

# Analysis Of Illocutionary Acts in Dedi Mulyadi's Speech at the National Awakening Ceremony: Let the Sarcastic People Be Hurt Forever

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## Abstract

This study examines the illocutionary acts in Dedi Mulyadi's speech delivered during the National Awakening Ceremony, utilizing Searle's (1976) taxonomy within a descriptive qualitative framework. A total of 72 utterances were identified and categorized: 40 assertive (55.5%), 15 directive (20.8%), 10 commissive (13.9%), 5 expressive (6.9%), and 2 declarative (2.8%) acts. Assertives dominate, reflecting Dedi's sarcastic and informational style, while the rarity of declaratives underscores his emphasis on persuasion rather than formal proclamation. The analysis reveals how Dedi strategically employs sarcasm and militaristic directives to assert authority, critique societal issues, and influence public perception. These rhetorical choices strengthen his image as a decisive leader but may limit dialogic engagement. The study highlights the communicative function of illocutionary acts in political discourse and contributes to a deeper understanding of how language performs social and political actions in contemporary Indonesian rhetoric.

**Keywords:** *Illocutionary Speech Acts, Dedi Mulyadi's Speech, Speech Analysis*

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji tindak tutur ilokusi dalam pidato Dedi Mulyadi yang disampaikan pada Upacara Kebangkitan Nasional, dengan menggunakan taksonomi Searle (1976) dalam kerangka deskriptif kualitatif. Sebanyak 72 ujaran berhasil diidentifikasi dan dikategorikan: 40 asertif (55,5%), 15 direktif (20,8%), 10 komisif (13,9%), 5 ekspresif (6,9%), dan 2 deklaratif (2,8%). Tindak asertif mendominasi, mencerminkan gaya komunikasi Dedi yang sarkastik dan informatif, sementara tindak deklaratif yang jarang menunjukkan fokus pada persuasi daripada pernyataan formal. Analisis menunjukkan bagaimana Dedi secara strategis menggunakan sarkasme dan direktif militeristik untuk menegaskan otoritas, mengkritik isu-isu sosial, dan memengaruhi persepsi publik. Pilihan retorika ini memperkuat citranya sebagai pemimpin yang tegas, namun berpotensi membatasi keterlibatan dialogis. Studi ini menyoroti fungsi komunikatif tindak ilokusi dalam wacana politik dan memberikan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang bagaimana bahasa berperan sebagai tindakan sosial dan politik dalam retorika Indonesia kontemporer.

**Kata Kunci:** *Tindak Tutur Ilokusi, Pidato Dedi Mulyadi, Analisis Pidato*

## 1. Introduction

Speech act theory, first introduced by philosopher J.L. Austin (1955) and later developed by John Searle (1969), remains fundamental in pragmatics studies. As noted by Wijaya and Nugroho (2022, p. 15), this theory revolutionized our understanding of language by demonstrating that utterances constitute social actions rather than mere information exchange. Contemporary scholars like Locher and Graham (2021) emphasize that speech acts serve as powerful tools in political communication, where every utterance carries intentional force and social

consequences. According to Yule (1996: 47), a speech act is an activity that is demonstrated through speech. According to the experts' explanations, a speech act is an action that a speaker performs using his speech. More precisely, the speech act is the knowledge that when someone speaks, they do more than just utter a series of words; they actually carry out an action. It has a specific impact when it comes to communicating.

Recent linguistic research (Almurashi, 2023; Fetzer & Weizman, 2022) has identified several persistent challenges in analyzing illocutionary acts:

- Contextual Misinterpretation: Cultural or environmental variances frequently result in disparities between the speaker's aim and the listener's comprehension (Chen, 2023). Political sarcasm, for example, often leads to misunderstandings among various audience segments.
- Pragmatic Ambiguity: Nguyen (2021) points out that politicians frequently use purposefully ambiguous language to accomplish several communication goals at once.
- Situational Inappropriacy: When illocutionary behaviors deviate from contextual norms, such as employing combative language in diplomatic contexts, they may not be successful (Park & Lee, 2022).
- Perlocutionary Failure: Because of audience resistance or misinterpretation, speech acts frequently fail to produce the desired result (Davis, 2023).

In political discourse, when speech acts serve as tactical tools for mobilization and persuasion, these communication difficulties become especially apparent (Wang & Zhang, 2023). According to recent research on populist rhetoric, politicians use particular illocutionary patterns to create their public personas and sway voters (Moffitt, 2021; Wodak, 2022). Dedi Mulyadi's speech at the National Awakening Ceremony is examined in this study for a number of strong reasons:

First, a cursory examination demonstrates his unique use of provocative illocutionary acts, especially caustic statements such as "Let the sarcastic people be hurt forever." Such statements are a prime example of "confrontational populism," a rhetorical approach that is becoming more and more popular worldwide, according to Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2023).

Second, Dedi's speeches serve as important case studies in Indonesian political communication since he is a regional leader with national sway. Tapsell's (2022) recent research highlights the growing use of media-savvy language by regional leaders in an effort to increase their power.

Third, examining how political leaders strike a balance between traditional ideals and modern populist tactics is made easier by the ceremonial setting of National Awakening Day (Aspinall & Mietzner, 2023).

Fourth, Dedi's contentious rhetorical approach, which combines contemporary political sarcasm with Javanese cultural allusions, provides fresh perspectives on how Indonesian political discourse is changing (Jurriëns & Tapsell, 2023).

Dedi's illocutionary methods may be thoroughly examined thanks to this concentrated research of a single speech, filling a vacuum in micro-level studies of Indonesian political rhetoric identified by Heritage (2021). The study advances linguistic pragmatics and political communication studies by utilizing modern speech act theory in this little-studied situation.

## 2. Literature Review

A key component of pragmatic studies that looks at how language is used to carry out actions is speech act theory. In his book *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech actions*, Searle (1979) divided speech actions into three parts: locutionary acts (the literal meaning of utterances), illocutionary acts (the speaker's intention behind the utterance), and perlocutionary acts (the effect produced on the hearer). Illocutionary acts are the most important of these for comprehending how speakers express their intended meaning in particular situations. Searle (1979) further categorize illocutionary acts into five distinct types: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Assertives (statements of fact or belief), directives (attempts to influence the listener's action), commissives (commitments to future actions), expressives (expressions of psychological states), and declaratives (utterances that change reality by their enactment). This taxonomy provides a robust lens for examining political discourse, where language is strategically employed to persuade, critique, and mobilize audiences (locher & Graham, 2021; Wang & Zhang, 2023).

## 3. Method

This study examines Dedi Mulyadi's speech at the national awakening ceremony, in detail using a descriptive qualitative method. Sugiyono (2015: 15) asserts that qualitative research methods are studies that arose as a result of a shift in perspective on a reality, a phenomenon, or symptoms that are currently present. The

researcher used the Kompas TV YouTube video to transcribe Dedi Mulyadi's speech at the national awakening ceremony, which served as the study's data source. The documentation instrument was one of the tools the researcher employed in this investigation.

Gathering of data. Along with the instrument used to collect data for this study, the researcher also used a laptop as a supporting tool to watch Dedi's Mulyadi speech videos, a reliable internet connection, and the YouTube application to watch Dedi Mulyadi's speech videos. Following the collection of all the data, the researcher conducted a comprehensive analysis of the data. After Dedi Mulyadi's speech transcripts were analyzed, the several types of illocutionary behaviors were identified. In order to accomplish this, the researcher employed an interactive data analysis approach as outlined by Miles and Huberman (2014: 31–32). This approach breaks down the research into three streams of activities: data visualization, data condensation, conclusion drawing, and conclusion verification. These steps will address questions one and two of the problem formulation that were previously explained and derived from Searle's theory.

#### 4. Result and Discussion

##### 4.1 Result

In analyzing Dedi Mulyadi's speech, several dominant illocutionary acts emerged. Assertives were the most prevalent (40 instances), encompassing both sarcastic critiques like "Biarkan kaum nyinyir sakit hati selamanya" and factual claims such as "Anak-anak kehilangan ruang bermain." Directives appeared 15 times, ranging from calls to action ("kita harus bertindak!") to militaristic order ("didik anak secara disiplin!"). commissives occurred 10 times, primarily in the form of pledges like "beri beasiswa untuk engineering," while declaratives were rare (only 2 instances) and limited to institutional proclamations. The speech heavily employed sarcasm as a rhetorical tool, particularly in assertive acts that mocked opponents (e.g., "Gubernur molor lebih buruk dari gubernur konten"), requiring audiences to infer the intended meaning (Gibbs, 2020). This approach generated polarized reactions, with supporters praising the wit while critics perceived hostility (Lee & Pinker, 2010). The militaristic directives ("disiplin adalah harga mati") served to reinforce authority but risked alienating more liberal audience segments. Conversely, emotional expressives like "anak-anak adalah korban sistem" effectively fostered empathy among parents, demonstrating the varied impact of Dedi's rhetorical strategies on different audience groups.

Based on the research conducted, the analysis identified 72 utterances in Dedi Mulyadi's speech that could be categorized as illocutionary acts, covering assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive types, with only 2 declarative instances. Following Searle's (1976) classification framework, the study revealed the assertive category as dominant, appearing 40 times (55.5%). In his address, Dedi frequently employed declarative statements to convey his message.

##### 4.2 Discussion

The prevalence of assertive acts in Dedi's speech underscores his authoritative and sarcastic rhetorical style. Statement such as "Biarkan kaum nyinyir sakit hati selamanya" ("let the sarcastic people be hurt forever") demonstrate his use of bold, unequivocal language, which enhances message clarity and projects confidence. This approach strengthens his credibility and influence, as listeners perceive his assertions as firm and decisive. Moreover, such statements can significantly sway public opinion, reinforcing his arguments with conviction. But there are drawbacks to the prevalence of forceful behavior as well. These claims may lessen audience interaction even while they successfully inform and persuade. Dedi's approach is more one-way and emphasizes assertion over conversation, in contrast to dialogic or inviting rhetoric. His speech serves more as a monologic delivery than an open discussion, which may restrict audience participation.

This study looks at Dedi's speech's communicative purposes and underlying meaning in addition to classifying illocutionary behaviors. Searle's (1976) taxonomy assertive, commissive, directive, declarative, and expressive is used in this study to analyze how Dedi's language affects perception. His ironic assertives, such as "Gubernur molor lebih buruk dari gubernur konten" (meaning "A sleeping governor is worse than a content-creating governor"), are examples of hidden critiques that defer to the listener. In the meantime, his orders ("Kita harus bertindak!" ("We must act!")) reinforce his leadership image and demonstrate his harsh, military style.

Dedi's speech analysis provides insightful information about political communication tactics, especially the roles of authority and sarcasm in public discourse. By assisting audiences in deciphering intentions, an understanding of these illocutionary behaviors promotes more effective communication. This study demonstrates to scholars and readers the value of pragmatic analysis in analyzing political discourse by demonstrating how language performs social activities in addition to transmitting information. By shifting the focus to Dedi Mulyadi, this research illuminates his distinctive rhetorical style marked by assertiveness, sarcasm, and command-driven directives while also acknowledging the trade-offs of such an approach in public engagement.

## 5. Conclusion

This study examines the illocutionary speech acts in Dedi Mulyadi's speech, revealing significant findings about his distinctive communication style. The analysis of 72 categorized utterances shows: 40 assertive (55.5%), 15 directive (20.8%), 10 commissive (13.9%), 5 expressive (6.9%), and 2 declarative (2.8%) acts. These findings comprehensively address the research questions by identifying and quantifying the types of illocutionary acts present, interpreting their meaning and linguistic function, and determining that assertive acts dominate Dedi's rhetoric. The study emphasizes how the audience and speaker interacted dynamically during Dedi's speech. His scathing statements, such as "Let the sarcastic people be hurt forever," and his militaristic orders, such as "Discipline is non-negotiable," reveal his communication style to be essentially aggressive and provocative. Important insights into how Dedi strategically uses language to question opponents, exercise authority, and rally supporters are offered by this work. Dedi's overwhelming use of assertive acts (55.5%) reveals his preference for definitive, often confrontational statements that leave little room for debate. This approach strengthens his image as a decisive leader but may limit genuine dialogue. The minimal presence of declarative acts (only 2 instances) suggests his speech prioritize persuasive argumentation over formal proclamations, distinguishing his rhetoric from more ceremonial political discourse.

The study specifically shows how Dedi's trademark sarcasm serves as a rhetorical device that listeners must understand in a nuanced way. His controversial approach produces divisive reactions, which may energize his supporters while alienating detractors. According to the research, Dedi's illocutionary choices serve particular political goals, such as establishing authority through aggressive domination, making strategic pledges through commissives, and calling for action through directions. In the end, this analysis offers scholars, speakers, and listeners useful resources for comprehending Dedi Mulyadi's distinctive communication style. We may better understand how he develops his political identity, interacts with various audience segments, and uses deliberate language choices to further his objective by looking at his speech through the prism of illocutionary acts. The results highlight the effectiveness of pragmatic analysis in deciphering sarcastic and confrontational modern political discourse. Dedi's speech prioritized assertive acts with sarcasm to critique societal issues and directives to advocate militaristic discipline. The scarcity of declaratives underscores his focus on persuasion over formal authority. Future research could explore cross-cultural perceptions of his sarcasm.

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