



# Mapping The Strategic Manoeuvring Through Speech Acts: A Study of Ferry Irwandi's Political Argumentation in YouTube

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Received: 2025-12-04 Revised: 2026-03-16 Accepted: 2026-04-07</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Argumentation, Ferry Irwandi, Pragema-dialectics, strategic manoeuvring, speech acts</p> <p><b>DOI:</b> 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.8674</p> <p><b>Corresponding Author:</b> Nauvalia Hanidia <a href="mailto:nauvaliahanidia1402@upi.edu">nauvaliahanidia1402@upi.edu</a> Linguistics, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Jawa Barat</p>	<p><i>This study examines how Ferry Irwandi employs speech acts as strategic manoeuvring in his political argumentation on YouTube, specifically in the video "Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer." While previous studies on political discourse have largely examined strategic manoeuvring or speech acts separately, limited attention has been given to how speech acts function as concrete linguistic mechanisms for balancing dialectical and rhetorical aims in digital political argumentation. To address this gap, this study applies a descriptive qualitative method within the pragma-dialectical framework to analyze the relationship between speech acts and strategic manoeuvring. The analysis covers seven argumentative units, each systematically divided into the four stages of argumentation: confrontation, opening, argumentation, and concluding. In each stage, the forms and functions of direct and indirect speech acts are identified to examine how they fulfill the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring: topical potential, audience demand, and presentational devices. The results of the analysis show that direct-representative speech acts are the most dominant with 17 data and function to clarify claims and strengthen the argument structure. Meanwhile, indirect speech acts with 10 data are used to meet the audience's demand through a more empathetic approach, and directive speech acts with 5 data appear at the conclusion to encourage action. These three linguistic patterns work simultaneously in a strategic manoeuvring, where representatives strengthen topical potential, directives strengthen presentational devices, and indirect speech acts build audience demand.</i></p>

## 1. Introduction

Humans inevitably engage in arguments across various fields, including democracy. An argument aims to prove or justify a standpoint (Anita & Tenriawaru, 2019) and involves giving reasons to persuade others (Van Eemeren et al., 2019). Arguments are also not merely single sentences but consist of interconnected statements that reveal how individuals' reason and justify their claims (Mercier & Sperber, 2011). In democracy, argumentation is vital because it manages differing opinions fundamental to democratic processes (Van Eemeren, 1995; Madung, 2021). Public decisions emerge through exchanges among citizens and officials, making the quality of argumentation essential for democratic functioning (Majdik & Keith, 2011; Van Eemeren, 1995). Thus, argumentation skills, including logical, ethical, and evaluative, are crucial (Van Eemeren, 1995)

These argumentative demands are particularly salient in the context of Indonesian democracy, where political participation increasingly occurs in digital spaces. Following the Reformasi era, Indonesia has experienced a rapid expansion of democratic freedoms accompanied by the rise of social media as a primary arena for political discussion, criticism, and mobilization (Nurhayati & Suryadi, 2017; Ilham & Pawane, 2025). Platforms such as YouTube have become significant sites of political discourse, offering unique opportunities for content creators to engage mass audiences through multimodal communication. (Gillespie, 2010; Fischer, Kolo & Mothes, 2022; Nakamura, 2024).

Recent reports indicate that Indonesia indeed ranks among the countries with the highest social media users globally, with YouTube emerging as a critically important platform for news consumption and political commentary (Junawan & Laugu, 2020; Venus, Intyaswati & Ayuningtyas, 2024). This shift has transformed political debate from elite-dominated forums into participatory, digitally mediated interactions, while also intensifying polarization, misinformation, and emotionally charged argumentation.

In today's digital democratic landscape, grasping rational and ethical argument construction is crucial. The pragma-dialectical approach offers a fitting framework, viewing argumentation as a pragmatic speech act activity and dialectical process for resolving opinion differences via reasonable discussion (Van Eemeren et al., 2013). This dual lens positions it beyond formal logic as a socially embedded communicative practice fostering mutual understanding (Van Eemeren, 2016). Extended by rhetorical strategic manoeuvring, it balances dialectical reasonableness with rhetorical efficacy in real contexts (Houtlosser & Van Rees, 2014).

The relevance of strategic manoeuvring becomes evident when examining influential figures in Indonesia's digital political discourse, such as Ferry Irwandi. Ferry Irwandi is a political commentator and digital activist known for producing analytical political content on YouTube, where he critically discusses state policies, democratic issues, and power relations in Indonesia. His influence lies not only in

the volume of his audience but also in his distinctive argumentation style, which is often described as straightforward, and critical. For example, he frequently employs direct assertions, and clear causal reasoning to expose inconsistencies in official narratives, while avoiding excessive technical jargon. He also uses analogies, and evaluative speech acts to guide viewers toward particular interpretations without sacrificing argumentative clarity.

The public impact of this argumentative style is empirically visible in audience responses. In the comment section of the video *"Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer"*, viewers explicitly articulate their appreciation for Ferry Irwandi's manner of argumentation. For instance, a comment by @alesha\_leung508 states, *"pak veri aku kok sukaa setiap kata-kata mu"*, indicating affective engagement with his verbal delivery. Another viewer, @kennyfathurrahman8005, remarks, *"Bang Ferry Irwandi terimakasih telah mencerdaskan rakyat Indonesia, kawal demokrasi yang sehat, rakyat kritis bukan anarkis"*, directly associating his argumentation with the cultivation of critical yet non-anarchic democratic attitudes. Similarly, @ginnavadhya7984 writes, *"thanks bang! sehat selalu, kita butuh tokoh publik seperti lu bang"*, positioning Ferry Irwandi as a necessary public figure within Indonesia's democratic digital space.

These responses, among many others, illustrate how his arguments are not only consumed but also evaluated as educational, rational, and socially constructive by a broad audience. This phenomenon underscores the importance of analyzing how Ferry Irwandi constructs his arguments through speech acts as a form of strategic manoeuvring. His discourse exemplifies how digital political actors can simultaneously pursue dialectical reasonableness and rhetorical effectiveness, thereby influencing public reasoning in a highly polarized online environment.

Despite pragma-dialectics' value as a framework integrating pragmatic speech acts, dialectical difference-resolution, and rhetorical strategic manoeuvring (Van Eemeren et al., 2013; Van Eemeren, 2016; Houtlosser & Van Rees, 2014), its application to Indonesian digital political discourse remains underexplored. Previous studies have applied the pragma-dialectical concept of strategic manoeuvring in various contexts.

Wu and Qian (2024) examine how strategic manoeuvring operates in chairmen's letters of major Chinese corporations, while Sijadu (2020) analyzes the use of metaphors as strategic manoeuvring devices in traditional Isixhosa argumentative discourse as represented in the novel *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya*. Wu and Zhou (2023) investigate patterns of argumentation in Chinese diplomatic press conferences, with particular attention to the use of pragmatic arguments.

Similarly, Feng et al. (2020) explore how United Airlines employed strategic manoeuvring through dissociation techniques in managing the crisis following the 2017 passenger removal incident; However, as with previous studies, this research has not discussed the role of speech acts in balancing dialectical and rhetorical goals in political argumentation, especially in the context of Indonesian language

on social media.

This study addresses this gap by examining the relationship between speech acts and strategic manoeuvring in Ferry Irwandi's political discourse on YouTube. Specifically, it investigates how direct and indirect speech acts contribute to the balancing of dialectical and rhetorical goals within digital argumentation. It addresses two questions: (1) What speech acts did Ferry Irwandi use in constructing his argument? and (2) How was the strategic manoeuvring realized through the use of these speech acts according to the pragma-dialectical framework? The analysis was conducted using the pragma-dialectical approach of Frans H. van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst, with data from one of Ferry Irwandi's YouTube videos entitled "Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer".

This video was chosen because it was relevant to the research topic and represented Ferry Irwandi's style of argumentation. In addition, this video has been viewed 2.7 million times, making it Ferry Irwandi's most popular video related to Indonesian political issues at the moment. The video "Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer" is an opinion-based video by Ferry Irwandi that addresses the political unrest occurring in Indonesia. In this video, Ferry Irwandi critically examines the dynamics behind mass demonstrations, questions the actors allegedly orchestrating the protests, and discusses the potential implications of invoking a state of emergency. He presents evaluations of government responses, public reactions, and power relations, positioning the video as a form of digital political commentary aimed at fostering public critical awareness rather than provoking anarchic action.

This research is expected to enrich the field of linguistics, particularly the study of strategic manoeuvring from a pragmatic-dialectical perspective, while also contributing to the study of Indonesian political discourse by presenting an analysis that focuses on the arguments of digital activists on social media. In practical terms, this research is also expected to serve as a guide for argumentators in utilizing speech acts as a manoeuvring strategy capable of achieving dialectical and rhetorical goals as applied by Ferry Irwandi, thereby eliciting positive responses from the public.

## **2. Method**

The choice of method not only determines the direction of the analyze, but also how researchers capture, read, and interpret the phenomena being studied. In the context of this study, the chosen approach is the qualitative method. Basically, the qualitative method is a research procedure that uses descriptive data in the form of written or spoken sentences from human behavior with natural data characteristics, humans as instruments, based on theory, and 'descriptive' (Koyan, 2014).

The purpose of using this qualitative method is to find patterns of interconnected relationships, provide an overview of a more complex reality, and gain an understanding of meaning (Sugiyono, 2013). Thus, this method appropriate choice for examining the strategic manoeuvring and use of speech acts that emerge in the research data.

In analyzing argumentation, the pragma-dialectics approach developed by Van Eemeren and Grootendorst can be used to view it as a rational process for resolving differences of opinion. This theory combines pragmatic and dialectical approaches, later incorporating a rhetorical dimension (Marraud, 2024). For a more comprehensive understanding, argumentation analysis considers two levels: first, the utterance level, which assesses whether a statement conventionally qualifies as argumentation based on Searle's speech act theory; second, the interaction level between speaker and listener, treating argumentation as a social exchange affecting mutual rights and obligations (Haro, 2023).

This study adopts the first level of analysis by focusing on the identification of direct and indirect speech acts that constitute the argumentation, following a systematic data analysis procedure that includes (1) transcription, (2) segmentation argument units, (3) Classification of argument units, (4) classification of speech acts, (5) mapping these speech acts to aspects of strategic manoeuvring, and (6) interpretation.

This research began with data collection through Ferry Irwandi's YouTube video entitled *"Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer"* (The Puppeteer of Demonstrations and Preventing Military Emergency). This 9-minute 6-second video was uploaded on August 31, 2025, and has been viewed approximately 2.7 million times and received more than 12,000 comments. This video was published to convey Ferry Irwandi's opinions and critical analysis of the political unrest in Indonesia, particularly regarding the alleged actors behind the mass demonstrations and the discourse on the implementation of a military emergency. Through this video, Ferry Irwandi presents his evaluation of the government's response, the dynamics of mass movements, and the evolving power relations, with the aim of encouraging critical public awareness and strengthening rational democratic discourse in the digital space.

The data analysis was conducted through systematic procedures. First, the entire video *"Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer"* was transcribed using the Notegpt.io transcription service. The automatically generated transcript was subsequently reviewed to ensure its suitability for linguistic analysis. Second, the verified transcript was segmented into argumentation units. An argumentation unit is defined as a coherent segment consisting of a central standpoint, supporting reasons, and a set of arguments that simultaneously perform dialectical functions, aimed at resolving differences of opinion, and rhetorical functions, aimed at persuading the audience (Van Eemeren et al., 1993; Van Eemeren, 2018).

Based on these criteria, seven argumentation units were identified, all of which relate to the themes of protest orchestration and the discourse on martial law. Third, each argumentation unit was analyzed according to the four stages of argumentation proposed in pragma-dialectical theory, namely the confrontation stage, opening stage, argumentation stage, and concluding stage. At each stage, the types of direct and indirect speech acts were identified using Searle’s speech act classification. Fourth, the identified speech acts were examined in relation to strategic manoeuvring to determine how they functioned in balancing dialectical reasonableness and rhetorical effectiveness through three key aspects: topical potential, audience demand, and presentational devices. Finally, the analysis synthesized the overall tendencies in Ferry Irwandi’s use of speech acts in constructing his strategic manoeuvring in argumentation.

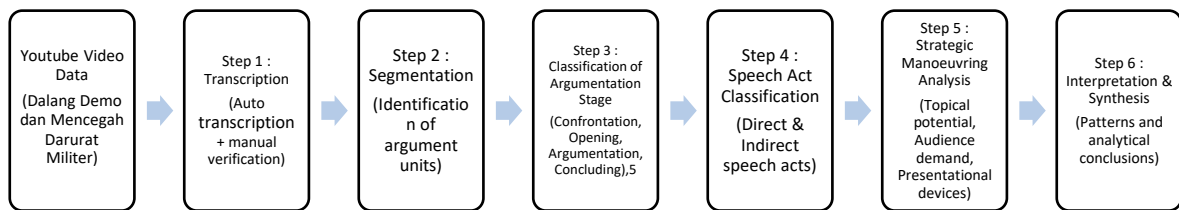


Figure 1. Procedure of analysis

### 3. Result

#### *Speech Acts used by Ferry Irwandi*

Overall, to answer the first research question, the analysis identifies seven units of argumentation, each consisting of four stages of argumentation and incorporating three aspects of strategic manoeuvring. Across these units, the most frequently occurring category is the direct representative speech act, with a total of 17 instances distributed across almost all argumentation stages. These speech acts function to present claims, explain factual information, restate topics, and elaborate argumentative positions. In relation to the research question on the distribution and function of speech acts within the argumentative structure, this finding indicates that representative speech acts play a central role in constructing the informational and explanatory foundation of the argumentation.

In addition to representative speech acts, the analysis identifies five direct directive speech acts, which occur in the fifth, sixth, and seventh argumentation units. These speech acts appear primarily in the concluding phases of the argumentation and are used to prompt audience responses, invite collective action, or guide audience interpretation. When connected to the research question concerning the sequencing of speech acts, this pattern shows that directive speech acts tend to be introduced after earlier argumentation units have established background information and claims through representative speech acts. This

suggests a sequential arrangement in which explanation and claim-making precede calls for action.

The data also reveal the use of ten indirect speech acts throughout the argumentation. These indirect forms are employed in contexts where explicit directives or claims are mitigated. With respect to the research question on strategic manoeuvring, indirect speech acts function to soften argumentative moves, reduce the potential for direct confrontation, and signal interpersonal alignment. They are also used to convey affective stances, such as calming the audience or emphasizing collective identity, which supports the progression of the argument without relying on overtly confrontational strategies.

### ***Speech acts as a strategic manoeuvring by Ferry Irwandi***

Addressing the second research question on how speech acts function across stages of argumentation, there is a clear pattern in the use of speech acts employed by Ferry Irwandi to fulfill strategic manoeuvring aspects. As the most dominant type, direct-representative speech acts are used most strongly to realize the topical potential aspect, where Irwandi uses them to ensure clarity of topic and build direct and firm arguments, thus avoiding ambiguity in his arguments. Their frequent occurrence in the confrontation, opening, and argumentation stages indicates that representative speech acts are central to how issues are introduced and developed within the argumentative structure.

There are also direct directive speech acts appear less frequently, occurring approximately five times and predominantly in the concluding stage. These directives are associated with the use of presentational devices, as they are expressed through explicit and repeated forms of address to the audience. Their placement at the end of the argument suggests a patterned use of directives to mark the transition from argument development to closure.

In addition to using direct speech acts, Ferry Irwandi also used indirect speech acts ten times throughout his argument. These indirect speech acts took the form of rhetorical questions, moral criticism, or implicit statements, which most often appeared in the opening and closing stages. The use of this strategy predominantly fulfilled the audience demand aspect, as Ferry Irwandi tailored his argument to the characteristics and expectations of his listeners. Therefore, he not only conveys ideas, but also builds a shared perspective and emotional closeness with the audience, making his arguments feel more logical and persuasive.

Table 1. Distribution of speech acts and dominant manoeuvring aspect across the seven units

Argumentation unit	Speech	Stage argumentative strategies	Direct/indirect	Most dominant of strategic manoeuvring aspect
1	<i>"Kita udah ngespill beberapa akun yang bisa ditelusuri untuk mencari ..... Ya, bukannya pemerintah sudah mencari itu ya"</i> <b>(00.00 - 00.20)</b>	Confrontation	Direct – representative	Topical potential
1	<i>"Nah, clue-nya Pak bukan dari asing Pak. Dari kekuasaan itu sendiri Pak"</i> <b>(00.21 - 00.25)</b>	Opening	Direct representative	Topical potential
	<i>"dari tamaknya, dari keserakahan, dari rasa sakit hati mungkin dan rasa ingin lebih kuat dan lebih powerful."</i> <b>(00.26 - 00.32)</b>		Indirect	Audience demand
1	<i>"Dan buat teman-teman juga bisa pelajari ..... Kadang mereka split nih pembelaannya, tapi jelas kok di situ."</i> <b>(00.33 - 01.15)</b>	Argumentation	Direct – representative	Topical potential
1	<i>"Dan itulah alasan kenapa akun-akun ini harus ..... siapa dalang semua kerusuhan ini."</i> <b>(01.16 - 01.22)</b>	Concluding	Direct – directive	Presentational devices
Argumentation unit	Speech	Stage argumentative strategies	Direct/indirect	Most dominant of strategic manoeuvring aspect
2	<i>"Selanjutnya, Teman-teman, kita semua ..... bisa melihat semua pihak bermain gitu"</i> <b>(01.22 - 01.32)</b>	Confrontation	Direct – representative	Audience demand
2	<i>"Kita melihat entah itu polisi, entah itu TNI, entah itu ..... semuanya sudah bercampur jadi satu gitu."</i> <b>(01.33 - 01.46)</b>	Opening	Indirect	Audience demand
2	<i>"Tapi yang pasti dan jadi salah satu tujuan gua juga kenapa gua ..... yang memulai semua kerusuhan ini."</i>	Argumentation	Direct – representative	Topical potential

	<b>(01.47 - 01.58)</b>			
2	"Jadi kalau ada pihak-pihak yang mencoba menunjuk tangan teman-teman ..... sudah berhasil kita tunjukkan kepada publik." <b>(01.59 - 02.08)</b>	Concluding	Indirect	Audience demand
<b>Argumentation unit</b>	<b>Speech</b>	<b>Stage argumentative strategies</b>	<b>Direct/indirect</b>	<b>Most dominant of strategic manoeuvring aspect</b>
3	"Artinya apa? Artinya di hari Minggu ini ada satu goals yang ingin dituju oleh pihak tertentu." <b>(02.09 - 02.13)</b>	Confrontation	Direct Representative	Topical potential
3	"Dan mungkin teman-teman juga sudah terinfo ya, karena udah banyak sekali buktinya yang tersebar di sosial media." <b>(02.13- 02.18)</b>	Opening	Direct Representative	Audience demand
3	"Tujuan tersebut tak lain tak bukan adalah menciptakan ..... negara berada dalam keadaan darurat militer." <b>(02.19 - 02.42)</b>	Argumentation	Direct Representative	Topical potential
3	(no closing stage)	Closing	-	-
<b>Argumentation unit</b>	<b>Speech</b>	<b>Stage argumentative strategies</b>	<b>Direct/indirect</b>	<b>Most dominant of strategic manoeuvring aspect</b>
4	"Nah, rencana darurat militer ini butuh .... untuk ditetapkannya status darurat militer" <b>(02.43 - 02.54)</b>	Confrontation	Direct- representative	Topical potential
4	"Jadi, all make sense sekarang, Teman-teman." <b>(02.55 - 02.59)</b>	Opening	Direct- representative	Audience demand
4	"Yes. Itulah kenapa sekarang kalau misalnya ..... keempat pakai foto orang lain dan jumlahnya bisa puluhan ribu." <b>(03.00 - 03.28)</b>	Argumentation	Direct- representative	Audience demand

4	<i>"Ini yang disebut sebagai cipta kondisi."</i> <b>(03.29- 03.30)</b>	Concluding	Direct-representative	Topical potential
	<i>"Sudah paham sampai sini, Teman-teman?"</i> <b>(03.31 - 03.34)</b>		indirect	Audience demand
<b>Argumentation unit</b>	<b>Speech</b>	<b>Stage argumentative strategies</b>	<b>Direct/indirect</b>	<b>Most dominant of strategic manoeuvring aspect</b>
5	<i>"Nah, bagaimana cara melawan mereka? .... jalan dengan membawa senjata yang kita punya?"</i> <b>(03.35 - 03.38)</b>	Confrontation	Indirect	Presentational devices
5	<i>"Tidak. Tidak, tidak. Kita mungkin bisa menang, tapi peluangnya sangat kecil"</i> <b>(03.38 - 03.43)</b>	Opening	Direct-representative	Audience demand
	<i>"kemenangan kita akan jauh lebih besar dan mereka akan sangat-sangat kewalahan, yaitu kesadaran, Teman-teman"</i> <b>(03.43 - 03.54)</b>		Indirect	Presentational devices
5	<i>"Memahami strategi mereka, memahami ..... kita adalah otak sesuatu yang mereka enggak punya, gitu."</i> <b>(03.55 - 04.02)</b>	Argumentation	Indirect	Audience demand
	<i>"Dan gua berterima kasih sekali ke seluruh teman-teman, .... untuk saling menjaga satu sama lainnya"</i> <b>(04.02 - 04.19)</b>		Direct-ekspresive	
5	<i>"Kuatkan mental dan hati kalian, Teman-teman ..... keselamatan banyak sekali nyawa manusia."</i> <b>(04.20 - 04.30)</b>	Concluding	Direct-directive	Audience demand
<b>Argumentation unit</b>	<b>Speech</b>	<b>Stage argumentative strategies</b>	<b>Direct/indirect</b>	<b>Most dominant of strategic manoeuvring aspect</b>
6	<i>"Dan sebenarnya tuntutan masyarakat ..... anggota dewan itu"</i>	Confrontation	Direct-directive	Topical potential

	<i>batalin aja semua.</i> <b>(04.31 - 05.38)</b>			
6	<i>"Mereka sudah melakukan hal yang buruk, ..... beberapa tunjangan yang mereka punya ya."</i> <b>(05.39 - 05.44)</b>	Opening	Direct-representative	Topical potential
6	<i>"anggota-anggota dewan kita yang menyiram minyak ke api."</i> <b>(05.45 - 05.48)</b>	Argumentation	Indirect	Balance
	<i>"Walaupun mereka sudah minta maaf ..... Cuma minta maaf aja enggak cukup."</i> <b>(05.48 - 06.03)</b>		Direct-representative	
	<i>"Sesekali lu tunjukkan jiwa kesatria lu, lu mundur ..... sebagai anggota dewan"</i> <b>(06.04 - 06.10)</b>		Direct-directive	
6	<i>"Seenggaknya itu sedikit menyelamatkan kehormatan lu ..... dan keselamatan yang bisa lu simpan"</i> <b>(06.11 - 06.24)</b>	Concluding	Indirect	Audience demand
<b>Argumentation unit</b>	<b>Speech</b>	<b>Stage argumentative strategies</b>	<b>Direct/indirect</b>	<b>Most dominant of strategic manoeuvring aspect</b>
7	-	Confrontation	-	-
7	<i>"Dan terakhir buat public figure, buat influencer .... termasuk fitnah dan lain sebagainya."</i> <b>(08.13 - 08.28)</b>	Opening	Direct-representative	Audience demand
7	<i>"Gua cuma bisa ngomong teman-teman sebagai ..... jaga kawan-kawan kita, jaga masyarakat kita."</i> <b>(08.29 - 08.46)</b>	Argumentation	Direct-directive	Audience demand
7	<i>"Ya, semua orang pantas untuk mendapatkan Indonesia yang lebih baik ..... Semoga kita baik-baik saja dan terus baik-baik saja."</i> <b>(08.47 - 09.05)</b>	Concluding	Direct-representative	Presentational devices

*In the analytical process, each aspect is examined separately to identify its specific contribution to the realization of the speech act. However, due to the length and density of the analytical findings, the reporting focuses only on the dominant aspect at each stage, as determined by its functional prominence.*

#### 4. Discussions

To answer the research question, this study analyzed each unit of argumentation presented by Ferry Irwandi. In conducting the analysis, seven complete argumentative units were found, which were then analyzed step by step to identify the use of speech acts that fulfill the aspects of manoeuvring. It is important to note that strategic manoeuvring is inherent in every stage of argumentation, as it represents the continuous effort to reconcile effectiveness and rationality in argumentative discourse (Van Eemeren, 2018).

In this sense, strategic manoeuvring functions as a theoretical link between dialectics and rhetoric (Peng & Van Eemeren, 2017), operationalized through the systematic consideration of topical potential, audience demand, and presentational devices (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2015). The three aspects operate concurrently; however, each aspect must be examined independently to identify the dominant strategy and to clarify how the aspects interact with one another (Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2010).

Given the length of the analysis results, the following is an example of the analysis of one of Ferry Irwandi's argumentative units in his YouTube video "*Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer*".

##### **Unit argument 2 (01.23 - 02.07)**

###### **A. Confrontation stage**

*"Selanjutnya, Teman-teman, kita semua sama-sama melihat ya, hal-hal paling buruk yang bisa kita lihat gitu, dan kita semua sama-sama bisa melihat semua pihak bermain gitu"*

In the Pragma-Dialectics approach, speech acts describe what arguers do when engaging in argumentation. Only speech acts that contribute to resolving a difference of opinion are considered relevant. Adopting Searle's (1969) framework, the theory focuses on direct speech acts; representatives/assertives, directives, commissives, and declaratives, while excluding expressives because they do not aid in resolving disagreements (Van Eemeren, 2015). In the confrontation stage of argumentation, the speech act used by Ferry Irwandi is a direct-representative speech act.

As stated by Searle (1969), direct representative speech acts are speech acts whose sentence form corresponds to their function, and representative indicates that the speaker is describing, claiming, and hypothesizing (Cutting, 2020). In this speech act, the speaker makes a statement and takes action by claiming that many parties were involved in and took advantage of the situation during the riots. Through this speech act, Feri Irwandi attempts to balance

dialectical and rhetorical objectives during the argument.

The argumentator's efforts to balance dialectic and rhetorical goals can be seen through manoeuvring strategies that include three main aspects that must be fulfilled (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2015). The first aspect is topical potential, which looks at how the speaker begins to construct their argument (Eemeren, 2018). The argumentator will choose the option that is most advantageous to their position by selecting the issue, material, or argument to be used (Van Eemeren, 2015).

Similar to findings in earlier analyses of political and public discourse, topical potential is often realized through assertive or representative speech acts that establish shared premises early in the argument (Makiling & Erellana, 2025). To fulfill this aspect, Ferry Irwandi uses direct-representative speech acts to construct his argument by claiming the analogy that *"kita semua sama-sama melihat ya hal-hal paling buruk yang bisa kita lihat gitu dan kita semua sama-sama bisa melihat semua pihak bermain gitu"* (We can all see the worst things that are happening, and we can all see that all parties are involved).

Thus, the speaker creates common ground that the riots were not a spontaneous action by one group but involved a wider range of parties. This strategy is effective in opening the audience's perspective because it places them as joint witnesses to the situation, so that the audience is encouraged to accept the topic brought up by the speaker without feeling forced or explicitly directed.

The second aspect is audience demand, where the argumentator will adjust their argument to the needs or views of the audience (Eemeren, 2018). Strategic manoeuvring will involve adjusting the argument to the values, beliefs, and expectations of the audience so that the argumentator will create a sense of "connection" with the audience at every stage of the discussion used (Van Eemeren, 2015). The use of direct-representative speech acts also fulfills this aspect. With this utterance, Ferry Irwandi employs a strategy by stating directly that it is not only the speaker who knows the conditions in Indonesia, but also the entire audience who has felt and witnessed the unrest in Indonesia. This utterance creates the impression that the speaker and the listener are in the same position of experience, thus creating a sense of emotional closeness and equality of perspective towards compassion, because many parties are playing for their own interests.

The third aspect is presentational devices. Speakers will usually choose a style of language, sentence structure, or rhetorical technique to construct the most persuasive argument (Van Eemeren, 2015). This aspect is fulfilled by Ferry Irwandi with direct-representative speech acts. Ferry Irwandi conveys his claim that it was not only civilians who played a part in the riots, but also the police, the Indonesian National Armed Forces, and so on. This is demonstrated through a straightforward and direct style of speech so that the message conveyed is easy to understand. By choosing an explicit form of speech, the speaker strengthens the persuasiveness of his argument because the audience is encouraged to accept the claim as something

that is reasonable and can be verified through their social experience.

The use of speech acts at this stage serves two main purposes in the argument: dialectical and rhetorical. Dialectically, direct-representative speech acts are used to convey claims clearly and logically, so that the argument can be understood rationally. Rhetorically, these speech acts are also designed to build emotional closeness and encourage the audience to accept the claims being made.

In the context of manoeuvring strategies, these three aspects will work simultaneously, but these aspects need to be analyzed separately in order to understand which strategy is most dominant and how the three influence each other (Emeren & Houtlosser, 2010). The audience demand aspect is most prominent in the argumentation unit. This can be seen in the speaker's strategy of trying to align their perspective and experience with the audience through the claim that the riot situation was witnessed together.

This finding confirms earlier studies that identify audience demand as a dominant aspect in public-oriented argumentative discourse, particularly in contexts involving collective social experiences (Van Eemeren & Garssen, 2015; Al-Hindawi & Jubair, 2021). By placing themselves and the audience in a position of equal experience, the speaker creates a sense of togetherness, making the argument easier to accept. Although the aspects of topical potential and presentational devices continue to function in a supporting role, both play a greater role in strengthening the delivery framework.

### **B. Opening stage**

*"Kita melihat entah itu polisi, entah itu TNI, entah itu presiden sekarang, entah presiden yang sebelumnya, entah itu pendukung rezim sekarang, pendukung rezim sebelumnya atau pendukung orang yang gagal menjadi rezim semuanya sudah bercampur jadi satu gitu."*

Opening stage, where the argumentator begins to form a basis of understanding or common ground containing rules, information, and assumptions that will be used during the argument (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2003). Although the sentence appears to be descriptive in form, the meaning behind the statement implies that there were interests and power games at work in the situation. Because the evaluative and critical intent is not explicitly stated, this utterance is considered indirect speech. The speaker does not directly accuse these parties but directs the audience to draw their own conclusions based on the known context.

When arguing, an argumentator will try to persuade the audience, but still has to stick to the standards of rationality in discussions (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999). To achieve the purpose of argumentation, Ferry Irwandi employed a strategic manoeuvring by balancing three aspects. The first aspect, topical potential, was fulfilled by Ferry Irwandi through the use of indirect speech acts. In his speech, he mentions various parties involved, such as the police, the

Indonesian National Armed Forces, and groups supporting the regime, not to explicitly accuse them, but to imply moral criticism that the riots did not originate purely from the community, but were influenced by actors with vested interests. This strategy strengthens topical potential because Ferry Irwandi chooses the most effective line of argument to introduce the topic, namely by inviting the audience to see the same facts through their experiences.

The second aspect is audience demand, which refers to how the argumentator adjusts the delivery of their argument to the perspective, knowledge, and psychological condition of the audience (Eemeren, 2018). In this context, Ferry Irwandi uses indirect speech acts to build rapport with the audience. By stating that many parties had "*sudah bercampur jadi satu gitu*" (have already merged into one) in the riots, he did not directly blame any particular party, but led the audience to a conclusion, namely that all parties had become one so that it was no longer clear which power was in a position to support the community.

This strategy positions the speaker and the audience as joint witnesses to the social situation that is occurring, creating the impression that the speaker is not speaking from a position of power, but rather from a position equal to that of the public. This adjustment increases the likelihood that the audience will accept the argument because they feel involved, rather than directed or cornered.

The third aspect is presentational devices, which are how the argumentator chooses and packages the form of delivery so that the argument appears convincing (Eemeren, 2018). In this aspect, Ferry Irwandi uses indirect speech as a style of language to convey his criticism of the parties involved in the riots without explicitly mentioning their mistakes. By stating that "*semuanya sudah bercampur jadi satu gitu*" (all parties have become mixed together) the speaker allows the audience to interpret how all the powerful parties have played a part, so that we no longer know who is on the side of the oppressed people. This strategy makes the speech sound less aggressive, but it still has critical power. Thus, this style of delivery gives the impression that the speaker is speaking with caution and prudence so that the argument is more easily accepted by those who may feel offended.

In the opening stage, Ferry Irwandi uses indirect speech acts to establish an initial understanding that the riots involved many parties, without explicitly accusing anyone. Through this strategy, the dialectical goal is achieved because the speaker introduces the issue rationally and in a way that can be verified together, while the rhetorical goal is fulfilled by building a sense of togetherness and closeness of experience with the audience. All three aspects of strategic manoeuvring work together in this stage, with the aspect of audience demand being the most prominent.

Through indirect speech acts, the speaker aligns his perspective with that of the audience, namely the people who feel that they no longer have a figure of authority who is on their side. The speaker does not explicitly command or direct

the audience, but rather invites them to draw the conclusion that they do not know for sure who is playing, but that they are all mixed together. In this way, the argument becomes more acceptable because the audience feels recognized and positioned as a party with experience of the situation. These three aspects influence each other, so that the delivery of the argument can be dialectical and rhetorical.

### **C. Argumentation stage**

*“Tapi yang pasti dan jadi salah satu tujuan gua juga kenapa gua ngebongkar ini di awal adalah bukan masyarakat, bukan mahasiswa, bukan buruh, bukan koalisi masyarakat sipil atau bukan gerakan rimpang yang memulai semua kerusuhan ini.”*

Argumentation stage, where the argumentators begin to defend or attack each other's opinions with arguments based on data or beliefs (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2003). The use of speech acts in the argumentation stage in the second argumentation unit is a direct-representative speech act, where the sentence form and the speaker's intended function are in harmony, as stated by Searle (1969) (in Cutting, 2020). In representative speech acts, the speaker states, claims, or believes a situation to be a fact, and through this utterance, Ferry Irwandi explicitly conveys the claim that civil society was not the party that started the riots. There is no hidden meaning, sarcasm, or additional implications beyond the literal message, so this utterance is direct.

Every argumentation inevitably contains strategic manoeuvring, whether consciously or unconsciously performed by the speaker (Eemeren, 2018). This strategy includes, first, the aspect of topical potential. In the argumentation stage, the speaker will choose the strongest type of argument to defend the topic or standpoint in the argument (Van Eemeren, 2015). Ferry Irwandi chooses direct-representative speech acts to deliver the core claim that the riots were not initiated by civil society. His selection of topic and manner of delivery shows that the speaker intends to clearly assert the focal point of the argument from the very beginning. By mentioning groups such as students, laborers, and civil society movements, the speaker constructs the boundaries of the issue and establishes who should not be considered responsible for the unrest.

Second, in the aspect of audience demand, the speaker adjusts his delivery to the emotional condition and experiences of the listeners (Eemeren, 2018), which is at the time were situated within an atmosphere of riots and stigmatization. By directly stating that the people were not the masterminds of the turmoil, the speaker builds a sense of defense and solidarity toward the public, who likely felt cornered by narratives from the media or authorities. This utterance creates the impression that the speaker is speaking with the people, not above them. This helps the audience feel acknowledged and defended, making them more receptive to and trusting of the claims being presented.

Third, the aspect of presentational devices, where the argumentator will choose the most effective form of presenting the argument (Van Eemeren, 2015). Ferry Irwandi structures his utterances using a direct and repetitive style, employing a denial sequence *"bukan masyarakat, bukan mahasiswa, bukan buruh..."* (not the public, not students, not workers....) to strengthen his emphasis. This repetition not only clarifies the message but also functions to reinforce the argumentative position so that it becomes memorable for the audience. By presenting the statement explicitly and without ambiguity, the speaker creates a convincing and clear impression that encourages the audience to accept the claim as true, that the perpetrators of the unrest were not members of civil society. The use of direct-representative forms strengthen the persuasive impact because the message is delivered in a simple yet powerful manner.

In the argumentation stage, Ferry Irwandi frequently employs direct-representative speech acts to provide clarity and assert his claim that the actors behind the riots were not civilians. Strategic manoeuvring refers to an arguer's effort to balance two goals: dialectical reasonableness and rhetorical effectiveness (Van Eemeren, 2009). In Ferry Irwandi's case, the dialectical goal is fulfilled because he presents the issue rationally and supports his standpoint with logical reasoning that aligns with widely known public information. This also indicates that, as an activist concerned with public conditions, Ferry Irwandi understands how to formulate and deliver arguments effectively.

Rhetorically, the utterance builds the audience's belief and trust by displaying the speaker's firm and confident stance toward his claim. In this stage, the aspect of topical potential appears most prominent, as the speaker emphasizes the core content of his argument directly and clearly through the repeated mention of groups not involved, enabling the audience to immediately focus on the presented topic. Audience demand and presentational devices remain present to build rapport and strengthen the style of delivery; both function more supportively, while the reinforcement of the main claim becomes the central strategy in this argumentation stage.

#### ***D. Concluding stage***

*"Jadi kalau ada pihak-pihak yang mencoba menunjuk tangan teman-teman ini semua ya udah gugur sendiri karena apa yang sudah berhasil kita tunjukkan kepada public".*

The concluding stage is the part in which the speaker formulates a conclusion, which usually contains an invitation or a final stance the speaker wishes to convey (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2003). As explained by Searle (1969) regarding speech acts, the utterance in the concluding part of the second argumentative unit constitutes an indirect speech act. In form, the utterance appears to be representative, as it expresses the speaker's belief about the truth of

a situation. However, its meaning or illocutionary force does not remain merely a statement; instead, it functions as a directive speech act an attempt to encourage the audience not to feel guilty or to implicitly instruct them to reject the accusation without explicitly saying “reject it” or “ignore it.” For this reason, the utterance falls into the category of indirect speech acts.

The combination of rational and persuasive goals led to the development of the concept of strategic manoeuvring (Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2000). As a form of strategic manoeuvring, the use of this linguistic device functions as a means to balance dialectical and rhetorical objectives by attending to three main aspects (Van Eemeren, 2018). In terms of topical potential, this statement serves to close and reinforce the main argument that civil society is not the perpetrator of the riots. By stating that the accusations “*telah runtuh dengan sendirinya*” (has collapsed on its own) the speaker chooses a relevant form of speech to connect and reinforce the previous claim. This strategy produces a logical structure of the topic by refuting the allegations and then supporting the refutation with evidence that has been “*sudah ditunjukkan kepada publik*.” (has already been shown to the public) In this way, the speaker ensures that the previous claim is based on consistent reasoning, while placing this statement as a final reinforcement in the second argument unit.

Regarding audience demand, the speaker adjusts the delivery of his argument to align with the emotional condition of the audience, who at the time were in a defensive position due to public accusations. By using an indirect form that carries a calming tone “*udah gugur sendiri*” (has already fallen on its own) the speaker builds a sense of safety and defense for the audience, namely community members who feel blamed. This utterance aligns the speaker and audience as parties who share the same understanding of what actually happened, thus creating a sense of solidarity. This strategy makes it easier for the audience to accept and trust the argument because they feel the speaker is on their side, not speaking from a distant position of authority.

In terms of presentational devices, the utterance is crafted in an indirect style to avoid confrontation, making the criticism subtle yet effective. The use of the phrase “*udah gugur sendiri*” (has already fallen on its own) creates a calming effect while simultaneously asserting the strength of the argumentative position. This diction is non-aggressive but still conveys the power of the claim, making the audience feel that the accusation no longer needs to be debated since the evidence has already been presented by the speaker. Through this approach, the speaker communicates the message in a persuasive, conclusive style that strengthens the closure of the argument without triggering new conflict. Ring.

## **5. Conclusion**

This study discusses the urgency of argumentation in Indonesia's democratic space. Using a pragmatic-dialectical approach, this study examines how Ferry Irwandi constructs his argument through the use of speech acts to fulfill strategic manoeuvring efforts in the video *"Dalang Demo dan Mencegah Darurat Militer"*. Analysis of seven units of argumentation shows that the arguments he constructs not only serve to convey claims or criticism, but also become a political communication strategy that combines rationality and persuasive effectiveness.

This study contributes to filling the gap in research on the relationship between speech acts and strategic manoeuvring in Indonesian-language political discourse. However, this study has limitations because it only uses one video of Ferry Irwandi's political argumentation containing seven units of argumentation. Therefore, further research is expected to expand the object of study by analyzing more videos or other argumentative materials from Ferry Irwandi to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

From the perspective of linguistic patterns, the findings show that Ferry Irwandi consistently structures his argumentation through a predominance of direct-representative speech acts (17 occurrences), which function to clarify claims, present facts, and reinforce the structure of the argument so that his position appears rational and credible. After the informational structure is established, he employs direct-directive speech acts (5 occurrences) to invite, guide, and enhance rhetorical force, particularly in the concluding sections.

Meanwhile, indirect speech acts (10 occurrences) are used to avoid confrontation, express empathy, and reassure the audience, thus fulfilling the aspect of audience demand by aligning emotions and perspectives with the public. These three linguistic patterns work together within the framework of strategic manoeuvring, where representative acts strengthen topical potential, directive acts reinforce presentational devices, and indirect speech acts construct audience demand. Accordingly, Ferry Irwandi's argumentation is demonstrated to be strategically organized to maintain a balance between rationality and persuasive effectiveness.

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