

ANALYZING SPEECH ACTS IN MODERN PARENTING: A PRAGMATICS STUDY OF NIKITA WILLY VLOG'S

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Abstract. This study examines the use of speech acts in modern parenting communication as represented in YouTube vlogs by Indonesian public figure Nikita Willy. The research aims to identify the types of illocutionary speech acts employed, the parenting styles reflected through these utterances, and the observable perlocutionary effects on the child. Using a descriptive qualitative method, this study applies Searle's (1979) speech act theory and Baumrind's (1971) parenting style framework. Data were collected from 15 purposively selected vlogs uploaded between 2022 and 2024 on the "Nikita Willy Official" YouTube channel, representing five parenting contexts: playtime, mealtime, bedtime, study time, and conflict resolution. The findings reveal that, out of a total of 57 utterances analyzed from 15 vlogs (2022–2024), directive (42%) and expressive (22%) illocutionary acts are the most dominant forms of communication, followed by assertive (17%), commissive (12%), and declarative (5%) acts. The parenting style most frequently reflected is authoritative (42 of 57 utterances, 74%), characterized by emotional warmth, clear guidance, and respect for the child's autonomy, followed by permissive (10 utterances, 17%), neglectful (5 utterances, 9%), and authoritarian (0 utterances) styles. The perlocutionary effects observed include positive engagement, emotional responsiveness, and cooperative behavior from the child. This study contributes to pragmatic studies and the emerging field of parentinguistics by demonstrating how everyday parenting communication in digital media reflects modern parenting values and influences child development through language. These findings suggest that the co-occurrence of directive and expressive acts within a predominantly authoritative style reflects a communicative pattern in which behavioral guidance is consistently balanced with emotional warmth, offering interpretive insight into how language in digital parenting media both shapes and mirrors contemporary, child-centered caregiving values.

Keywords: Digital Parenting, Parenting Communication, Parentinguistics, Speech Acts

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan tindak tutur dalam komunikasi pengasuhan modern sebagaimana direpresentasikan dalam vlog YouTube oleh figur publik Indonesia, Nikita Willy. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis tindak tutur ilokusi yang digunakan, gaya pengasuhan yang tercermin melalui tuturan tersebut, serta efek perlokusi yang dapat diamati pada anak. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan menerapkan teori tindak tutur Searle (1979) dan teori gaya pengasuhan Baumrind (1971). Data diperoleh dari 15 vlog yang dipilih secara purposif dan diunggah pada kanal YouTube "Nikita Willy Official" antara tahun 2022 hingga 2024, yang mencakup lima konteks pengasuhan: waktu bermain, waktu makan, waktu tidur, waktu belajar, dan penyelesaian konflik. Dari total 57 tuturan yang dianalisis dari 15 vlog (2022–2024), hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tindak tutur direktif (42%) dan ekspresif (22%) merupakan bentuk komunikasi yang paling dominan, diikuti oleh asertif (17%), komisif (12%), dan deklaratif (5%). Gaya pengasuhan yang paling banyak tercermin adalah pengasuhan otoritatif (42 dari 57 tuturan, 74%), yang ditandai dengan kehangatan emosional, pengarahan yang jelas, serta penghargaan terhadap kemandirian anak, diikuti oleh gaya permisif (10 tuturan, 17%), lalai/neglectful (5 tuturan, 9%), dan otoriter (0 tuturan). Efek perlokusi yang diamati meliputi keterlibatan positif, respons emosional yang baik, dan perilaku kooperatif pada anak. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian pragmatik dan bidang parentinguistik dengan menunjukkan bagaimana komunikasi pengasuhan sehari-hari dalam media digital mencerminkan nilai-nilai pengasuhan modern dan memengaruhi perkembangan anak melalui bahasa. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kemunculan tindak tutur direktif dan ekspresif secara bersamaan dalam gaya pengasuhan yang didominasi otoritatif mencerminkan pola komunikasi yang secara konsisten menyeimbangkan arahan perilaku dengan kehangatan emosional, sehingga memberikan wawasan interpretatif tentang bagaimana bahasa dalam media pengasuhan digital membentuk sekaligus mencerminkan nilai-nilai pengasuhan modern yang berpusat pada anak.

Kata kunci: Pengasuhan Digital, Komunikasi Pengasuhan, Parentinguistik, Tindak Tutur

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INTRODUCTION

Parenting plays a fundamental role in shaping children's development, encompassing not only cognitive growth but also social behavior, emotional regulation, and mental well-being. Parents serve as the earliest and most influential environment in a child's life, acting as the primary agents of socialization and education (Sugiarti et al., 2022). Through continuous interaction, parents introduce values, norms, and behavioral expectations that children gradually internalize. This process highlights that parenting is not merely a set of daily caregiving routines, but rather a complex and dynamic system of interactions that significantly influence a child's long-term development. In this regard, parenting styles become a central concept in understanding how different approaches to child-rearing shape developmental outcomes. Baumrind's classification of parenting styles—authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved—has been widely used to explain variations in parental behavior and their effects on children (K. Kurniawan, 2023). Each style reflects distinct patterns of communication, discipline, and emotional involvement, which in turn influence children's personality formation and social competence.

The importance of parenting becomes particularly evident during early childhood, especially in the first three years of life. This period is often referred to as the "golden age" of development, during which the brain undergoes rapid growth, reaching approximately 80% of its adult capacity (Maulina & Budiyo, 2021). During this stage, children are highly sensitive to environmental stimuli, making the quality of parenting interactions critically important. Responsive parenting, characterized by sensitivity to children's needs, emotional warmth, and active engagement, is essential for fostering optimal development. Such parenting practices not only support cognitive and language development but also contribute to the formation of secure attachment and emotional stability. Conversely, inadequate parenting during this period may result in long-term developmental challenges, including behavioral problems, emotional difficulties, and limited social skills.

Despite the recognized importance of responsive parenting, its implementation in Indonesia remains inconsistent, as reflected in reports of suboptimal caregiving conditions among children under five and continuing cases of child abuse recorded by SIMFONI PPA (Anak Usia Dini, 2021; HUMAS KEMENPPPA, 2023). This inconsistency is closely tied to Indonesia's cultural history, in which hierarchy, obedience, and respect for authority have long encouraged authoritarian parenting marked by strict rules and one-directional communication (Febiyanti & Yulindrasari, 2021); while such practices may instill discipline, they also tend to limit children's self-expression and critical thinking. In recent years, however, research points to a gradual shift toward more democratic, child-centered approaches, with authoritative parenting—combining warmth, clear boundaries, and open communication—shown to positively influence children's emotional and social development (Syahrul & Nurhafizah, 2022), reflecting broader societal changes such as wider access to education, exposure to global parenting trends, and growing awareness of children's psychological needs.

The transformation of parenting practices is further shaped by the rapid advancement of digital technology, which has changed not only how children learn and interact but also how parents access information and construct their parenting practices (Rahmawati & Haerani Nur, n.d.). Parenting is no longer confined to private family settings but has expanded into digital spaces, giving rise to the concept of digital parenting—the strategies parents use to manage children's engagement with technology while maintaining healthy developmental outcomes. Within this evolving context, communication becomes the central medium through which values, expectations, and emotions are conveyed, combining verbal channels such as instructions, explanations, and praise with non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice (Anggun Anggraini, n.d.); consistency between the two is essential, as misalignment may confuse children and weaken the effectiveness of communication.

This need for effective communication is even more pronounced for Generation Alpha, who are born into a fully digitalized environment and exposed to technology from an early age (Khritish Swargiary, n.d.). Unlike traditional parenting, which tends to be directive and authority-driven, modern parenting for this generation emphasizes two-way communication, emotional responsiveness, and adaptability, encouraging dialogue, empathy, and mutual understanding (Burhan et al., 2021). This shift is amplified by the growing visibility of parenting on digital media platforms, particularly YouTube, where parents share their experiences and disseminate parenting knowledge to a wide audience (Chineyemba, 2023); as a result, parenting is no longer a private activity but a form of public discourse in which practices are performed, observed, evaluated, and replicated, shaping broader societal perceptions of parenting.

A prominent example of this phenomenon in Indonesia is Nikita Willy, a public figure who actively shares her parenting journey through her YouTube channel. Her content provides detailed documentation of everyday interactions with her child, offering a unique opportunity to observe authentic parent-child communication in natural settings. Unlike fictional representations found in films or television, her vlogs capture spontaneous and unscripted interactions that reflect real-life parenting dynamics. As a widely followed influencer, her parenting practices have the potential to shape public perceptions and influence parenting trends among her audience. This makes her content a valuable and contextually rich source for analyzing contemporary parenting communication. A recurring linguistic phenomenon observed in her vlogs is the use of indirect, mitigated directives—phrased as suggestions or invitations rather than direct commands—alongside frequent expressive utterances of praise and reassurance, a pattern that becomes central to the speech act findings of this study.

From a linguistic perspective, parenting communication can be effectively examined through the framework of pragmatics, particularly speech act theory. Pragmatics focuses on how language is used in context to perform actions and convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words. Speech act theory, as introduced by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969), provides a systematic approach to analyzing how utterances function within communication. Austin categorizes speech acts into three types: locutionary acts, which involve the production of utterances; illocutionary acts, which represent the intended function of the utterance; and perlocutionary acts, which refer to the effects produced on the listener (Leilei, ZOU & Chunfang, WU, 2023). Among these, illocutionary acts are particularly significant, as they reveal the speaker's intention, while perlocutionary acts highlight the impact of communication on the listener's behavior.

Searle further refines this framework by classifying illocutionary acts into five categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. These categories provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing communication in various contexts, including parenting. In parent-child interactions, speech acts play a crucial role in guiding behavior, expressing emotions, and establishing relationships. For example, directives may be used to instruct or guide children's actions, expressives may convey affection or disapproval, and assertives may provide information or explanations. By analyzing these speech acts, it becomes possible to understand how parenting styles are enacted through language and how communication influences children's responses.

Previous studies have explored the application of speech act theory in different contexts, including media and parenting. Diffani and Kholis (2023) analyzed speech acts in the film *Turning Red* and found that expressive speech acts were dominant, reflecting emotional relationships among characters. Similarly, Kurniawan (2023) introduced the concept of parenting linguistics, which focuses on the linguistic aspects of parenting communication. This study examined how different parenting styles influence communication patterns and found that authoritarian communication tends to negatively affect children's emotional well-being, while more flexible approaches encourage independence and self-expression. In a related context, Aulia Nida (2022) examined parents' speech acts when scolding their children and found that directive and expressive acts dominated such interactions, while Pratiwi and Laila (2020)

analyzed speech acts in parenting styles depicted in the movie *Bad Moms* and reported that assertive and directive acts were closely tied to children's self-esteem. Fitri (2022) further demonstrated, in an analysis of politeness strategies in the movie *Mulan*, that indirect and mitigated speech acts are commonly used to preserve interpersonal harmony, a pattern echoed in parent-child interactions. Meanwhile, Ulinsa et al. (2021) investigated parents' speech acts directed at young children and highlighted how directive utterances support children's early language acquisition. These studies collectively highlight the importance of language in shaping parenting dynamics and child development, while also indicating that most existing research relies on fictional or scripted sources rather than authentic, naturally occurring parent-child interaction.

However, despite these contributions, existing research has several limitations. Many studies, such as Diffani and Kholis (2023), Fitri (2022), and Pratiwi and Laila (2020), focus on fictional or scripted media—films whose dialogue is written and rehearsed by scriptwriters and actors—which may not accurately represent the spontaneity, hesitations, and situational nuance of real-life interactions. Moreover, there is limited research examining authentic parent-child communication in digital contexts, particularly within the framework of speech act theory. This gap is significant, as digital platforms have become central to contemporary parenting practices. Understanding how communication functions in these contexts is essential for capturing the evolving nature of parenting in the digital era. To address this gap, the present study examines parenting communication in Nikita Willy's YouTube vlogs, focusing on the types of speech acts used, the parenting styles reflected, and the perlocutionary effects observed in children's responses. The analysis is conducted across various everyday contexts, including playtime, mealtime, bedtime, learning activities, and conflict resolution. These contexts represent key domains of parent-child interaction and provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing communication patterns (Jonathan Tudge). By examining speech acts within these contexts, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how language functions in everyday parenting practices.

The objectives of this study are threefold: to identify and classify the types of illocutionary speech acts used in parenting interactions, to analyze how these speech acts reflect underlying parenting styles, and to examine the perlocutionary effects of these speech acts on children's behavior and responses. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of pragmatic studies by applying speech act theory to authentic, real-life parenting interactions in digital contexts. It also expands the concept of parentinguistics by integrating linguistic analysis with contemporary digital parenting practices. Practically, this study provides valuable insights for parents, educators, and content creators in understanding the importance of effective communication in fostering healthy and responsive parent-child relationships in the digital era.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design, following Creswell's framework as outlined by Charli et al. (2022), which emphasizes describing phenomena as they naturally occur without manipulating variables, to analyze speech acts in modern parenting communication. The data consisted of parental utterances extracted from 15 parenting vlogs published on the Nikita Willy Official YouTube channel between 2022 and 2024, selected through purposive sampling based on the presence of clear parent-child interactions across various contexts, including playtime, mealtime, bedtime, study activities, and conflict resolution. Data were collected through non-participant observation, in which the researcher watched each vlog as an outside observer without interacting with the participants, and documentation, in which utterances and their surrounding context (setting, participants, and non-verbal behavior) were recorded in a data sheet together with the video title, timestamp, and situational context, with all videos repeatedly viewed and relevant utterances manually transcribed and verified. Non-verbal cues were also noted to support interpretation. The data were analyzed by coding utterances according to Searle's (1979) classification of illocutionary

acts. Coding was carried out by reading each transcribed utterance together with its situational context and assigning it to one of Searle's five categories—assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, or declarative—based on the speaker's communicative intent rather than the grammatical form of the sentence; coded utterances were then re-checked against the video recordings to ensure that the assigned category matched the parent's tone and non-verbal behavior. The same procedure was applied to interpreting parenting styles using Baumrind's (1971) typology, identifying observable perlocutionary effects, and synthesizing recurring patterns to draw conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of Illocutionary Acts

The analysis revealed the presence of all five types of illocutionary acts across a total of 57 utterances collected from the 15 vlogs analyzed: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives, as summarized in Table 1. Among these, directive (24 utterances, 42%) and expressive (13 utterances, 22%) speech acts were the most frequently used, followed by assertive (10 utterances, 17%), commissive (7 utterances, 12%), and declarative (3 utterances, 5%) acts.

Directive speech acts, which formed the largest category with 24 of the 57 utterances analyzed (42%), appeared predominantly in situations where guidance or behavioral direction was required, such as during playtime, study time, and daily routines. During playtime, directives typically took the form of gentle invitations guiding the child toward a desired action (e.g., inviting the child to tidy up toys before switching activities) [contoh tuturan asli dari transkrip vlog perlu dilampirkan di sini, misalnya: "..."]. During study time, directives were used to guide the child's learning process in an encouraging tone rather than as strict instructions [contoh tuturan asli dari transkrip vlog perlu dilampirkan di sini, misalnya: "..."]. In daily routines such as mealtime and bedtime, directives were embedded in everyday caregiving requests, phrased as suggestions rather than commands [contoh tuturan asli dari transkrip vlog perlu dilampirkan di sini, misalnya: "..."]. Across all three contexts, these directives were often delivered in indirect and polite forms, such as suggestions or invitations, rather than strict commands, reflecting a communicative style that favors cooperation over compliance.

Expressive speech acts, the second-largest category with 13 of the 57 utterances (22%), were commonly used to convey praise, reassurance, empathy, and emotional validation. These utterances played an essential role in strengthening emotional bonds and supporting the child's emotional regulation.

Assertive speech acts were used to explain situations, provide information, or clarify the child's understanding of the environment. Commissive and declarative acts occurred less frequently and were mostly associated with promises or situational role definitions

Parenting Style Reflected

Based on Baumrind's parenting style framework, authoritative parenting emerged as the dominant style reflected in Nikita Willy's communication, accounting for 42 of the 57 utterances analyzed (74%), as shown in Table 2. This style was characterized by a balance between guidance and emotional responsiveness. The use of polite directives, emotional validation, and respectful language indicated a parenting approach that values cooperation and autonomy.

Permissive (10 utterances, 17%), neglectful (5 utterances, 9%), and authoritarian (0 utterances, 0%) styles appeared only occasionally and were not dominant. Overall, the communication patterns consistently demonstrated warmth, structure, and mutual respect, which are key features of authoritative parenting.

Perlocutionary Effects

The perlocutionary effects observed in the child included positive engagement, emotional responsiveness, cooperative behavior, and active participation. The child often responded with compliance, smiles, verbal responses, or calm behavior, indicating that the speech acts used by the parent effectively supported emotional security and interactional harmony.

These findings support previous research suggesting that authoritative communication fosters positive developmental outcomes. From a pragmatic perspective, the study demonstrates how illocutionary intent and perlocutionary impact are closely connected in parenting discourse.

Table 1. Types, Amounts, and Percentages of Illocutionary Speech Acts

No	Types of Illocutionary Act	Amount	Percentage
1	Directive	24	42%
2	Expressive	13	22%
3	Assertive	10	17%
4	Commissive	7	12%
5	Declarative	3	5%
Total		57	98%

Table 2. Distribution of Illocutionary Acts across Parenting Styles

Types of Illocutionary Act	Authoritative	Permissive	Neglectful	Authoritarian	Total
Directive	21	2	1	0	24
Expressive	12	1	0	0	13
Assertive	9	0	1	0	10
Commissive	0	7	0	0	7
Declarative	0	0	3	0	3
Total	42	10	5	0	57

CONCLUSION

This study set out to answer three research questions concerning parenting communication in Nikita Willy's YouTube vlogs. First, regarding the types of illocutionary speech acts used, the analysis of 57 utterances shows that all five Searlean categories were present, with directive (42%) and expressive (22%) acts being the most frequent, followed by assertive (17%), commissive (12%), and declarative (5%) acts. Second, concerning the parenting style reflected, these speech acts predominantly align with an authoritative style (74% of utterances), characterized by a balance of clear guidance and emotional warmth, with permissive, neglectful, and authoritarian styles appearing only marginally. Third, in terms of the perlocutionary effects observed, this communication pattern consistently elicited positive engagement, emotional responsiveness, and cooperative behavior from the child. Taken together, these findings indicate that the frequent, closely intertwined use of directive and expressive illocutionary acts is central to how an authoritative, child-centered parenting style is enacted through everyday language, and that this style reliably produces positive behavioral and emotional responses in the child.

The findings contribute to pragmatic studies by applying speech act theory to real-life parenting interactions in digital media. Additionally, this research enriches the field of parentinguistics by highlighting how language functions as a central tool in modern parenting practices. Future studies may expand this research by examining other digital parenting figures or comparing parenting communication across cultural contexts.

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