

## Promoting Political Engagement among Youth: Analysis of Speech Act Patterns in Syed Saddiq's Speech

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### ABSTRACT

*It has been observed that speech act theory studies have mainly focused on Western orators and societies, whereas studies conducted on Eastern orators are still limited and insufficient, especially on youth speakers and youth political representatives in Malaysia. This paper will report on illocutionary type features of Speech Acts used in Syed Saddiq's (a young member of Parliament for Muar) 'A Lost in Generation: Youth in Politics' speech and explain how the identified illocutionary type features project the messages in the speech. His speech has inspired the thoughts and beliefs of young minds through the power of his passionate words and a variety of language resources. The research used a descriptive qualitative research design and investigated the types of illocutionary acts based on the Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts by John Searle (1975). The qualitative analysis of the data revealed that Syed Saddiq's speech mainly employed representative and directive acts. Further analysis of the data also suggested that Syed Saddiq tended to implore the audience in his speech to persuade and motivate them to act and create a change in the political scene as Malaysian youths. The results of this study propose that political figures and speech writers may employ a specific speech act or illocutionary type to deliver a persuasive political speech to successfully persuade the target audience, i.e., youth or university students, to accept suggestions and opinions in order to break the cycle of political apathy and foster political interest in the younger generation.*

*Keywords: speech acts; youth, speech; illocutionary; politics*

### INTRODUCTION

In order to procure a better living in the country that they serve, Asian youth are today emerging as valiant in challenging systems that have for so long stomped on their rights and advancement. In parallel, the phenomenon of local youth-led political movements retaliating against their government can also be observed happening in Malaysia recently when the new Government was sued by a group of youth for postponing the amendment of the *Undi18* Bill. The bill was first tabled in 2019 to lower the voting age from 21 to 18 years old. The fate of the bill has remained uncertain; due to the Covid19 pandemic, which has resulted in Malaysians' livelihoods to steadily decline. On 27<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 100 youth decided to organise a peaceful protest in front of the Parliament in Kuala Lumpur, demanding the new government to reveal parliament as a symbol of democracy and also, hopefully, to pass the *Undi18* bill. However, several youths were arrested and underwent police investigations in the nature of the protest under the Peaceful Assembly Act. Youth voices are continuously disregarded despite their ubiquitous efforts to be heard, despite being non-violent in their nature.

The triviality of youth issues that are prevalent in Malaysia can be traced to the lack of youth representation in the Cabinet or as a member of the Parliament to speak up on concerns faced by the younger generation group. They are often ostracised from society's organisational power structures, which lead to the inability to experience being governed by organisations that could potentially accommodate their interests and needs more fittingly. The turmoil happening in Malaysia, not only on youth issues but also on democracy issues of the government, shows the power held by these prominent local youth-led political movements poses a threat to authoritative bodies just by publicly speaking up on the discrimination.

Speeches are exceptionally powerful in convincing people to rethink their decision-making process and change one's opinions. Whilst there are multiple news headlines highlighting how Malaysian youth are now more vigorous than ever to be retaliating and challenging Malaysia's old political elites, they still lack the fundamental platforms and resources needed to allow them to speak up and be listened to. Speeches for the betterment of youth's lives are still being falsely represented and conveyed by the mistaken generation group. Thus, it is important to emphasise the role speeches play; it is a vital part of our life because from it, we are able to convey information to the public, to illicit interests or even influence the hearers to change their opinions to favour the speaker (Muhammad Agus, 2009).

In the study of pragmatics, communication can only succeed if both the speaker and the hearer have the same prospectation. A case in point in which a hearer has trouble understanding the meaning of speech delivered by a speaker; one of the linguistics branches that pragmatics examine is speech acts. According to Leech (1983), Thomas (1995) and Watson and Hill (1993), speech acts performed in communication comprise the involved hearers, their purpose, knowledge of the world, the influence the message has based on the interaction, what the hearer subconsciously digests as fragments of context and conclusions conceived from the context; whether it is implied by the speaker or not. In a general sense, when delivering a speech, the speaker would assume that his communicative purpose will be understood by the audience. Hence, the concept of speech acts is important in pragmatics because it denotes the sense in which utterances are not mere meaning-bearers but rather, in a very real sense, do things, that is, perform actions (Levinson, 2016).

However, are persuasive political speeches only successful when conveyed by prominent veteran political figures? In Malaysia, the younger generation has now stepped up to take on the challenge of leadership roles; for example, young Members of Parliament (MP) like Yeo Bee Yin (39), Syed Saddiq (30) and P. Prabakaran (26) are exemplary figures for the youth group who have been taking the initiative to change the political scene in Malaysia. The surge of the youth-led political movement, especially representation in the Malaysia Parliament, has proven how vital it is to have a platform to communicate with people strategically and effectively. The lack of platforms for youth political representatives to participate and amplify their voices must be addressed. One of the prominent youth figures in Malaysia, with remarkable skill in connecting with the younger generation, is Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman. As a university student, he competed in an Asian-level debate competition and triumphantly won the United Asian Debating Championship. He also took the honour of Asia's Best Speaker award at the Asian British Parliamentary Debating Championship thrice (Dina, 2015). Syed Saddiq also joined the Perdana Fellows Program, which is Malaysia's most prestigious youth leadership program connecting youths and the Cabinet Ministers of Malaysia. Syed Saddiq has actively participated in TEDx talk events held in Malaysia, speaking on an array of topics mostly circulating around youth and politics with the intention of reaching his target audience group with substantial benefits for the younger generation. His speech 'A Lost Generation: Youth in Politics', delivered at a TEDx Talk program

held at Monash University Malaysia in 2017, addressed a pivotal point of how youth should not be hindered from being involved in Malaysia’s political discourse. This speech can be regarded as a reflection of his political ideologies, particularly about changing the old mindset that revolves only around race, religion and states into issues that are more relevant to youth, such as unemployment, access to education and healthcare (Faiz, 2021).

This study has decided to explore the power of youth speeches in Malaysia and has chosen a speech delivered by Syed Saddiq, who is one of the most important youth voices and advocates in the country. It was conducted to analyse Syed Saddiq’s speech on the illocutionary acts used, using Searle’s Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts (1975). Specifically, it was aimed to examine how speech acts were utilised by Syed Saddiq, how language was used to construct the speech and how the speech itself projected the messages onto the audience. The TEDx Talk speech delivered by Syed Saddiq is not the key breakthrough for Malaysia’s youth movement; nevertheless, it is the major representation of current and future youth-led movements and political or persuasive speeches in the country.

### SEARLE’S TAXONOMY OF ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS (1975)

This study would utilise Searle’s Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts (1975) as it is the ideal theoretical framework for the study. Speech act theory consists of three different categorisations, which are locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary is an act of saying something in a traditional sense; illocutionary is the performance of an act when saying something, and perlocutionary is the effect of the utterance either to the speaker or listener. Searle (1975) expanded and refined the theory of Austin’s illocutionary act by proposing a revised five classifications of illocutionary types, which are representative, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative.

Searle’s alternative taxonomy can be outlined as follows:

TABLE 1. Searle’s Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts (1975)

<b>Illocutionary Type</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Direction of fit S: Speaker X: Situation</b>
Representative (or Assertive)	The speaker asserts an idea to be true, such as facts and conclusions made based on a specific context	Make words fit the world S believes X
Directives	The speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something (the speaker’s goals mostly)	Make the world fit the words S wants X
Commissive	Operate a change in the world by means of creating an obligation; however, this obligation is created in the speaker, not in the hearer	Make the world fit the words S intends X
Expressive	Expresses an inner state of the speaker; the expression is essentially subjective and tells us nothing about the world.	Make words fit the world S feels X

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Declarative	Some alteration in the status or condition of the referred object solely by virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed	Words change the world S causes X
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According to Beard (2000), a political speech is a matter of posing arguments; however, it is not always automatically successful. Politicians tend to overlook how there is a link between the utterances, the underlying meaning and the action communicated by what is said. It is a common reality that power is implicated with politics; power to manage resources, to determine decisions, and frequently sway people's values and behaviour (Bayram, 2010). Therefore, the speaker's utterances are likely to influence people and the reality they inhabit, even if it is communicated explicitly or subliminally. There are multiple factors involved in producing a persuasive and effective speech, one of which is one's capability to use suitable language that can form a mutual connection between the orator and the audience (Farhad & Sanaz, 2016; Alimi et al., 2021; Manoharan et al., 2022). Political discourse is not solely about declaring public propositions, but it is about performing actions with words in the political sense; words chosen will affect the political body. Evidently, being in a political situation does not necessarily make political actors speak in specific ways; rather, "there is a need for a cognitive collaboration between situations and talk or text, that is a context" (van Dijk, 2006). Henceforth, political discourse does not only concern the discourse structures but also the political contexts. Specific contexts determine how participants encounter, decipher, and relate to the relevant prospect of the political situation.

In Malaysia, political participation specifically from the youth, is not particularly new to the country. A significant historical event in Malaysia in 1998, the *Reformasi* movement, was a crucial moment where the nation witnessed youth actively fighting against the government. A notable example of the impact of the *Reformasi* movement is the birth of a political party called the 'Movement for Social Justice' (ADIL) to ratify the movement into a solid organisational structure (Norhafiza, 2018). The party managed to transform into a strong multiracial political party that attracted more than 200,000 members, mostly Malaysian youth (Weiss, 2006). How the party managed to captivate youths' interest is due to the condition in which the party bloomed; it strongly tackled issues interrelated with youths' concerns, such as, good governance, human rights, and social justice. Furthermore, during the late 90s, the growth of the Internet has caused it to be a vital medium for ADIL, as it evolved into a prime channel for spreading *Reformasi*-related information and mobilising support (Mohd Azizuddin, 2009).

The political participation of the Internet generation did not die down in the late 90s but instead continued with the current generation of Malaysian youths evidently maximising digital technology. Political participation via digital platforms is now widely accepted by today's generation, primarily using YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and such (Abdullah et al., 2021). Moreover, there are positive views on the prospects of digital platforms in promoting political engagement among youth (Bennett 2008; Jenkins 2006; Levine 2011; Rheingold 2008). The occurrence of online political activities, which has become an alternative to offline approaches, shows how digital platforms allow youth to form political groups, write and publish political issues and spread political videos all through online channels (Abdullah et al., 2021). There are multiple known political activists in Malaysia who have turned to digital platforms to spread national and international news and share ideas on Instagram and Twitter, a platform where the dominant age group users are the youth; among which are MISI: Solidariti (@msolidariti) and The Loud Asians (@theloudasians). These digital activists indulge the masses in political discourses through content creation, primarily using infographics to deliver political messages.

A prime example of low youth participation can be seen in Malaysia's Parliament in 2019, where youth representation was a meagre 12% out of 222 members of Parliament (Choo, 2019). The declining youth representation is a concerning issue, especially in a country where the population is of the median age of 29.6 (DOSM, 2021). Younger generations feel extremely prejudiced by the older generation whenever they discuss political issues that are relevant to their concerns, which just ends with youths being annihilated from further discussion.

Numerous researchers have conducted studies analysing political speeches given by politicians using Searle's Speech Act taxonomy. For example, Khalid and Amin (2019) examined political speeches given by UNAMI Regional Office Erbil and the Prime Minister of Kurdistan during the fourth anniversary of the mass genocide of Yazidis using the linguistic framework, Searle's Taxonomy of Speech Act. The study hypothesised there would be differences in the usage of speech acts even though in a similar context and environment and attempts to give details on the differences by using Speech Act theory. The researcher discussed the importance of language to relay political ideas and garner support, which resulted in discovering how politicians usually use speech acts that would assert authority, maintaining power with less usage of speech acts that would be too emotional. Meanwhile, Permana & Mauriyat (2021) analysed how political speeches are important for politicians to control the masses and ensure support from the people. The study examined Susilo Bambang Yudhono's speech to study the type of speech acts using Searle's Taxonomy of Speech Act theory as the main theoretical framework to highlight the meaning of each utterance of the political speech. The study produced data on how politicians often use speech acts that assert dominance, ensuring faith in the speaker and are rarely emotional. Abdulrahman (2016) investigated rhetorics in speech in his study 'Speech Acts as Persuasive Devices in Selected Speeches of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad'. The researcher addressed the research gap in limited studies on non-western cultures and societies by examining the usage of speech acts as persuasive devices by an Eastern politician. This qualitative study of analysing two speeches given by Dr Tun Mahathir used the Speech Act theory by Searle (1979) as the main analytical framework. The findings of this study showed that Mahathir's usage of rhetorical devices was his attempt to persuade the audience with his arguments, and he often employed two types of speech acts; assertives and directives. While he used directive speech acts as a persuasive strategy to persuade his audience and focus their attention on taking appropriate action, he utilised assertive speech acts to attest to the truth and accuracy of his assertion. This suggests that illocutionary forces can be employed in speeches as a means of persuasion.

These past studies have acknowledged speech act theory research of persuasive or political speeches by influential figures; however, the current study addresses the research gap on youth speakers and political representatives, especially in Malaysia. Despite multiple youth speakers in Malaysia engaging in public conferences and talks as keynote speakers, they are often excluded from the limelight as credible and notable speakers. Thus, this study aims to study the speech act of a notable youth political figure in Malaysia, how language was used to construct the speech and how the speech projects the messages onto the audience.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach to describe the linguistic phenomena found in the speech. The data is from a speech presented by Syed Saddiq, one of Malaysia's young members of Parliament. The speech was delivered in October 2017, when he first appeared as Malaysia's youth political representative at TEDx Monash University Malaysia held in Malaysia. His public speech, 'A Lost Generation: Youth in Politics' lasted for 18 minutes and 59 seconds. The speech touches on his experience as the youngest political representative in the country and how there are large disparities in the opportunities given to the youths to be involved in Malaysia's political scene.

TABLE 2. Information from the Website on the Selected Speech of Syed Saddiq

Speech Title	Website	Date of Speech	Video Duration	YouTube views	Length of Speech	Comments	Audience	Context
A Lost Generation - Youth in Politics	YouTube	7th October 2017	18 mins 59 secs	65,736	2934 words	63	University Students	Youth in Politics

This study has attempted to identify the use of illocutionary types in the speaker's utterances found in his speech. At first, the speech was viewed several times and transcribed into a speech script. After reading the transcription of the speech thoroughly, every sentence in the speech text was analysed and split into categories. Then the utterances were classified with codes into illocutionary types based on Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts (1975) with his five general classifications, which are Representative, Directive, Commissive, Expressive and Declarative. Following this, the utterances were interpreted for their function according to Searle's five illocutionary act classifications.

A sample of tabulated data of the illocutionary types is given in Table 3.

TABLE 3. A Sample Table of Illocutionary Acts of 'A Lost Generation: Youth in Politics' Speech

No.	Illocutionary Type	Coded	Utterance/Dialogue	Analysis
15	Representative	<b>R.15</b>	Because it effectively says that young people cannot do, cannot discuss, cannot debate, cannot have dialogues about important national issues.	Syed Saddiq continues (also an extension from utterances 13 and 14) insisting in his statement on how youth should not be brainwashed into being politically inactive
47	Directive	<b>D.47</b>	What has happened? Were we like this before in the 1960s and 1970s? Or is this a new phenomenon?	This utterance utilises a directive act and also poses the same pattern of the rhetorical question. Syed Saddiq is attempting to direct the addressees to think of the situation and its issue but does not await for an answer.
66	Commissive	<b>C.66</b>	It is to ensure that we will no longer sit behind our foreign allies. That we will no longer just be able to look up to people like Justin Trudeau, Emmanuel Macron, Mhairi Black, but	The utterance contains the speaker's statement that is used to commit some future action. Syed Saddiq and other future youth representatives will keep fighting

70	Expressive	<b>E.70</b>	we have those very versions in our country, better and more in numbers. But the second one is something that is very close to my heart. Something which I faced from before up to today.	until they get their rights and physical presence. The utterance shows the speaker expressing his emotions. In utterance 12, Syed Saddiq elaborated on the issue of belittling youth power in political structures. Therefore, he expresses how he feels about the issue since he has experienced discrimination before.
61	Declarative	<b>D.61</b>	So I would like to start off by reflecting on the challenges, and while I reflect on the challenges, I'll also briefly share my personal experiences when I got into politics.	It can be observed that the speaker employs a declarative act in this utterance. Syed Saddiq declares and lays out the flow of his speech by parts for the addressees' understanding.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This is a qualitative study that collected utterances for analysis of a speech by Syed Saddiq entitled *A Lost Generation-Youth in Politics*, according to illocutionary types. It was a speech expressing the speaker's ideologies toward promoting youth involvement in Malaysian politics. This speech has been found to be effective, as evidenced by its track record, whereby Syed Saddiq was elected as the Cabinet Minister of Youth and Sports in July 2018. This appointment indicates that the speech has gained him favour from the youth, and thus, he has been chosen to represent their voice in the government (P Prem Kumar & Alifah Zainuddin, 2019). This study has attempted to identify the use of illocutionary types in the speaker's utterances, examined the way language was used to construct the speech and determined how the speech projected the messages onto the audience.

Using Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts (1975), the illocutionary types were analysed and identified. The results of the analysis can be tabulated in summation of occurrence and frequency in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4. Occurrence of Illocutionary Types in the Selected Speech

No.	Types of Illocutionary Act	Occurrence
1	Representatives	45
2	Directives	14
3	Commissives	3
4	Expressives	4
5	Declarative	6
<b>Total Occurrence</b>		<b>72</b>

Table 4 shows that the total data of types of speech acts found in the speech is 72 utterances. The most dominant type of illocutionary act utilised by Syed Saddiq is the representative act which has a total of 45 utterances, followed by the directive act with a total of 14 utterances. The third is the declarative act with a total of 6 utterances, followed by the expressive act with a total of 4 utterances, and the least is the commissive act with only 3 utterances. It can be concluded that Syed Saddiq essentially relied on the representative act as it is used thrice, the amount of the second most used illocutionary type throughout the speech. In addition, it can also be inferred that Syed Saddiq rarely relied on the commissive act throughout the speech as the occurrence of the type is

the lowest. He utilised the representative act 45 times throughout his whole speech, making this type of illocutionary act as the one mostly used by the speaker. Briefly, the representative act is the kind of illocutionary type in which the speaker believes something in being the case, “the truth of the expressed proposition” (Searle, 1975). John Searle explains how the member of the representative class can simply be characterised as the utterances being true or false. Representative act can also be regarded as how the utterances fit the words-to-the-world direction. According to Searle (1975), representative acts can be observed from several speech act verbs such as assert, correct, state, guess, deny, tell, report, remind, describe, inform, believe, etcetera. The overall usage of the representative act by Syed Saddiq can be inferred as mainly employing it to report on facts and information of substantial data he collected. He also used this illocutionary type often as a method of asserting his thoughts and opinions, which he believed would be the case of the issue or situation. He also often used a pattern of retelling the narrative of his past experiences or stories that could redirect the audience’s attention to the issue as something very close to him and conclude how it has affected him.

The excerpt below shows an example of a representative act.

SAMPLE 1. Utterance of the Representative Act

And, some extent **we cannot simply blame the youth, we can’t simply point to them and say**, “you are ignorant”, “you choose to remain this way and as a consequence you will forever remain in this vicious cycle” (R.6)

The data found in the extract above is a representative act of correcting and assuring an idea of how youth cannot be blamed for political inactivity. In the utterance, he is reporting factual information using the speech act verb, ‘to remind’. Syed Saddiq asserts and reminds the audience that the youth cannot be condemned for the lack of representation in the political scene. He also utilises quotations from conversations youth often hear from others which subliminally tells how regularly persistent is the cycle of ‘political shaming’ in Malaysian youth’s lives. This representative act exhibited in this utterance gives some indication of how the speaker believes the case to be.

In total, Syed Saddiq utilised the directive act 14 times throughout his whole speech. A directive act is an illocutionary act which is an attempt by the speaker to make the hearer perform an action (Searle, 1975). According to Searle, there are differing degrees of the speaker’s attempt to influence the hearer to do something. For example, certain attempts can be moderate such as suggesting or inviting the hearer to perform an action, or it can be an aggressive attempt where the speaker demands the hearer to do it. The directive act can also be regarded as how the utterances fit the world-to-the-words direction.

The excerpt to show an example of the directive act is presented below.

SAMPLE 2. Utterance of the Directive Act

But while we look at examples abroad, **where do we stand as the youth of Malaysia? Are we equivalent to them? Do we respect youth power, similarly like our foreign allies? Are we behind them?** (D.46)



This utterance can be regarded as utilising the directive act. The illocutionary act used can be interpreted as an attempt to direct the audience to think of the issues and their solutions. The use of rhetorical questions was an approach adopted by the speaker as an attempt to direct the audience to think of the issues and the solutions without expecting an answer or a response from them.

Overall, Syed Saddiq utilised the commissive act with a mere occurrence of 3 times throughout his whole speech, making this type of illocutionary act the least used. The commissive act is the type of speech act utilised by the speaker to commit the addressees for future actions. Searle (1975) notes how the defining characteristics of members of the commissive class defined by Austin do not fall in his category, which can be observed from commissive verbs suggested by Austin such as “shall”, “intend”, “favour” and others. The commissive act can be regarded by how the utterances fit the world-to-words direction and have the condition that the intention must be sincere.

The excerpt to show an example of a commissive act is as below:

SAMPLE 3. Utterance of the Commissive Act

Some say politics is like a marathon, I disagree. **I want to see changes take place as quickly as possible** because I do not want my Malaysian dream to be delayed. (C.67)

The data found in the extract above is a commissive act which contains the speaker’s statement that is used to commit some future action. It is important to highlight that the utterance uses the speech act verb ‘want’. Also, he commits to future promises and actions by utilising the verb want + be. In this utterance, Syed Saddiq continues to assert how determined he is to realise his dream and how eager he is to serve in the political scene. He believes that this dream can be accomplished in a short time span because it is timely that the youth act swiftly for the promise of prosperity and welfare of the people and the nation.

The expressive act is ranked fourth among the illocutionary types with a mere occurrence of 4 times throughout his whole speech. In short, expressive acts are utilised to show how the speaker expresses and feels about the situation. Searle (1975) expresses a few examples of expressive verbs, which are “congratulate”, “condole”, “apologise”, “welcome” and “thank”. Mainly, Syed Saddiq uses the expressive act as a means of conveying his feelings and emotions on the issue at hand rather than thanking or apologising to the addressees.

An example of an expressive act is presented below:

SAMPLE 4. Utterance of the Expressive Act

**Ruefully** behind, even on our neighbouring partners like Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand even Cambodia. (E.69)

This utterance can be regarded as utilising the expressive act due to the function; the adverb ‘ruefully’ determines its function. Utterances containing expressive acts are usually used by the speaker to express their feelings. The emboldened word in the utterance shows that Syed Saddiq is expressing strong disapproval of the situation. The choice of the word expresses his immense

sorrow for the issue, which should not have happened (the issue of low youth political participation according to the data by Youth Development Index 2017).

The highlighted statement from the utterance below contains the declarative speech act utilised by the speaker with the function of announcing and declaring a proposition that changes the state of reality. This utterance contains a declarative act verb but in the guise of his narrative from past experience. Syed Saddiq declares that youth demand for change and reformation of the law and culture in the government and Parliament, and it must be acknowledged. He reiterates to the crowd how he declared fairness and transparency in the government to the affiliated parties involved.

SAMPLE 5. Utterance of the Declarative Act

When we got more than 10000 and we pulled all of them and vast majority said that **we want for the youth age should be limited at 35 years old, we want terms limit, we want to ensure that more women are given positions in the top leadership.** (D.62)

The findings of this study are aligned with the results of the literature discussed earlier. Past researchers have concluded that political figures, or political speech itself, tend to possess the characteristics of authoritative and maintaining power while being independent of showing emotions. Common illocutionary types used by political figures are representative acts and directive acts. There is no doubt that Syed Saddiq leaned on the usage of representative and directive acts to deliver his speech and persuaded the audience of the message of his speech, which is the lack of youth representation in the political scene. The particular reliance on those illocutionary types could be considered as the nature of a persuasive speech and the need for the successful performance of the utterances.

His utilisation of the representative act was to assert factual information regarding the national and international political scene, to inform on past narratives that he experienced as a youth in politics and also to make conclusions on cases and propositions which he believed to be the truth. It is undeniable that Syed Saddiq often utilised the representative act in his speech for the purpose of bringing out in the open what he believes in with regard to the challenges and issues of youth political participation in Malaysia.

Directive acts are commonly used by speakers to make the hearer perform an action, be it a moderate request or a much bolder request. However, the utilisation of the directive act by Syed Saddiq can be reconsidered as having a different perlocutionary act. Often, he used a different method and style of speaking, which resulted in the utterances being regarded as rhetorical questions, one where he expected no answer or action from the hearer. Ultimately, Syed Saddiq implemented interrogative verbs such as what, how, when are and is to fulfil his objective through this illocutionary type. He also used modal verbs such as must, will, and may in declarative sentences to motivate and also implore the Malaysian youth to act in the political scene.

The declarative act was used by Syed Saddiq in his utterances by fitting the context in which he was in. He utilised the declarative act in indicating the flow and objective of his speech to the audience, recounting past narratives in which he was in an institutional context of declaring youth and women's rights in the political scene. He also proclaimed to the audience, who were mostly the targeted group of his speech, that they should listen to his words and reject the long-standing political normal in the country.

Predominantly, Syed Saddiq used the expressive act as a means of conveying his feelings and emotions on the issue at hand, and he also thanked the audience at the end of his speech as a form of gratitude. Basically, he used terms like rue, respect and hope to communicate his thoughts and emotions on the issues regarding the youth in politics to the audience. This makes clear how deeply affected he is by the problem and how serious his feelings are.

The speaker rarely relied on the usage of the commissive act, which has a total of 3 occurrences throughout his speech. Commissive acts often bring the effect of committing to future action towards the speaker more than it does to the hearer. A few linguistics forms, like verb to be and modal verbs, were commonly used by Syed Saddiq, for example, will + be, will + verb, will not + be and want + be. These utterances were used to deliver a message that potentially contains future promises or actions to be performed by the speaker. It can be observed that the commissive act is the least used illocutionary type in persuasive speech as the need to convey correct political information and solutions is the main priority rather than portraying himself as the prime example of a successful politician or youth in politics.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that Syed Saddiq used specific illocutionary types to convey his message and persuade the audience with the objective of his belief. The results indicate that a persuasive speech does not necessarily have to utilise illocutionary types that are of direct persuasion. Syed Saddiq relied on representative acts for most of his utterances which were simply delivering personal experiences, information, and propositions which he believed were the truth to the audience. He also relied on the directive act as the second most used illocutionary type in his speech. These two types of the illocutionary act have the most effect, which is the perlocutionary act, on the audience to cause change.

It is hoped that this research has given a clearer understanding of the speech act theory through the analysis of a persuasive political speech by a youth political figure. Specifically, it is hoped that this current research provides a clear view and understanding of the revised taxonomy of illocutionary acts by John Searle and the utilisation of the illocutionary types. The findings of this research have important implications for language learners, especially regarding the speech act theory. With this knowledge, language learners themselves can apply effective approaches to compose an engaging and attractive speech in order to have a positive impact on the listeners. As for youth interested in politics, it is suggested that one should utilise the illocutionary types of representative act and directive act, which are mainly used by most political figures when delivering effective political speeches. Future researchers and scholars could also acknowledge the importance of speech act theory to accomplish communication goals through the utilisation of certain illocutionary types in everyday communication.

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