

AN ANALYSIS OF ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS IN *YES, WE CAN* SPEECH BY BARACK OBAMA

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is a form of communication used by human in order to delivering ideas, information, thoughts, and feeling. Speaking is not only about the sound, but also about the meaning and purpose behind the sound. There is a further study about the meaning and purpose of utterance from speaker, which is illocutionary act. The subject of illocutionary acts can be vary since speaking is the nature of human beings. Some people used speaking in bigger purpose, to influence other. Politician is one the profession which needs to influence people by speaking. One of the form to influence people from a politician is by performing a political speech. In 2008, a politician which lately be the 44th President of United States, Barack Obama, performed a primary speech to influence people in his campaign. Obama uttered his vision about America in the future which brings hope to the audiences. This study will focus on Barack Obama's primary speech in 2008 entitled *Yes, we can*. The purpose of this study is to see the implication of illocutionary acts by finding the types that implied in the primary speech, and also to discover the dominant type of illocutionary acts on it. By find out the implications of illocutionary acts in the primary speech, people can sort the acts that Obama performed to avoid misunderstanding on the utterances. By discover the dominant type used in this primary speech, this study will try to show the outline of the speech. The result of this study will show the function and purpose of a political speech and to share more knowledge about the type of utterances used in a political speech.

Keywords: pragmatics, speech acts, speech, illocutionary acts

ABSTRAK

Berbicara merupakan bentuk komunikasi yang digunakan manusia guna menyampaikan ide, informasi, pemikiran, dan perasaan. Berbicara tidak hanya mengenai suara, tetapi juga tentang maksud dan tujuan dibalik suara. Terdapat sebuah kajian lebih dalam mengenai maksud dan tujuan dalam sebuah tuturan dari seorang pembicara, yaitu tindak ilokusi. Subjek dari tindak ilokusi terdiri dari beraneka ragam dikarenakan berbicara merupakan sifat alami manusia. Beberapa orang berbicara untuk tujuan yang lebih besar, yaitu untuk mempengaruhi orang lain. Politisi adalah salah satu profesi yang membutuhkan prosesi berbicara guna mempengaruhi orang lain. Salah satu cara untuk mempengaruhi orang-orang dari seorang politisi adalah dengan menyampaikan pidato politik. Pada tahun 2008, seorang politisi yang kemudian menjadi Presiden ke-44 Amerika Serikat, Barack Obama, menyampaikan pidato politik guna mempengaruhi orang-orang dalam kampanyenya. Obama menyampaikan visinya mengenai Amerika di masa depan dimana memberikan banyak harapan kepada para pendengarnya. Kajian ini akan berfokus pada pidato politik Barack Obama yang berjudul *Yes, we can*. Tujuan dari kajian ini adalah untuk melihat penerapan dari tindak ilokusi dengan cara menemukan tipe-tipe yang diterapkan dalam pidato politiknya,

dan juga guna menemukan tipe tindak ilokusi manakah yang paling mendominasi dalam pidato tersebut. Dengan menemukan penerapan-penerapan tindak ilokusi di dalam pidato politik tersebut, orang-orang dapat memilah tindak tutur yang ditampilkan Obama guna mencegah kesalah-pahaman dalam memaknai tuturan. Hasil dari kajian ini akan menunjukkan fungsi dan tujuan dari sebuah pidato politik dan juga untuk berbagi pengetahuan lebih luas tentang tipe tuturan yang digunakan dalam sebuah pidato politik.

Kata kunci: *pragmatik, tindak tutur, pidato, tindak ilokusi*

A. INTRODUCTION

Barack Hussein Obama II, as known as Barack Obama, is an American politician who served as the 44th President of United States for two periods (2009 - 2013 & 2013 - 2017). The victory of Obama to get this highest position is not an accidental; Obama puts lots of attention and gave the powerful speeches in almost all of his chance to convince American about their choice in the presidential election. One of Obama's speech that doubtlessly convinced people to vote him is Yes, we can at New Hampshire on January 8th, 2008. In this primary speech, Obama mentioned about several occurrences of key importance in America history, for example about the abolition of slavery, to illustrate the possibility of changing the given circumstances. Additionally he tries to encourage American people to work together as one nation. In 2017, 9 years after Obama addressed Yes, we can speech, people still remember it; besides the power of this speech, one thing which make it could attract lot of people attention even in nowadays is because Obama mention it on his valedictory speech. Precisely on Tuesday, January 10th, after eight years led America, Obama delivers his farewell speech before replaced by Donald Trump as the President of the United States. In the end of his valedictory speech, Obama recall Yes, we can to remind people about everything that he said at that time. After recall it, then Obama said confidently "Yes, we did" which followed by roared from the crowd that shows about their enthusiasm.

It is interesting to see the implication of illocutionary acts in Yes, we can speech in order to find what Obama intends to; does he wants to declare something, represent an event, express his emotion, direct an order, or commits him for some future actions. So it is become the reason for the researcher to identify this case. Another reason is because the researcher wants to know and see how a politician –in this case is Barack Obama– deliver his purposes on a speech. This speech is very important for him because it used to introduce himself and makes people know more about his activities and assists to national advance, let the people know about his vision, and gather more people to join him so Obama can win the election and they can reach together the purpose to get a better life in United States. More support from sympathizers and citizen to stands Obama's visions can make him easier to make it happen. Therefore, speech in here is very important for Obama to declare his purposes, and illocutionary acts is also important to know by the hearers or audiences, so they can divide the speech in some categories which then makes easier to recognize and find the context of utterances to avoid misunderstandings.

B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Searle's Classification of Speech Acts

Searle (1969) stated that when a person speaks, he/she performs three different acts. Those are utterance acts, propositional acts, and illocutionary acts. Utterance acts consist simply in uttering strings of words, while propositional acts and illocutionary acts consist characteristically in uttering words in sentences in certain context, certain condition and also

certain intention. Searle also adds that those three acts are not separate things, they are connected each other. In performing an illocutionary act, someone characteristically performs propositional acts and utterance acts. Below, Searle classifies the illocutionary acts based on varied criteria as follows:

a. Declarations

Declarations (or declaratives) are those kinds of speech acts that effect immediate changes in some current state of affairs. Because they tend to rely on elaborate extralinguistic institutions for their successful performance, they may be called institutionalized performatives. In performing this type of speech act, the speaker brings the statement about changes in the world; that is, he or she effects a correspondence between the propositional content and the world. Illocutionary force include: declaring, resigning, adjourning, appointing, nominating, approving, confirming, disapproving, endorsing, renouncing, disclaiming, denouncing, repudiating, baptizing, cursing, excommunicating, consecrating, abbreviating, naming, calling.

b. Representatives (Assertive)

Representatives are those kinds of speech acts that commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition and thus carry a truth-value. They express the speaker's belief. In performing this type of speech act, the speaker represents the world as he or she believes it is, thus making the words fit the world of their belief. Illocutionary force include: asserting, claiming, predicting, affirming, retelling, informing, concluding, stating, believing, explaining, convincing.

c. Expressives

Expressives are those kinds of speech acts that express a psychological attitude or state of the speaker such as joy, sorrow, and likes/dislikes. There is no direction of fit for this type of speech act. Illocutionary force include: congratulating, complimenting, thanking, disappointing, welcoming, greeting, respecting.

d. Directives

Directives are those kinds of speech acts that represent attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something. They express the speaker's desire/ wish for the addressee to do something. In using a directive, the speaker intends to elicit some future course of action on the part of the addressee, thus making the world match the words via the addressee. Illocutionary force include: inviting, commanding, ordering, requesting, suggesting.

e. Commissives

Commissives are those kinds of speech acts that commit the speaker to some future course of action. They express the speaker's intention to do something. In the case of a commissive, the world is adapted to the words via the speaker. Illocutionary force include: hoping, refusing, promising, offering.

2. Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID)

IFID or Illocutionary Force Indicating Device is the device which can be literally used to indicate an utterance of a sentence containing illocutionary act. Yule (1996) explained IFID as an expression with a slot for a verb that explicitly names the illocutionary act being performed. It means that by illocutionary force, the hearer will be easy to understand.

Searle (1987) classified some components in finding illocutionary force in the study of illocutionary force indicating device. It is included word order, stress, intonation, contour, punctuation, the mood of the verb, and performative verb. Those are defined as follow:

a. Word Order

Searle (1987) explained that word order is the way in which words are arranged in sequence or smaller construction.

b. Stress

Searle (1987) argued that stress is the degree of emphasis given a second or syllable in speech. The function of stress is to provide the distinction degrees of emphasis or contrast in sentence or lines of verse.

c. Intonation contour

Searle (1987) stated that intonation contour is the characteristic series of musical pitch level that serves to distinguish between question, statement, and other types of utterance in language.

d. Punctuation

Searle (1987) defined that punctuation is used to give a mark in the sentence. Types of punctuation including: full stops, comma, semicolon, apostrophe, hyphen, dash, brackets, inverted, and exclamation mark.

e. The Mood of the Verb

Searle (1987) explains that the moods of the verb are classifications that indicate the attitude of the speaker. Here are three kinds of mood in the verb: imperative used in request and command, subjunctive, and indicative.

f. Performative Verb

According to Searle (1987), a performative verb is a verb that names its own implementation. In other words, when people use a performative verb, they “do” what they are describing simply by saying the verb. We can also test that the utterances considered as performative or not. It can be proved by inserting hereby before the verb. If the resulting sentence does not make sense, so it is not performatives.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative research is an approach that used in this study, where it is “concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. That is to say, it aims to help us to understand the social world in which we live and why things are the way they are” (Hancock, Windrige, & Ockleford, 2009). The reason of the use of qualitative approach was because this research focused on a human –in this case is Barack Obama– thought through his utterances. It deals about exploring the reasons, opinions, and motivation which is the main concern in a qualitative research (Wyse, 2011). Qualitative research also used to go deeper into issues of interest and explore nuances related to the problem at hand. Writing style that compatible with this research is descriptive, it is based on Nazir (1988) who stated that descriptive method focuses on describing systematic fact in society at the present time. Content analysis used as the approach in this research. According to Mayring (2000), the object of content analysis can be all sort of recorded communication (transcripts of interviews, discourses, protocols of observations, video tapes, documents, etc).

The primary source of this research is a transcript of Obama’s Yes, we can from www.barackobama.com. This research used illocutionary acts by Searle as the data to analyze. The researcher also used a video from Youtube entitled “Barack Obama- Yes We Can” as the secondary source to watch the footage of primary speech from Obama and to validate

it. But in the video, the researcher found some unnecessary words like the repetition of word “thank you” on the beginning and “there is something happening” in the middle of speech. By calculated the advantages and disadvantages from both textual (transcript) and visual (video) sources, the researcher then chose to use the transcript as the main source. The reason because it was hard to decide a sentence from the visual source; the researcher could not identify the punctuations because there was no written text in the video, only the live record from New Hampshire with Obama’s voice. The sentence in here was a central point to recognize and divided the functions. Another reason also because the researcher could not hear all of the utterances from Obama clearly, because of the limit of the researcher’s vocabulary and sometimes Obama spoke faster which make it hard to identify. Therefore, the transcript used to avoid mishearing which can be found in the live record.

The researcher was the key instrument in this research. Bodgan and Biklen (Satori & Komariah, 2009) said that the researcher is the key instrument on a qualitative research. It means that, in this study, the researcher was the key instrument in data collection and data analysis. The researcher had the personal judgment and consideration on what kind of data required or how the research exploration is limited and scoped.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Types of Illocutionary Acts

This section presented the analysis of types and functions of illocutionary acts that produced by Barack Obama in his primary speech entitled Yes, We Can. The objective of this section is to answer the first question of this study. Following were the representation of the data collected:

a) Expressives

Expressives were those kinds of speech acts that expressed a psychological attitude or stated of the speaker such as joy, sorrow, and likes/dislikes. There was no direction of fit for this type of speech act (Searle, 1976).

Start with congratulating, Barack Obama congratulated his rival at the election, Hillary Clinton, in the opening of his primary speech:

“I want to congratulate Senator Clinton on a hard-fought victory here in New Hampshire.”

Congratulating was the illocutionary force that found in the data above, indicated by the used of performative verb congratulate which means an act to express about praise or something that somebody get. By showing the good relationship before the election, Obama intended to create the good atmosphere at that time. The United States presidential election in 2008 was the 56th quadrennial presidential election. It was held on Tuesday, November 4, 2008. The good campaign was important to preserve the country remain stable, as Obama did by congratulating Clinton.

b) Representatives

Representatives were those kinds of speech acts that commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition and thus carry a truth-value. They expressed the speaker’s belief. In performing this type of speech act, the speaker represents the world as he or she believes it is, thus making the words fit the world of their belief (Searle, 1976).

In representative, convincing became the most illocutionary force used by Barack Obama. Convincing is vital in here to make the audiences believed that something is true or correct. This is supported by the following data:

“But in record numbers, you came out and spoke up for change. And with your voices and your votes, you made it clear that at this moment - in this election - there is something happening in America.”

First, Obama convinced the audiences that they were took the right steps by join his side in the presidential election. Obama mentioned about their voices and votes, which was very important for him to reach the highest position, to make a better change in America as their hopes. Obama added:

“We know the battle ahead will be long, but always remember that no matter what obstacles stand in our way, nothing can withstand the power of millions of voices calling for change.”

Obama stressed again about the advantages that they would face in the future, and Obama then convinced the audiences that people wants a change, America needs to change. In the end of the speech, for the last chance at that moment, Obama convinced people as presented below:

*“we will remember that there is something happening in America; that we are not as divided as our politics suggests; that **we are one people; we are one nation; and together, we will begin the next great chapter in America's story with three words that will ring from coast to coast; from sea to shining sea - Yes. We. Can.**”*

Yes we can was the most convincing pattern that appeared on the speech. Obama said Yes we can nine times and most of it used to convinced people about his programs and their choices to stand on his side. In the data above, Obama united the audiences by said that **we are one nation**, differences in political view or the politician that they were chose was not a reason of disunity.

c) Directives

Directives were those kinds of speech acts that represented attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something. They expressed the speaker's desire/ wish for the addressee to do something. In using a directive, the speaker intends to elicit some future course of action on the part of the addressee, thus making the world match the words via the addressee (Searle, 1976).

Obama only used one directive in the speech as presented by the data below:

“You can be the new majority who can lead this nation out of a long political darkness.”

The illocutionary force that Obama used above is ordering. Ordering was an act to tell somebody to do something. Ordering was more polite than commanding a person. Obama ordered the audiences to become new majority who can lead America out of political darkness. There was no further explanation about the political darkness that he mentioned before, but the point was he intended to give opportunities to the audiences by join in the political and social advance.

d) Commissives

Commissives were those kinds of speech acts that commit the speaker to some future course of action. They expressed the speaker's intention to do something. In the case of a commissive, the world is adapted to the words via the speaker (Searle, 1976).

As a minority by race, Obama also brought an issue about the minority religion in America, which is Muslim. Obama promised as follow:

“And when I am President, we will end this war in Iraq and bring our troops home; we will finish the job against al Qaeda in Afghanistan; we will care for our veterans; we will restore our moral standing in the world; and we will never use 9/11 as a way to scare up votes, because it is not a tactic to win an election, it is a challenge that should unite America and the world against the common threats of the twenty-first century: terrorism and nuclear weapons; climate change and poverty; genocide and disease.”

War in Iraq and Afghanistan was the global issue which takes attention by the world, especially Muslim countries. President Bush established some policies which caused the war in the Middle East. Obama, as the candidates of President of United States of America, promised to end the war in the Middle East. The promise brought hope to the Muslims in America which effect to his vote in the presidential election. Most of Muslims in America supported him, the fact is The American Muslim Task Force on Civil Rights and Election released a pole at that time of over 600 Muslims from more than 10 states, including Florida and Pennsylvania, and it revealed that 89 percent of respondents voted for Obama.

e) **Declaratives**

Declarations (or declaratives) were those kinds of speech acts that effect immediate changes in some current state of affairs. Because they tend to rely on elaborate extralinguistic institutions for their successful performance, they may be called institutionalized performatives. In performing this type of speech act, the speaker brings the statement about changes in the world; that is, he or she effects a correspondence between the propositional content and the world (Searle, 1976).

According to the research on this thesis, declaratives was not found in Barack Obama primary speech entitled Yes we can because it required specific circumstances to perform the acts. It is performed by someone in a specific institutional role and context like priest. By performing declarative acts, the speakers may change the world. These circumstances is not found in Obama’s primary speech, therefore there is no declarative acts found in this research.

2. **The Dominant Type of Illocutionary Acts**

By collecting the data required, the researcher found the number of illocutionary acts implied in Barack Obama’s primary speech entitled Yes we can as in Appendix 5. The result described as follow: representatives appears 21 times (53,8%), expressives appears 3 times (7,7%), directives appear 1 time (2,6%), commissives appears 14 times (35,9%), and no appearance of declaratives. Furthermore, the type of representatives includes retelling, informing, claiming, believing, and convincing. The kinds of expressives consist of congratulating and complimenting. The act of directive represented by ordering. And the type of commissives consist of offering, promising, and hoping.

As the result of data collection above, the dominant type of illocutionary acts that found in Barack Obama’s primary speech entitled Yes, we can was representatives, followed by commissives and expressives as the second and third dominant types. The used of representatives in this speech was to express Obama’s belief. In performing this type of speech act, the speaker represented the world as he or she believes it is, thus making the words fit the world of their belief (Searle, 1976). The most illocutionary force of representatives that Obama used in this primary speech is convincing. In this primary speech,

Obama tried so hard to convince people to elect him by presented about 10 utterances which contains convincing act in Yes, we can speech.

E. CONCLUSION

In reference to the research findings. The conclusion could be drawn as follows. There are four types of illocutionary acts found in Barack Obama's primary speech, those are representatives, expressives, directives, and commissives. It proved that there was no need to imply all types of illocutionary act on a political speech. Inserting irrelevant acts into the speech would make it less effective. In Yes, we can speech, Barack Obama needed to gain more participants, more people, to join his side. Barack Obama had to make people believe that he was capable to rule the country.

Since the dominant type of illocutionary act implied on the speech is representatives which followed by convincing as the illocutionary force, Obama tried so hard to convince the audiences that America would have a better future if he given a chance to lead. Convincing was a formula that Obama needs to wiped out the hesitancies amongst the audiences. By knowing the purpose of Yes, we can speech through the research, this study finished the obligation to provide the data of the implication of illocutionary acts in Barack Obama's primary speech.

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