that Tyler doesn't feel surprised as often as the Narrator because Tyler usually does the action, not only witnesses it. Indeed, Tyler was in the first place created by the Narrator to act, not to feel. In a way, Tyler is the machine that does the work that the Narrator wants to do, but can't.

### **Anger**

There is not a significant difference between the two characters when it comes to the number of times they use acts indicating anger. Not only the difference is insignificant, but the total number of use too. Hence, they are not angry in nature. However, the fact that the Narrator created Tyler to change the life he leads suggests the existence of repressed anger. Nonetheless, this anger was not expressed through speech acts mainly, but by creating Tyler Durden.



## **Demand**

I believe that what goes with the act of refusal is applicable here, as they both refuse and demand things equally. However, the things and the ways they adopt are not the same. I believe that one of the major themes of the film is a call for a change, or a demand to do so. Nevertheless, the protagonist doesn't rely on words the most to demand this change from others as he prefers to take matters into his hands, or to be more precise, into his mind. In truth, the opening credits of the film with the background of the insides of a human brain might be suggestive that a true start begins from one's mind.

## **Entreat**

The fact that someone has to entreat someone else suggests that the first is subordinate to the latter. Hence, when we learn that the Narrator entreats others 21 times it is safe to say that he is sometimes subordinate. On the other hand, there is only one time that Tyler entreats others, where he begs Big Lou to have the basement. In that scene, Big Lou hits Tyler continuously without being fought back. What is fascinating is that Tyler seems to enjoy getting beaten. The idea that could be interpreted from the scene is that Tyler actually wanted to get beaten. He also hard headedly begged Lou to let them have the place so *Fight Club* members can fight there. The result was that he got what he wanted.

## **Request**

The degree of strength for request is weaker than demand, suggesting the weaker nature that characterizes the Narrator compared to Tyler. As for the relatively low number of times the

two characters use the speech act of request, it indicates, as well as it goes with the act of demand, that they tend to do things themselves rather than request them from others.

## **Fear**

A whopping 21 times that the Narrator used illocutionary acts to indicate that he feels scared sometimes, unlike Tyler who didn't use a single act that indicates he was scared. In truth, in the Narrator's core, he did not deny his cowardice, if we may say. The reason that supports this claim is that the Narrator wanted to make a change but he was afraid. Nevertheless, he didn't keep quiet. Instead, he invented Tyler Durden, a fearless alter-ego. This fact suggests that the Narrator knew all along he was scared and the way to overcome this fear was by creating Tyler. Consequently, Tyler not using any act that indicates fear suggests that the Narrator actually succeeded in creating an alter-personality that has no fear. In a twisted way, this proves that the Narrator is brave too, but not by not having fears, but by indirectly confronting them.

## **Insisting**

The percentage here goes in favor of Tyler to show his emphatic nature. Nevertheless, neither the total number of speech acts that serve the purpose of insisting nor the difference between the number of the times they are performed by either character is significant. However, the use of this act tells a lot about the two characters. In the film, the first time the Narrator uses a speech act of insisting is in his conversation with Marla on the issue of splitting the support groups between the two of them. While he insists that these groups are his she just ignores his claims suggesting the weak effect of the Narrator's speech acts of insisting on others. On the

other hand, the first speech act of insisting performed by Tyler is when he insists that “the things you own end up owning you.” Only a few words but indeed, they reflect the reality of the Narrator’s lifestyle, one which the latter fights to change.

### **Refusal**

The close number that the two characters use a speech act to indicate refusal suggests that deep inside the two want the same things. However, the frequency of these acts is insignificant. Nevertheless, the trait of refusal could be expressed in other ways than words. In fact, the whole plot of the film could be interpreted as an act, not through words though, of refusal of the mundane and materialistic lifestyle of the Narrator’s. Therefore, Speech Act Analysis is not enough to accurately interpret this characteristic.

### **Threat**

Even though the number of acts performed by the Narrator is almost double the number of the acts performed by Tyler, the Narrator's use of the act 'threat' is almost one fourth the times that Tyler performs it. In addition, the scene where the Narrator threatens his boss is actually the Narrator completing an assignment given by Tyler. Therefore, the Narrator is performing the act of threat but at the same time is yielding to the assignment given by Tyler, indicating Tyler's superiority over the Narrator. In truth, the Narrator says in that scene "Tyler's words are coming out of my mouth," suggesting Tyler's effect on him.

Superiority is not the only trait proven for Tyler to have when showing that he performs the act of 'threat' more than the Narrator, moreover, it suggests that Tyler is not afraid to take things to an extreme point if that means his plans will be turned into reality.

### **Deny**

The Narrator lives in a constant state of denial toward his lifestyle. Therefore, it is not a surprise that he uses an illocutionary act that serves the purpose of denial fairly frequently. Despite that the number of occurrences of this speech act in the Narrator's speeches is relatively small compared to the other speech acts, it is still essential for the plot to progress since that the Narrator's feeling of denial toward the way he lives is an important factor that led him change his lifestyle through creating *Fight Club*.

### **Acceptance**

By the act of acceptance the researcher refers to the speech acts performed by either character to indicate his acceptance of what others say. In the film, the Narrator performs 14 speech acts that serve the purpose of accepting what others say. On the other hand, Tyler performs only one act. This big difference between the Narrator and Tyler Durden suggests that Tyler is adamant while the Narrator is not. In truth, the Narrator sometimes sounds shaken when accepting what others say without serious attempts at standing ground from his part.

## **Excitement**

The reason that led the Narrator to create an alter-ego is that he was bored with his life in the first place. Thus, knowing that the Narrator expresses excitement only twice in the film is fathomable. On the other hand, Tyler expresses excitement every now and then, contrary to the nonchalant Narrator. Not only the speech act of expressing excitement could be analyzed here, but also the non-existence of it, especially on the Narrator's part. Hence, it is implied that some characteristics of people could be inferred not only by analyzing the speech acts they use, but also the ones they don't.

## **Complaint**

Even though the Narrator is bored with his life, he doesn't complain about that which makes this feeling suppressed deep inside. However, when the feeling got out it was in the shape of Tyler Durden, not only a speech act. So, in a way, Tyler himself is a speech act that serves the purpose of complaint. Moreover, Tyler is not an act of complaint alone, but he is a tool used to eradicate the things that the Narrator used to complain about.

## **Thanking**

They both don't thank people a lot as they don't interact with others in a friendly way very often. For Tyler, his interaction with others is mainly when he instructs the members of *Fight Club* to do something. Therefore, most of the speech acts performed in his interaction with others are acts that serve the purpose of ordering and instructing as he is their leader. As for the Narrator, his life revolves around his job in which he doesn't have any friends. Hence, he doesn't

have friendly relationships with co-workers. And this fact justifies the very few times he uses a speech act to thank someone.

### **Greeting**

I believe that what goes with welcoming and thanking goes too with greeting, not having many friendly relationships that is. What might have been a suitable relationship where the Narrator could use a speech act of greeting is his relationship with Marla. However, the unclear and awkward state of their relationship prevented this as the Narrator didn't confess his tenderness for Marla before the revelation that he and Tyler were one. Before that, he thought that Marla was in a relationship with Tyler.

### **Promise**

The fact that the two characters don't promise a lot suggests that there is a distance between them and other people. Nevertheless, when the Narrator uses the speech act of promising with Marla, viewers could infer that the Narrator wants this distance between him and Marla to be abridged. Hence, the Narrator might not have many relationships with people, but there is a relationship which he wants to save, and that is the one with Marla.

### **Pledge**

The number of speech acts serving the purpose of pledge is insignificant. Nonetheless, the only time that Tyler makes a pledge is committing himself to Project Mayhem which shows Tyler's affiliation in the film. A point to notice here is that Tyler pledged himself to Project

Mayhem which came some time after the creation of *Fight Club*. The timing of this pledge is suggestive that the aims of Project Mayhem are very serious and that they require commitment and possible sacrifice.

### **Welcoming**

Despite that Tyler doesn't perform acts of welcoming more than 5 times but when he uses them it's used to welcome members to *Fight Club* which shows his dedication toward it. On the other hand, the Narrator not using many speech acts of welcoming suggests that people are not usually welcome in his life. Even his love interest, Marla, was asked "What are you doing here?!" when he realized that she had slept over. Understandably, for viewers, he technically didn't invite her. Tyler did.

### **Mockery**

The Narrator mocks Marla's dress in the film and that is the only time he uses a speech act that serves the purpose of mockery. On the other hand, Tyler uses three speech acts of mockery, all performed to mock the Narrator, implying the superiority that Tyler feels toward the Narrator who doesn't respond to Tyler and just accepts what he says about him.

### **Prediction**

Tyler doesn't predict. He plans. On the other hand, the Narrator seems not to mind making predictions from time to time. This is a distinctive characteristic between the two

characters. In the first place, the Narrator wanted to make a change but he had to create Tyler to make this change because he, unlike the Narrator, is capable of good planning.

### **Relief**

Three times of the four that the Narrator uses speech acts to express relief is when he describes his feelings after going to support groups, but before Marla appears there of course. This alone is enough to show that the Narrator feels relieved for only minutes in the film.

### **Pain**

Although the number is small, it suggests that the Narrator feels pain more than Tyler. In truth, when Tyler is hit by the Narrator, and in another scene by Big Lou, the expression that prevails is excitement, not pain.

### **Apologizing**

Tyler does not express apology, not even for once in the film which indicates his firmness toward the goals he wants to achieve, no matter the way is. Besides, Tyler not using speech acts of apology indicates that he completely believes that what he is doing is right.

### **Praising**

Each character performs only one speech act to express praisal. This small number implies that they don't have much to praise. The Narrator on one hand seems nonchalant about



the way his life is going so it is expected that he doesn't have much to praise. On the other hand, Tyler is a very practical person who doesn't care much about interpersonal relationships.

### **Regret**

Despite that a speech act that serves the purpose of regret is only performed twice by the Narrator in the film, it still indicates that he sometimes feels sorry for the things he has done or abstained from doing. On the contrary, Tyler has no regrets.

### **Direction**

Tyler uses two speech acts in order to direct. The Narrator however doesn't use such acts. This fact suggests that Tyler has a persona of a leader, contrary to the Narrator. Besides, as analysis shows that the speech act of instructing is performed more by Tyler, it is reasonable also that he is the one to use the speech act of direction more as the two acts are close in the purpose they serve.

### **Hesitation**

The Narrator expresses hesitation only once in the film. Although it is not a lot but it still suggestive that he is not totally firm despite his knowledge that a drastic change must be made to flip his lifestyle, a change which requires an unshaken character, which the Narrator is not.

## **Embarrassment**

The only time a speech act that serves the purpose of embarrassment is performed in the film, it says a lot about the performer. The Narrator expresses his embarrassment when his condo blows up and he notices that there is no food there. This proves his loneliness.

## **Convince**

When Tyler feels threatened by the Narrator having a gun and ready to use it in the last scene of the film, he doesn't order the Narrator to put it down. Instead, he tries to convince him that they're friends which suggests that the superior tone that Tyler has used with the Narrator the whole film has changed.

## **Congratulating**

It is true that there is only one speech act of congratulating in the film but it says much about the two characters. The act is performed when Tyler burns the Narrator's hand and then congratulates him because he finally 'hit the bottom.' The fact that Tyler congratulates Tyler for this proves that hitting bottom is something to be celebrated in Tyler's point of view. However, the Narrator receives this congratulation with tears, not of joy but pain, indicating that his perception of hitting bottom might be different than that of Tyler's.

## **4.2 Direction of Fit (word to world and world to word)**

The difference between the two phrases is that in the first, the performer of speech acts performs acts that fit the current world. However, the second phrase describes the situation

where someone performs speech acts in order to make a change in the world (Searle, 1976). Therefore, by giving each speech act used in the film a description of its direction of fit, then counting the times that acts which go under 'word to world' and 'world to word' and calculating their percentage, we will be able to infer what character accepts reality as it is and what character tries to change the world. In case of acts with double direction of fit or null direction of fit, they will not be categorized.

The following tables show speech acts under their categories regarding direction of fit and the times they were performed and their percentage.

Table 2

Word to World

Speech act	the Narrator	Tyler Durden
Statement	164	61
Assertion	50	46
Insisting	11	8
Deny	16	1
Description	34	10
Answer	53	21
Percentage (%)	47	40

Table 3

## World to Word

Speech act	the Narrator	Tyler Durden
Ordering	20	34
Instructions	8	30
Suggestion	14	16
Demand	17	6
Entreat	21	1
Request	18	3
Threat	6	11
Promise	4	4
Pledge	6	1
Direction	-	1
Convince	-	1
Percentage (%)	16	29

The percentage of acts that go under the category 'word to world' suggests that indeed the Narrator is the more accepting of the world as it is. Moreover, the percentage of speech acts that fit the direction of 'world to word' that Tyler has got is almost double the percentage of the acts under the same category that the Narrator performs, which indicates that Tyler works to make a change to the world. The results shown in tables 2 and 3 answer the second question of the thesis.

## **Results and conclusion**

The analysis of the speech acts performed by the two characters in the film show that they are different. For the majority of the acts, there was a significant difference between the Narrator and Tyler Durden. The differences in traits which are proven by speech acts use adhere to the literature. Moreover, the analysis of direction of fit for the speech acts performed implies that the Narrator has surrendered to the world, however, Tyler's use of speech acts suggests that he has the desire and the will to make a change in the world.

### **Summary:**

In this chapter, the researcher counted the speech acts performed by the two characters in the film and sorted them in a table with the times they were performed and the percentage of the use of each act in comparison with the other acts. It was found that the number of speech acts performed by the Narrator (696) is almost twice the number of speech acts performed by Tyler Durden (373). Therefore, the percentage of acts use was essential for the researcher to analyze these acts.

After that, the researcher analyzed these acts. A point to consider is that the researcher interpreted the performed acts, however, the researcher sometimes interpreted the non-existence of certain acts to reach a conclusion. Then, the acts were sorted according to their direction of fit, either word to world or world to word. The first is used to describe speech acts that are performed to fit the current state of the world. The other direction of fit refers to the speech acts performed to serve the purpose of wanting to make a change in the world. It was found that the higher percentage of speech acts performed by the Narrator are those that go under the direction

of fit of word to world. On the other hand, the higher percentage for the speech acts performed by Tyler Durden are under the category of the direction of fit of world to word.

Finally, the researcher discussed the results and concluded that indeed, speech act analysis supports what literature says about the two characters which is in short is that the Narrator is a reclusive adult who is confined by his material belongings, and his alter-ego, Tyler Durden, the one who has the knowledge and the will to free the Narrator and the world from the chains of commodities.

## Chapter Five: Conclusion

For over a century films have been an integral part of the world of entertainment. Moreover, the film industry is developing ever since few frames showing people at a train station were played after each other almost seamlessly to compose the first video clip. The beginning of films was a black and white clip with no dialogue, plot, or even sound, and lasting for less than a minute. However, the craft of filmmaking developed into an industry that actors, directors, writers, producers, technicians, etc. work in. Nowadays, a single film could make over a billion dollars in profits and that shows the influence the industry has on people.

For some years, films have been looked at in a notion that exceeds their role as a way of entertainment. In truth, some countries banning some films suggests the impact that these films might have on viewers' ideas and behaviors. Therefore, films are viewed more seriously now. Besides, they've become subject to studies of different disciplines, for example, language. However, since that language is not present in all films as human voice wasn't used in early films, linguistic studies weren't applicable on such films. Nevertheless, with the emergence of sound as an integral part in films, there is even an Academy Award given for best sound recording, made studying the language used in a film applicable.

The paper overviewed an important period of film industry development which is recording the human voice reviewing several films which talked about this transitory period too. However, since the topic of the paper is Speech Act Analysis, it makes it obvious that the film under discussion is produced after the silent era.

The film under discussion here is significantly important in the field of language analysis since that the two main characters are notably different despite being the same person. Therefore,

it is worthy to conduct research to analyze the idiolect of each personality to discern the differences between them. Nevertheless, the rare medical condition that the protagonist suffers from, which is Dissociative Identity Disorder, makes him a sophisticated case to be analyzed. Hence, the research delved into several topics that could make the mission of understanding the interesting case of the protagonist less complicated.

The first topic of these is Freud's structural model of the human psyche. The different parts of the psyche are explained in the paper in light of the two main characters of *Fight Club*. The researcher makes comparisons between each part of the human psyche and the characteristics of each character to explore how that part affects the world. Besides, the paper reviews other films the protagonist of each one of them is a patient who suffers from Dissociative Identity Disorder. However, each one of the different personalities that a DID patient has represents a different part of the human psyche.

The researcher chose two films to support the notion of different personalities representing different parts of the human psyche. One is made before *Fight Club*, which is *Psycho* (1960) and another made in 2016, after *Fight Club* that is, which is *Split*. The choice of these two films reflects the interest that filmmakers had and still have regarding making films with a mentally ill protagonist. Such films led the researcher to review another topic that is essential for a better understanding of the two main characters of *Fight Club*. This topic is mental illness. The researcher reviews several sources that explore mental and psychological illnesses, especially Dissociative Identity Disorder. Furthermore, the paper reviews real-life cases of crimes committed by mentally ill people and how the law views them. It also reviews a film the



story of which revolves around a young man who suffers from Dissociative Identity Disorder and who is under trial for committing a murder.

The researcher sees that giving examples from real life and works of cinema improves viewers' understanding of films the protagonist of which is mentally ill. For instance, such cases and films explain several reasons that lead a person to become a patient with DID. They also give scientific and logical factors that indicate that mentally ill people are more susceptible to commit crimes. Moreover, the researcher believes that analyzing the protagonist's idiolect, in addition to his or her mental illness would help for a clearer comprehension of that character. Thus, the researcher analyzes the individual language of the personalities of the protagonist of *Fight Club*.

The researcher adopts Speech Act Theory as the framework for his analysis. The paper reviews the history of the theory from its inception by Austin to its development by different scholars, most notably Searle. It also explores the parts of the speech as viewed by the theory in light of the different categories that the theory consists of. The researcher also reviews multiple papers that adopt Speech Act Theory as the main framework to analyze speeches both in political and cinematic works.

The researcher believes that analyzing the idiolect of a person helps to understand the speaker. However, analyzing one's speech is not as easy as it might seem. The researcher first has to separate the speeches of the speaker whose speeches are to be analyzed, but with relation to the context they occur in. Then the researcher has to sort each speech act into a category and the purpose it serves. Finally, the researcher interprets the intended speech acts. Nonetheless, some limitations could face the researcher. For instance, not every speech act is direct, and this

fact necessitates the researcher take the context into consideration. The paper therefore pays attention to and explores both direct and indirect speech acts.

The paper reviews distinctive characteristics that describe the two characters whose speeches are to be analyzed, and this fact raises an important question which is, “Does the analysis of the speech acts of the two characters conform to their description in the literature?” Indeed, the researcher analyzes the speech acts performed by the two characters both quantitatively and qualitatively to reach an answer. However, since the analysis is partly qualitative suggests that some differences between interpretations of two different researchers might take place. Nonetheless, the paper concludes that the analysis of the speech acts of the two main characters conform to what the literature describes them, Tyler as the outrageous and revolutionary, and the Narrator who is bored and passive. After the researcher, both quantitatively and qualitatively, analyzed a total of 38 speech acts performed by either one or both the characters, the researcher found that through performing the analyzed speech acts characters reveal a lot about themselves. Moreover, they indeed sometimes uncover their true colors by abstaining from performing a certain act in a certain context. Nevertheless, in general, the characteristics of the two characters are reflected in their speeches.

It is astonishing, in the researcher’s point of view, that an action film can reveal its characters not only through action but also through dialogue. This feeling comes from the notion that action films focus mainly on action scenes in the film. To support this idea, action stars like Jackie Chan and Jean-Claude Van Damme whose native languages are Cantonese and French respectively, succeeded in action films despite that their English was hard to understand in their first films in Hollywood. On the other hand, however, *Fight Club* pays attention to the dialogue

too. And viewers have Chuck Palahnuik, the author of the source material, and Jim Uhls, the screenplay writer to thank. In addition, for a director like Fincher, who made films spanning from thrillers like *Se7en*, action films like *Fight Club*, and dramas such as *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, it proves that he has a vast repertoire of different expertise regarding filmmaking which entails he pays attention to the different aspects of the films he makes, including of course dialogue. In addition, the camera movement in some of the scenes in Fincher's movies, where the camera perfectly moves with the actor, requires hours and perhaps days from the camera crew and the actors to perfect the shot. This shooting style, which might not be noticed by some viewers, actually makes it fathomable that Fincher tries his best to direct a well-made film where no pieces are out of place. Truly, the researcher believes it is admirable that the director tries not to let any detail slide.

The paper refers to the film several times to quote the two characters to support the researcher's interpretation of something they did or said, or just to reflect on one or more of their characteristics. The researcher pays attention to making the context of the referred quote clear to the reader so that they could get a clear picture of the intended scene. Nonetheless, the direction and set production are helpful for a better understanding of the film. Music too is important in helping to uncover some of the characters' traits and the scenes in general, especially the song in the last scene. Therefore, the clarification of context provided by the researcher might be subjective which could result the researcher and the other viewers having different interpretations for a certain scene.

Although that the paper explores different categories of speech acts, nonetheless, the researcher believes that sorting these acts into the category they belong to as inaccurate analysis

for two main reasons. First, a certain speech act does not necessarily belong to a fixed category. Therefore, one speech act could go under two different categories depending on the context which suggests the indefinite nature of these categories. Second, the researcher sees that the same category could consist of different speech acts that might be contradictory. Ergo, two speech acts that are sorted into a certain category does not mean they indicate a certain trait or value of the performer. For these two reasons, the researcher thinks it is more accurate to interpret illocutionary acts themselves in their context regardless of their categories.

The researcher believes that most films with plot twists are not rewatchable since these films rely heavily on the plot twist to affect the audience. However, he personally considers *Fight Club* as one of the most rewatchable films despite having a plot twist. This point of view indicates that the film has strengths that exceed a mere scene where a mystery is revealed. It suggests that the film relies on different factors for its high cinematic value, among these is dialogue and the distinguished language of its different characters.

The researcher recommends that further studies aiming at analyzing speeches of characters in films and literary works be conducted, and that aspiring novelists, playwrights, and screenplay writers take these studies as examples of how idiolect can reflect and reveal the concealed traits of a certain character. Of course, that doesn't necessarily mean that writers have to conduct research to analyze the speeches performed by the characters they create in the work they are writing, however, it merely suggests that these writers pay attention to their selection of words ascribed to a certain character. After all, writers create people in their writings, and people are unique in nature.

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