



An Analysis of Ferdi Sambo's Statements after Handover to the Prosecutor's Office: A Speech Act Perspective

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Abstrak: This study analyzes the public statements made by Ferdi Sambo following his handover to the prosecutor's office in the context of a high-profile legal case. The research using Kreidler's taxonomy of speech acts that categorizes into assertives, performatives, verdictives, expressives, directives, commissives, and phatic utterances to explore their functional roles. Data were collected from verified transcripts, media reports, and official documents, employing qualitative content analysis, thematic analysis, and contextual analysis to uncover the intentions behind Sambo's rhetoric. The findings reveal that his statements are strategically crafted, blending expressions of remorse, assertions of innocence, and commitments to accountability to manage legal and public perceptions. Commissives underscore his acceptance of legal consequences, while assertives and expressives serve to justify his actions and evoke empathy. This study highlights the intricate interplay of language, legal strategy, and public narrative, illustrating how speech acts can shape outcomes in contentious legal and societal contexts.

Kata kunci: Speech acts, Speech acts theory, Language, Ferdi sambo, Public perception
ceramah, media pembelajaran interaktif, hasil belajar, Bahasa Indonesia.



PENDAHULUAN

Language serves a pivotal role in human interaction, acting as a vital means of conveying information and expressing intentions while also shaping perceptions and navigating social contexts. In scenarios where public attention is heightened—particularly in legal matters involving prominent figures—the significance of language is magnified. Cotterill (2003) examines linguistic tactics in courtroom discourse and highlights the power of language to shape narratives and influence opinion. Each statement uttered carries substantial consequences, impacting public opinion, legal proceedings, and societal narratives. This holds especially true in situations where an individual's words can influence both their personal reputation and broader legal discussions.

Court interpreting plays a vital role in ensuring effective communication in trials, especially when participants speak different languages, facilitating fair legal decisions based on accurate information (Rothstein, 2004). This principle is exemplified in high-profile Indonesian cases such as the “Coffee Killer” trial. In the 2016 “Coffee Killer” trial, involving the cyanide poisoning of Wayan Mirna Salihin, interpreters mediated interactions between foreign expert witnesses and the court, showcasing the complexities of speech acts among lawyers, expert witnesses, and interpreters. Misinterpretations or altered translations during these interactions could potentially affect the intended meaning and function of utterances, impacting the trial's outcomes.

The case that also illustrating this dynamic is the Ferdi Sambo case. The Ferdi Sambo case became a viral and high-profile affair in Indonesia due to several compelling factors that captured public attention. As a two-star general in the Indonesian National Police and Head of the Profession and Security Division (Propam), Sambo's involvement in a criminal case shocked the nation. The case centered around the death of Brigadier Nofriansyah Yosua Hutabarat (Brigadier J), initially described as a shootout but later revealed to involve allegations of premeditated murder, conspiracy, and a cover-up.

This revelation exposed potential abuse of power and corruption within law enforcement, resonating with widespread public concerns. Extensive media coverage, coupled with dramatic twists and emotional public statements by Sambo, kept the case in the spotlight. Social media further amplified its visibility, with hashtags, discussions, and viral trends dominating platforms like Twitter and YouTube. After surrendering to the prosecutor's office on October 5, 2022, Ferdi Sambo was pressed by reporters to speak and make a statement outside the Attorney General's Office. In front of a large audience, particularly the reporters, the atmosphere was tense. This case is very interesting to analyze. Through his statements to the public, Sambo conveyed various conditions that depict his situation, viewed through the lens of Speech Act theory by Kreidler. Ferdi Sambo's statements provided ample material for analysis. His rhetoric was not only aimed at legal authorities but also intended to sway public perception, seeking to mold the narrative surrounding his involvement in a high-profile legal affair. The other notion relevant to the examination of Ferdi Sambo's case is Eades' (2010) discussion of how defendants shape their statements to strike a balance between public perception and legal accountability. His statements ranged from expressions of regret and claims of innocence to efforts to manage public outrage, all carefully constructed to serve multiple purposes under intense scrutiny.

Despite extensive studies on courtroom discourse and the strategic use of language in legal settings, there remains a limited focus on how high-profile individuals, such as defendants in prominent legal cases, use language to simultaneously manage legal accountability and public perception. However, there is a notable gap in examining the specific application of speech act theory, particularly Kreidler's classifications, to analyze public statements made outside the courtroom that aim to influence both legal outcomes and societal narratives. Existing research, such as that by Cotterill (2003) and Eades (2010), primarily explores linguistic strategies within courtroom environments or broader legal frameworks.

However, some studies have examined related aspects. Speech acts and speaker purpose in the matter pertaining to sovereignty over the islands of Sipadan and Ligitan (Burhanudeen,

2005). She examines the terminology employed by the attorneys for Indonesia and Malaysia at the International Court of Justice. With an emphasis on courtroom environments rather than public utterances, the study emphasizes how speech acts transmit communicative intent in legal conflicts. Besides that, in their study “Speech Act in a Courtroom: An Analysis of Chris Watts’ Trial,” Heidi and Setyaningsih (2024) examine the types and purposes of speech acts that are used in trial. Even though there is a lot of information about trial interactions, this study does not fully address the public statements made outside of the legal process.

The other study is “Directive and Expressive Speech Act in the Judicial Case of the Murder of Judge Jamaluddin.” Safreni et al. (2023) explores how directive and expressive speech acts were employed by the main defendant, Zuraida Hanum, during the trial. While insightful regarding courtroom interactions, it does not extend to public statements made outside the legal proceedings. These studies contribute to understanding language use in legal contexts but do not directly address how high-profile individuals employ language outside the courtroom to influence legal outcomes and public perception. This underscores the need for further research applying speech act theory, including Kreidler’s classifications, to public statements made by such individuals.

In the case of Ferdi Sambo, while his public statements offer rich material for analysis, little attention has been paid to dissecting how his rhetoric operates across multiple speech act dimensions to achieve varied communicative goals. This study seeks to fill this gap by integrating Kreidler’s speech act framework to provide a nuanced understanding of the interplay between language, intention, and public reception in shaping the narratives of high-profile legal cases.

This study conducts a thorough analysis of how language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a strategic tool for managing public perception and navigating intricate legal and social terrains through Kreidler’s theory. It underscores the intricate interplay among language, intention, and societal reception, illustrating how individuals embroiled in legal controversies utilize language to shape their public image and steer the unfolding events. Ultimately, this analysis accentuates the potency of linguistic strategies in deciphering the multifaceted narratives emerging at the crossroads of law and public dialogue.

METODE

This study employs a qualitative content analysis approach to examine the speech acts in Ferdi sambo’s public statements, focusing on their strategic use within legal and public contexts. Data were collected through analysing documentary video transcripts. Triangulation ensured the reliability of sources by cross-verifying official documents, news articles, and recordings. The analysis applied Kreidler’s taxonomy to categorize speech acts into assertives, performatives, verdictives, expressives, directives, commissives, and phatic utterances, identifyin their functional roles in communication. A thematic analysis was conducted to uncover patterns of intention and effect, while contextual analysis explored the alignment of speech acts with legal strategies and public narratives. This methodology provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the interplay between language, law, and societal perceptions in high-profile cases.

HASIL PENELITIAN

In this section, the findings are presented. The data presented is analysed from the transcript of Ferdi Sambo’s statement.

Table 1. Kreidler's speech act findings in Ferdi Sambo's statements

No.	Kinds of Speech Act	Function	Statements
1.	Assertive Utterances	Information or beliefs	2
2.	Expressive Utterances	Reflect emotional states	4
3.	Commissive Utterances	Commit the speaker to future actions	2
4.	Phatic Utterances	Maintain social connections	1

This section analyzes the statements made by Ferdi Sambo following his handover to the prosecutor's office, categorizing each utterance based on Charles Kreidler's taxonomy of speech acts. The analysis identifies the types of speech acts present and discusses the intentions and implications behind each. Data transcript of Ferdi Sambo's statement:

"Saya pasrahkan nasib saya ke yang mulia majelis hakim. Semua yang saya lakukan adalah karena kecintaan saya pada istri saya. Saya tidak tahu bagaimana membahasakan perasaan, emosi, amarah yang memuncak setelah mendengar informasi tentang perbuatan yang dialami istri saya. Kabar yang sangat menyedihkan hati saya sebagai seorang suami. Namun, saya menyesal sangat emosional saat itu. Saya akan mempertanggungjawabkan secara hukum. Istri saya tidak terlibat dan tidak melakukan apa-apa. Terakhir, saya memohon maaf kepada seluruh pihak yang terdampak atas perbuatan yang saya lakukan, khususnya mohon maaf kepada bapak dan ibu keluarga korban. Terima kasih."

("I surrender my fate to the honorable judges. Everything I did was out of my love for my wife. I don't know how to articulate the feelings, emotions, and anger that welled up after hearing the information about what happened to my wife. The news was very heart-wrenching for me as a husband. However, I deeply regret being very emotional at that time. I will take legal responsibility. My wife was not involved and did nothing wrong. Lastly, I apologize to everyone affected by my actions, especially I apologize to the parents and families of the victims. Thank you.")

This is an analysis of the findings of each statement uttered by Ferdi Sambo.

1. "I surrender my fate to the honorable judges." ("*Saya pasrahkan nasib saya ke yang mulia majelis hakim.*")

This statement is classified as a **commissive utterance** specifically a **pledge**, as it demonstrates a clear commitment by Ferdi Sambo to accept whatever decision the court may render. This is because the statement implies the speaker's commitment to accepting whatever decision is made by the honorable panel of judges. The choice of the word "*pasrahkan*" (to surrender) reflects an attitude of fully entrusting responsibility or the decision to another party, in this case, the judges, which implicitly serves as a promise not to oppose the outcome. Although it is not explicitly stated as "I promise," the context of this statement is akin to pledging, where one declares a willingness to accept and abide by the decision given. By stating this, he is essentially entrusting his fate to the judges, showcasing his willingness to abide by the legal process.

Through this statement, Sambo portrays himself as cooperative, respectful, and prepared to face the legal consequences of his actions. Moreover, his use of formal and respectful language, addressing the judges as "*yang mulia*" (Your Honor), reinforces his acknowledgment of their authority and expertise. This reflects cultural norms in Indonesia, where hierarchical respect and politeness are highly valued (Kartomihardjo, 1988). This utterance also carries an emotional appeal, as it subtly conveys a sense of resignation and vulnerability, potentially evoking sympathy from both the judges and the public. It signals a shift in his stance, from someone possibly seen as defensive to someone taking responsibility for his actions.

2. "Everything I did was out of my love for my wife." ("*Semua yang saya lakukan adalah karena kecintaan saya pada istri saya.*")

This statement is an **assertive utterance** that expresses Ferdi Sambo's belief and justification for his actions, specifically **profess**. This is because the statement emphasizes the speaker's emotional involvement and personal commitment to their actions, explicitly attributing their motivation to love for their spouse. Phrases like "*kecintaan saya*" (my love) highlight the intensity and emotional depth of the speaker's declaration, which aligns with the act of professing—expressing a deeply held belief or commitment.

By attributing his behavior to love for his wife, he frames his actions as emotionally driven rather than malicious or self-serving. This choice of words shifts the

narrative from wrongdoing to emotional vulnerability, presenting his decisions as stemming from deep emotional attachment.

3. “I don’t know how to articulate the feelings, emotions, and anger that welled up after hearing the information about what happened to my wife.” (*“Saya tidak tahu bagaimana membicarakan perasaan, emosi, amarah yang memuncak setelah mendengar informasi tentang perbuatan yang dialami istri saya.”*)

This statement falls under the category of **expressive utterance**, specifically focusing on **acknowledge or confess**. This is because the speaker is openly expressing their struggle to articulate the intense emotions they are experiencing, such as feelings, anger, and frustration, triggered by the situation involving their spouse. By admitting their difficulty in verbalizing these emotions, the speaker demonstrates an act of acknowledgment, recognizing their emotional turmoil. Additionally, it can also be interpreted as a form of confession, as the statement reveals a personal vulnerability and emotional challenge faced by the speaker. However, acknowledge may be more fitting in this context, as it centers on the recognition of their emotional state rather than an admission of fault or guilt.

Ferdi Sambo conveys his emotional turmoil—confusion, anger, and frustration—caused by distressing information about his wife. He describes being overwhelmed by intense emotions, implying a sense of helplessness in finding the right words. This expression aims to highlight the psychological impact on him as a husband, seeking to explain his actions as a reaction to emotional distress rather than malicious intent. According to Norrick (1978), expressive utterances like these are powerful in evoking empathy, as they reveal the speaker’s inner state. Through this emotional appeal, Sambo seeks to evoke empathy and soften his image, framing his behavior as an impulsive response to extreme emotional pressure.

4. “The news was very heart-wrenching for me as a husband.” (*“Kabar yang sangat menyedihkan hati saya sebagai seorang suami.”*)

This statement is an **expressive utterance**, specifically focusing on **acknowledge**, where Ferdi Sambo expresses his personal grief and emotional distress. By using the phrase “*menyedihkan hati*” (heart-wrenching), he emphasizes how deeply the news affected him, particularly as a husband. This choice of words shows that the situation caused him significant emotional pain, highlighting the weight of his feelings. This act of expression is not an apology or denial but a recognition of the pain they are experiencing, aligning with the verb acknowledge, where the speaker openly identifies and conveys their emotional response.

The utterance reinforces the idea that his actions were not driven by malice but by intense emotional suffering. Sambo uses this emotional expression to help others understand the psychological burden he faced, framing his behavior as a reaction to overwhelming pain rather than premeditated wrongdoing. By doing so, he aims to evoke sympathy from the public and possibly gain leniency in how his actions are perceived, suggesting that his actions were an emotional response rather than a calculated or malicious choice.

5. “However, I deeply regret being svery emotional at that time.” (*“Namun, saya menyesal sangat emosional saat itu.”*)

This statement is an **expressive utterance** specifically focusing on **apologize**. Ferdi Sambo clearly shows regret for his actions. By saying “*saya menyesal*” (I regret), he is expressing that he feels sorry for what happened, which is a key characteristic of apologizing. The phrase “*sangat emosional saat itu*” (very emotional at that time) adds that his emotions were so strong that they influenced his behavior. By admitting this, Sambo acknowledges that he was not in full control of his emotions during the situation. This statement shows that he is aware of his actions and is taking responsibility for them. It helps to soften his image because it shows self-awareness—he’s not denying his fault but explaining that his emotional state played a role in his actions. This expression of

remorse is meant to make the public see him as someone who regrets his behavior, rather than someone who acted with deliberate ill intent.

6. "I will take legal responsibility." (*"Saya akan mempertanggungjawabkan secara hukum."*)

This statement is a **commissive utterance**, specifically focusing on **pledge**. Ferdi Sambo makes a clear promise to take responsibility for his actions in the eyes of the law. By saying "*akan mempertanggungjawabkan secara hukum*" (I will take legal responsibility), he is committing to face the legal consequences of what he has done. This shows that Sambo is willing to accept whatever judgment or punishment comes from the legal process, which positions him as someone who is accountable for his actions. It suggests that he is not trying to escape responsibility but instead is ready to cooperate with the judicial system. The statement paints him as someone who respects the law and is ready to deal with the consequences of his behavior.

7. "My wife was not involved and did nothing wrong." (*"Istri saya tidak terlibat dan tidak melakukan apa-apa."*)

This statement is an **assertive utterance**, specifically focusing on **affirm or assert**. Ferdi Sambo is making a strong claim about his wife's innocence. By saying "*tidak terlibat dan tidak melakukan apa-apa*" (she was not involved and did nothing), he is asserting that his wife had no role in the situation and is completely blameless. This statement serves a strategic purpose: it shifts attention away from his wife, protecting her from any potential legal or social consequences. Sambo is trying to ensure that she is not seen as responsible for his actions or negatively impacted by the case. By emphasizing her innocence, he aims to safeguard her reputation and avoid further harm to her image, showing that he wants to keep her separate from his own troubles.

8. "Lastly, I apologize to everyone affected by my actions, especially I apologize to the parents and families of the victims." (*"Terakhir, saya memohon maaf kepada seluruh pihak yang terdampak atas perbuatan yang saya lakukan, khususnya mohon maaf kepada bapak dan ibu keluarga korban."*)

This statement is an **expressive utterance**, specifically focusing on **apologize**. Ferdi Sambo is offering a direct apology to those affected by his actions, particularly the victims' families. By saying "*memohon maaf*" (I apologize), he is expressing sincere regret for what he has done and is seeking forgiveness from those harmed by his actions. The apology is important because it shows that Sambo recognizes the impact of his behavior on others and feels remorse for it. By specifically mentioning the families of the victims, he acknowledges their suffering and takes responsibility for causing them pain. This expression of regret is meant to help restore his moral credibility, showing that he understands the wrongness of his actions and is trying to make amends. It also seeks to repair relationships with those affected, signaling a desire for reconciliation and a step toward taking responsibility for the emotional harm caused.

9. "Thank you." (*"Terima kasih."*)

This statement is an **phatic utterance**. In this case, "*Terima kasih*" (Thank you) is a form of gratitude that does not aim to provide new information or affect the world directly, but rather to politeness between the Sambo and the audience.

PEMBAHASAN

The analysis of Ferdi Sambo's statements aligns with and diverges from findings in previous research on speech acts, particularly those rooted in Kreidler's taxonomy. His utterances demonstrate a blend of commissive, assertive, expressive, and phatic acts, reflecting his strategic use of language to navigate a complex legal and emotional scenario. For instance, his use of commissive utterances, such as "I surrender my fate to the honorable judges" and "I will take legal responsibility," aligns with studies emphasizing how pledges and commitments in legal contexts often aim to present the speaker as cooperative and accountable (Searle, 1979; Austin, 1962). These statements resonate with findings by Trosborg (1995), which suggest that

commissive acts in judicial discourse often serve to mitigate public perception and establish credibility.

Similarly, expressive utterances, like “I deeply regret being very emotional at that time” and his apology to the victims' families, align with prior research highlighting the role of apologies in crisis communication. Holmes (1995) emphasized that apologies are powerful tools for repairing interpersonal relations and mitigating negative public sentiment. Sambo's explicit acknowledgment of regret and his direct apology appear to be strategies aimed at evoking empathy and reducing the moral severity of his actions, consistent with findings by Benoit (1995) on image restoration theory.

His assertion that his actions were driven by love for his wife (“Everything I did was out of my love for my wife”) highlights a justification strategy, which is in line with studies on emotional appeals in crisis narratives. Coombs (2007) noted that emotional framing can reduce perceived culpability by shifting focus to the speaker's psychological state rather than their actions. However, the justification risks being perceived as a deflection, which, as noted by Lee and Chung (2012), may lead to mixed audience responses depending on cultural and social contexts.

The protective stance taken regarding his wife's innocence (“My wife was not involved and did nothing wrong”) is reflective of assertive acts meant to clarify and establish facts, as per Kreidler's framework. This aligns with Goffman's (1974) theory of face-saving acts, where individuals strategically manage impressions to protect their social image and relationships. The clear assertion of his wife's non-involvement is a calculated move to shield her from reputational damage, a tactic often observed in crisis communication studies (Coombs & Holladay, 2002).

Interestingly, the final phatic utterance, “Thank you,” reflects politeness strategies outlined by Brown and Levinson (1987), reinforcing formal closure and maintaining decorum. While seemingly minor, such utterances are vital in maintaining relational harmony and signaling respect for the audience, as also noted in studies by Watts (2003). While the analysis aligns with much of the prior research, it also diverges in its context-specific nuances. Unlike traditional studies focusing on purely communicative intentions, Sambo's statements interweave legal defense with emotional appeals, showing a multi-layered approach to speech acts.

The analysis reveals that Sambo's statements incorporate multiple speech acts, including commissives, assertives, and expressives, strategically employed to achieve distinct objectives. Commissives demonstrate his readiness to face legal accountability, while assertives aim to justify his actions and shift focus away from others involved. Expressives dominate the statements, reflecting an emotional appeal designed to elicit empathy and soften the public and judicial perception of his actions.

This mix of speech acts highlights the deliberate crafting of language in high-stakes situations. By balancing expressions of remorse, assertions of innocence, and commitments to accountability, Sambo strategically navigates his legal and social circumstances, leveraging language to manage public and institutional responses. Through Kreidler's framework, the analysis underscores how speech acts can serve as powerful tools for individuals seeking to shape narratives and maintain control over their personal and legal image in contentious cases.

SIMPULAN

The analysis of Ferdi Sambo's public statements reveals a deliberate use of speech acts to navigate the dual pressures of legal accountability and public perception. By employing commissives to signal responsibility, assertives to justify his actions, and expressives to elicit empathy, Sambo strategically crafts his rhetoric to align with his legal and social objectives. The predominance of emotional appeals in his statements underscores an effort to soften public and judicial views, presenting his actions as driven by personal vulnerabilities rather than malicious intent. Through Kreidler's taxonomy, this study demonstrates the power of speech acts in shaping narratives, particularly in high-stakes situations where public image and legal outcomes are intertwined. These findings contribute to the understanding of language as a strategic tool in

socio-legal contexts, emphasizing its role in influencing both institutional and societal responses in high-profile legal cases.

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