Education Transformation: Illocutionary in Nadiem Makarim's Speech at the Education World Forum 2023

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Abstract

People communicate with each other with some intentions. Nowadays, information can be easily accessed through social media. Unfortunately, the platforms cannot understand the semantic and pragmatic features. To achieve effective communication, speech should be performed and interpreted accordingly. This article will discuss the illocutionary acts in Nadiem's speech. The speaker's purpose can be understood comprehensively by analysing the illocutionary acts. The present study is a descriptive-qualitative analysis. The main focus of this study is the illocutionary speech acts performance. The video gathered was about Nadiem Makarim, the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, presenting the Education Transformation in Indonesia. The video was taken at the Education World Forum, London 2023. The researchers then transcribed the video, analysed the illocutionary speech acts, specified the types, and evaluated the corresponding frequently used speech acts percentages to derive the conclusions. It can be found that Nadiem Makarim has performed 107 utterances. The utterances used are categorised as assertive speech acts, which is prevalent up to 82 utterances. The other illocutionary speech acts presented are expressive, consisting of 14 utterances, ten directives utterances, and one commissive speech act. It can be concluded that the most frequently used illocutionary speech act in the speech is assertive, which takes accounts into 76.6%. There were not any declaratives illocutionary speech acts found

Keywords: *analysis, illocutionary acts, Merdeka curriculum, speech, speech act*

Introduction

It is impossible to separate human life from activities involving communication. Human communication is not merely exchanging codes or sounds. People communicate with each other with some intention. Each word produced has an inferred meaning to respond. The speaker's meaning exists when it does not only intend to create an effect on the audience and to be recognised by the audience but also considers the effect on the audience to recognise and fulfil the speaker's intention. (Grice, 1969) Nowadays, information can be easily accessed through social media. YouTube is one of the most widely used video-sharing platforms in the world. Unfortunately, it cannot understand the semantic and pragmatic features. The information included in the video only relies on the metadata generated by the user. (Benson, 2015) To achieve effective communication, speech should be performed and interpreted accordingly. The speaker's purpose can be understood comprehensively by analysing the illocutionary acts.

Language brings six building tasks delivered in negotiation and collaboration with others in interaction: the significance and value of material world aspects, activities, identities and relationships, politics, connections, and semiotics. (Gee, 2014) When we speak, we make locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary acts refer to speech that has a similar meaning; illocutionary acts refer to utterances that have conventional force, e.g., informing, ordering, warning, promising, etc.; and lastly, perlocutionary acts are the effects resulting from the speech, such as convincing, persuading, discouraging, surprising, and misleading. (Austin, 1975) The utterances may also deliver the speaker's belief, expression, and purposes. The purposes of how people interact with each other can be categorised into five distinguished illocutionary speech acts: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration. (Searle, 1976; Yule, 1996) In contrast, Kreidel (1998) classified illocutionary into seven types: assertive, performative, verdictive, expressive, directive, commissive, and phatic utterances.

The assertive speech act is the illocutionary type in which the utterances show the speaker's beliefs. The utterances exposed in this speech act convey the speaker's faith related to the topic discussed, which is in line with present reality. (Hancher, 1979) It commits the speaker to the truth underlying the words. Expressive is an illocutionary speech act related to the emotions of the speaker. It expresses the psychological condition regarding the discussed topic. Directives are illocutionary acts that persuade the listener to do what the speaker desires. Commissives are a specific form of illocutionary act that binds the speaker to future actions. Declarations are the illocutionary acts which are characterised by the syntactical structure of many declarative sentences. It is used to declare something. Meanwhile, phatic utterances are the illocutionary which build a bond in relationships among society members. It consists of salutations, farewells, and polite expressions. (Kreidel, 1998) However, the researcher does not regard this newly found utterance as an essential speech to discuss.

Previous related research mentioned that the speech acts theory contributes to language learning and teaching. Building strong communication through proper speech acts is beneficial for both teachers and students. (F. Amalia et al., 2021; Herfina, 2021) Nadhira, the Indonesian student representative at her graduation, mostly talked about how she felt about her struggles in her public health study to earn a master's degree. She preferred to share her feelings of happiness and gratitude that, finally, the dream she had been chasing would come true. Her academic success has never been achieved without the support and encouragement of her precious mother. It was revealed that representative and expressive acts delivered in the speech may motivate the students in the classroom to pursue their dreams. Another research highlighted that teacher commonly used directive speech acts in their classroom instruction. (E. Amalia et al., 2021) It was found both male and female English teachers employ directive speech acts in the classroom, which are typically categorised as commanding, requesting, and wishing. In the teaching-learning process, teachers mostly command the students to do exercises or assignments. However, when it comes to communicating with the students, each gender has different approaches to the male or female students.

Meanwhile, the other speech acts can be typically found in political speeches. Nugraha & Citraresmana (2022) discussed about the illocutionary speech act performed by Nadiem Makarim in his inaugural speech as Indonesia's Minister of Education and Culture. Nadiem, who did not have a political background, needed to deliver his speech for the first time as a political figure. He was the founder of Indonesia's first ride-hailing startup, namely *Gojek*, before being appointed as Minister of Education and Culture. It was found that the most frequently used speech act is commissive, which tried to

reassure and promise the audiences related to the future education projection in Indonesia. It can be seen that being convincing for political figures in public forums is important.

The prior researches mentioned above are aligned with the present study, which focuses on the speech acts analysis. Nevertheless, a gap can be found in the latest educational issue related to the Merdeka Curriculum, which has been released by the Minister. There have been disputes regarding the implementation of this new education policy. Research revealed that relying solely on educators and learners to manage the Merdeka Belajar program is a mistake because the policies are not clearly defined and not supported with a basis paradigm. It was found that neither teachers nor schools are ready for this education shift. (Maipita et al., 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2023; Yuhastina et al., 2020) Furthermore, English subject is only regarded as a non-compulsory subject at schools. The teachers need to be familiar with the curriculum and use their own creativity to apply the Merdeka Belajar without understanding the fundamentals concept. However, they are unable to explore due to the administrative burden.

It appears that there is a lack of synergy between Nadiem's perspective and educators in Indonesia. Therefore, finding out how he delivered his ideas related to the Merdeka Curriculum in the Education World Forum 2023 will be interesting. Instead of having teachers merely give commands to the students to do assignments on the book, he wants the teachers to give the students far more delightful experiences and engaging activities to create lifelong learners and enable them to achieve their dreams. The previous study primarily discussed his speech at the inauguration, which mostly employed commissive speech acts to promise and give an assurance that he was capable of being the chosen Minister. Meanwhile, in this study, the author will focus on the illocutionary speech acts performed after two years of officiating as Indonesia's Minister of Education and Culture. The study will focus on the five speech acts described by Searle (1976) and Yule (1996).

Method

The present study is a descriptive qualitative analysis. In qualitative design, the researchers typically examines papers, observes how people behave to get in-depth data, and interprets comprehensively. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) The main focus of this study is the illocutionary speech acts performance. The data collection was primarily conducted through accessing the YouTube contents of Kemendikbud RI (The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia). The video gathered was about Nadiem Makarim, the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, presenting the Education Transformation in Indonesia. The video was taken at the Education World Forum, London 2023. The researchers then transcribed the video, analysed the illocutionary speech acts, specified the types, and evaluated the corresponding frequently used speech acts percentages to derive the conclusions.

Results

From the respective video, it can be found that Nadiem Makarim has performed 107 utterances. The most frequently used utterances are categorised as representative speech acts, which are prevalent up to 82 utterances. The other illocutionary speech acts presented are expressive, which consists of 14 utterances, ten directive utterances, and

one commissive speech act. The video does not contain any declarative speech acts. Some samples of the utterances will be provided below.

Assertives

The assertive speech act is the illocutionary type in which the utterances show what the speaker believes. The utterances exposed in this speech act convey the speaker's faith related to the topic discussed. It commits the speaker to the truth underlying the words. It is characterised by speech, which includes the speaker's statement, conclusion, description, and assertion. (Yule, 1996)

Table 1. Assertive Speech Acts

No	Utterance	Meaning
1	*Now, the only statistic that you need to know about where we started was about the learning crisis, so like I may explain we knew we were in a learning crisis even before Covid.*	*It means that he has already known about the statistics data related to the learning crisis in Indonesia. He wanted to inform the audience that the learning crisis had even happened before Covid-19. This utterance is considered to be representative speech acts as it reflects the beliefs on the information he had.*
2	*The first bold thing that we did was we removed subject-based high-stakes testing completely.*	*This statement conveyed that he wanted to explain that the Minister of Education has removed the National Exam, the high-stakes testing, which is a very bold move and replaced it with formative assessments. It is categorised as a representative speech act because he tried to inform about the testing removal.*
3	*The other thing that we did we became one of the first countries in our national assessment to include character surveys to assess the risk of bullying, intolerance, and sexual violence/ sexual harassment.*	*This means that he was assertive about Indonesia as a leading country, which includes the survey of character in national assessment. It is classified as representative speech acts for mentioning the information about surveys to assess bullying risk, intolerance, and sexual harassment.*
4	*Teachers learn best from other teachers, fellow practitioners, just like in any other craft the way Jaime said this.*	*It means that he wanted to inform that teachers can get the best learning experiences from their co-teachers and also other fellows.*

No	Utterance	Meaning
5	And we also created a super app for teachers that is now being used by close to 2 million teachers, where it is basically an online continuous learning university.	In this statement, he tried to state that Kemendikbud RI has launched an education app that has been used by approximately 2 million people. This application offers continuous learning.

These statements above are assertive illocutionary speech acts which have the intention to inform. It can be seen that the purpose of speech (2), *"The first bold thing that we did was we removed subject-based high-stakes testing completely"*, is to explain that the speaker, who is currently a Minister of Education, has made a big jump in his whole career. The decision he made to remove the National Exam, which belongs to high-stakes testing, was fearless. There has not been any massive reformation of education in Indonesia before.

Expressives

Expressive is the illocutionary speech act, which is related to the speaker's emotions. It expresses the psychological state of the content discussed. (Searle, 1979)

Table 2. Expressive Speech Acts

No	Utterance	Meaning
1	It is a pleasure and honour to be with such distinguished people.	In this utterance, the speaker sent the signal of joy feeling to be a speaker in front of those people coming at the Education World Forum 2023
2	I was just telling Jaime before that he… he kind of stole my thunder because my presentation is going to be essentially what happens when… a large government with 300.000 schools and about 60 million students actually listens to Jaime and actually does what he told me to do.	Here, Nadiem felt a little disappointment as what would be presented by him had actually been mentioned by Jaime, the MC. The materials delivered was the matter which Jaime suggested to do.
3	But what Covid did was actually created a far more burning platform for us to actually make those leaps.	This utterance meant that the Covid 19 has accelerated the improvements of education in Indonesia. The Covid-19 here was associated as burning platform to express his pleasure after suffering hardship during the pandemic era.
4	We think it is the most silly thing ever that everyone, no matter how impoverished the region is or how wealthy a city is everyone studies at the same level.	By this speech, he tried to show his disliking on the education system, which forces students to study at the same level, knowing that they

No	Utterance	Meaning
		have different backgrounds.
5	*One of the best things that I did when I took this job, in the beginning, was ask the President to please combine lower and higher education because one part of this cycle that is not part of the transformation, the whole incentive structure of the system fails.*	*It meant that one of the best feelings he has experienced in his new occupation as the Minister of Education in Indonesia after spending nine years creating a decacorn ride-hailing app, namely, "Gojek", was asking the President to integrate the structure on lower and higher education.*

The statements mentioned above are categorised as expressive illocutionary speech acts which intend to express speaker's feelings regarding the topic. For instance, the speech (1), *"It is a pleasure and honour to be with such distinguished people",* showed emotional gratitude over being in the program and surrounded by esteemed individuals. He was glad to have the experience of being a representative speaker at the Education World Forum 2023.

Directives

Directives are illocutionary speech acts which have an imperative force on the hearer to do what the speaker wants. Asking, ordering, commanding, requesting, begging, pleading, praying, entreating, permitting, and advising are classified as directives. (Searle, 1975)

Table 3. Directive Speech Acts

No	Utterance	Meaning
1	*What is it about the new curriculum?*	*This utterance means that he asked the audience about the new curriculum implemented in Indonesia.*
2	*You decide.*	*It means that Nadiem commanded the teachers in Indonesia to decide which of curriculum to be applied in their schools.*
3	*What was the biggest difference?*	*Here, he tried to asked whether there was any difference of selecting people with specific competencies and giving a leadership development course to the potential teachers, which could be addressed as Master teachers.*
4	*I throw back the question to them: Do you think a teacher without autonomy can ever create learning in a classroom?*	*By this utterance, he questioned about a school without autonomy in the classroom. He wanted a clear*

		response as he thought that it would seem difficult to create learning without autonomy for teachers.
5	*Just like Jaime said before, technology should be focused not on replacing the teachers but on making them into superheroes, making them into teachers that are able to create content, teachers that are able to see formative assessments of their students in real time, discriminate between different groups and classes, what kind of homework do you want to personalise and tailor to them, and to reduce the painful administrative burden.*	*In these utterances, he suggested how humans live with technology without feeling inferior because utilising technology will surely ease teachers' lives in preparing administrative school stuff such as lesson plans, assigning homework/assessments for students, and even creating content on social media/YouTube.*

The above statements are classified as directive illocutionary speech acts, which are used to influence others. As stated by Sari & Utomo (2020), the directive speech act implies that others can be influenced through the use of language. It can be seen in the speech (4), *"I throw back the question to them, do you think a teacher without autonomy can ever create learning in a classroom?"* This utterance demonstrated how the speaker requests an action from the hearer. Through this utterance, the speaker requested that the teachers should have autonomy in the classroom to manage their own teaching and learning experience.

Commissives

Commissive is the illocutionary speech act type, which commits the speaker to future actions. (Searle, 1979)

Table 4. Commissive Speech Acts

No	Utterance	Meaning
1	*You will see this as a consistent theme in our transformation.*	*In this statement, it can be seen that he promised a persistent topic related to students' and teachers' power and agency in the education transformation in Indonesia.*

Lastly, the utterance above, as stated, "*You will see this as a consistent theme in our transformation"*, has an intention of promising, which can be categorised as a commissive speech act. This speech explains that the speaker will make sure that the transformation he initiated would always remain the main focus in the context of future education in Indonesia. The main focus that he referred to was creating long-life learners, which are triggered by engaging the classroom at school. Based on the findings above, it is reported that Nadiem has mainly used representative speech acts in his speech. The results of the analysis are summarised and presented in the chart below.
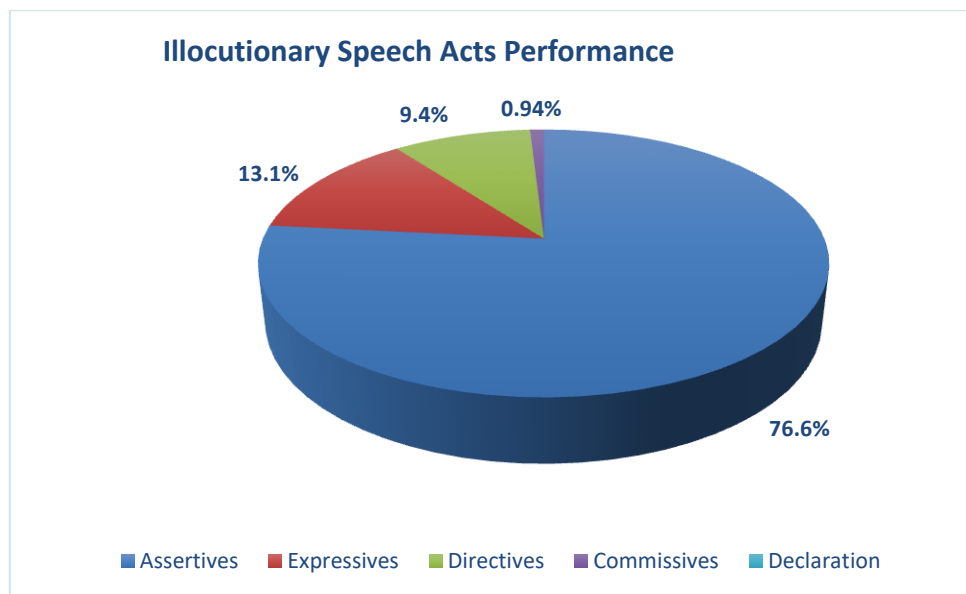
Figure 2. Illocutionary Speech Acts Performance

Based on the data provided, the assertive speech acts that categorise the speech as stating, concluding, describing, and asserting reached 82 utterances (76.6%) significantly. The expressive speech acts which show the speaker's emotions on the related topic are conveyed in around 14 utterances (13.1%). Directive speech acts, which require the listeners to do what the speaker insists, are made around ten utterances (9.4%). The commissive speech act, which covers promising future actions, has been the least performed. There was only one utterance shown in the speech (0.94%). In contrast, declaration speech acts could not be found in the programme as Nadiem was present as a guest/representative of the Indonesian Education & Culture Ministry.

Discussion

Nowadays, public officials show a tendency to employ electronic media as a means of engaging in public communication and fostering community intimacy. (Yustita et al., 2022) YouTube, as a platform site, provides a valuable resource for text analysis. Just like in the classroom setting, information shared in an online platform will have an impact on the listener. However, while a speaker produces a speech, the hearer may only interpret the meaning precisely through context. Individuals who listen without knowing the context may misunderstand the information shared in the video. In the speech, Nadiem explained how the Merdeka Curriculum differs from the prior Curriculum 2013. Despite the controversy, in the Merdeka Curriculum, students are insisted to be long life learners. (Rohimajaya et al., 2022)

During the speech, he clearly explained how this curriculum emerged as a response to a sudden threat to education caused by Covid-19. As mentioned in Minister of Education & Culture Law No 20 (2020), the Pancasila student profile has six core values, which are: (1) religious, devoted to God, (2) excellent behaviour, (3) global diversity, (4) mutual assisting, (5) self-reliance, (6) creative thinking, analytical thinking. As he delivered his speech, he might have been concerned about being doubted by listeners. Therefore, he preferred to use more assertive speech acts than other speech acts to

prove how the curriculum has been applied in the Indonesian school setting. The type of speech used is straightforward and follows the politeness norms to ensure the listener to minimise misunderstanding. As the speaker needs to be understood, and the addressee is required to understand the topic discussed. (Kreidel, 1998) The issue that has concerns with an utterance's meaning belongs to a subfield of linguistics, namely pragmatics.

Illocutionary speech acts are part of study-related discourse topics discussed in pragmatics. (Herfina, 2021) It has essential points in managing reactions from the interlocutor. Through the analysis of the speech's context, the interlocutor can determine both the intent and significance of the topic of being discussed. (Sari & Utomo, 2020) Yule (1996) stated that illocutionary speech acts can be classified as follows: assertive/representative speech acts cover the speaker's stating of fact, asserting, concluding, and describing. Meanwhile, directive speech acts cover commanding, ordering, requesting, and suggesting. Commissive speech acts cover promising, threatening, refusing, and pledging. Expressive speech acts cover the speaker's utterances of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy, or sorrow. Further, in declaration speech acts, the speaker declares something on his behalf.

The discourse perspective in language instruction emphasises the concept of shared knowledge significantly. (Olshtain & Murcia, 2001) Every utterance can have an impact on the listener. An effective communication in human interaction needs a careful interpretation. People involved in a conversation will develop and repeatedly redefine their situated meaning based on the context of talking. (Gee, 2014) The implication of this study on language learning can be regarded as a reference for material discussion of discourse analysis, particularly speech act theory, in the classroom. Olshtain & Murcia (2001) stated that the essential components of language instruction are strategies to create messages that facilitate the learners' development of their understanding of the communication purposes and strategies to interpret and process what the speaker or writer means.

In the context of teaching English as a foreign language, teachers act as a speaker or communicator who has several aims when talking because they need to manage the classroom effectively. Communicators are individuals who determine actions and become strategic decision-makers. They need to analyse the situations and deal with ambiguous circumstances to work based on their concerns. (Tracy, 2001) Most of teachers in Indonesia tend to use directive speech acts and give more commands during teaching in the classroom. (E. Amalia et al., 2021; Herfina, 2021) However, there are many other options of speech acts that can be used to communicate to the students. Merely giving commands to the students will make the students feel burdened during the teaching and learning process.

English teachers should have taught the students creatively, particularly. They need to find alternative words to say; therefore, the students in the classroom will be engaged easily. Even without being forced to do something, the students will anticipate doing what the teachers want. Many teachers believe that giving directive speech acts like

commands to the students will help the students achieve the objective of the lesson. In fact, directives are not always in imperative forms. (Kissine, 2013) Unless the speech act used is carried out to make students more active in participating and talking in the classroom, which contributes to the improvement of students' achievement such as asking, requesting, inviting, and ordering. (Muhammad et al., 2023)

Thus, communication in teaching and learning will be better and run smoothly. In this study, it was reported that Nadiem had stated many utterances, which are included as assertive speech acts. In assertive, speakers deliver their statements, conclude, describe, and give information based on fact. (Kreidel, 1998; Yule, 1996) As English teachers, they may perform better in teaching by using this speech act, such as giving related facts about students' performance in the classroom as an appreciation for their hard work or giving more details of the English materials by informing them of something related to the topic. Further, it will expand their horizon about the lessons they have in the classroom.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the most frequently used illocutionary speech acts in the speech is assertive which takes account of 76.6% out of 107 total speeches. There were not any declaratives illocutionary speech acts found. There has been a shift in the illocutionary speech acts found in the research. It was found that Nadiem spoke based on the data rather than giving promises and assurances, such as in his first speech. In this study, Nadiem executed his speech by using assertive speech acts which covered to inform, report, state, declare, and announce the data related to the Merdeka Curriculum.

In Merdeka Belajar, teachers are allowed to be co-creators of the curriculum as teachers have the autonomy to deliberate their teaching-learning process based on their desired outcomes. Despite the school facilities' lack, English teachers should understand that utilising technology in teaching will be beneficial as it is a tool to create content, provide personalised learning, and relieve burdensome administrative tasks. English educators and school stakeholders should be fully aware of the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka based on the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim's perspective.

The results of this study may also have implications towards the teaching and learning process at school. Choosing suitable illocutionary acts in the classroom will have a significant impact on the student's response. To make students feel engaged in the classroom, teachers should wisely pick the proper words. Hence, the students may get higher grades and improvement in English skills. Hopefully, this study may contribute to the researcher's future development in illocutionary speech acts in discourse analysis in particular. Further research should be done in the classroom setting to examine which illocutionary speech act will be more effective in teaching English in the Indonesia context.

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