



**AN ANALYSIS OF ASSERTIVE SPEECH ACTS IN THE PRESS RELEASE  
'THE GENERAL ATTORNEY AFFIRMS PERTAMAX QUALITY MEETS  
PERTAMINA'S SPECIFICATIONS'**

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***Abstract***

*This study aims to analyze the use of assertive speech acts in an official press release by the Chief of the Indonesian Attorney General's Office, which addressed public concerns over the illegal blending of RON 92 fuel. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, using documentation and indirect observation as data collection techniques. The researcher transcribed into written form and analyzed through pragmatic approach, focusing on identifying assertive speech acts based on Searle's classifications. Data analysis applied Miles and Huberman's interactive model, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed 11 assertive speech acts categorized into four types: stating, reporting, claiming, and concluding. These speech acts functioned to rebuild public trust in Pertamina Patra Niaga and to counter misinformation circulating among the public. This research contributes to the understanding of how institutional communication through assertive speech acts can reinforce public confidence during social controversies.*

**Keywords:** *Assertive Speech Acts, Kejagung Press Release, Pragmatic Approach*

**INTRODUCTION**

In the frame of the hundred days of President *Prabowo's* reign period, there are several policies have been released. From those policies such as economic policies, political policy, and governmental policies, there were unpredictable declarations of corruption cases. One of these cases was the mega corruption of *Pertamina Patra Niaga*. This bombastic case revealed a very shocking effect on the public society. Indonesian General Attorney Office declared that there were seven people suspects of corruption ([Sari, 2025](#)). Besides information of national harm and loss, which are beyond a hundred trillion, a very influential effect occurred. Information about the illegal blending of fuel, which has been disseminated to public society, namely *Pertamax Ron 92* causes commotion.

The additional process of chemical addiction that has been done by those several suspects of corruption causes public trust degradation and worries ([Gustati, 2025](#)). This was because several public people intentionally used this kind of fuel to select better fuel than another one/*Pertalite*. Some issues ([Ika, 2025](#)) released that that fuel causes some machine damage. Therefore, there was a panic attack that could disturb public comfort. Fortunately, the official press release was by the Indonesian General Attorney's Office at the same time. Indonesian government hoped that this informational release could make public society calm down. In accordance, a current

researcher would like to provide and analyze that press release by embracing speech act theory. This study focused on the content analysis of the Chief of the Indonesian General Attorney Office, S.T. Burhanuddin. This recent research was sure that this study would be significant in calming public worries on related issues. To provide a detailed background, the researcher would like to report on some previous studies.

In recent years, the issue of illegal blending in fuel RON 92 has sparked public concern, leading to a decline in trust toward governmental bodies and corporations involved in the production and distribution of fuel. To address this, the Chief of the Indonesian Attorney General's Office issued an official press release, aiming to clarify the situation and restore public confidence. While previous research has explored various aspects of assertive speech acts, such as in the studies by [Hutasoit et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Cristin & Handayani \(2023\)](#), there remains a gap in understanding how assertive speech acts function in governmental press releases, particularly in response to public controversies.

The study by (Hutasoit, et.al., 2022) analyzed assertive speech acts used by an English virtual teacher, Dr. Jun Chen Hsieh, in the context of intercultural communication. It identified 12 types of assertive speech acts and found that "stating" was the most dominant. However, this study focused on virtual exchange courses rather than institutional responses to public issues and the second previous research was done by Cristin & Handayani entitled *Analysis Assertive Speech Act in Purple Hearts Movie by Tess Wakefield A Pragmatic Approach* ([Cristin, 2023](#)). This study examined assertive speech acts in the movie *Purple Hearts*, focusing on the dialogue of the main characters. While their study provided valuable insights into the use of assertive speech in films, it does not address the institutional or official discourse used by governmental bodies.

While several studies have discussed speech acts in legal settings (e.g., courtrooms, legal documents) and political speeches, there remains a noticeable research gap in investigating how official press releases during public controversies specifically utilize assertive speech acts to strategically rebuild public trust and counter misinformation. Most prior research has focused either on the linguistic structure of press releases or on their general impact, without closely examining the pragmatic mechanisms as particularly assertive acts that operate within such communication.

This study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how assertive speech acts are deployed in the official press release of the Indonesian Attorney General's Office concerning the illegal blending of RON 92 fuel. By focusing on the pragmatic functions of assertives speech act, this research aims to highlight their role as a communicative solution to reinforce public confidence in critical social situations.

This study is intended to analyze the use of assertive speech acts within an official press release issued by the Indonesian Attorney General's Office concerning the illegal blending of RON 92 fuel. The research seeks to demonstrate how assertive speech acts function strategically to restore public trust and dispel misinformation during periods of social controversy. Addressing a gap in previous studies that have largely focused on rhetorical structures or media narratives, this study offers a novel contribution by specifically examining the pragmatic deployment of assertive acts based on the frameworks of Searle and Vanderveken. It is hypothesized that assertive speech acts are deliberately utilized to uphold institutional credibility and manage

public perception. The scope of the study is confirmed to a single official document, analyzed through a descriptive qualitative method emphasizing pragmatic analysis and the identification of Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

To provide a solid foundation for the study, this section reviews the key theoretical concepts relevant to the research. The central theory in this study is speech acts, which are essential for understanding communication. Speech acts are utterances or spoken words that convey meaningful objectives, as proposed in communicative theory ([Fachrully, et.al., 2023](#)). When people say something means that people are producing utterances. This statement was stated that speech act was a function of communication. This theory posits that speech acts serve as the fundamental function of communication, where speakers aim to express intentions through their utterances (Nirmala, et.al., 2021). However, the relationship between the utterance and its intended meaning is not always straightforward; often, speakers employ indirect methods to convey their true intentions ([Indari, 2020](#)).

The classification of speech acts, as outlined by Searle and Austin (1979), provides a framework for analyzing communicative functions. They categorize speech acts into three types: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts ([Levinson, 1983](#)). Locutionary acts would be a fundamental speech from people. Locutionary acts refer to the basic form of the utterance, where the speaker delivers an utterance with an intent to convey meaning (Ariq, et.al., 2024). The second category, illocutionary acts, focuses on the intended communicative purpose behind the utterance, often expressed indirectly ([Patni, 2023](#)). This type of speech act is central to the current study, as it forms the core of the analysis in identifying how speakers achieve their communicative goals through indirect expressions. Finally, perlocutionary acts involve the effects or reactions elicited from the listener by the speaker's utterance ([Windy, et.al., 2023](#)).

To better understand the application of these concepts, it is important to distinguish between the common sentence types used in speech acts: declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences ([Syahputra, et.al. 2023](#)). Declarative sentences are used to state or inform something, interrogative sentences are used to ask questions, and imperative sentences are used to issue commands ([Mulyana & Engliana, 2021](#)). In some cases, speakers use indirect speech acts, where a sentence type is used in a way that does not align with its usual function. For example, a declarative sentence can be used to issue a command rather than to inform (Hamnu& Putra, 2023).

Building on this theoretical foundation, the study focuses specifically on assertive speech acts. Assertives are a type of illocutionary act used to convey information or state facts ([Anggraeni & Ramdhani, 2023](#)). In this study, assertive speech acts are particularly relevant because they play a key role in conveying truths and building social trust ([Naibaho & Simanjuntak, 2022](#)) ([Libriananda, Darmayanti, & Lukman, 2023](#)). Assertive speech acts are often used to clarify important issues, such as addressing public concerns or ensuring clarity in communication (Ashfira & Hardjanto, 2021).

Searle (1979) identified five specific categories of speech acts: declarations, expressive, representatives/assertives, directives, and commissives ([Yule, 1996](#)). For the purpose of this study, the focus is on assertives, which include types such as

stating, reporting, claiming, suggesting, and describing ([Vandervaken, 1990](#))([Damayanti, Adhitya, & Kristiawan, 2024](#)). To identify these types more precisely in the data, the study employs the Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFIDs), a tool that helps pinpoint the communicative function of an utterance. IFIDs include elements such as performative verbs, intonation, adverbial phrases, and key lexical items ([Izar, et.al, 2020](#)). By applying IFIDs, the study can distinguish between the propositional content (the informative substance) and illocutionary force (the communicative goal) of the assertive speech acts in the data ([Rahmayani & Dwiyluliana, 2018](#)).

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design to analyze assertive speech acts in the official press release by the Chief of the Indonesian General Attorney Office, S.T. Burhanuddin. The descriptive approach was chosen because it allows for detailed descriptions of how language is used within a specific context ([Furidha, 2023](#)). This method is particularly suitable for speech act analysis as it focuses on understanding the use of words, phrases, and sentences to convey meaning ([Mardiana & Indiaty, 2020](#)) ([ZA, 2022](#)). Additionally, a pragmatic approach is applied to analyze how the speaker uses language in accordance with the given circumstances, aiming to shape discourse and influence the audience's understanding ([Eliza, 2024](#))([Anita, et.al., 2023](#)). This approach helps identify the illocutionary force of assertive speech acts, focusing on their impact on the audience.

The primary Data in this study came from a monologue delivered by S. T. Burhanuddin in an official press release entitled The issue of fake fuel, the Attorney General as Pertamina quality entitled already according to Pertamina specifications, was broadcast on March 7, 2025 through Kompas.com YouTube channel. The 15-minute speech was transcribed for analysis. Data collection is done through indirect observation (observing without direct interaction) and documentation (speech transcript).

For data analysis, this study follows the model proposed by [Miles and Huberman \(1994\)](#), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the first stage, irrelevant or redundant data will be eliminated, and only data containing assertive speech acts will be selected([Asipi, Rosalina, & Nopiyadi, 2022](#)). The second stage involves data display, where the transcribed data is presented in description, including components such as utterances (sentences), assertive speech act classification (e.g., stating, claiming), illocutionary meaning (interpretation), and perlocutionary effect (impact on the audience) ([Annisa & Mailani, 2023](#)). The final stage is conclusion drawing, where the researcher will interpret the results based on the research objectives, specifically regarding how these assertive speech acts play a role in building public trust and influencing audience perception.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of the Attorney General's speech reveals various assertive speech acts used to convey information, clarify issues, and strengthen the credibility of the ongoing investigation. Below are the key findings based on the identified assertive speech acts:

### ***Reporting Statement***

The speech frequently utilizes reporting assertive speech acts to communicate information to the public. For instance, when the Attorney General says.

#### **Data 1**

"On this occasion, we would like to convey several points that may be important for all relevant parties to be informed of."

The utterance performs an assertive speech act by explicitly foregrounding the upcoming agenda, thereby establishing an epistemic stance that positions the speaker as a credible and authoritative source of information. This statement functions not merely to inform but also metapragmatically, signaling the communicative relevance and institutional significance of the content to be presented. The intent behind the utterance is not only to convey information but also to construct a framework of anticipation and perceived necessity among the audience, reinforcing the legitimacy and urgency of the issues to be addressed. Thus, the utterance carries not only propositional content but also serves a strategic role in psychologically and socially preparing the audience for the importance of the forthcoming communication.

### ***Stating Facts***

The speech declared the factual information about the length or timeline of investigation.

#### **Data 2**

The statement "*first of that the incidents that started from 2018 to 2023 that...*"

This utterance performs a clear assertive speech act by explicitly demarcating the temporal scope of the investigation, thereby positioning the speaker as an epistemic authority with access to precise legal information. By specifying the period from 2018 to 2023, the speaker not only conveys factual content but also establishes boundaries that delimit the inquiry's jurisdiction. This explicit temporal framing functions to reduce ambiguity and enhance the audience's understanding of the investigation's parameters. Moreover, the statement carries a metapragmatic dimension, signaling the speaker's commitment to transparency and procedural clarity, which serves to legitimize the ongoing legal process. Through this articulation, the speaker asserts control over the discourse, guiding the audience's perception of the investigation's relevance and temporal validity.

### ***Explaining condition***

The speaker wanted to announced the essential information in order to revive the public trust.

#### **Data 3**

The Attorney General asserts "*The second one was the fuel as the end product that has been distributed by Pertamina at recent time was in good specification*".

This utterance functions as an assertive speech act by confidently affirming the quality of the fuel product distributed by Pertamina. The speaker assumes an

epistemic stance of certainty, providing a factual evaluation that the product conforms to established standards. By emphasizing that the fuel is the “final product” and highlighting its recent distribution, the statement situates the assertion within a current and relevant temporal context. This serves to reassure the audience of the legitimacy and reliability of Pertamina’s product. Furthermore, the utterance carries a normative dimension, implicitly endorsing the adherence to quality standards, which enhances the credibility of the source and reinforces public trust.

### ***Claiming actions***

The speaker wanted to confirm the collaboration strategies between General Attorney and Indonesian Police.

#### **Data 4**

Another key assertive speech act is the claiming action. For example, the statement *“then the fourth one was the law enforcement in this case was synergy between General Attorney and Pertamina in order to shape good corporate governance principle”*.

This speech acts asserts the collaborative nature of the legal process. This is used to emphasize transparency and cooperation between government institutions and to assure the public that the process is legitimate, free from external influence. This utterance constitutes an assertive speech act by explicitly affirming the collaborative efforts between the Attorney General’s Office and Pertamina in enforcing the law. The speaker positions themselves as a knowledgeable authority, delineating the cooperative nature of the enforcement process. By framing the collaboration as a means to uphold “good corporate governance,” the statement not only conveys factual information but also appeals to normative standards and institutional values. This serves to legitimize the actions taken and emphasizes the shared responsibility of both institutions in promoting transparency and accountability. The utterance thereby reinforces the credibility and seriousness of the legal process in addressing the case at hand.

### ***Clarifying Actions***

The Attorney General also employs clarifying assertive speech acts to ensure that the public understands certain aspects of the issue correctly.

#### **Data 5**

For instance, when he says, (“it is true that there is legal evidence stating that Pertamina Patra Niaga made the purchase and payment for RON 92, but what was received was RON 88 or 90...”)

This utterance performs an assertive speech act by acknowledging the existence of legal evidence while simultaneously presenting a factual discrepancy regarding the fuel grade received. The speaker adopts an epistemic stance that balances affirmation of documented transactions with the expression of an inconsistency, thereby maintaining credibility and transparency. By contrasting the expected product (RON 92) with the actual product received (RON 88 or 90), the statement underscores a critical issue relevant to the investigation. This serves not only to inform but also to implicitly raise concerns about the integrity of the procurement process. The utterance

thus functions both as a statement of fact and as a subtle critique, reinforcing the speaker's role in clarifying key points within the legal discourse.

### ***Reassuring Public Confidence/Trust***

Another important assertive speech act used is reassuring the public of the legitimacy of the investigation.

#### **Data 6**

For example, the Attorney General states, ("I must emphasize that in handling this case, there has been no intervention from any party, but rather it is purely law enforcement...").

This statement functions to reassure the public that the investigation is being conducted without external pressure, interference, or bias. By using assertive speech to clarify the purity of the process, the Attorney General aims to restore confidence in the fairness of the legal proceedings, distancing the process from any political or corporate influence. This speech act is crucial in maintaining public trust during controversial legal matters. This utterance functions as a strong assertive speech act by unequivocally affirming the impartiality of the legal process. The speaker takes a clear epistemic stance, emphasizing the absence of external interference, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy and integrity of the case handling. The contrastive conjunction "rather" serves to clarify and strengthen the assertion that the process is solely grounded in lawful enforcement. This statement seeks to reassure the audience, establishing trust and confidence in the procedural fairness. By explicitly denying intervention, the speaker also implicitly counters any possible doubts or criticisms, positioning themselves as an authoritative source committed to transparency and justice.

### ***Emphasizing Accountability***

The Attorney General also uses assertive speech acts to emphasize accountability.

#### **Data 7**

For instance, when he declares, ("this action is not related to the policies in Pertamina, please understand and communicate this to the public so that there is no further confusion...")

The speaker is asserting that the actions of a few individuals involved in the blending are separate from the company's broader policies. This speech act stresses accountability, highlighting that the company as a whole is not to blame for the actions of a few wrongdoers. This serves to prevent damage to the institution's overall reputation and assures the public that the corporation is taking responsibility for addressing the issue. This utterance performs an assertive speech act by clearly disassociating the action in question from Pertamina's official policies. The speaker adopts an authoritative stance, explicitly instructing the audience to comprehend and disseminate this clarification to the public. This directive not only informs but also aims to manage public perception and mitigate misinformation. By emphasizing the need to prevent further confusion, the utterance underscores the speaker's role in maintaining transparency and controlling the narrative. This dual function of stating facts and guiding communicative behavior exemplifies the pragmatic force of the assertion in managing discourse and public understanding.

### ***Summarizing and Concluding***

Finally, the Attorney General makes use of summarizing and concluding speech acts to provide closure to the speech.

#### **Data 8**

For example, ("the law enforcement carried out in this case is a form of synergy between the Attorney General's Office and PT Pertamina in order to clean up state-owned enterprises...").

This speech act serves to summarize the broader context of the investigation, emphasizing the cooperation between the public and private sectors. By concluding with this assertive statement, the Attorney General reinforces the collaborative efforts in maintaining good corporate governance. This closing statement works to reassure the public that the investigation will lead to positive change and improvement, providing a sense of finality and hope for future integrity. This utterance functions as an assertive speech act by explicitly affirming the cooperative nature of the legal actions taken. The speaker establishes an authoritative epistemic stance, highlighting the partnership between two key institutions involved in law enforcement. By framing this collaboration as a strategic effort to "clean up" or improve state-owned enterprises, the statement conveys both factual information and a normative commitment to institutional reform and accountability. This assertion serves to legitimize the ongoing legal process and underscores its broader socio-political significance, positioning the enforcement not merely as a legal procedure but as part of a larger governance agenda.

Those analyses of assertive speech acts in the Attorney General's speech have revealed a careful and strategic use of language to manage public perception and convey important information regarding the ongoing investigation. The variety of assertive acts, including reporting, stating facts, explaining conditions, and claiming actions, served not only to inform but also to shape the narrative surrounding the investigation. By using these speech acts, the Attorney General sought to clarify the public's understanding of the issue, reduce any confusion, and guide the conversation towards a more informed and balanced view of the situation.

Moreover, the speech demonstrated how language can function as a tool for reinforcing institutional credibility. Through well-crafted statements, the Attorney General aimed to demonstrate transparency, uphold the integrity of the legal process, and ensure that the public's trust was maintained throughout the investigation. By addressing potential concerns and clarifying misconceptions, the use of assertive speech acts played a key role in framing the investigation as legitimate and free from external influence or interference.

Another important aspect revealed in this analysis is how assertive speech acts contribute to the broader goal of managing social controversies. In the context of this speech, the Attorney General not only communicated facts but also strategically shaped public opinion regarding the actions of Pertamina and the ongoing legal proceedings. The speech acts reassured the public that the situation was under control and that the integrity of Pertamina's operations remained intact, despite the investigation into alleged illegal practices.

As the transition into the final conclusions of this study, it is important to reflect on how these findings contribute to our understanding of institutional communication.



The role of assertive speech acts in managing public opinion, particularly in sensitive legal matters, highlights the power of language in shaping societal outcomes. The following conclusion will synthesize these findings and provide a final perspective on the impact of assertive speech acts in public discourse.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of assertive speech acts in the Attorney General speech highlights the strategic use of language to inform, clarify, and manage public perception. By utilizing a combination of reporting, stating facts, explaining conditions, and claiming actions, the Attorney General effectively communicates the scope and progress of the legal investigation while simultaneously addressing public concerns. The assertive speech acts serve to bolster the legitimacy of the legal process and reassure the public that the actions taken are both transparent and in the public best interest. Overall, these speech acts are crucial in shaping the public's understanding of the investigation and maintaining trust in government institutions.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that future research expand the scope of speech act analysis to include other types of speech acts, such as directives and commission, to provide a more holistic view of institutional communication strategies, especially during public controversies. Further studies could also examine how assertive speech acts function across different cultural and institutional contexts, enabling a comparative analysis of public communication in various settings. For practitioners and institutions, it is crucial to recognize the role of pragmatic strategies in shaping public trust, particularly in crisis communication. By consciously applying assertive speech acts, institutions can better manage public perception and address misinformation effectively. Lastly, the findings of this study can serve as valuable teaching material in the fields of linguistics and pragmatics, particularly for illustrating the practical application of speech act theory in real-world institutional communication.

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