

# Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts by Anies Baswedan in the First Presidential Candidate Debate in 2024

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## Abstract

*Understanding meaning in political discourse is crucial, as a speaker's intentions shape public perception and influence audience perspectives. While many studies have explored speech acts in political contexts, there is still limited analysis focusing specifically on the locutionary and illocutionary acts of Indonesian presidential candidates, particularly in the 2024 debates. This study aims to analyze the types and frequency of locutionary and illocutionary acts used by Anies Baswedan in the first presidential candidate debate of 2024, as well as to interpret the meanings embedded in these speech acts. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, the research collects data in the form of clauses containing types of locutionary and illocutionary acts as the primary source, which then were identified and categorized. The findings reveal 40 instances of locutionary acts, dominated by assertive acts (26), followed by phonetic acts (14) and retic acts (8). Additionally, 42 illocutionary acts were identified, with phatic actions (18) being the most frequent, followed by phonetic (14) and retic actions (8). The analysis uncovered that many of these acts carried persuasive meanings aimed at convincing listeners during the debate. This study offers insights into how Indonesian political figures strategically use language, providing a basis for future research on persuasive speech in political campaigns.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Meaning is an understanding of a speaker's purpose that influences a perception. In understanding a meaning, a listener or reader needs to interpret an utterance spoken by a speaker based on its context which involves interpreting the pragmatic meaning based on the purpose of the utterance (Pranowo, 2020). The ability to understand the meaning often causes misunderstandings in understanding the meaning of an utterance. This results in the meaning of the speaker's intention being misunderstood by listeners or readers who do not interpret the purpose of the utterance. For example, when someone is going to sell their house and there is a buyer who is checking the condition of the house. Then the buyer says, "*This house is very dirty, isn't it?*" If the seller misinterprets this

meaning, the seller will mean that the buyer is insulting the house that is being sold, even though the intention of the buyer in saying this is for the house to be cleaned first before being sold to buyers. This misunderstanding often occurs due to low knowledge of pragmatics.

When someone communicates, sometimes some listeners have a different point of view from the speaker and experience misunderstandings in interpreting the meaning conveyed by the speaker. In this problem, the cause is a lack of pragmatic knowledge possessed by the listener or reader. This problem occurs if the listener lacks pragmatic knowledge, so there are different points of view between the speaker and the speaker. This is what creates misunderstandings between speakers and listeners (Cruz, 2013). This problem occurred in the 2024 presidential candidate debate when several speakers misunderstood other candidate's statements. Enhancing pragmatic competence is essential to minimize misunderstandings and ensure effective communication, especially in contexts like political debates where clarity and accurate interpretation are vital.

Speech acts are a science that studies how a speaker or listener uses language (Yule, 1996). Meanwhile, according to Bach & Harnish (1979), speech acts as an action in direct communication and has its own meaning, so that communication has action and not just language. Therefore, in the speech act carried out there is a statement that is expressed and leads to an action being carried out. In its development, speech acts can influence the meaning of an action. What is said by the speaker, there is also a meaning of what the speaker means, it can be an expression or an action. There are three types of speech acts, namely locution, illocution, and perlocution.

A locutionary act is an action carried out to produce an expression that has meaning according to Yule (1996). In a locutionary act, it is not just a statement, there is meaning contained in it. Apart from that, there is a second type of speech act, namely illocutionary. The definition of illocutionary is an action carried out using communicative abilities in expressed speech such as offering, promising, and apologizing. Illocution is the most meaningful level of action because it has the strong power desired by the speaker to determine the action to be taken. The last type of speech act is perlocutionary. Perlocution is an action when a speaker utters an utterance and this utterance causes certain consequences for those who hear it or other people. Actions taken to make an offer to someone are called perlocutionary actions. This perlocutionary act influences the impact of one person's words on the thoughts or actions of others, aspects that often cause misunderstandings in a debate.

Debate is a communicative setting where speakers with opposing viewpoints present arguments to persuade an audience, functioning as a formal, interactive process of representational argument (Alasmari & Ahmed, 2013). It can occur in many settings, including presidential candidate debates, to serve as critical public forums where candidates use strategic language and layered expressions to convey policy positions, critique opponents, and influence voter perceptions. Debates significantly reinforce partisan decision-making and political opinions, even on non-debated issues, highlighting their broader sociopolitical impact (Keum & Cho, 2021). Analyzing the speech acts within these debates thus provides valuable insight into both the linguistic strategies employed and the psychological mechanisms shaping voter alignment and electoral dynamics.

One interesting 2024 presidential candidate to research is Anies Baswedan, a prominent Indonesian academic, activist, and politician, who has long been recognized for his eloquence, notably as former Minister of Education and Culture (2014–2016), Governor of Jakarta (2017–2022), and now as a 2024 presidential candidate. His reputation as an award-winning public speaker and former spokesperson for the Eight Corruption Eradication Commission makes him an interesting figure for speech act analysis.

Previous studies have focused on a single aspect of speech acts, without exploring the combined function of locutionary and illocutionary acts, such as Phatic Speech Acts (Nasution, 2019), Assertive Illocutionary Acts (Aditiawarman & Agustriawan, 2022), and Perlocutionary Acts (Setiawan, 2017). Some other analyses were conducted such as in short stories (Anggraeni & Ramdhani, 2023; Izar et al., 2022), movies (Rismayanti, 2021), President Joe Biden’s Speech (Atusaadah & Zuindra, 2022), Presidential debates in the U.S. (Doamad & Rohmah, 2023; Gusthini, Sobarna, & Amalia, 2018), debate for Governor election (Siagian, Husein, & Lubis, 2021), and Indonesian Presidential debate before 2024 (Husain, Hamamah, & Nurhayan, 2020; Rosyidi, Mahyuni, & Muhaimi, 2019). Addressing this gap, the present study aims to identify and analyze both locutionary and illocutionary acts used by Anies Baswedan in the first presidential candidate debate of 2024. The results could contribute to a deeper understanding of political discourse strategies and their persuasive impact on Indonesian political communication.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method, which enables the collection of data in the form of words rather than numbers to explore phenomena requiring in-depth investigation (Partington, 2002). The primary data source was the video of Anies Baswedan’s first 2024 presidential candidate debate, held on December 12, 2023, and uploaded by KompasTV on YouTube, focusing on his locutionary and illocutionary acts while debating, questioning, and responding across themes like governance, law, human rights, anti-corruption, democracy, public services, and social harmony. Using observation as the main data collection technique, the researchers carefully transcribed the debate and applied coding to categorize utterances by speech act types (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015). Codes included abbreviations such as PHONTC (phonetic act), PHATC (phatic act), RHETC (rhetic act), ASSERT (assertive act), DIREC (directive act), COMMIS (commissive act), EXPRES (expressive act), and DECLA (declarative act), along with identifiers for data sequence (D), time stamps, and type—for example, D1/05:02/PHATC, indicating the first data at minute 05:02 marked as a phatic act. The researchers then grouped and interpreted the meanings within each speech act category and discussed the findings to answer the study’s research questions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers found 40 locutionary act clauses in Anies Baswedan's speech during the first Indonesian presidential candidate debate in 2024. Three types of locutionary acts were found, namely phonetic, phatic, and rhetic. In this study, the type of locutionary act that was most frequently found was the phatic act, totaling 18 sentences with a percentage of 45%. The second type of locutionary act is phonetic act with a total of 14 sentences and a percentage of 35%. The type of locutionary act that the researchers found the least was the rhetic act, which amounted to 8 sentences with a percentage of 20%. Table 1 below illustrates the percentage of types of locutionary acts used by Anies Baswedan in the first presidential candidate debate in 2024.

*Table 1. Total Percentage of Types of Locutionary Acts*

No.	Types of Locutionary Acts	Percentage
1	Phonetic act	35%
2	Phatic act	45%

3	Rhetic act	20%
	TOTAL	100%

Then, the researchers also found 42 illocutionary act clauses in Anies Baswedan's speech in the first presidential candidate debate in 2024. There were five types of illocutionary acts found, namely assertive act, directive act, commissive act, expressive act, and declarative act. The most common type of illocutionary act was an assertive act, totaling 26 sentences with a percentage of 62% data. The second type of illocutionary act is a directive act which consists of 6 sentences with a percentage of 14%. Furthermore, two types of illocutionary acts place the same number of positions, namely commissive and declarative acts, which both total 4 sentences with a percentage of 10%. Finally, The least-occurring type of illocutionary act was an expressive act which only amounted to 2 sentences with a percentage of 4%. Table 2 below illustrates the percentage of types of illocutionary acts used by Anies Baswedan in the first presidential candidate debate in 2024.

Table 2. Total Percentage of Types of Illocutionary Acts

No.	Types of Illocutionary Acts	Percentage
1	Assertive act	62%
2	Directive act	14%
3	Commissive act	10%
4	Expressive act	4%
5	Declarative act	10%
	TOTAL	100%

## 1. Types of Locutionary Act

### Phonetic acts

Researchers found 14 phonetic acts data spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidates debate of 2024. The following are some phonetic acts:

*“nah, jadi caranya bagaimana satu atas semua peristiwa pelanggaran ham yang terjadi dilakukan tindakan penyelesaian hingga tuntas” / (well, so how do you resolve all human rights violations that occur until they are resolved?)*  
(D7/24:55/PHONTC)

The utterance above was expressed by Anies Baswedan when responding to an answer from another candidate named Ganjar Pranowo. He gave a statement responding to this response by strengthening his intonation to convince his listeners. In this speech, there is the word "nah". means "well". In the word "nah" there is an emphasis which means that the speaker clarifies his sentence so that the listener can absorb what he is saying. In this sentence, he emphasized a question about what actions were taken to resolve incidents of human rights violations. In this speech, there is an emphasis on intonation so that the word is a phonetic act.

*“dan mengatakan ah itu kan proses hukum” / (and said ah, that's a legal process)*  
(D19/1:00:57/PHONTC)

The utterance above was spoken when Anies Baswedan responded to a statement given by another candidate named Ganjar Pranowo. In this response, he made a promise using a firm intonation to convince the listeners. In this speech, there is the word "ah" which is an intonation that has the meaning of a feeling. So the spoken word is a phonetic act.

*“bahwa harus memastikan mereka memiliki remunerasi yang baik, ya itu penting” /*  
(that they have to make sure they have good remuneration, yes that's important)  
(D20/1:01:13/PHONTC)

The utterance above was spoken when Anies Baswedan responded to a statement given by another candidate named Prabowo Subianto. In this response, he made a promise using a firm intonation to convince the listeners. In this speech, there is the word "ya" (yes) which means that the speaker confirms something he said. So the sentence is a phonic act.

### *Phatic acts*

Researchers found 18 phatic acts data spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidates debate of 2024. The following are some phatic acts:

*“Apakah ini akan diteruskan? tidak, ini harus diubah, ini harus dikembalikan” /* (Will it continue? No, this must be changed, this must be returned) (D1/05:02/PHATC)

In the utterance above, it was said that Anies Baswedan gave a vision, mission, and work program. In this statement, he used a high tone when expressing his statement. This statement means that it is a necessity not to continue doing the wrong thing and to return to the good things again. So this statement is a phatic act.

*“dan kondisi ini tidak boleh didiamkan, tidak boleh dibiarkan dan harus berubah” /*  
(and this condition must not be ignored, must not be allowed and must change)  
(D3/06:00/PHATC)

In the utterance above, it was said that Anies Baswedan gave a vision, mission, and work program. He gave hope that must be carried out. In conveying this statement, the speaker used quite high intonation, so that the public could understand and be moved by what he said. So this statement is a phatic act.

*“masalah utamanya adalah tiadanya keadilan di tanah papua itu masalah utama” /*  
(the main problem is that the lack of justice in the land of Papua is the main problem)  
(D5/24:38/PHATC)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan responded to answers from other candidates named Prabowo Subianto. He delivered a statement using a high tone. This statement has the meaning that listeners can know about the main problem in Papua, namely injustice so that they can hopefully make a change. Therefore, the statement sentence is a phatic act.

### *Rhetic Acts*

Researchers found 8 rhetic acts data spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidate debate of 2024. The following are some rhetic acts:

*“jadi kita harus sadar negara bukan mengatur pikiran, negara bukan mengatur perasaan, negara mengatur tindakan, di situ kita atur” /* (so we must realize that the state does not regulate thoughts, the state does not regulate feelings, the state regulates actions, there we regulate) (D10/36:23/RHETC)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan answered a question about a policy. He conveyed a sentence that made people understand better about taking action. Then in the speech sentence (that's where we regulate them), the speaker conveys an uncertain plan so that the speech sentence is a rhetic act.

“seperti disampaikan pak Prabowo, pak Prabowo tidak tahan untuk menjadi oposisi”  
/ (as Mr. Prabowo said, Mr. Prabowo could not bear to be the opposition)  
(D16/55:40/RHETC)

The utterance above was spoken when Anies Baswedan responded to responses from other candidates named Prabowo Subianto and Ganjar Pranowo. Some statements are indirect sentences in the speech, he repeated what his interlocutor said. He also responded to what his interlocutor said. The statement sentence here is a rhetic act.

“beliau sendiri menyampaikan bahwa tidak berada dalam kekuasaan membuat tidak bisa berbisnis” / (he said that not being in power makes him unable to do business)  
(D17/55:47/RHETC)

The utterance above was spoken when Anies Baswedan responded to responses from other candidates named Prabowo Subianto and Ganjar Pranowo. In that statement, there is a connecting word "that" so that the statement sentence is indirect. Apart from that, he also responded to the statement made by his interlocutor. Therefore, the statement sentence is a rhetic act.

## 2. Types of Illocutionary Acts

### *Assertive acts*

Researchers found 26 data on assertive acts spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidates debate of 2024. The following are some assertive acts:

“Ditekuk, sesuai dengan kepentingan yang sedang memegang kekuasaan” / (Bending, according to the interests of those who hold power) (D43/04:58/ASSERT)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan gave his vision, mission, and work program as an assertive act. His statement above contains the meaning of assertive action. The sentence “Ditekuk” (Bending), has meaning in it which means it is formed in accordance with the interests of those who hold power and this sentence is an expression of the law that exists in a country.

“kalau kita lihat hukum itu harusnya tegak. Begini, inilah hukum dalam kenyataannya bengkok biar tajam ke bawah, tumpul ke atas” / (if we look at the law, it should be upright. Look, this is the law in reality, it is bent so that it is sharp at the bottom, blunt at the top)  
(D44/04:50/ASSERT)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan gave his vision, mission, and work program as an assertive act. His statement above contains the meaning of assertive action. The sentence “bengkok biar tajam ke bawah, tumpul ke atas” (bent so that it is sharp at the bottom, blunt at the top) means that the laws that occur often lack justice towards the lower class, and only the upper classes have power. Therefore, Anies does not want this condition to be allowed to persist and there must be changes for the common good.

“jadi tujuannya bukan semata-mata tentang mentiadakan kekerasan karena damai itu bukan tiada kekerasan, damai itu ada” / (so the goal is not solely about eliminating violence because peace is not the absence of violence, peace is the existence)  
(D46/24:43/ASSERT)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan responded to answers from other candidates named Ganjar Pranowo. In this sentence, there are words “semata-mata” (solely). This word does not mean there are many eyes, but it contains a meaning that is not just about violence.

### *Directive acts*

Researchers found 6 data on directive acts spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidates debate of 2024. The following are some directive acts:

*“karena itu kita mendorong perubahan, mengembalikan hukum menjadi tegak kepada semuanya”* / (therefore, we encourage change, returning the law to be upright for all)  
(D67/0:06:06/DIREC)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan gave his vision, mission, and work program. He gave a statement containing an order so that listeners could carry it out. The utterance above is a directive act. In the sentence *“mengembalikan hukum menjadi tegak”* (returning the law to be upright for all) the meaning is that Anies has hope and gives orders so that the function of the law can be restored in accordance with legal norms in real terms.

*“kami kembalikan marwah kehidupan bernegara yang menempatkan hukum sebagai tempat yang paling tinggi dan ketentuan itu berlaku kepada semua, termasuk ke-3 menyangkut urusan asn, menyangkut urusan tni dan polri”* / (we are returning the spirit of state life, which places the law as the highest place, and these provisions apply to all, including the third regarding civil servant affairs, military and police affairs)  
(D68/0:08:00/DIREC)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan gave his vision, mission, and work program. He gave a statement containing an order so that listeners could carry it out. The sentence *“kami kembalikan marwah kehidupan bernegara”* (we are returning the spirit of state life) has a meaning in it which means that Anies hopes and orders that we can restore the good name of state life where the law has high justice for all people.

### *Commissive acts*

Researchers found 4 data on commissive acts spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidate's debate of 2024. The following are commissive acts:

*“kami mendedikasikan diri hadir untuk memberikan komitmen bahwa dari puncak sampai ke bawah, kami akan tegakkan hukum pada siapa saja”* / (we dedicate ourselves to being here to commit that from the top to the bottom, we will uphold the law on anyone) (D73/0:07:51/COMMIS)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan gave his vision, mission, and work program. The speaker uses quite a high intonation when delivering it to convince the listeners to show a directive act. The sentence has the meaning and purpose of the speaker. The intention of the speaker is a promise and belief that the speaker has come to realize success and will enforce the law as fairly as possible.

*“Jadi ketika saya bertugas sebagai presiden maka saya akan tegaskan kepada semua yang berada di lingkaran judicial bahwa tugas anda bukan hanya menegakkan hukum, tugas anda menghadirkan rasa keadilan itu nomor satu tegaskan itu...”* / (So when I serve as president, I will emphasize to everyone in the judicial circle that your job is not only to uphold the law, your job is to provide a sense of justice, number one, emphasize that...) (D74/1:00:31/COMMIS)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan responded to responses from other candidates named Prabowo Subianto. He gave a statement containing orders so that listeners could do it which shows a commissive act. There is the sentence *“Jadi ketika saya bertugas sebagai*

*presiden maka saya akan...*” (So when I serve as president, I will...) This sentence is a promise that if the speaker becomes president then Anies will take firm action against all those present. In judicial circles, it is like providing a sense of justice which is paramount. So the meaning contained in this sentence is the meaning of a promise that he will make if he becomes president.

#### *Expressive arts*

Researchers found 2 data on expressive acts spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidates' debate of 2024 as follows:

*“Terima kasih wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh”* / (Thank you wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh) (D77/0:08:19/EXPRES)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan ended his statement of vision, mission, and work program. This sentence means that the speaker said thank you after giving his statement to calm the atmosphere and also confirm the statement he gave. Therefore, this speech is an expressive act.

*“Pak prabowo, terima kasih ya atas pertanyaan yang bagus”* / (Mr. Prabowo, thank you for the good question) (D78/1:21:05/EXPRES)

Anies Baswedan stated the above utterance when he wanted to answer a question from the person he was talking to. This sentence means that the speaker expressed his gratitude to his debate opponents or other presidential candidates who had asked him some questions. However, this sentence has a meaning to the question that is not completely accurate. Therefore, this speech is an expressive act.

#### *Declarative acts*

Researchers found 4 data on declarative acts spoken by Anies Baswedan at the first presidential candidates debate of 2024 as follows:

*“negara tidak boleh memusuhi salah satu unsur yang ada di masyarakat gak boleh, negara adalah penyelenggara yang harus menjangkau semua”* / (The state should not be hostile to one of the elements of society, the state is an organizer that must reach out to all) (D79/0:35:56/DECLA)

In the utterance above, it was said when Anies Baswedan answered a question regarding a policy. He gave a statement that could convince listeners. This sentence has meaning and a statement so that it can influence the listeners to take action. This means that within a country, there should be no favoritism. In carrying out an activity within a country, the country must achieve its totality. Therefore, this speech is a declarative act.

*“Kayak seperti disampaikan pak prabowo, pak prabowo tidak tahan untuk menjadi oposisi”* / (Like what Mr. Prabowo said, Mr. Prabowo can't stand to be the opposition) (D81/0:55:41/DECLA)

The utterance above was spoken when Anies Baswedan responded to responses from other candidates named Prabowo Subianto and Ganjar Pranowo. In this sentence, the speaker makes a statement that contains meaning in it. The meaning is that the opponent who is talking about the debate wants to always oppose or reject a statement he gets. Therefore, this speech is a declarative act.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Forty locutionary acts and 42 illocutionary acts were identified in the 2024 presidential candidate debate by Anies Baswedan, representing varied meanings. The types of locutionary acts found in the data source were phonetic acts, phatic acts, and rhetic acts, while the types of illocutionary acts identified in the data source were assertive acts, directive acts, commissive acts, expressive acts, and declarative acts. These findings imply that the speaker employed a broad range of pragmatic strategies in his debate performance, combining meaningful utterances with intentional speech functions to effectively engage, persuade, and position himself in the political discourse. This highlights that speech acts in political debates serve not only to convey information but also to perform strategic communicative functions, suggesting that analyzing a candidate's speech acts can offer deeper insights into their rhetorical style, leadership persona, and persuasive tactics in public discourse. As the present study only focused on one speaker in one debate, further research involving a broader range of political figures and cross-cultural contexts is recommended to identify commonalities and variations in speech act usage across political discourse.

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