

## Potential Implications of Verbal Sexual Violence Through Humor: A Forensic Linguistic Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

Verbal expressions of non-physical sexual violence are frequently perceived merely as “jokes.” This study investigates the possibility of a verbal sexual violence offense perpetrated by a religious leader during a question-and-answer session with a participant at a spiritual event. The data consists of a video uploaded to an Instagram account during the question-and-answer session. News articles from [liputan6.com](http://liputan6.com), [rctiplus.com](http://rctiplus.com), and [merdeka.com](http://merdeka.com) are used prevent research bias and to support the data transcription and interpretation. The dialogue among Person 1, Person 2, and Person 3 in the video was subsequently transcribed to analyze the speech acts employed. This research uses a qualitative descriptive methodology. This study qualifies and explains speech acts through Weigand’s (2010) taxonomy of dialogic speech acts. This study’s results indicate that Person 1 employs representative and directive speech. This dominance indicates that Person 1 attempted to persuade all attendees at the event that the “joke” regarding Person 3 was factual. Furthermore, this dominance indicates that Person 1 has been found to have violated Law No. 12 of 2022 through the commission of a criminal act of verbal sexual violence. The taxonomy of dialogic speech acts has effectively facilitated the analysis of potential criminal acts of verbal sexual violence.

**Keywords:** *criminal acts of verbal sexual violence, speech acts, jokes, Law No. 12 of 2022*

### INTRODUCTION

The intricacies of addressing sexual violence crime, along with the widespread belief that such violence necessarily entails physical contact, frequently result in the disregard of

non-physical, verbal sexual violence (Afrian & Susanti, 2022; Agustina dkk., 2022; Vidhiasi, 2024). Verbal sexual violence, prevalent in society, frequently remains unrecognized, despite contravening ethical standards. The actions frequently remain unobserved due to their spontaneous nature. Many Indonesians perceive verbal sexual violence as a trivial matter or a jest in social interactions (Afrian & Susanti, 2022; Fadillah, 2021; Harikadua et al., 2024).

Sexual violence is an age-old crime. Despite the ratification of Law Number 12 of 2022, which addresses sexual violence offenses, the management of such crimes was previously governed by the Criminal Code (KUHP), particularly in paragraphs 281 to 299. The public typically perceives sexual violence as an act involving physical compulsion (see Ayuningtyas et al., 2019). Law Number 12 of 2022, particularly article (4), enumerates a minimum of 19 categories of sexual violence. This article addresses non-physical sexual harassment as a kind of sexual violence.

Indonesia's Law No. 12/2022 classifies non-physical sexual harassment as a complaint-based offense, creating a structural impediment for linguistic research on seemingly humorous remarks that may represent verbal sexual violence: the law mandates a formal report, while social, cultural, and religious pressures frequently render reporting perilous for victims. Weigand's (2010) dialogic speech act theory elucidates the enactment, negotiation, or imposition of power-laden humor in interactions; however, its analytical insights seldom correspond with legal outcomes when victims encounter stigma, moral judgment, or communal sanctions that inhibit the counteractions fundamental to Weigand's model. As a result, language evidence of coercion or objectification remains legally ineffective as it does not enter the judicial domain. Recognizing that disparity, this research necessitates placing speech act analysis within the social ecology of interaction, illustrating how laughter, silence, or muted resistance signify the normative constraints that complicate reporting—and consequently legal acknowledgment—demonstrating that the difficulty of reconciling linguistic findings with legal interpretation arises not from analytical shortcomings but from interconnected socio-legal frameworks that limit victims' agency.

The lack of physical contact frequently renders non-physical sexual harassment prevalent. A prevalent type of non-physical sexual harassment is verbal teasing, commonly referred to as catcalling. Catcalling manifests in multiple ways, including winking, whistling, and verbal teasing directed at individuals (see Fatura, 2019; Nurahlin, 2022). Catcalling can impact individuals of any gender; however, it is predominantly aimed at women (Afrian & Susanti, 2022). Physical sexual harassment tends to occur in closed environments to reduce the likelihood of detection, whereas non-physical sexual harassment is more frequently perpetrated in open settings. This is compounded by the perception that catcalling is not classified as non-physical sexual harassment, but is instead regarded merely as “a casual joke” (see also Afrian & Susanti, 2022; Nurahlin, 2022).

A “joking” tradition that has garnered popular interest involves a joke delivered by a prominent religious leader in Indonesia. A spiritual leader was conducting a question-and-answer session with a female participant at a religious event in a village in Central Java. Upon the woman’s request to speak, the spiritual leader made a remark deemed offensive by many. A comparable event transpired during a wayang performance in 2022, when the religious leader made a “joke” about an artist that many deemed offensive.

Labeling an utterance as a “joke” often operates as a discursive strategy that obscures the power asymmetry between a religious leader and female participants, because the humor frame redirects attention away from coercive perlocutionary effects and compels audiences to accept the interpretation imposed by the authority figure. Within religious institutional settings, the phrase “just joking” functions as a form of discursive management that normalizes hierarchy and suppresses resistance, aligning with recent findings that language practices frequently reproduce domination and silencing (Ahmed, 2021; Butler, 2020). This hierarchical structure produces interpretive conditions that are not fully captured by Weigand’s (2010) dialogic taxonomy, which classifies speech acts formally but does not account for the relational dynamics shaped by symbolic status and moral authority. Recent critical discourse studies underscore that analyses of speech acts must integrate institutional and gendered power to reveal how high-status humor can serve as a mechanism

of covert domination (Ahmed, 2021; Wodak, 2021), indicating that taxonomic approaches must be complemented by frameworks more sensitive to social hierarchy and contextual coercion.

Research on speech acts differentiates humor as a communicative tool from humor as a means of coercive domination by analyzing the illocutionary functions, dialogic responses, and interactional conditions that influence the production and reception of utterances. In communicative humor, the speaker primarily aims to foster solidarity, alleviate tension, or negotiate social closeness. Empirically, this is characterized by mutual understanding, symmetrical shared laughter, and the interlocutor's capacity to resist without incurring social penalties. Conversely, humor that serves as a means of coercive domination exposes power imbalances, the lack of a safe space for refusal, and predictable reactions such as enforced laughter, silence, sudden changes in topic, or the absence of resistance. These elements suggest that "humor" is employed to legitimize aggression or objectification.

The criteria for determining when "joking" transitions into verbal sexual violence encompass three primary dimensions: (1) intentionality and illocutionary effect, specifically whether the utterance objectifies, degrades, or targets the individual's body or sexuality; (2) power dynamics and the interlocutor's ability to resist, which includes hierarchical status, group pressure, gender norms, or social repercussions of refusal; and (3) the nature of dialogic responses, particularly the victim's lack of capacity to offer an equivalent counteraction. When humor transitions from a collaborative practice to one that seeks to control, shame, or threaten, the "joke" analytically transforms into an act of verbal sexual violence, regardless of cultural tolerance or recontextualization as harmless banter.

According to Law Number 12 of 2022 about Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, particularly Article 7, non-physical sexual harassment is a complaint-based violation when the alleged victim is neither a minor nor a disabled person. Mandagi et al. (2021) define a complaint-based offense as one that can only be prosecuted upon the filing of a complaint by the offended party. A complaint or report must be submitted by the purported victim to the police before an investigation into the alleged harassment is initiated (see Pandiangan et al.,

2024). As a complaint-driven offense, law enforcement cannot initiate action on a crime without a report or assertion from the victim. The necessity of a complaint or claim from the victim often leads to a crime being resolved through familial avenues or restorative justice (Arafat, 2017; Kumendong, 2017).

Although Law No. 12/2022 criminalizes verbal sexual harassment, its status as a complaint-based offense renders its effectiveness contingent on victims' willingness to report—an act often constrained by cultural pressure, community norms, and entrenched religious authority. Recent studies show that the normalization of sexist humor, stigma against complainants, and fears of disrupting social harmony frequently produce self-silencing among victims, while religious hierarchies amplify power asymmetries that undermine victims' confidence that their reports will be believed or socially tolerated (Lewoleba et al., 2023; Rais et al., 2025). In this context, the complaint requirement operates less as a procedural safeguard and more as a social filter that systematically blocks cases from reaching formal legal channels, thereby weakening the substantive protective force of Law No. 12/2022 and allowing cultural impunity to persist.

The analysis of verbal sexual violence offenses relies fundamentally on comprehending the utterance and the context of the incident. Comprehending the statement extends beyond the speaker's expression and necessitates analyzing the interlocutor's response. This guarantees a thorough comprehension of the context within a singular speech event (Tsoumou, 2020; Vidhiasi, 2025).

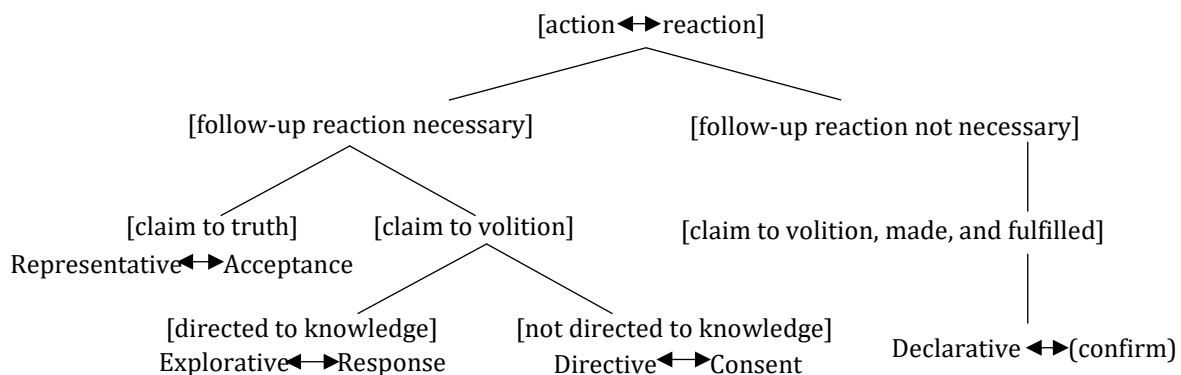
This study analyzed utterances in the data using the taxonomy of dialogic speech acts proposed by Weigand (2010). Weigand (2010) defines speech act understanding as a synthesis of the speaker's illocutionary utterances (action) and the interlocutors' perlocutionary responses (reaction), which together elucidate the meaning of a speech event. Action and reaction constitute a complete and equal unity in comprehending a speech event (Tsoumou, 2020). Weigand (2010) categorizes the correlation between action and reaction utterances into four speech act types: declarative, explorative, directive, and representative. Among the four types of speech acts, representative speech acts exhibit the

most significant variation in expression. This variation depends on the response from the speech partner.

Weigand (2010) characterizes declarative speech acts as statements that establish a “world.” This indicates that speakers can establish or dictate specific conditions through their discourse (Tsoumou, 2020; Vidhiasi, 2025). Declarative speech acts primarily aim to establish social bonds among individuals. The responsive expression of a declarative speech act is fundamentally a “confirmation.” Nonetheless, the absence of a response from the interlocutor does not negate the significance of a declarative speech act.

In contrast to declarative speech acts, exploratory speech acts emphasize the acquisition of specific information from the interlocutor (Weigand, 2010). Reactive speech acts are anticipated to arise from the interlocutor as confirmations or responses to questions posed to them. Explorative speech acts highlight the speaker’s inquiry into information from the interlocutor. In contrast, directive speech acts focus on the speaker’s attempts to compel the interlocutor to perform a desired action or follow an order (Tsoumou, 2020).

The representative speech act is the final one in Weigand’s (2010) taxonomy of dialogic speech acts. This speech act operates under the premise that an utterance is accurate. Nonetheless, the truth indicated in this speech act pertains not to the interlocutor’s perspective, but solely to that of the speaker. This indicates that the interlocutor has the capacity to challenge the “truth” present in the statement. Figure 1 presents a succinct overview of Weigand’s (2010) taxonomy of dialogic speech acts.



**Figure 1.** Basic Patterns of Dialogic Speech Acts (Weigand, 2010: 144)

Before the implementation of Law of the Republic of Indonesia (UU) Number 12 of 2022 about Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence (TPKS), the resolution of sexual violence matters was governed by the Criminal Code (KUHP), particularly Chapter XIV, which addresses Crimes Against Morality. While the KUHP has addressed this issue, it mostly concentrated on physical sexual assault and has not clearly governed the offense of verbal sexual abuse (see Aleng, 2020; Harikadua et al., 2024).

Sexual harassment constitutes unwanted sexual behavior intended to satisfy the desires of one individual, perpetrated by one person against another through physical or non-physical contact, leading to distress for the victim, often resulting in psychological trauma (Dewi & Swardhana, 2023). The elucidation of non-physical sexual violence and its penalties has been further refined in Law Number 12 of 2022, particularly in Articles 4 and 5. Dewi & Swardhana (2023) stated that non-physical sexual harassment can manifest through verbal expressions or behaviors that evoke sexual themes, resulting in feelings of discomfort, fear, or intimidation in the victim of harassment. Harikadua et al. (2024) assert that the penalties for non-physical sexual harassment outlined in Law Number 12 of 2022 are less severe than those for physical sexual harassment. Furthermore, while legislation concerning non-physical sexual harassment exists, the law lacks a comprehensive definition and delineation of verbal sexual violence.

Humans frequently employ jokes or humor in social interactions (Morreall, 2020; Tanadi & Wijaya, 2022). Individuals often select jokes to alleviate anxiety, diffuse tension, enhance self-esteem, and mitigate aggression, depression, and low moods (Borgella et al., 2020; Morreall, 2020; Tanadi & Wijaya, 2022). Jokes can frequently serve to target individuals, including the joke-teller and others. Humor may contribute to diminished self-esteem, manifesting as reduced confidence, increased shyness, and inadequate social skills (Tanadi & Wijaya, 2022). Additionally, they may express dominance and superiority over others (Papousek, 2018).

Ridwan & Arifin (2024) observed that humor possesses a distinctive charm in Islamic communication, as it fosters a relaxed environment, captures attention, and alleviates participant monotony. Within the framework of Islamic communication, humor serves as an effective instrument for delivering messages more engagingly and memorably, acting as a potent means of attracting attention.

A key indicator of humor in a speech is the presence of joy, which is often expressed through smiles or laughter from the interlocutor (Abdullah et al., 2022). While humor is often intended to elicit joy, it can, in practice, demean and insult individuals. Martin et al. (2003), as cited in Tanadi & Wijaya (2022), define humor as a phenomenon that can be categorized into two types: adaptive and maladaptive. Adaptive humor includes self-enhancing humor and affiliative humor. Self-enhancing humor is characterized by a high tolerance and a lack of harm to others, whereas affiliative humor strengthens interpersonal relationships by eliciting laughter. Maladaptive humor includes aggressive humor, which targets others as the subject of the joke, and self-defeating humor, which incorporates elements of insult and targets oneself.

The dialogic speech act taxonomy proposed by Weigand (2010) offers a valuable micro-interactional lens, yet research from the past five years demonstrates that it is insufficient for identifying forms of verbal harm rooted in sociocultural norms, gendered relations, and institutional authority. Recent studies emphasize that verbal harm often arises not from linguistic form itself but from patterns of silencing, asymmetric uptake, and unequal allocations of speaking rights embedded in institutional structures (M. Martin & Suratno, 2025). Work in gender and discourse further shows how humor, moral evaluation, and selective interruption operate as subtle mechanisms that sustain social hierarchies and diminish the agency of marginalized groups (Lawson, 2020). Emerging research in critical pragmatics also highlights that verbal harm is cumulative and context-dependent, requiring analytical attention to power relations, institutional positionality, and interpretive practices beyond the categorization of speech-act functions alone (Kádár & House, 2021). Consequently, the adequacy of Weigand's taxonomy depends on its integration with

contemporary sociocultural frameworks that are more sensitive to dynamics of domination and vulnerability in interaction.

The inclusion of sexual violence as a complaint offense has the potential to complicate case resolution. Moreover, when victims of sexual violence face pressure from their immediate surroundings and family members, the likelihood of reporting such incidents diminishes (Vidhiasi, 2024). This study examines the actions of Person 1, suspected of verbal violence, to investigate the potential occurrence of sexual violence against Person 3 during a religious event in a hamlet in Magelang. This study emphasizes Person 1's utterances rather than conducting a legal analysis. This study aims to provide a reference for law enforcement and policymakers concerning the potential for sexual violence that can emerge through verbal means.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This inquiry does not center on legal science; rather, it is a multidisciplinary examination, particularly in the field of forensic linguistics. This indicates that it constitutes a practical examination of linguistic phenomena, concentrating on the linguistic data that arises. This investigation constitutes a qualitative descriptive analysis. Moleong, as cited in Arifianti et al. (2024), posits that qualitative descriptive research yields descriptive data manifested through written or spoken language, which is comprehensively observed (Pratiwi, 2022).

To investigate possible instances of verbal sexual abuse, the researcher observed a one-minute video excerpt from the Instagram account @fuadbakh23. The video depicts a religious outreach event with numerous attendees in a field. The activity is located in a hamlet within Magelang City. The religious leaders engaged in the dialogue are referred to as "Person 1" and "Person 2," while the female participant is designated as "Person 3." The utilization of these initials serves to maintain the secrecy of all persons engaged in this research.

Dependence on a one-minute Instagram video may yield a decontextualized speech event, encompassing significant interactional dynamics—such as conversational sequences, power relations, social pressures, and repetitive behavioral patterns—that are essential for evaluating whether a speech constitutes verbal sexual violence. The absence of the complete video is mitigated by the posting of the identical video clip by national news YouTube accounts *Tribun Jateng* and *Viva.co.id*, accompanied by the same explanation, which substantiates the legitimacy and credibility of the data source employed.

The dialogues presented in the video were subsequently transcribed to enable the analysis of the statements. The researcher uses the Jeffersonian method in transcribing the conversations in the video. Upon completing the transcription of all utterances, the researcher categorized and organized them into four types of dialogic speech acts, as defined by Weigand (2010), by paying attention to the action-reaction process that occurs in the video. The researcher will analyze each speech act utilizing Weigand's (2010) speech act theory to uncover the meaning behind the utterances. The researcher will subsequently apply Law Number 12 of 2022 regarding Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence to assess the potential criminal acts of sexual violence perpetrated by Persons 1 and 2 against Person 3.

To further mitigate researcher bias in transcription and interpretation, the researchers additionally juxtaposed the findings with analogous news items concerning the videos utilized in this study. News articles from *liputan6.com*, *rctiplus.com*, and *merdeka.com* were utilized as supplementary references for transcription and interpretation.

## **DISCUSSION**

The video data features three individuals in the speech process: Person 1, Person 2, and Person 3. The study of the transcription data revealed that representative speech acts are most frequently used by Person 1, Person 2, and Person 3. Nonetheless, there are considerable disparities in the use of representative speech acts among the three individuals.

**Table 1.** Speech Act Realization of Person 1

No.	Speech Act	Type	Amount	%
1	Representative	<i>Action</i>	11	47.8%
		<i>Reaction</i>	4	17.4%
2	Directive	<i>Action</i>	6	26.1%
3	Explorative	<i>Action</i>	2	8.7 %
4	Declarative		0	0 %
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>23</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Table 1 presents findings concerning the speech acts employed by Person 1. Table 1 indicates that Person 1 has produced 23 utterances. Analysis of the 23 utterances revealed that Person 1 employed only three speech act categories: explorative, directive, and representative. Among the three types of speech acts, representative speech acts are most prevalent in Person 1's discourse. Among the 15 representative speech acts analyzed, Person 1 produced 11 utterances categorized as action speech acts. The action speech act indicates that Person 1 aims to persuade both the speech partner and the listener of the truth of the utterance made. This indicates that Person 1 aims to persuade Person 2, Person 3, and the audience present at the religious event of the veracity of their statements regarding Person 3. The relevant utterances are presented in Excerpt 1, Excerpt 2, and Excerpt 3.

### Excerpt 1

1. Person 1 : *Coba cara menyiarkan* (Try to act like broadcasting news) *Directive (order)*
2. Person 3 : *Baik pemirsa masih bersama saya "Person 3"* (Okay viewers, still with me "Person 3") *Representative (Assertive) → Consent (Reaction)*
3. Person 1 : *iiii... apik ya apik ya apik* (*iiii... good good good*) (laughing) *Representative (Constative)*
4. Person 3 : *Cocok mboten bib?* (Does it fit, Bib?) *Explorative (Representative)*
5. Person 2 : a. *Cocok.* (It fits) *Representative (Emotive) → Confirmation (Reaction)*  
 b. *Omongono cepet.* (Talk, quick) *Directive (order)*

- |               |   |   |  |
|---------------|---|---|--|
| 6. Person 1   | : | a. <i>Sek, tak kandani sek.</i> (Wait, let me tell you something, wait) | <i>Directive (request)</i>                 |
|               |   | b. <i>Suarane enake koyo ngono.</i> (Your voice is good)                | <i>Representative (Constative)</i>         |
|               |   | c. <i>Opo meneh desahane (enak).</i> (Moreover her moaning)             | <i>Representative (Assertive)</i>          |
|               |   | d. <i>Iiiaa...</i>  | <i>Representative (Emotive)</i>            |
| 7. Person 1&2 | : | <i>"tertawa"</i> (laughing)   | <i>Empathy → Reaction (Non-linguistic)</i> |

Excerpt 1 indicates that while the distribution of turns among Person 1, 2, and 3 appears equitable, Person 1's utterances significantly outnumber those of Person 2 and Person 3. In utterance number 2, Person 3 produces a statement that is categorized as a reactive utterance, specifically a "consent" (representative). In this scenario, Person 1 issues a directive to Person 3, specifically requesting that Person 3 adopt the manner of speaking characteristic of a broadcaster.

In the subsequent utterance (number 3), Person 1 evaluates Person 3's manner of speaking by repeating the term "*apik*" (nice) three times. Person 1 aims to persuade Person 2, Person 3, and the event participants of the quality of Person 3's voice or speaking style. When analyzed in sequence from utterance 1 to utterance 5, the speech event is characterized solely by Person 1 and Person 2 offering praise to Person 3.

A distinct observation is noted in Data 1, particularly in number 6, letter c. Person 1 is convinced and seeks to persuade Person 2, Person 3, and the participants that Person 3's sighing voice is equally commendable as their broadcaster-like speech. While the term "*desahane* (her moaning)" lacks a negative connotation in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), the inclusion of the utterance "*Iiiaa...*" in point d indicates that Person 1 is invoking an alternative contextual interpretation of the term "*desahane* (her moaning)" beyond its literal definition in KBBI.

The contextual distinction may be construed as Person 1 alluding to sexual conduct. This indicates that Person 1 is envisioning the groaning sounds emitted by Person 3 during sexual intercourse. This situation is further substantiated by the expression "*Iiiaa...*"

articulated by Person 1 and by the laughter of Person 1, Person 2, and the other participants. The visualization created by Person 1 indicates a deliberate intention to depict the sexual action in their thoughts.

Person 1's comment in line 6, letter a, reinforces the conclusion that he wants his remarks acknowledged and accepted by all attendees at the event. The phrase "*Sek, tak kandani sek*. (Wait, I will tell you something, wait)" constitutes a directive utterance, commanding all individuals present at the event to momentarily cease speaking and attend to the forthcoming statement or information from Person 1.

### Excerpt 2

- |    |          |   |   |
|----|----------|---|---|
| 1. | Person 3 | : <i>Kulo polos lho, Gus</i> . (I'm innocent, you know, Gus)  | <i>Obedience (Negative)</i><br>→ <i>Representative (Assertive)</i><br><i>(Reaction)</i>   |
| 2. | Person 1 | : <i>Alah rupamu koyo ngono kok polos</i> . (Your face is like that, why (do you think you are) innocent)   | <i>Acceptance (Negative)</i> → <i>Reaction</i>  |
| 3. | Person 2 | : a. <i>Ayo mbak, lanjutkan</i> . (Come on, continue)<br>b. <i>Apik apik</i> (Very good)  | <i>Directive (order)</i><br><i>Representative (Emotive)</i>   |
| 4. | Person 1 | : a. <i>Ssttt...</i> ( <i>Sshhh...</i> )<br>b. <i>Gak, dia memang polos</i> . (No, she is innocent)<br>c. <i>Cowok itu memang suka dengan cewek yang polos</i> . (Guys do like innocent girls)<br>d. <i>Baik polos pikirannya maupun polos busananya</i> . (Her mind and her nakedness)<br>e. <i>Iiiiaaaa... Modyar</i> (Damn) (Laughing)<br>f. <i>Salahmu ngomong polos</i> . (It's your fault for saying that about being innocent)<br>g. <i>Ayo nduk ayo nduk</i> . (Come on girl) | <i>Directive (order)</i><br><i>Representative (Assertive)</i><br><i>Representative (Assertive)</i><br><i>Representative (Assertive)</i><br><i>Representative (Emotive)</i><br><i>Representative (Assertive)</i><br><i>Directive (order)</i> |

Excerpt 2 commences with Person 3 asserting her innocence. The Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) defines “innocent” as “lacking malicious intent; sincere.” This indicates that, within the discourse, Person 3 seeks to convey that they do not harbor malevolent or immoral views, particularly regarding sexual behavior.

In Excerpt 2, Person 3’s utterance, specifically number 1, is categorized as a “representative (assertive)” utterance. This statement is not an action utterance; instead, it constitutes a negative reaction speech act in response to Person 1’s utterance in Data 1, specifically item number 6. Person 3 dismisses Person 1’s interpretations concerning the significance of the term “*desahane* (her moaning)” as articulated by Person 1.

Despite Person 3’s efforts to dismiss Person 1’s ideas, Excerpt 2, particularly line 2, indicates that Person 1 continues to impose his imagination on Person 3 and other participants as if it were factual. The utterance “*Alah rupamu koyo ngono kok polos* (Your face is like that, why (do you think you are) innocent)” means that Person 1 is sure that the face and even the physical characteristics of Person 3 do not depict a Person who is innocent and does not know anything.

The perceptions of Person 1 concerning sexual activity are reinforced by the statements presented in Excerpt 2, particularly in line 4, letters b, c, and d. Person 1 claims to be innocent; however, the statement “her mind and her nakedness” suggests that Person 1 is envisioning Person 3 in a naked condition.

An analysis reveals similarities in the speech patterns of Person 1, as presented in Excerpt 1 and Excerpt 2. Both patterns show that Person 1 consistently initiates his speech with a directive intended to instruct each individual to remain silent and attend to the forthcoming statement. In Excerpt 2, item 4, section a, Person 1 produces a brief utterance, “Shhh...”, which explicitly directs others to remain silent and attend to his statement.

### Excerpt 3

- |    |            |   |  |  |
|----|------------|---|--|--|
| 1. | Person 1   | : | a. Apa kesanmu dengan “Person 2” dengan sholawatannya?<br>(What is your impression of “Person 2” with his <i>sholawat</i> ?)     | <i>Explorative (Representative)</i>        |
|    |            |   | b. Apa kesanmu? (What is your impression?)   | <i>Explorative (Representative)</i>        |
| 2. | Person 3   | : | <i>Bikin adem.</i> (Makes me comfortable)  | <i>Representative (Emotive) → Reaction</i> |
| 3. | Person 1   | : | <i>Oh bikin adem.</i><br>(Oh, that makes you comfortable)  | <i>Comment</i>                             |
| 4. | Person 3   | : | Personnya <i>bikin adem</i><br>(He makes me comfortable)   | <i>Representative (emotive)</i>            |
| 5. | Person 1   |   | a. Oh.   | <i>Empathy (Reaction)</i>                  |
|    |            |   | b. Tak kasih tau ya. (Let me tell you)   | <i>Directive (order)</i>                   |
|    |            |   | c. Tak kasih tau. (Let me tell you)  | <i>Directive (order)</i>                   |
|    |            |   | d. <i>Kalo</i> panas minum es, <i>kalo</i> penasaran ya dites. (If it's hot, drink ice, if you're curious (with him), try (him)) | <i>Representative (informative)</i>        |
|    |            |   | e. <i>liala...</i>   | <i>Representative (Emotive)</i>            |
| 6. | Person 1&2 | : | “Tertawa” (laughing)   | <i>Empathy → Reaction (Non-linguistic)</i> |

Excerpt 3 illustrates that the speech commences with a question posed by Person 1 to Person 3. The text from lines 1 to 4 does not indicate any occurrence of sexual violence. Line 5 indicates that Person 1 is once more attempting to express his thoughts or imagination regarding Person 3. In line 5, letter d, Person 1 delivers a brief verse. The speech raises the possibility that Person 3 may try (to have sex with) Person 2 if Person 3 shows curiosity toward Person 2. The text pertains to a sexual activity. This indicates that Person 1 once more invokes his imagination, allowing Person 3 to participate in sexual activity with Person 2.

The findings in Data 3 exhibit a pattern consistent with those in Data 1 and 2, specifically regarding directive speech used as an introductory remark before Person 1 articulates his imagination. The directive speech observed in line 5, particularly in letters b

and c, conveys a meaning analogous to the directive speech found in Data 1 and Data 2, specifically as an order for another person to attend to the speech delivered by Person 1.

Findings from Data 1, Data 2, and Data 3 indicate that Person 1 consistently laughs following instances of verbal sexual violence committed by them. This response allows for multiple interpretations. The previously discussed definition of humor suggests that the laughter exhibited by Person 1 signifies an effort to generate humor. Upon examining the utterances and the contextual events, it can be concluded that the humor expressed by Person 1 is aggressive. This occurs as Person 1 intends to humiliate the other individual through speech perceived as humorous.

The findings of directive speech acts in Data 1, Data 2, and Data 3 indicate that the utterance functions as a command from Person 1 to another individual and also reflects Person 1's intention to position himself as the primary focus. This desire suggests that Person 1 has a clear intention to express this. This intention may serve as evidence that Person 1 committed a criminal act of verbal sexual violence.

The findings in Data 1, Data 2, and Data 3, supported by directive statements in the form of orders, suggest that Person 1 attempted to impose his sexual thoughts or imaginations concerning Person 3 on all individuals present at the event. The actions of Person 1, in relation to Law Number 12 of 2022 regarding Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, can be classified as non-physical sexual harassment as outlined in Article 5. The statements made by Person 1 represent sexual acts aimed at the body, sexual desires, and/or reproductive organs, intended to undermine the dignity and honor of an individual based on their sexuality and/or morality. Non-physical sexual violence offenses are subject to a maximum penalty of 9 months' imprisonment and/or a fine not exceeding IDR 10,000,000.

In conjunction with Law No. 12 of 2022, Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2023 regarding the Criminal Code classifies the actions of Person 1 as a criminal offense against morality. Specifically, Article 406 addresses public morality, imposing a maximum imprisonment of 1 year or a maximum fine of category II (IDR 10,000,000). Additionally, Article 407 pertains to pornography, stipulating a minimum imprisonment of 6 months and

a maximum of 10 years, or a minimum fine of IDR 200,000,000 and a maximum fine of IDR 200 billion.

Sexual violence is fundamentally a serious crime that warrants grave consideration. Nevertheless, addressing instances of sexual abuse is frequently obstructed by societal stigma or unfavorable labeling. The Academic Draft of the Draft Law on Sexual Violence (TPKS), prepared by the Civil Society Network and the National Commission on Violence Against Women in 2020, indicates that victims frequently face blame in instances of alleged sexual violence. This encompasses being categorized as “inexpensive ladies” due to their attire, as well as being deemed “sensitive” by societal standards (see Vidhiasi, 2024).

Despite the legal provisions established in the Law on Sexual Violence and the Criminal Code, their application is not guaranteed in every instance of suspected or potential sexual violence. The 2023 Annual Report of the National Commission for Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection indicates a 44% rise in reports of sexual violence in public spaces. The ineffectiveness in addressing cases of sexual violence can be attributed to Law No. 12 of 2022, particularly Article 7, which designates non-physical sexual violence, including verbal offenses, as complaint-based. Consequently, in the absence of a direct complaint from Person 3 concerning the statements made by Person 1, the actions of Person 1 cannot be prosecuted under the relevant legal framework (Mandagi et al., 2021; Pandiangan et al., 2024). This weakens the process of resolving cases of sexual violence while reinforcing the perception that similar statements, such as those made by Person 1, are merely jokes.

A discussion concerning sexual matters is not inherently taboo. This topic has emerged as a significant subject of discussion (Yuniawan, 2005). Accessible broadcasts and reading materials that enhance individual comprehension of sexuality have also facilitated the increase in verbal sexual violence offenses. Sutjipto et al. (2024) indicated that the moans produced by women are frequently perceived as a means of conveying pleasure, which may enhance the sexual arousal of men or both parties involved. The utterance of the word “*desahane* (her moan)” by Person 1 suggests that Person 1 envisions Person 3 experiencing excitement sufficient to elicit a moan (see also Suryanto, 2024). The actions of Person 1,

characterized by the intention of imagination, substantiate the conclusion that Person 1 has committed a crime of sexual violence.

In line with Ridwan & Arifin (2024), humor is frequently used by religious leaders in delivering their teachings, both within and beyond places of worship. Humor or jokes within the framework of religious teachings should adhere to societal standards of propriety and politeness. Ridwan (2010) asserts that these values are imbued with educational content, do not demean or contradict the disseminated religious teachings, and are both interesting and creative. The findings in Data 1, Data 2, and Data 3 indicate that the jokes told by Person 1 do not reflect the values of propriety and politeness prevalent in that society. This indicates that the jokes presented by Person 1, while deemed interesting by many, lack educational merit, demean others, and contradict the religious teachings being conveyed (see also Ridwan & Arifin, 2024). The findings suggest that Person 1 committed the offense of verbal sexual violence.

Research in forensic linguistics employing a speech act theory framework has been notably extensive. The application of Weigand's speech act taxonomy remains infrequent in forensic linguistic research within Indonesia. Weigand's (2010) speech act taxonomy highlights the integrity of the action-reaction process within speech acts (see Tsoumou, 2020; Vidhiasi, 2025). The findings of this study reveal that the presence of directive utterances, coupled with Person 3's lack of direct response to Person 1's statements, illustrates the power dynamics at play, with Person 1 exhibiting dominance over Person 3 (Vidhiasi, 2024). The findings indicate that the application of Weigand's (2010) speech act taxonomy in this study aids in identifying the occurrence of a verbal sexual assault crime perpetrated by Person 1.

## **CONCLUSION**

The resolution of sexual violence cases presents significant challenges. This study's findings indicate that implementing the taxonomy of dialogic speech acts effectively enhances understanding of the context of a speech event. The analysis of Person 3's

response, alongside the evident power dynamics in Person 1's speech, reveals how the taxonomy of dialogic speech acts effectively identifies the verbal sexual violence perpetrated by Person 1. The taxonomy effectively illustrates that humor or jokes may potentially contribute to incidents of sexual violence.

In public events, collective laughter, audience silence, and other forms of social support can function as powerful mechanisms of collective reinforcement for verbal sexual violence. These responses are not pragmatically neutral; laughter often operates as an affiliative signal that normalizes sexually charged or harmful utterances, while silence frequently reflects limited capacity for resistance within hierarchically structured interactions. The audience thus becomes an active co-constructor of the interactional frame, enabling offensive speech to be reinterpreted as humor or as part of socially acceptable norms.

The implications for legal interpretation are significant. Collective reinforcement can blur the assessment of verbal offenses, especially when public reactions are misread as indicators of consent, tolerance, or lack of objection. This dynamic may hinder evidentiary processes and influence law enforcement's perception of the seriousness of the event, even though the conduct clearly meets statutory definitions of verbal sexual harassment. From a sociolinguistic perspective, these dynamics underscore the importance of incorporating collective affect, power relations, and audience alignment into speech-act analysis, as meaning emerges not solely from the speaker's intent but from the broader social negotiations surrounding the utterance.

Even though it is considered successful in revealing the potential for verbal sexual violence, Weigand's (2010) dialogic taxonomy is limited because it examines only micro-level action-counteraction patterns and cannot account for how gendered power relations, institutional authority, and sociocultural hierarchies shape dialogic asymmetries. Contemporary research shows that verbal harm is inseparable from the material and symbolic conditions that determine who can resist and who is silenced. Therefore, speech act analysis must be integrated with power-oriented frameworks so that failed

counteractions can be interpreted as linguistic manifestations of verbal sexual violence sustained by unequal social structures.

Overall, the interplay between public responses and sexually harmful speech demonstrates that verbal violence operates not only at the textual level but also within wider social structures. To prevent the institutional and cultural reproduction of harm, an interdisciplinary approach—integrating legal studies, sociolinguistics, and social-performativity frameworks—is necessary to ensure interpretations that are accurate, context-sensitive, and oriented toward protecting victims.

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