

Illocutionary Acts in dr. Tan's Criticism on Free Nutritious Meal Program

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to identify and analyze the various types and meanings of illocutionary acts in dr. Tan Shot Yen's public criticism of the Indonesian Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) program. The data were gathered using a qualitative-descriptive study design and a transcript of dr. Tan's critical video on TikTok. The analysis was carried out using John R. Searle's (1969) speech act theory, which classified utterances as assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative acts. The findings revealed a strategic use of illocutionary acts, with assertives (59.1%) dominating in factual arguments and expressives (28.8%) in expressing moral and emotional weight. Directives (8.1%) and commissives (4%) served less frequently to propose solutions and demonstrate personal commitment, although no declaratives were discovered, indicating the speaker's non-authoritarian public perspective. The study concludes that dr. Tan's critique is a sophisticated rhetorical strategy that effectively combines logical appeal, emotional resonance, and actionable advocacy to challenge policy flaws and promote a more equitable nutrition program, which has contributed to a pragmatic understanding of professional criticism in digital public discourse.

I. Introduction

In public communication, including speeches, criticism, media commentary, and social debate, language is not merely a tool for conveying facts, but also an active force shaping social realities, political dynamics, and pragmatic outcomes. According to Huebner D., research on communicative practices, language performs crucial social functions beyond mere information transmission; it constructs social identities, negotiates power relations, and influences public opinion in a variety of contexts [1]. This perspective aligns with the foundational theory of speech acts proposed by J.L. Austin in his seminal work *"How To Do Things With Words"*, where he argues that utterances perform actions rather than just describe reality. Austin introduced the concept that when people speak, they do not just make statements but also perform acts such as promising, ordering, or apologizing [2]. Building on Austin's framework, John R. Searle further developed the theory by categorizing speech acts into five types: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Searle emphasized the intentionality behind speech acts and how they function to influence the social world, highlighting that language use always involves a speaker's intentions and the context of interaction [3]. Together, Austin and Searle's contributions reveal how speech acts operate not only linguistically but pragmatically, shaping human behavior and social relations.

Locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts are key components within speech act theory that explain how utterances work at different levels. A locutionary act is the act of producing meaningful linguistic expressions—the actual utterance and its semantic content [4]. The

illocutionary act is the intended social function of the utterance, such as questioning, promising, or criticizing, representing what the speaker aims to accomplish through speech [5]. Meanwhile, perlocutionary acts refer to the effects or responses that the utterance provokes in the listener, including persuading, provoking, or inspiring [6].

There are five types of illocutionary acts proposed by Searle, namely assertive, expressive, directive, commissive, and declarative. Assertive is an illocution that functions to state, report, or claim a fact or belief by the speaker. Examples include stating information, complaining, or expressing opinions that bind the speaker to the truth of their statement. Directive is an illocution that functions to direct or influence the listener to perform an action. Examples include ordering, pleading, requesting, suggesting, or giving commands. Expressive is an illocution that expresses the speaker's feelings, attitudes, or emotions toward a situation. Examples include saying thank you, apologizing, giving praise, or expressing joy and regret. Commissive is an illocution where the speaker commits to performing an action in the future. Examples include promising, swearing, offering, or threatening. Declarative is an illocution which has the power to change the state of the world through the utterance itself. Examples include appointing someone to an office, announcing an official decision, forbidding, allowing, or granting forgiveness [7].

In the context of public criticism, illocutionary acts reveal the speaker's intentions behind their utterances. For instance, in Nabila A. et. al's (2025) study, it is shown how various illocutionary strategies are employed to deliver analytical and persuasive criticism within digital political communication. These acts serve as a means to express opinions, engage the audience in critical thinking, and convey assessments of government policies in a respectful and effective manner [8]. Similarly, in Akbar, M.I. et. al's study discusses how illocutionary acts are used in sharp, communicative critique that awakens public awareness and understanding while maintaining strategic dialogue [9].

dr. Tan Shot Yen, M.Hum. is a doctor, nutritionist, and Indonesian public intellectual that join Maternal and Child Health Movement (GKIA), which is focus to educate nutrition to mother and child, and joined several other organizations in the Public Hearing (RDPU) with Commission IX of the Indonesian House of Representatives. dr. Tan held an audience regarding the concept of MBG occurring among children in Indonesian schools [10].

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) is an Indonesian government policy aimed at improving the health and nutrition of children in schools to support the sustainable enhancement of education in Indonesia (Q. Rif'iy et al. 2025) [11]. dr. Tan openly criticized the MBG menu in the Indonesian House of Representatives. dr. Tan's criticism of the MBG menu included items that are not grown in Indonesia, menu castanization, and the public health consequences of consuming such items. By raising this criticism in the public sphere, dr. Tan was not merely making recommendations, but engaging in persuasive and evaluative communication. Speech act analysis of this criticism allows us to trace how the message was conveyed (illocution).

Previous research analyzing illocutionary acts in public criticism has focused on various contexts such as political discussions, social media, and television talk shows. Nabila A. et al. (2025) discussed illocutionary communication strategies in the video "*Membedah 100 Hari Kabinet Prabowo*" to shape public perception of the government on digital platforms [8]. Suwija, I., et al. (2024) analyzed illocutionary acts in the YouTube program "*Lapor Pak!*", which contains critical and evaluative statements about politics [12]. Endripalwi, I. (2024) explained the types of illocutionary acts in the YouTube channel Total Politik to convey criticism in digital political content [13]. Prahesti, R.I. (2025) examines illocution as a form of social criticism communication in films [14]. Another study by Nurkhasanah, S. (2024) focuses on illocution on Instagram social media containing implicit political criticism of Prabowo [15]. Devi, N.N. et al. (2025) also describe expressive illocution in netizens' comments regarding the Indonesia vs Australia match results [16]. Finally, the analysis of illocution in the television program "*Mata Najwa*" by Artati et al. (2020) highlights illocutionary functions such as assertive, directive, and expressive in public criticism [17].

Nevertheless, these studies have not specifically examined illocutionary acts in the criticism of dr. Tan's Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) program. Thus, this research fills that gap by investigating how dr. Tan employs illocutionary acts in her public criticism of MBG, combining the context of professional expertise and public discourse in the field of health and nutrition. This

provides a new contribution to the pragmatic understanding of professional critical speech in the public sphere.

This study aimed to address the research questions by conducting a qualitative pragmatic analysis of dr. Tan's public speech. The research problems are stated as follows: a) What forms of illocutionary acts does dr. Tan use in her public critique of the MBG menu, and b) What illocutionary act meanings are transmitted by dr. Tan's criticism in the public sphere? The purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the type and meaning of illocutionary acts employed by dr. Tan when criticizing the MBG menu. The objective of this research is to categorize the several forms of illocutionary actions that emerge in dr. Tan's speech - assertive, expressive, directive, commissive, and declarative, and to investigate the illocutionary act meanings behind her critique in the public domain. Thus, this study is likely to contribute to the pragmatic understanding of public criticism by providing an empirical account of how speech acts function in the language of public food and service critique.

II. Method

This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach as explained by Creswell (2014) in his book *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. According to Creswell, a qualitative approach is used to describe and understand social and human phenomena that focus on understanding meaning and context, rather than statistical measurements [18]. The purpose of descriptive-qualitative research is to explain a linguistic phenomenon based on factual data. The reason for choosing a qualitative-descriptive approach in this study is because this study aims to describe the function of criticism and speech acts of dr. Tan and explain the effects of communicative utterances on the MBG menu on the TikTok social media platform. In this context, the researcher tries to explain how illocutionary speech acts in dr. Tan's public criticism of the MBG menu on the TikTok platform. The qualitative nature of this study interprets communicative phenomena contextually, while the descriptive nature describes data factually without manipulating variables.

The data source for this study is a TikTok video featuring dr. Tan Shot Yen's criticism of the Free Nutritional Meal Program (MBG) menu. The video is approximately three minutes long and was purposefully selected for academic reasons. This video was chosen because it explicitly contains verbal criticism delivered directly and in its entirety by dr. Tan, thus providing clear and complete utterance data for analysis using speech act theory. Furthermore, the video was chosen because it presents a consistent topic of criticism, without any cuts or merging of other content, allowing for a comprehensive illocutionary and perlocutionary analysis. The video also received a significant public response, as reflected in the numerous comments from TikTok users, allowing the researcher to observe the perlocutionary impact of the utterances. Data collection was conducted between September and November, from the time the video was uploaded until the comment period was considered relatively stable. All verbal utterances uttered by dr. Tan in the video were analyzed in their entirety, not just specific excerpts or quotes. Furthermore, relevant public comments were selected as supporting data to examine the perlocutionary effects of the analyzed utterances.

Data analysis was conducted based on the Speech Acts theory proposed by J.L. Austin (1962) and developed by John R. Searle (1969). This theory views every utterance as conveying not only linguistic meaning but also social action through language [19]. The primary focus of this research was directed at illocutionary acts to identify the intent and function of dr. Tan's utterances in criticizing MBG. For example, whether the utterances were assertive, stating facts, directive, giving orders or advice, or expressive, showing emotion and judgment. Thus, this aspect helps researchers understand how dr. Tan's criticism is conveyed in the public sphere.

The analysis process began with transcribing dr. Tan's entire utterance verbatim. The utterance was then segmented into speech units based on topic changes, pauses, and communicative functions. Each speech unit was then coded and classified into illocutionary speech act types based on Searle's categories: assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. After the illocutionary classification was carried out, the researcher analyzed the perlocutionary speech acts by examining the public comments that emerged in response to the utterance. This

stage aimed to identify the communicative impact of dr. Tan's utterance, such as the emergence of agreement, rejection, counter-criticism, or further discussion. All analysis results were then interpreted by considering the intratextual context, namely the relationship of meaning between dr. Tan's utterance and public comments as a single digital discourse unit. Through this approach, the meaning of the utterance is understood based on the relationship between the text elements in the data, so that the communicative intent and effect of the utterance can be explained contextually and systematically.

Limitations of this study should be noted as it focused on only one object: dr. Tan's criticism of the MBG menu was uploaded through a single video on the TikTok platform. Therefore, the results of this analysis are limited to the speech acts and communicative effects that emerged within this discourse context and, therefore, cannot be generalized to all forms of public criticism or other digital discourse.

III. Results and Discussion

The researchers selected illocutionary acts from dr. Tan's critical utterances regarding the MBG menu are classified into five categories of illocutionary acts: assertive, expressive, directive, commissive, and declarative. Based on this analysis, the following percentages of illocutionary acts were found by the researchers:

Table 1. Illocutionary Acts

No	Categories of Illocutionary Acts	Quantity	Percentage
1	Assertives	29	59,1%
2	Expressives	14	28,8%
3	Directives	4	8,1%
4	Commissives	2	4%
5	Declarative	0	0%
TOTAL		49	100%

The results of the illocutionary act analysis show that assertive acts are the most common type of illocutionary act in dr. Tan's critical speech had a percentage of 59.1%, followed by expressive acts at 28.8%, directives at 8.1%, and commissives at 4%. Meanwhile, declarative illocutionary acts were not found in dr. Tan's critical speech. From the total of 49 utterances delivered by dr. Tan, the researcher, selected several data in the form of the most prominent utterances for the analysis:

1. Assertives

In Speech Acts (1969), Searle identifies asserting as a key illocutionary act, in which the speaker declares or confirms a statement as true. When making an assertion, the speaker conveys a conviction that a statement reflects the truth of reality. Therefore, an assertive action refers to the act of communicating information or expressing a fact in which the speaker affirms the accuracy of what is stated [19]

Table 2. Assertives

NO	Utterance	Meaning
1.	<i>"Tapi yang terjadi dari Lhoknga sampai dengan Papua yang dibagi adalah burger."</i>	The utterance " <i>Tapi yang terjadi dari Lhoknga sampai dengan Papua yang dibagi adalah burger.</i> " falls under the assertive category since dr. Tan is stating an observed reality that the MBG menu consistently consists throughout Indonesia. This statement serves to present a factual statement or evidence that supports dr. Tan's position within the critique of the national nutrition program, rather than to

make a request, issue an order, or convey a sentiment. As a result, the statement represents dr. Tan's belief about the real condition of affairs is a characteristic that distinguishes an assertive act.

2. *“Dimana tepung terigu tidak pernah tumbuh di bumi Indonesia.”* The utterance “*Dimana tepung terigu tidak pernah tumbuh di bumi Indonesia.*” by dr. Tan is stating a factual claim to support her argument that burgers, which use wheat flour, are not created from locally sourced ingredients. The statement serves to highlight the difference between the actual use of imported resources and the local food targets of the MBG program in this context. Consequently, it is an obvious illustration of assertive behaviour since it expresses the speaker's belief about a real-world fact rather than an effort to convince, command, or convey emotion.

3. *“Kalau yang dekat dengan pusat, supaya kelihatan bagus, yang dikasih kayak chicken katsu.”* The utterance “*Kalau yang dekat dengan pusat, supaya kelihatan bagus, yang dikasih kayak chicken katsu.*” is described by dr. Tan as a situation she believes to be true, that schools or regions closer to central authorities receive better-quality food (chicken katsu) than others. The criticism serves to highlight unfairness and favoritism in the distribution of MBG menus in this particular scenario. As a result, the statement reflects the speaker's evaluation of a factual condition in the execution of the program, which is typical of an assertive act.

4. *“Saya aja gak pernah mengatakan ini adalah daging olahan.”* The utterance “*Saya aja gak pernah mengatakan ini adalah daging olahan.*” is a statement of assertive illocutionary act. In this particular context, dr. Tan used this comment to emphasize disbelief and criticism regarding the food's subpar quality, suggesting that it is so awful that it cannot even be classified as processed meat. As a result, this statement clearly illustrates an assertive act since it expresses a factual claim or conviction as opposed to an emotion or a direction.

5. *“Jadi saya setuju bahwa ada anak yang tidak suka dengan pangan lokal.”* The utterance “*Jadi saya setuju bahwa ada anak yang tidak suka dengan pangan lokal.*” is an assertive illocutionary act because dr. Tan is stating agreement with a fact or opinion on children's eating preferences. In the context of the MBG program debate, this statement acknowledges reality and expresses the speaker's conviction that the lack of interest in

regional cuisine is a serious problem. Therefore, it serves the primary purpose of an assertive act, which is to convey dr. Tan's acceptance of a factual condition.

6. “*Saya nggak tahu apakah anggota dewan yang terhormat masih tahu itu bahwa kita udah lewat dari 4 sehat 5 sempurna.*”

The utterance “*Saya nggak tahu apakah anggota dewan yang terhormat masih tahu itu bahwa kita udah lewat dari 4 sehat 5 sempurna.*” is an assertive act because dr. Tan is expressing an opinion and belief regarding policymakers' current understanding of nutrition. This statement is intended to criticize and challenge the awareness of contemporary nutritional standards among decision-makers. As a result, the statement expresses dr. Tan's judgment about a real-world situation, that certain authorities might still retain antiquated opinions, is consistent with the characteristic of an assertive act.

2. Expressives

Searle (1969) refers to actions like showing joy or feelings as illocutionary acts that represent a mental state. When a speaker expresses gratitude, makes an apology, or shares happiness, they are not depicting the external world; rather, they are revealing their personal feelings toward a particular situation or individual [19].

Table 3. Expressives

NO	Utterances	Meaning
1.	“OH MY GOD...”	The utterance “OH MY GOD...” by dr. Tan is expressing a strong emotional reaction, specifically shock and frustration to the circumstance being criticized, namely the uniform, non-local MBG menu. The main purpose of an expressive act is to reveal dr. Tan's feelings regarding the ridiculousness of the program, rather than to provide information or demand action.
2.	“ <i>Ya, dan maaf ya, itu isi burgernya itu kastanisasi juga.</i> ”	The utterance “ <i>Ya, dan maaf ya, itu isi burgernya itu kastanisasi juga.</i> ” is an expressive illocutionary act since dr. Tan is expressing dissatisfaction and disappointment regarding the subpar and unequal food served in the MBG program. The term “ <i>maaf ya</i> ” softens the critique by displaying an emotional position rather than a factual report and revealing dr. Tan's attitude and unfavorable evaluation are two characteristics that characterize an expressive act.
3.	“ <i>Saya aja nista bilang itu daging olahan.</i> ”	The utterance “ <i>Saya aja nista bilang itu daging olahan.</i> ” expresses an emotional reaction, specifically disgust and shame toward the subpar quality of the meal being

condemned. This statement by dr. Tan is revealing a personal emotion of moral and aesthetic discomfort instead of declaring a fact or issuing an order, which amply illustrates the purpose of an expressive act.

4. *“Saya nggak tau itu produk apaan.”*

The utterance *“Saya nggak tau itu produk apaan.”* is an expressive illocutionary act because dr. Tan is expressing confusion and dissatisfaction regarding the food product under discussion. In this instance, the statement expresses an emotional reaction of incredulity and frustration rather than an actual ignorance. As a result, it serves to reveal dr. Tan’s negative attitude toward the product’s ambiguity or subpar quality, which is typical of an expressive behavior.

5. *“Astaga kan bukan itu tujuan MBG. Punten.”*

The utterance *“Astaga kan bukan itu tujuan MBG. Punten.”* is an expressive illocutionary act. In this statement, dr. Tan is expressing disappointment and concern about how the MBG program has strayed from its intended purpose. *“Punten”* adds a tone of civility and remorse, whereas *“Astaga”* expresses emotional distress. Together, the convey dr. Tan’s emotional reaction and disapproval, rather than a command or factual statement, are what distinguish an expressive act.

6. *“Lah, kalau requestnya cilok...mati kita.”*

The utterance *“Lah, kalau requestnya cilok...mati kita.”* is an expressive illocutionary act. This statement by dr. Tan is expressing frustration and sarcasm on the impractical or troublesome requests made in the MBG program. Instead of providing information or guidance, the statement uses emotional criticism and exaggeration to emphasize how ridiculous the situation is. As a result, it serves to reveal dr. Tan’s attitude of irony and exasperation is a feature of an expressive act.

3. Directives

Searle (1969) indicates that by using speech acts such as requests or commands, the speaker seeks to affect the listener’s actions to encourage the listener to carry out a specific task. These actions convey the speaker’s desire for the listener to take some kind of action [19].

Table 4. Directives

NO	Utterances	Meaning
1.	<i>“Alokasikan menu lokal sebagai 80% isi MBG di seluruh wilayah.”</i>	The utterance <i>“Alokasikan menu lokal sebagai 80% isi MBG di seluruh wilayah.”</i> is a Directive illocutionary act because dr. Tan requests and instructs the authorities or

policymakers to take a specific action, ensuring that the majority of the MBG program's menu consists of local foods. Within the context of the criticism, this statement serves as policy advice and a call to action, trying to address what the speaker considers an excessive dependency on foreign or non-local meals such as burgers. dr. Tan's objective is to influence the conduct and decisions of program implementers, which is consistent with the purpose of a directive act.

2. *"Ini mau sampai kapan makannya burger."* The utterance *"Ini mau sampai kapan makannya burger."* is a Directive illocutionary act because, while expressed as a question, it serves as a rhetorical argument encouraging change. In this context, the speaker criticizes the MBG program's continuous use of non-local foods while informally encouraging politicians to stop selling burgers and switch to local options. Thus, the objective of the utterance is not to seek an answer, but to prompt thinking and action, influencing the listener's future decisions, a crucial characteristic of a directive act.

3. *"Tapi bukan berarti lalu request anak-anak, lalu dijawab dapur."* The utterance *"Tapi bukan berarti lalu request anak-anak, lalu dijawab dapur."* is a directive illocutionary act while dr. Tan's advises or warns program implementers not to blindly follow children's food preferences. In this context, the statement acts as a cautionary instruction, explaining how the MBG policy should be carried out more responsibly. dr. Tan's purpose is to influence the listener's decision-making and conduct, which exemplifies the function of a directive act.

4. *"Boleh gak ciloknya dimodif menjadi bakso ikan."* The utterance *"Boleh gak ciloknya dimodif menjadi bakso ikan."* is a Directive illocutionary act because, while constructed as a question, it serves as a suggestion or proposal aimed to motivate action. In this context, dr. Tan is encouraging creativity and nutritional improvement on the MBG menu by recommending a healthier, more local option. Thus, the utterance's purpose is to influence the listener to consider and complete a better alternative, which is consistent with the main role of a directive act.

4. Commisives

In Searle's exploration of the concept of promising (1969), he explains that making a promise in the right circumstances is considered taking on a responsibility. The act obligates the speaker to take a specific action in the future [19].

Table 5. Commisives

NO	Utterances	Meaning
1.	<i>"Ya, saya pengen anak Papua bisa makan ikan kuah asam."</i>	The utterance " <i>Ya, saya pengen anak Papua bisa makan ikan kuah asam.</i> " is a commissive illocutionary act because the speaker is expressing a personal intention and commitment to ensuring that local foods, such as ikan kuah asam from Papua is included in the MBG program. In the context of the criticism, this statement indicates dr. Tan's dedication to encouraging food diversity and cultural representation, which contrasts with the prevalence of standardized, non-local menus such as burgers. By expressing this purpose, dr. Tan implicitly commits pushing for laws or actions that promote local food traditions, which is consistent with the defining objective of a commissive act to express one's commitment to a future course of action.
2.	<i>"Saya pengen anak Sulawesi makan kapurung."</i>	The utterance " <i>Saya pengen anak Sulawesi makan kapurung.</i> " is a commissive illocutionary act because the speaker is expressing a personal intention and commitment to promoting the inclusion of local foods, specifically Kapurung from Sulawesi in the MBG program. In the context of the criticism, this statement emphasizes dr. Tan's resolve to restore and maintain local culinary identity, which has been disregarded in favor of standardized, Western-style meals such as burgers. Through this expression of desire, dr. Tan implicitly commits to supporting or advocating efforts to ensure that children throughout Indonesia can enjoy their region's traditional meals, demonstrating the defining function of a commissive act, a commitment to future action or objective.

The analysis of illocutionary acts in dr. Tan's critical utterances indicate a purposeful and multifaceted communicative approach. The pronounced dominance of assertive activities (59.1%), followed by expressive acts (28.8%), directive acts (8.1%), and commissive acts (4%), with a complete lack of declaratives, demonstrates a discourse carefully constructed to critique, persuade, and advocate. This distribution demonstrates that dr. Tan's main purpose is to present facts, express

moral judgments, and encourage change from a position of competence and personal conviction, rather than to wield formal authority.

The enormous predominance of assertive acts is consistent with Searle's (1969) definition of asserting as a fundamental illocutionary function in which the speaker commits to the truth of a statement. dr. Tan's frequent use of assertives, such as expressing the global uniformity of the "burger" menu or the fact that wheat is not regionally produced, serves as the basis of her argument. Statements such as "*Dimana tepung terigu tidak pernah tumbuh di bumi Indonesia*" are more than just observations; they are evidence-based claims intended to establish credibility and logical appeal. This dominance places her critique primarily as an informative and argumentative discourse, focusing on verifiable truths and factual contradictions within the MBG program to increase its persuasiveness.

This factual base is complemented by the extensive use of expressive behaviors, which reveal dr. Tan's strong emotional engagement and moral attitude. As Searle (1969) points out, expressives convey the speaker's psychological state. dr. Tan displays shock, frustration, and ethical concern using exclamations such as "OH MY GOD..." or remarks softened with "maaf ya." These actions are critical for humanizing her criticism, which turns a logical argument into a sincere demand. They increase emotive power, connect with the audience on an emotional level, and emphasize the moral importance of the problem. The high frequency of expressives thus functions in combination with assertives, resulting in a language that acts on both intellectual and emotive levels.

Although less frequent, the implementation of the directive act, at 8.1% of the total, marks a significant shift from identifying problems to offering solutions. In an effort to influence the behavior of listeners (Searle, 1969), examples of directive actions, such as "*Alokasikan menu lokal sebagai 80% isi MBG*" are clear examples of calls to action. Moreover, rhetorical questions such as "*Ini mau sampai kapan makannya burger*" motivate introspection and transformation in the implementation of this MBG program. Although limited, dr. Tan's presence shows that her criticism is not only observational but also reformative and persuasive, and aims to influence the actions and decisions of policymakers and program implementers.

Her rhetorical stance is further strengthened by the minimal, yet significant, use of commissive acts. By expressing suggestions and commitments such as, "*Saya pengen anak Papua bisa makan ikan kuah asam*," dr. Tan shifts from critic to advocate. These utterances demonstrate a moral commitment, echoing Searle's (1969) notion of commitment to future action. These comments personalize the critique, reinforce its value by demonstrating its focus on solutions, and frame it as a stakeholder invested in the outcome rather than an indifferent commentator.

The total lack of declarative acts has important theoretical and contextual implications. To alter reality through speech alone, declaratives (such as "*Saya menyatakan program dihentikan*") need institutional power (Searle, 1969). Their absence highlights dr. Tan's function as an advocate and public scholar rather than a legislator. She does not have the official authority to impose change by edict; instead, she uses moral persuasion, proof, and persuasion to indirectly influence others. This demonstrates that her main role is to influence public opinion and advocate for change from within the public domain.

In conclusion, dr. Tan's speech demonstrates a sophisticated rhetorical strategy through the constellation of illocutionary acts. She skillfully combines emotional appeal (expressives) with logical criticism (assertives) to demonstrate the argument's moral and logical foundations. She then uses personal commitment (commissives) and practical demands (directives) to reaffirm this. While staying within the parameters of her powerful but non-authoritative public role, this balanced approach enables her to mobilize empathy and public concern, authoritatively challenge structural flaws, and clearly articulate a vision for a more equitable and culturally sensitive nutrition program.

IV. Conclusion

This study successfully identified and analyzed the types and meanings of illocutionary acts in dr. Tan Shot Yen's public criticism of TikTok's Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) program. The results show that dr. Tan's critique is a sophisticated pragmatic construct that strategically uses a variety of speech acts to accomplish her communicative purposes. Lastly, dr. Tan's critics work perfectly. She used assertives to establish a logical argument, expressives to make it emotionally

resonant, directions to direct it toward practical change, and commissives to underline her personal investment. This multifaceted method enables her to authoritatively critique policy weaknesses, effectively fight for a more democratic, culturally sensitive, and locally sourced feeding program, all from a public platform.

Based on the research findings and conclusions, several suggestions for future studies involve examining dr. Tan's criticisms or similar public discourses across different social media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) to compare how illocutionary strategies adapt to different digital contexts and audiences. Then, using Perlocutionary emphasis, researchers might examine the comments and shares on the TikTok video to find out how the public received, interpreted, and was influenced by dr. Tan's speech acts. Finally, a comparative illocutionary act analysis of criticisms from other interested parties (e.g., government officials, other nutritionists, and parents) on the same problem might be performed to map out the number of communicative techniques within a single public policy debate.

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