



An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts Used in The Speech of Ridwan Kamil as Jakarta Governor Candidate

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This research analyzes the illocutionary acts present in Ridwan Kamil's campaign speeches for the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election. It shows how political speeches change perspectives, audiences, and candidates. Kamil engages diverse voters with his funny, sympathetic, and aggressive communication. This study classifies Kamil's illocutionary acts—assertive, commissive, directive, and expressive—using speech act theory to uncover his political appeal's vocabulary. Voter trust requires 25 assertive actions to develop credibility and 12 commissive acts to express future governance. Directive activities (5), which gain audience support, and expressive acts (2), which provoke emotion, were rarer, showing a tactical concentration on substantive substance. Kamil's remarks match people's expectations for sensible, solution-oriented leadership with clarity and tangible guarantees, according to research. This extensive examination of how language might strategically influence voter behavior and understanding enriches political communication literature. The study proposes future research into cross-cultural comparisons and political speech expression, particularly in different electoral circumstances. Kamil appealed to Jakarta's voters by tailoring his message to diverse audiences in formal and informal settings.

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INTRODUCTION

In politics, the strategic use of language plays a crucial role in shaping public perspectives and influencing voter behavior (Naaikuur, 2024),(Rahmani & Saeed, 2024). Political speeches are vital for candidates to articulate their vision, persuade audiences, and build their political identity (Mamidi, 2018); (Kotenko et al., 2023). The crafting and

delivery of language often determine a candidate's ability to resonate with voters and garner support, making the study of political discourse an important area of linguistic and pragmatic research.

Ridwan Kamil, a prominent figure in Indonesian politics, is renowned for his dynamic communication style and ability to connect with diverse audiences. His speeches, characterized by humor, empathy, and clarity, have consistently demonstrated his adept use of persuasive language. Recently, Kamil declared his candidacy for the Jakarta governor election in 2024. His campaign speeches have become central to communicating his mission and vision, reflecting his commitment to addressing Jakarta's challenges while inspiring public trust.

This research aims to analyze the illocutionary acts performed by Ridwan Kamil in his campaign speeches. Illocutionary acts, as conceptualized by (Austin, 1962) and further elaborated by (Searle, 1976), refer to actions performed through utterances intended to influence listeners' thoughts, emotions, or actions. By identifying and categorizing these acts, the study seeks to reveal the rhetorical strategies that enhance Kamil's political appeal and effectiveness as a candidate. Additionally, this research contributes to the field of political communication by providing insights into how language can be strategically used to shape voters' perspectives, perceptions, and decisions.

Previous research has explored various aspects of political communication by Indonesian politicians, particularly Ridwan Kamil. Studies have analyzed public responses to his social media posts and his use of language in different media contexts, highlighting his diverse communication strategies.

The urgency of this research lies in its relevance to the broader discourse on political communication and persuasion in democratic societies. Political speeches are not merely vehicles for policy presentation; they are tools for building emotional connections, establishing credibility, and mobilizing public support. By analyzing the illocutionary acts employed in Ridwan Kamil's speeches, this study offers a nuanced understanding of how political candidates utilize language to achieve communicative and persuasive effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speech act is a concept in pragmatics that examines how language is used not to convey information but to perform an action. Based on Austin (1962), he argued that when people speak, they are not only producing the utterances but also performing an action. The speech act is divided into three types. There are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts.

a. Locutionary act

This act refers to producing sounds, words, and sentences with a specific meaning. It has the literal meaning. The sentence "*The weather is hot*" describes the real condition of the weather. It is hot.

b. Illocutionary act

This act refers to the listener doing something for the speaker. It represents the intention behind the utterances (Chaer & Agustina, 2010). With the same example, "*The weather is hot*," illocutionary has a different meaning from locutionary. The meaning depends on the response from the listener. It should

have a meaning that someone should open the window, open the door, or turn on the AC in that room because it feels hot.

c. Perlocutionary act

A perlocutionary act is the effect of the utterance (Astuti, 2018). The act refers to the effect the utterance has on the listener. Continuing the example, the listener does something such as open the window, open the door, or turn on the AC. It is called a perlocutionary act.

Searle's taxonomy states that an illocutionary act is classified into five categories. Such as the representative expresses the speaker's belief about something, the directive describes the speaker who makes the listener do something, the commissive refers to the speaker's commitment to some future action, the expressive represents the psychological state or emotion of the speaker, and then the last, the declarative, is an act of the speaker who has created new things, status, or reality.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative methodology to examine Ridwan Kamil's campaign speeches. The analysis involves identifying various types of illocutionary acts—assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative—and categorizing them based on their communicative functions. By applying speech act theory, this study investigates how these acts contribute to shaping the electorate's comprehensive understanding of Ridwan Kamil's message. The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the intricate relationship between language use and political persuasion, offering valuable insights for academics and practitioners alike.

This research provides a detailed analysis of the pragmatic strategies in Ridwan Kamil's campaign speeches and contributes to a broader understanding of the intersection between language, politics, and voter engagement. By uncovering the illocutionary strategies that underlie his speeches, this study underscores the critical role of linguistic mastery in political success, particularly in Indonesia's socio-political context.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To provide a clearer overview of the distribution of illocutionary acts employed by Ridwan Kamil in his campaign speech, this study categorizes each statement based on the type of illocution: assertive, commissive, directive, and expressive. The following table presents the frequency of each category of illocutionary act identified in the analysis, highlighting the strategic use of language in building connections with the audience and effectively conveying political messages.

Table 1. Illocutionary Acts of Ridwan Kamil's Speech

Illocutionary Act	Frequency
Assertive	25
Commissive	12
Directive	5
Expressive	2

Table 1 above illustrates the frequency of illocutionary acts used in Ridwan Kamil's campaign speech. Assertive acts dominate the speech with 25 instances, reflecting his effort to provide statements, share information, and present his observations to establish credibility and convey his understanding of Jakarta's challenges. Commissive acts, with 12 occurrences, highlight his commitment to fulfilling promises and delivering on his vision for Jakarta's future. Directive acts appear 5 times, indicating his strategy to involve and engage the audience by requesting their support and cooperation. Lastly, expressive acts, although less frequent with only 2 instances, emphasize his gratitude and emotional connection with the audience. These findings suggest that assertive and commissive acts play the most prominent roles in Ridwan Kamil's speech, aligning with his goals to build trust and persuade voters through informative and promising messages.

1. Assertive

Example 1:

Jakarta is experiencing many challenges from a global perspective, such as rising sea levels and flooding from the south

"Jakarta is experiencing many challenges from a global perspective, such as rising sea levels and flooding from the south."

This assertive act conveys factual information about the global issues affecting Jakarta. It establishes Ridwan Kamil's awareness of critical problems, enhancing his credibility as a leader who understands the complexities of governance.

Example 2:

Semua gubernur terdahulu sudah melakukan kerja-kerja yang baik.

"All previous governors have done good work."

This statement acknowledges the contributions of past leaders, reinforcing his inclusive and respectful stance while positioning himself as a candidate who values continuity and builds on previous achievements.

2. Commissive

Example 3:

Kami akan bekerja keras, bekerja ikhlas, bekerja tuntas, bekerja berkualitas, untuk mewujudkan apa tadi yang sudah disampaikan.

"We will work hard, work sincerely, work thoroughly, and work with quality to realize what has been conveyed earlier."

This promise highlights his dedication to fulfilling his campaign's objectives. Such commissive acts aim to reassure voters of his commitment to effective leadership.

Example 4:

"Jika hal itu baik, kami akan lanjutkan dan pertahankan, jika masih kurang, kami akan sempurnakan."

"If it is good, we will continue and maintain it; if it is still lacking, we will perfect it."

This statement reflects a clear commitment to sustaining and improving existing initiatives, reassuring voters of his readiness to implement meaningful changes while respecting what has already been achieved.

3. Directive

Example 5:

"Kami mohon doa restu dari semuanya karena tidak ada kesuksesan tanpa kebersamaan."

"We ask for the blessing of everyone because there is no success without togetherness."

This request engages the audience by inviting their participation and support. It emphasizes the collaborative nature of governance and strengthens voter engagement.

Example 6:

"Mohon izin sedikit saya menyampaikan pondasi kepemimpinan kami."

"Please allow me to convey the foundation of our leadership."

This polite directive act seeks permission from the audience, creating an interactive dynamic that shows humility and respect for their attention.

4. Expressive

Example 7:

"We both express our gratitude for all the support that has brought us to this stage."

By expressing gratitude, this act strengthens the emotional connection between Ridwan Kamil and the audience, showing appreciation for their support and trust.

Example 8:

"Kami sangat bahagia ada Mas Gibran di sini karena dengan undang-undang baru ini, Wakil Presiden diberi tugas untuk mengkoordinasikan aglomerasi Jakarta dan sekitarnya."

"We are very happy to have Mas Gibran here because under the new law, the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia is tasked with coordinating Jakarta and its surroundings."

This expressive act reflects happiness and enthusiasm, creating a positive and welcoming tone that helps to foster goodwill among supporters and stakeholders.

Discussion

This study identified four types of illocutionary acts in Ridwan Kamil's campaign speech: **assertive** (25 occurrences), **commissive** (12 occurrences), **directive** (5 occurrences), and **expressive** (2 occurrences). Assertive acts dominated the speech, reflecting Ridwan Kamil's emphasis on establishing credibility and conveying facts. Commissive acts were used to express commitments and promises, while directive acts encouraged audience participation. Expressive acts, although limited, were strategically employed to foster emotional connections with the audience.

The findings align with prior research that highlights the critical role of illocutionary acts in political discourse. Commissive acts, such as promises, have been emphasized as effective strategies for political persuasion, as they demonstrate a leader's commitment to actionable goals (Long & Thanh, 2022) (Ilić & Radulović, 2015). Ridwan Kamil's use of commissive acts follows this trend, as he frequently emphasizes his promises and commitments to gain voter trust.

The study also supports insights from (Hamad et al., 2022) who underline the role of complex speech acts in political discourse. Ridwan Kamil's assertive and commissive acts, when combined, create a coherent argumentative structure that balances fact-sharing

with actionable commitments, persuading the audience while avoiding over-reliance on emotional appeals. Additionally, (Oishi, 2022) findings on illocutionary-act-type sensitivity resonate with this study, as Ridwan Kamil sequences assertive acts to establish credibility before using commissive acts to reinforce his vision and commitments, demonstrating an understanding of how contextual placement strengthens the illocutionary force.

On the other hand, expressive acts, while noted in other research for their ability to influence perceptions of sincerity and emotional connection (Ilić & Radulović, 2015), are less prominent in Ridwan Kamil's speech. This suggests a strategic prioritization of substantive content (assertive and commissive acts) over emotional engagement. While this may reflect the preferences of Jakarta's electorate, who value solution-oriented leadership, it contrasts with political strategies that emphasize emotional resonance through expressive acts, as observed in other political contexts.

These findings illustrate the pragmatic strategies underlying Ridwan Kamil's political discourse. His heavy use of assertive and commissive acts reflects a deliberate focus on clarity, credibility, and commitment, consistent with the conclusions of (Ilić & Radulović, 2015), and Nguyen and Nguyen (2022) regarding the effectiveness of promises in building trust. Moreover, the strategic sequencing of illocutionary acts, as discussed by (Oishi, 2022), ensures that his speech aligns with audience expectations for rational and substantive messaging.

This pattern also reflects broader trends in political communication. As (Hamad et al., 2022) highlight, political discourse often employs a combination of illocutionary acts to construct layered arguments. While expressive acts can enhance emotional engagement, their limited use in Ridwan Kamil's speech suggests a focus on rational appeals to credibility and solutions, signaling a calculated effort to address Jakarta's diverse and pragmatic electorate.

Ridwan Kamil's multi-faceted communication strategies further highlight his adaptability in addressing diverse audience expectations, both in formal political discourse and digital interactions. While his campaign speech prioritizes assertive and commissive acts to project credibility and commitment, his social media presence demonstrates a contrasting yet complementary approach. As noted by (Habibi et al., 2022) Kamil employs informal language, cultural references, and entertaining content on platforms like Facebook to humanize his political persona and engage with grassroots audiences. This balance between formal and informal communication is crucial in modern political contexts, where leaders must resonate with both pragmatic voters seeking solutions and digitally active demographics seeking relatability. Moreover, (Mubarok et al., 2021) underscore Kamil's responsiveness to public sentiment, demonstrated through his interactive Instagram engagement during the COVID-19 crisis. This adaptability reinforces the importance of tailoring communication to audience needs, combining rational appeals in formal speeches with emotional engagement in digital spaces, ensuring a cohesive narrative that caters to Jakarta's diverse electorate.

The findings have important implications for political communication and campaign strategy. First, the emphasis on assertive and commissive acts highlights the importance of fact-based communication and concrete promises in political persuasion, as noted by (Ilić & Radulović, 2015). This demonstrates how political leaders can build credibility and trust with voters by combining factual observations with clear

commitments. Additionally, the lower frequency of directive and expressive acts suggests a need to balance substantive and emotional appeals, as excessive reliance on either could risk alienating segments of the audience.

For communication scholars, the study underscores the significance of context in shaping the illocutionary force of speech acts, as discussed by (Oishi, 2022). Understanding how different illocutionary acts interact and evolve within a speech offers valuable insights into the mechanisms of political persuasion.

The dominance of assertive and commissive acts in Ridwan Kamil's speech reflects both strategic and contextual considerations. As a candidate for Jakarta's governorship, Ridwan Kamil must address a highly diverse electorate with rational and solution-driven expectations. This is consistent with the findings of (Ilić & Radulović, 2015) that commissive acts are critical for building trust and accountability. Furthermore, the sequencing of illocutionary acts to prioritize assertive and commissive forms aligns with (Oishi, 2022) observation that contextual sensitivity and discursive sequence significantly impact the illocutionary force of political discourse.

The limited use of expressive acts may reflect the calculated decision to prioritize substantive content over emotional engagement, a trend also noted in Nguyen and Nguyen's (2022) work, where different cultures may value rational commitments over emotional resonance in political campaigns.

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge:

1. **For politicians:** Balance the use of assertive and commissive acts to build credibility and deliver actionable promises. Incorporate more expressive acts strategically to foster emotional engagement without diluting the substantive focus of the message.
2. **For communication scholars:** Expand research on the interaction between different illocutionary acts, particularly in multicultural and diverse political contexts, to deepen understanding of how these acts function in persuasion
3. **For Ridwan Kamil's campaign team:** Maintain the strong use of assertive and commissive acts while increasing the presence of directive and expressive acts. This approach can enhance emotional connections with the electorate and encourage active public participation in his vision for Jakarta.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the dominance of assertive and commissive illocutionary acts in Ridwan Kamil's campaign speech, reflecting his strategic focus on establishing credibility and making actionable promises. These findings distinguish him from other political figures who may rely more heavily on emotional appeals or directive acts. The sequencing of assertive acts to establish credibility, followed by commissive acts to reinforce commitments, demonstrates a calculated approach to political persuasion. Additionally, the limited use of expressive acts suggests a prioritization of substantive content over emotional engagement, catering to Jakarta's pragmatic and solution-oriented electorate. The study contributes conceptually by emphasizing the strategic role of illocutionary acts in political persuasion and methodologically by integrating the analysis of formal speeches with insights from digital interactions, offering a holistic view of Ridwan Kamil's communication strategies. However, the research is limited to formal speeches and does not extensively explore audience reception or the broader impact of

his digital communication. Future research could examine cross-cultural comparisons, audience perceptions, and the integration of digital and formal communication to provide a deeper understanding of how illocutionary acts shape political effectiveness across diverse contexts.

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