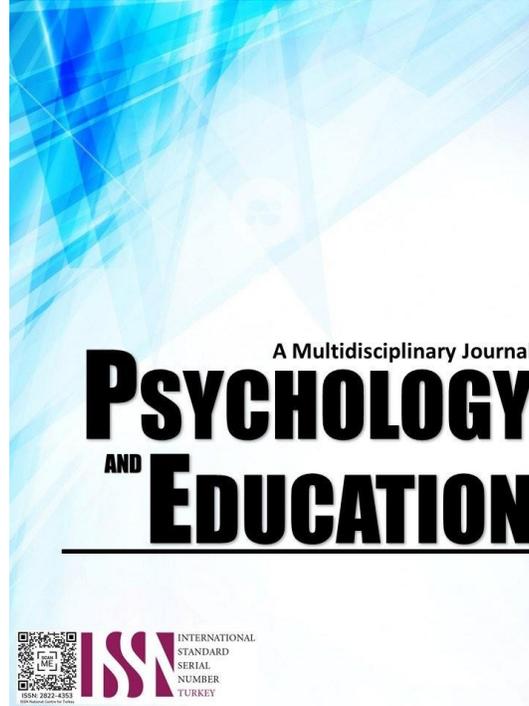


# AN IN-DEPTH PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS ON LETTERS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENTS



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## An In-Depth Pragmatic Analysis on Letters of Civic Engagements

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### Abstract

This main purpose of this study was to examine the linguistic elements and underlying meanings within letters of civic engagement. This includes analyzing how individuals and groups use language to advocate for change, influence political discourse, and address societal issues. This study employed a qualitative design utilizing the discourse analysis to which focuses on examining civic engagement letters. As defined by Kaplain (2015), qualitative research, in nature, is systematic and holds a formal process to which it utilizes the data gathered, analysis, interpretation, and representation of data. Thus, this connotes an understanding and elaboration of knowledge, ideas, concepts, and principles and opinion to which scaffolds in setting the hypothesis. The study's findings highlight the importance of speech acts in shaping discourse, which can be directly applied to teaching writing and rhetoric. For instance, assertive speech acts demonstrate how factual statements and affirmations are used to establish credibility, while directive acts illustrate how requests and commands can influence readers. Teaching students to identify and apply these speech acts in their own writing can enhance their ability to craft persuasive arguments, whether in academic essays, business communication, or civic discourse. It can be concluded that different speech acts play a crucial role in civic engagement letters, shaping how messages are communicated and received. Assertive speech acts help establish credibility and reinforce key points, while directives encourage action and persuade audiences to get involved. Commissive speech acts build trust by making commitments, and expressive acts promotes emotional connections, whether through praise, gratitude, or criticism. Together, these elements demonstrate how language is carefully used to influence public opinion and drive civic participation. Understanding these speech acts gives us valuable insights into how written communication can be a powerful tool for engagement and change.

**Keywords:** *civic engagement, discourse analysis, speech acts, persuasive writing, qualitative research*

### Introduction

The use of language in civic engagement serves as a tool of power and is deeply political in nature. It is closely linked to issues of group identity, social status, and citizenship. In the context of civic engagement, language, literacy, power, individuals, and nations are interconnected. As a result, communication can become complex, and the intended meaning may be challenging to interpret without a shared understanding and context. In essence, the implications of meaning in civic discourse cannot be fully understood without examining how language is utilized and framed in relation to power, society, and context. This underscores the inadequacy of relying solely on the literal meaning of words to derive meaning and analyze intended messages in political discourse, such as letters (Iredele, 2021).

In the USA, people often write letters—whether opinion pieces, online posts, or messages to elected officials—when confronting local issues or systemic injustices, driven by the belief that written communication can strengthen the political community. This study connects Martin Luther's theology of good works with political theory to examine the role and value of such practices. Luther's view that good works discipline the body and serve the neighbor in love offers a framework for understanding political correspondence as a means of cultivating civic skills and resisting indifference, cynicism, and self-righteousness. Letters, seen as acts of service and neighborly love, reflect a commitment to dialogue and collective improvement, though their ultimate impact remains uncertain (Bateza, 2023).

Whereas, in the Philippines, civic engagement letters play a part in encouraging active participation in societal issues. These letters allow individuals and groups to communicate their concerns, advocate for change, and engage with government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders. They are tools for advocacy, awareness, and collaboration, reflecting the values and aspirations of those who write them. By addressing issues through letters, people can promote dialogue, propose solutions, and influence decision-making processes. Although their impact may be incremental, civic engagement letters remain an important part of the effort to drive meaningful change in a society where active involvement and vigilance are essential for addressing systemic challenges (Turner, 2019).

This study addresses an urgent need to understand how language shapes societal participation and decision-making. In a time when civic engagement is crucial to addressing pressing social and political challenges, the role of written correspondence—letters, in particular—remains underexplored. These letters serve as vital tools for advocacy, negotiation, and the expression of collective concerns, yet their effectiveness depends heavily on the strategies and pragmatics of their language use. Meanwhile, this holds significant social relevance, as it uncovers how civic engagement letters can influence policy, promotes inclusivity, and strengthen democratic participation. By analyzing the structure, intent, and context of these letters, it provides insights into their potential to empower individuals and communities. The findings aim to guide citizens, advocates, and policymakers in crafting impactful

correspondence that bridges communication gaps, amplifies marginalized voices, and drives meaningful change in society.

There are various studies which also explored and examined civic engagement letters. In the study of Iredele (2021), entitled “A pragmatics of civic engagement an analysis of obasanjo’s letters,” and the study of Bateza (2023) entitled “The precarious power of a strongly worded letter: Political correspondence, Lutheran theology, and civic participation,” civic engagement letters served as the focus. However, while the aforementioned studies have been informative, a critical viewpoint on the in-depth pragmatic analysis on civic engagement letters concerning letters in Kapalong, Davao del Norte.

The researcher closely followed ethical guidelines while studying how civic engagement letters through the lens of pragmatics, safeguarding the study’s integrity and trustworthiness. By utilizing techniques for gathering and examining data, the research sought to produce thorough and enlightening findings that would be advantageous to a range of interested parties. The gathered data was carefully evaluated to produce relevant discoveries that were in line with the objectives of the research. These results were spread through various channels. Copies were printed and placed in the school library for easy access by readers who were interested readers. Moreover, attempts were undertaken to showcase the research at appropriate academic conferences and to get it published in reputable scholarly journals or on respected online platforms. These strategies for sharing information are intended to make the research’s important findings about civic engagement letters more available to a larger audience aiming to reach a wider understanding and discussion.

### Research Questions

The study aims to answer two critical research questions concerning letters of civic engagement letters. These questions focus on understanding the key themes that emerge in these letters, specifically, how they reflect the goals and values of community involvement and service:

1. What are the emerging themes present in letters of civic engagement?
2. What speech act features are present in letters of civic engagements?

### Methodology

#### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative design utilizing the discourse analysis to which focuses on examining civic engagement letters. As defined, qualitative research, in nature, is systematic and holds a formal process to which it utilizes the data gathered, analysis, interpretation, and representation of data. Thus, this connotes an understanding and elaboration of knowledge, ideas, concepts, and principles and opinion to which scaffolds in setting the hypothesis (Kaplain, 2015).

This study adopts a qualitative research design to comprehensively investigate civic engagement letters in Kapalong, Davao del Norte. The qualitative approach is particularly well-suited for examining the nuances of language use in written communications, such as civic engagement letters, as it emphasizes in-depth analysis over numerical data. By focusing on language, this methodology allows for a deeper understanding of the ways in which individuals express their concerns, advocate for change, and engage with the community. It also enables the researcher to explore the perspectives and insights of the participants, capturing the complexities of language and its role in civic participation. This approach thus provides a rich, detailed account of the subject, allowing for an exploration of specific language choices and their implications in civic discourse.

Specifically, discourse analysis is a qualitative research method that examines how language is used in real-life situations, focusing on the relationship between language and its social context. It investigates the purposes and effects of different types of language, cultural rules and conventions in communication, and how values, beliefs, and assumptions are communicated. Discourse analysis is often associated with critical inquiry approaches and perspectives because analysis of language can reveal unequal power relations and inequality (Simply Psychology, 2024).

In the context of the, discourse analysis serves as a valuable tool to explore how language functions within these letters to influence, persuade, and mobilize action. By examining the linguistic choices and structures within civic engagement letters, the study aims to uncover the underlying intentions and social dynamics at play. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how language is strategically used to perform various actions, such as requesting, advising, or commanding, thereby highlighting the power of language in shaping civic participation and social change.

#### Instrument

For this study, the corpora that were utilized were the civic engagement letters, which were collected directly from the concerned government and non-government agencies within Kapalong, Davao del Norte. The sources of the corpora that were used were suited to this study given their credibility and being reliable providers of civic engagement letters. The researcher collected a total of fifty-one (51) letters from various offices of the Local Government Unit of Kapalong, and Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology (KCAST).

The news articles were also selected using a specified criterion: (a) civic engagement letters that are from government and non-government agencies in Kapalong, Davao del Norte; (b) relevance to the topic (i.e., civic engagement), ensuring that chosen letters

directly pertain to the research topic; and lastly, (c) letters crafted between October 2024 and February 2025. This method aims to provide a focused and comprehensive analysis of pertinent information within the specified criteria. The researcher gathered the said research materials with the consideration of the criteria to reach the desired number of corpora. Moreover, the letters that served as the research materials were named CEL which stands for Civic Engagement Letter. Thus, the research materials were labeled as CEL01, CEL02, CEL03... CEL51.

### **Procedure**

As the researcher leading this study, I undertook a well-defined series of steps to ensure a systematic and ethically sound approach to data collection. This involved the strategic design of the research methodology, where I made thoughtful choices regarding data collection methods and sampling techniques. Ethical considerations, such as obtaining informed consent, preserving confidentiality, and safeguarding collected data, were integral components of this phase. I remained dedicated to upholding these ethical principles throughout the entire data collection process, prioritizing the credibility and reliability of the information gathered. This meticulous and principled approach underscores the integrity of the study's methodology.

The initial and crucial step involved coordinating with my research adviser to gain a clear understanding of the required procedures for conducting this study. Given that employing the discourse analysis approach was a new venture for me as a researcher, I took the initiative to prepare a set of questions. These inquiries were directed towards my research adviser, aiming to comprehensively grasp the entire process of the study. Recognizing my responsibility as a researcher, I sought to enhance my knowledge about the chosen methodology, ensuring a thorough and informed execution of the study.

The research corpus for this study comprised 51 civic engagement letters in Kapalong, Davao del Norte. Given the abundance of letters, I opted for a purposive sampling method, adhering to the specific criteria outlined above to narrow down the selection. The objective of this study was to uncover speech acts present in the letters and their frequency. To ensure alignment with this goal, I carefully selected letters that were directly relevant to the study's objectives.

### **Data Analysis**

To investigate the research questions, the research materials for this study consisted of 51 civic engagement letters. The selection of these letters was based on specific criteria that aligned with the research objectives. Subsequently, I employed a qualitative research design using a discourse analysis approach to analyze these articles in-depth. This approach allowed me to explore civic engagement letters through the lens of pragmatics.

In qualitative research, the process of data analysis is described as "individually tailored, adjusted, and carefully orchestrated." Consequently, the researcher integrated personal insights aligned with the perspectives of relevant theorists. However, the analysis of data involved a series of systematic steps to capture and articulate the study's findings and conclusions. The researcher diligently organized and thoroughly examined the gathered data to construct a comprehensive description of the subject under investigation. Subsequently, the data was categorized and interpreted in alignment with the theory guiding the study, insights from various literature, and the researcher's own perspective. Specifically, in this study, the researcher categorized the expressions within the utterances and interpreted them through the lens of the Speech Act Theory (Creswell, 2013).

The examination of civic engagement letters was conducted within the framework of Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory. This analytical approach encompassed the identification of the locutionary aspect of the letters. The categorization of the utterance based on its illocutionary act, and the interpretation of the perlocutionary act within the discourse. Simultaneously, the study provided a delineation and description of the communication situation context surrounding the letters, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the speech act analysis. Precisely, the examination of the locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act within the letters will draw upon the studies of Nurhayati and Yuwartik (2016) and Dylgjeri (2017). The locutionary act, defined as the act of saying something and encompassing the set of words uttered by the speaker, was a focal point of analysis. Identifying this locutionary act marked the initiation of the analysis and interpretation within the study.

Moreover, the examination of the illocutionary act within the locution adhered to Searle's (1969) proposition in the speech act theory, following the methodology outlined by the aforementioned scholars. In line with this, the writer's intention and purpose behind a particular utterance were interpreted and categorized into five illocutionary acts: assertive, commissive, expressive, directive, and declarative. Consequently, the study delved into the intention and meaning conveyed by the writers of the letters by classifying the locution according to the Illocutionary Act categories. The researcher delineated the speaker's intent in the utterance, thereby aiding the analysis of the perlocutionary act.

Finally, following the completion of data analysis, the researcher submitted the research paper to an expert in applied linguistics to undergo scrutiny and validation. This step aimed to ensure the thorough examination and verification of both the methods employed and the overall data analysis.

### **Ethical Considerations**

To ensure proper practice and conduct of the study, the ethical codes were considered and followed which were observed and applied

towards the implementation of this study. These were the following: respect for persons, beneficence, justice, consent, and confidentiality (Mack et al., 2005).

Respect for persons demands a dedication to upholding the autonomy of study participants and, if autonomy may be compromised, to shield them from being taken advantage of because of their vulnerability. All research subjects must be treated with dignity. Following this rule guarantees that individuals were not employed only as a way to further research goals (Mac et al., 2005).

Since this study was corpora-based and did not involve interviewing research participants to collect data, this principle was upheld by ensuring that no individuals/writers included in the news articles that were used as research material was used for non-academic purposes. The researcher ensured that the materials were used solely for educational and research purposes, with no intention of exploiting or misrepresenting the writers. The focus of the study remained academic and respectful throughout. Moreover, the researcher strictly adhered to ethical guidelines concerning the use of the data. All letters used for research purposes were selected and treated with utmost respect for the privacy and rights of the individuals featured in them. Personal information or identifying details of the authors were carefully anonymized or removed to protect their privacy. This practice helped maintain the confidentiality of the individuals involved and upheld their dignity.

Researchers must respect informed consent as a matter of ethics. According to Jefford and Moore (2008), the informed consent ethical principle is that the researcher guarantees or ensures that research participants participate in the study voluntarily and with full knowledge of what it takes to be a part of the research (Richards & Schwartz, 2002). Before starting the research, the researchers must make sure the participants have given their consent. Before the participant (potentially) enters the study, consent must be sought.

The corpora of this research were taken from the various agencies; hence, such were readily available, and consent was no longer required. When using publicly available corpora in research, consent from individuals who generated or shared that content may not be required due to the nature of publicly accessible information. However, ethical considerations for the proper handling and use of these materials ensure ethical conduct in handling the materials. The research adhered to ethical guidelines and codes of conduct relevant to academic research. These guidelines often emphasize the importance of respecting intellectual property rights and maintaining the confidentiality of individuals. Moreover, the researcher maintained robust data security practices to prevent unauthorized access to the research materials. This included secure storage, password protection, and encryption where necessary, to safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of the data.

Beneficence refers to moral behavior that involves acting in ways that are beneficial to others while encouraging their safety and welfare (Pieper & Thomson, 2016). In qualitative research, researchers must safeguard subjects from harm, defend their autonomy, and respect their welfare. Moral behavior known as beneficence is classified as acts of kindness and altruism that go above and beyond the call of duty (Arifin, 2018). Researchers can adhere to this code of ethics by avoiding harm, limiting harm, and maximizing any potential benefits.

The corpora that were utilized in this study were never used to harm, disrespect, or insult the persons featured in the materials. The researcher secured the protection and well-being of such individuals by safeguarding the utilization of the materials strictly for research use. On the other hand, the researcher guaranteed that the results of the analysis were of significant use for those individuals who are in the news and media industry. By framing the research in this way, the study aimed to benefit both researchers and society at large by advancing knowledge and understanding of civic engagement letters. To maximize benefits and minimize harm, the researcher handled the data with care and sensitivity. This includes ensuring that potentially sensitive or harmful content were used and reported ethically, avoiding any potential harm to individuals or groups mentioned in the corpora. On the other hand, the study was conducted with a commitment to avoiding harm to technical writers. It refrained from engaging in any activities that could negatively impact these communities and respected the norms and guidelines of the online platforms.

When conducting research, researchers should adhere to the ethical principles of maintaining confidentiality and privacy. The terms confidentiality and anonymity are frequently used interchangeably in human subject research, therefore recognizing the distinction between the two is essential when developing protocols to ensure ethical conduct in research. According to Kaiser (2009), confidentiality describes a scenario in which the researcher is aware of the participant's identity but takes the appropriate precautions to prevent that identity from being recognized or learned by others.

In the course of this corpora-based research, where no research participants were involved, maintaining confidentiality was paramount. Thus, the researcher implemented a series of measures to protect the privacy and rights of the writers whose publicly available online data were analyzed. Anonymization was achieved through the removal of personally identifiable information, ensuring that no names or identifying details were disclosed. Instead, codes and labels were adeptly used as substitutes for specific identifiers. Additionally, transparent reporting practices and secure data storage procedures further reinforced the commitment to safeguarding confidentiality. Thus, the research diligently adhered to pertinent legal and ethical standards concerning data privacy and confidentiality, guaranteeing full compliance with the prevailing regulations and guidelines.

Justice is characterized by the equitable treatment of every individual, ensuring that each person, irrespective of age, gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, or other variables, is afforded an equal opportunity to partake in the advantages and costs of the research. Nevertheless, it is the ethical obligation of the researcher to ensure that their research does not lead to any form of injustice or bias at



any phase of the study, particularly in the selection of research participants, to prevent the exclusion of any particular group (Farrugia, 2019).

To ensure justice in this study, the researcher established specific inclusion criteria when selecting corpora for analysis. These criteria were designed to be objective and non-discriminatory, ensuring that a diverse range of news articles were included, thus avoiding any undue exclusion or bias. The selection process for corpora followed a systematic and unbiased approach, offering equal opportunity to all eligible materials that meet the predefined criteria. This approach prevented favoritism or arbitrary selection, promoting fairness in the research. Moreover, during the analysis phase, the researcher maintained an impartial stance when examining the framing techniques of news writers. The analysis aimed to be objective and free from any preconceived judgments or biases, ensuring that each writer’s discourse received equitable scrutiny.

On the other hand, recognizing that the primary beneficiaries of this study would be the technical writers themselves, the researcher emphasized the practical relevance of the research findings. The results were presented in a way that could be applied by technical writers to enhance their techniques, thereby promoting equitable access to research outcomes.

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the study. Thematic outlines and speech act features present in letters of civic engagement.

### Research Question 1: What are the emerging themes present in letters of civic engagement?

This part delves into the thematic outline evident in letters of civic engagement. The analysis was based upon the J.L. Austin and John Searle’s Speech Acts Theory, which serves as the lens for analyzing and evaluating the language used in letters of civic engagement

Table 1. Emerging Themes Present in Letters of Civic Engagement

Emerging Themes	Civic Engagement Letter Excerpts
Civic Responsibility and Youth Engagement through Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Gearing up for new normal education, the Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology is an institution that promotes quality education and instills moral values to its students. In line with the opening of classes for the AY 2022-2023 the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office initiated to conduct community extension services with the theme: Students Support Brigada Eskwela 2022 “Eskwela for the PEOPLE (Enumerating the Core Values): A Donation Drive for DepEd Schools” of the identified schools.” (CEL06)</li> <li>“It is one of the aims of the National Service Training Program to spread awareness and contributes to the civic and general welfare in the youth by developing the ethics of service and patriotism while undergoing training in any of its three program components as mentioned in the Republic Act 9163 also known as the NSTP Law of 2001.” (CEL09)</li> </ul>
Community Engagement through Coordinated Service Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“...In line with this, the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office would like to inform you that the students under this program will conduct a clean-up drive...”(CE01)</li> <li>“Anent to this, the NSTP Office would like to ask permission to allow us to collect donations to all NSTP LTS and CWTS students of the following identified school materials...” (CEL06)</li> <li>“In line to this, the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office would like to request peace and order assistance during the Feeding Program to the children of Ilaboon, Maniki, Kapalong, Davao del Norte and Biokong, Sampao, Kapalong, Davao del Norte.”(CEL09)</li> <li>“In line with this, the Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology - National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office would like to ask permission from your good office to allow the selected faculty and ROTC students to conduct a clean-up drive and extension services.” (CEL15)</li> </ul>
Organized Youth Involvement in Community-Oriented Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“...this coming Tuesday at Sitio Biokong, Sampao, Kapalong, Davao del Norte, August 13, 2024, at exactly 6:00 o’clock in the morning to 5:00 o’clock in the afternoon. The participants of this activity are the first-year students, both male and female, under ROTC component. This activity is initiated by the office to prepare the vicinity of the area for the Galing Pook 2024 site visitation...” (CEL01)</li> <li>“The collection will be done by section and the deadline will be on August 18, 2022 at 10:00 o’clock in the morning.”(CEL06)</li> <li>“...this coming October 7, 2022, Friday at exactly 8:00 o’clock in the morning. The participants of this activity are the 1st year Students under LTS, CWTS and ROTC. At the same time, to partner your agency in the implementation of this event.” (CEL09)</li> </ul>
Appeal for Support and Shared Responsibility in Community Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“We hope for your support and positive response to this activity, as these donations will do so much to our identified beneficiaries which are the selected 14 Elementary and 6 Secondary schools.” (CE06)</li> <li>“With this, we are asking for your great support for the realization of the said undertaking and for the guidance and protection of the group.”(CEL09)</li> </ul>
Responsible Implementation and Community Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rest assured that adherence to safety protocols will be strictly monitored during the conduct of this activity, with the assistance of the campus security management team and the NSTP instructor.”(CEL01)</li> <li>“Your positive response towards this request will be highly appreciated. You may contact us through this mobile number 09XXXXXX8 for any queries.” (CEL09)</li> <li>“Rest assured that safety protocols will be strictly monitored during the conduct of this activity, with</li> </ul>

- the assistance of the NSTP instructors and NSTP-ROTC officers.” (CEL33)
- “We hope for your support and positive response to this activity, as these donations will do so much to our identified adopted community.” (CEL47)

Emerging Themes Present in Letters of Civic Engagement. After scrutinizing the corpora, this study revealed that there are five most recurring themes present in letters of civic engagement. Table 1 shows that these five themes are the introduction, issue or concern, supporting details, request or call to action, and conclusion. In the analysis of the fifty-one (51) letters of civic engagement, it was determined that majority uses the mentioned themes.

These statements fall under the theme Civic Responsibility and Youth Engagement through Education because they both highlight the role of educational institutions in fostering moral values and civic-mindedness among students, and they underscore structured programs (like NSTP and Brigada Eskwela) that actively involve youth in community service and nation-building efforts.

CEL06 exemplifies the theme of Civic Responsibility and Youth Engagement through Education by framing student service as an extension of the college’s educational mission. The letter begins by portraying the institution as one that “promotes quality education and instills moral values,” signaling that character and civic virtues are as central to its purpose as academic instruction. By introducing Brigada Eskwela 2022 under the thematic banner “Eskwela for the PEOPLE,” the college integrates community outreach directly into its curriculum for AY 2022–2023. This structured initiative ensures that student participation is not optional but an essential component of their learning experience. Moreover, the donation drive—collecting school supplies for public DepEd schools—serves a dual purpose: it addresses tangible community needs while sensitizing students to educational disparities. In doing so, CEL06 illustrates how KCAST leverages formal programs like the National Service Training Program to transform classroom lessons into civic action, thereby nurturing students into informed, morally grounded, and community-minded citizens.

“Gearing up for new normal education, the Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology is an institution that promotes quality education and instills moral values to its students. In line with the opening of classes for the AY 2022-2023 the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office initiated to conduct community extension services with the theme: Students Support Brigada Eskwela 2022 “Eskwela for the PEOPLE (Enumerating the Core Values): A Donation Drive for DepEd Schools” of the identified schools.” (CEL06)

CEL09 reinforces the theme of Civic Responsibility and Youth Engagement through Education by articulating how the National Service Training Program (NSTP) leverages structured training to instill service-oriented values in students. The excerpt emphasizes that one of NSTP’s primary aims is “to spread awareness and contribute to the civic and general welfare in the youth by developing the ethics of service and patriotism,” linking the program directly to the goals of holistic education under Republic Act 9163. By positioning service and patriotism as learnable and trainable outcomes alongside academic content, the letter underscores the college’s commitment to shaping students not only as scholars but also as active citizens. Furthermore, CEL09 highlights the program’s three components—ROTC, CWTS, and LTS—as formal avenues through which students gain hands-on experience in community engagement. This structured approach ensures that youth involvement is guided by educational objectives, making civic participation an integral part of their development. In sum, CEL09 demonstrates how KCAST’s NSTP embeds civic responsibility within its educational framework, preparing students to apply their learning for the betterment of society.

“It is one of the aims of the National Service Training Program to spread awareness and contributes to the civic and general welfare in the youth by developing the ethics of service and patriotism while undergoing training in any of its three program components as mentioned in the Republic Act 9163 also known as the NSTP Law of 2001.” (CEL09)

CEL01 fits the theme of Community Engagement through Coordinated Service Initiatives because it formally notifies stakeholders that the NSTP Office is organizing a clean-up drive. The phrase “In line with this” signals continuity from the program’s broader objectives into a concrete community action. By framing the activity as an official NSTP initiative, the letter underscores the need for coordination—among students, program staff, and local authorities—to secure permissions, resources, and logistical support necessary for a successful event.

“...In line with this, the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office would like to inform you that the students under this program will conduct a clean-up drive...” (CE01)

CEL06 exemplifies this theme by requesting permission “to collect donations to all NSTP LTS and CWTS students” for identified school materials. The structured ask (“Anent to this, the NSTP Office would like to ask permission...”) shows careful planning: materials are itemized, participants are grouped by program component, and the request is routed through proper channels. This level of organization highlights how community engagement is a collaborative effort that depends on clear communication between the college, its students, and external partners.

“Anent to this, the NSTP Office would like to ask permission to allow us to collect donations to all NSTP LTS and CWTS students of the following identified school materials...” (CEL06)

CEL09 demonstrates coordinated engagement in its appeal for “peace and order assistance during the Feeding Program.” By explicitly seeking support from security or civic agencies, the letter acknowledges that successful community service requires more than student

goodwill—it requires inter-agency collaboration. This request ensures that while students focus on delivering meals to children in Ilaboon and Biokong, external partners manage safety and crowd control, reflecting a holistic approach to service planning.

“In line to this, the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office would like to request peace and order assistance during the Feeding Program to the children of Ilaboon, Maniki, Kapalong, Davao del Norte and Biokong, Sampao, Kapalong, Davao del Norte.” (CEL09)

CEL15 brings the theme full circle by combining a clean-up drive with “extension services” and involving both “selected faculty and ROTC students.” The phrasing— “Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology ... would like to ask permission”—positions the activity as jointly owned by academic and military-training components. This fusion of resources and expertise illustrates how multiple arms of the institution work together, leveraging different strengths (faculty guidance, ROTC discipline, community networks) to implement a single, coordinated service initiative.

“In line with this, the Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology - National Service Training Program (NSTP) Office would like to ask permission from your good office to allow the selected faculty and ROTC students to conduct a clean-up drive and extension services.” (CEL15)

Organized youth involvement in community-oriented initiatives reflects a deliberate strategy to engage students in meaningful service projects through clear planning, role assignments, and collaborative partnerships. By outlining specific dates, times, locations, and participant groups, these letters demonstrate how the National Service Training Program (NSTP) transforms civic engagement from a general call to action into structured, manageable tasks. Such organization not only enhances accountability and efficiency but also empowers young participants—across ROTC, LTS, and CWTS components—to take ownership of their roles, develop teamwork skills, and gain firsthand experience in addressing community needs.

CEL01 illustrates Organized Youth Involvement in Community-Oriented Initiatives by providing precise scheduling and participant details for a site-preparation activity. By specifying the date (August 13, 2024), time (6:00 AM–5:00 PM), location (Sitio Biokong), and the cohort (first-year male and female ROTC students), the letter demonstrates meticulous planning. This level of detail not only ensures accountability but also empowers students with clear roles and expectations, reinforcing their active participation in preparing for the Galing Pook 2024 visitation.

“...this coming Tuesday at Sitio Biokong, Sampao, Kapalong, Davao del Norte, August 13, 2024, at exactly 6:00 o’clock in the morning to 5:00 o’clock in the afternoon. The participants of this activity are the first-year students, both male and female, under ROTC component. This activity is initiated by the office to prepare the vicinity of the area for the Galing Pook 2024 site visitation...” (CEL01)

CEL06 continues this theme through its structured approach to a donation drive: “The collection will be done by section and the deadline will be on August 18, 2022 at 10:00 o’clock in the morning.” By organizing students into sections and setting a firm deadline, the letter transforms a broad call for donations into a series of manageable tasks. This sectional breakdown fosters teamwork, gives each group ownership over specific responsibilities, and streamlines coordination—key elements of engaging youth in community efforts.

“The collection will be done by section and the deadline will be on August 18, 2022 at 10:00 o’clock in the morning.”(CEL06)

CEL09 further exemplifies organized youth involvement by combining multi-component participation with external partnership. The letter announces a Feeding Program scheduled for October 7, 2022 at 8:00 AM and lists participants from LTS, CWTS, and ROTC. By involving all three NSTP components and inviting an external agency to partner in implementation, the initiative becomes a collaborative enterprise. This inclusion broadens students’ exposure to diverse service contexts and models how organized youth engagement can effectively address community needs.

“...this coming October 7, 2022, Friday at exactly 8:00 o’clock in the morning. The participants of this activity are the 1st year Students under LTS, CWTS and ROTC. At the same time, to partner your agency in the implementation of this event.” (CEL09)

Together, CEL01, CEL06, and CEL09 showcase the effectiveness of organized frameworks in mobilizing youth for community service. From preparing sites for major civic events to coordinating donation drives and feeding programs, these initiatives illustrate how detailed scheduling, sectional responsibilities, and inter-agency collaboration strengthen student engagement and maximize impact. Ultimately, by embedding structure into service activities, educational institutions like KCAST ensure that civic participation is not only accessible but also professionally executed.

Appeals for support and shared responsibility in community initiatives play a pivotal role in mobilizing resources and fostering collaborative action. By explicitly requesting assistance and emphasizing the collective impact on beneficiaries, these letters transform individual goodwill into organized efforts. Within the context of civic engagement, such appeals not only secure material or logistical support but also reinforce the notion that successful community projects depend on the active participation of multiple stakeholders—schools, local authorities, and civic groups alike.

In CEL06, the request “We hope for your support and positive response to this activity, as these donations will do so much to our identified beneficiaries which are the selected 14 Elementary and 6 Secondary schools” exemplifies the appeal theme by linking the

ask directly to tangible outcomes. By naming the exact number and level of schools, the letter personalizes the appeal, making it clear how contributions will address specific educational needs. This specificity creates a compelling case for involvement, motivating recipients to participate in a clearly defined philanthropic endeavor.

“We hope for your support and positive response to this activity, as these donations will do so much to our identified beneficiaries which are the selected 14 Elementary and 6 Secondary schools.” (CE06)

Similarly, CEL09 underscores shared responsibility through its plea: “With this, we are asking for your great support for the realization of the said undertaking and for the guidance and protection of the group.” Here, the appeal extends beyond material aid to include moral and logistical backing—guidance and protection—highlighting the multifaceted nature of support required for the Feeding Program. By broadening the scope of the request, the letter invites recipients to engage in a supportive partnership, ensuring both the safety and success of the operation.

“With this, we are asking for your great support for the realization of the said undertaking and for the guidance and protection of the group.”(CEL09)

Together, these letters illustrate how carefully crafted appeals can galvanize diverse forms of support, from donations of goods to on-the-ground assistance. By clearly articulating the needs of the beneficiaries and the types of support required, CEL06 and CEL09 demonstrate that shared responsibility is foundational to effective community engagement. In doing so, they model a communication strategy that not only secures resources but also builds enduring partnerships rooted in mutual investment in community well-being.

Responsible implementation and community partnership are essential for ensuring that civic initiatives are executed safely, transparently, and with broad-based involvement. By explicitly addressing safety measures, communication channels, and collaborative oversight, these letters demonstrate a commitment to professionalism and joint ownership of projects. This theme underlines that beyond planning and resource mobilization, successful community activities hinge on rigorous execution and trusted partnerships between educational institutions, security personnel, and civic stakeholders.

In CEL01, the assurance “Rest assured that adherence to safety protocols will be strictly monitored during the conduct of this activity, with the assistance of the campus security management team and the NSTP instructor” highlights responsible implementation. By specifying which teams will oversee safety measures, the letter conveys organized risk management and accountability, reassuring recipients that student-led clean-up drives or site preparations will proceed without compromising health or security.

“Rest assured that adherence to safety protocols will be strictly monitored during the conduct of this activity, with the assistance of the campus security management team and the NSTP instructor.” (CEL01)

CEL09 reinforces community partnership through open communication: “Your positive response towards this request will be highly appreciated. You may contact us through this mobile number 09XXXXXXX8 for any queries.” By providing a direct contact line, the letter fosters transparency and responsiveness, inviting stakeholders to engage in a two-way dialogue. This open channel not only facilitates logistical coordination but also builds trust, demonstrating the program’s willingness to collaborate closely with partners.

“Your positive response towards this request will be highly appreciated. You may contact us through this mobile number 09XXXXXXX8 for any queries.” (CEL09)

Similarly, CEL33 echoes the safety assurance found in CEL01— “Rest assured that safety protocols will be strictly monitored during the conduct of this activity, with the assistance of the NSTP instructors and NSTP-ROTC officers.” This repetition across letters emphasizes a standardized approach to risk management, underscoring that all activities, whether tree maintenance or clean-up drives, adhere to the same high standards of oversight and interdepartmental cooperation.

“Rest assured that safety protocols will be strictly monitored during the conduct of this activity, with the assistance of the NSTP instructors and NSTP-ROTC officers.” (CEL33)

Finally, CEL47 combines responsible implementation with partnership: “We hope for your support and positive response to this activity, as these donations will do so much to our identified adopted community.”

While appealing for resources, the letter also implies a shared responsibility for community welfare. By linking donations to tangible community benefits, it positions external supporters as co-custodians of the initiative’s outcomes, reinforcing that successful implementation depends on collective stewardship.

“We hope for your support and positive response to this activity, as these donations will do so much to our identified adopted community.” (CEL47)

Through these assurances and collaborative appeals, CEL01, CEL09, CEL33, and CEL47 collectively showcase how responsible execution and active partnerships form the backbone of effective civic engagement. By detailing safety protocols, providing communication channels, and framing supporters as integral partners, the letters model a holistic approach to community service—one that balances meticulous planning, transparent communication, and shared accountability to achieve meaningful and sustainable impact.



**Research Question 2: What speech act features are present in letters of civic engagements?**

**Table 2.1. Assertive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements**

Class	Category	Civic Engagement Letter Excerpts	Subcategory
Illocutionary act	Assertive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“These statements provide factual information about the NSTP and the upcoming event.” (CEL01)</li> </ul>	Informing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“These statements provide factual information about our objectives, the purpose of the activity, and safety assurances.” (CEL19)</li> </ul>	Informing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“This program aims to train the students to render services contributory to the general welfare and betterment of life of the community.” (CEL23)</li> </ul>	Stating
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Christmas is culturally celebrated as the most joyful time of the year...” (CEL47)</li> </ul>	Stating

In CEL01, the statement is categorized as an assertive because it provides factual information about the NSTP and the upcoming event. It presents details that describe the situation, ensuring that the reader understands what is being communicated as a truth. Since the purpose of an assertive speech act is to convey information or make a claim about reality, this statement fits within that classification.

“These statements provide factual information about the NSTP and the upcoming event.”(CEL01)

For CEL19, the statement also falls under assertives as it declares that the information being shared includes the objectives, purpose, and safety assurances of an activity. By stating these aspects as facts, the speaker commits to their truthfulness, making this an example of an assertive illocutionary act.

“These statements provide factual information about our objectives, the purpose of the activity, and safety assurances.” (CEL19)

In CEL23, the sentence explains the purpose of a program, specifically which it aims to train students to provide services that contribute to the general welfare of the community. Since this is a statement of fact regarding the intent and function of the program, it qualifies as an assertive speech act, as it asserts something about the real world.

“This program aims to train the students to render services contributory to the general welfare and betterment of life of the community.” (CEL23)

Lastly, CEL47 is also an assertive because it makes a factual claim about Christmas, stating that it is culturally celebrated as the most joyful time of the year. This assertion reflects a widely accepted cultural belief and presents it as a general truth, making it an example of an assertive illocutionary act.

“Christmas is culturally celebrated as the most joyful time of the year...” (CEL47)

**Table 2.2. Directive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements**

Class	Category	Civic Engagement Letter Excerpts	Subcategory
Illocutionary act	Directives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“While the sentence informs, it indirectly implies a request for support or acknowledgment of the activity.”(CEL01)</li> </ul>	Asking(indirect)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“With this, we are asking for your great support for the realization of the said undertaking and for the guidance and protection of the group.” (CEL09)</li> </ul>	Asking
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These statements directly request approval and encourage support.” (CEL19)</li> </ul>	Asking
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“We hope for your support and positive response to this activity...”(CEL47)</li> </ul>	Asking
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“With this, we are asking for your great support for the realization of the said undertaking and for the guidance and protection of the group.”(CEL51)</li> </ul>	Suggesting

In CEL01, the statement is considered a directive because, while it primarily provides information, it indirectly implies a request for support or acknowledgment of the activity. Directives are speech acts that aim to get the listener to do something, and in this case, the statement subtly encourages the recipient to recognize or assist with the initiative.

“While the sentence informs, it indirectly implies a request for support or acknowledgment of the activity.”(CEL01)

For CEL09, the statement explicitly asks for support, guidance, and protection for the activity, making it a clear directive. Since it directly calls on the reader to take action and contribute to the success of the initiative, it fits within this category of illocutionary acts.

“With this, we are asking for your great support for the realization of the said undertaking and for the guidance and protection of the group.” (CEL09)

In CEL19, the statement falls under directives because it directly requests approval and encourages support from the recipient. This means it aims to influence the reader’s response and prompt them to take a specific action, which is a key characteristic of directive speech acts.



These statements directly request approval and encourage support.” (CEL19)

For CEL47, the statement expresses hope for support and a positive response, making it a directive because it encourages the recipient to take action in favor of the activity. While it is phrased politely, it still functions as a request, urging the reader to respond positively.

“We hope for your support and positive response to this activity...”(CEL47)

Table 2.3. *Commissive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements*

Class	Category	Civic Engagement Letter Excerpts	Subcategory
Illocutionary act	Commissive	• “This commits the organizers to ensuring safety compliance during the event.” (CEL01)	Promising
		• “The letter implies a commitment to implementing the gift-giving initiative and ensuring donations reach the intended community.” (CEL47)	Promising
		• “The letter implies a commitment to carrying out the Feeding Program and ensuring its contribution to community welfare.”(CEL51)	Promising

Similarly, CEL51 is another example of a directive as it explicitly asks for support, guidance, and protection to help with the success of the initiative. The direct nature of the request makes it a strong directive speech act, as it aims to persuade the recipient to take part in the effort.

“With this, we are asking for your great support for the realization of the said undertaking and for the guidance and protection of the group.”(CEL51)

These statements fall under commissive because they express a commitment from the speaker or the organization to carry out a future action. Commissive speech acts involve pledges, promises, or obligations, indicating that the speaker is taking responsibility for something.

CEL01 qualifies as a commissive because it states that the organizers are committed to ensuring safety compliance during the event. This shows an obligation to follow through on a particular responsibility, which is a defining characteristic of commissive speech acts.

“This commits the organizers to ensuring safety compliance during the event.”(CEL01)

CEL47 is also a commissive because it implies a commitment to implementing the gift-giving initiative and ensuring donations reach the intended community. The statement suggests that the organizers are taking responsibility for successfully carrying out the activity, which aligns with the nature of commissive acts.

“The letter implies a commitment to implementing the gift-giving initiative and ensuring donations reach the intended community.” (CEL47)

CEL51 fits under commissives as well, as it states that there is a commitment to carrying out the Feeding Program and ensuring its contribution to community welfare.

“The letter implies a commitment to carrying out the Feeding Program and ensuring its contribution to community welfare.”(CEL51)

This shows an obligation to not only conduct the program but also make sure it serves its intended purpose, reinforcing the idea of a pledged future action. is also a commissive because it implies a commitment to implementing the gift-giving initiative and ensuring donations reach the intended community. The statement suggests that the organizers are taking responsibility for successfully carrying out the activity, which aligns with the nature of commissive acts.

Table 2.4. *Expressive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements*

Class	Category	Civic Engagement Letter Excerpts	Subcategory
Illocutionary act	Expressives	• "Your positive response towards this request will be highly appreciated."(CEL06)	Thanking
		• “These statements express appreciation and goodwill.” (CEL09)	Thanking
		• "Thank you!" (CEL15)	Thanking
		• “This expresses gratitude and goodwill toward the recipient.”(CEL19)	Thanking

These statements fall under expressives because they convey emotions, attitudes, or psychological states of the speaker, such as appreciation, gratitude, or goodwill. Expressive speech acts are used to express how the speaker feels about a situation rather than to provide information or request action

CEL06 is an expressive because it states that the recipient's positive response "will be highly appreciated." This conveys gratitude in advance, expressing appreciation for any support or acknowledgment given.

"Your positive response towards this request will be highly appreciated."(CEL06)

CEL09 is categorized as an expressive since it explicitly mentions that the statements "express appreciation and goodwill." These are emotional responses that reflect positive feelings toward the recipient, making it a clear example of an expressive speech act. It is an expressive because it states that the recipient's positive response "will be highly appreciated." This conveys gratitude in advance, expressing appreciation for any support or acknowledgment given.

"These statements express appreciation and goodwill." (CEL09)

CEL15 is a strong expressive because it directly says "Thank you!" This is one of the clearest forms of an expressive speech act, as it explicitly conveys gratitude.

"Thank you!" (CEL15)

CEL19 also falls under expressives because it states that the message "expresses gratitude and goodwill toward the recipient."

"This expresses gratitude and goodwill toward the recipient." (CEL19)

By acknowledging and appreciating the recipient, this statement directly aligns with the function of an expressive speech act.

### ***Emerging Thematic Outlines Present in Letters of Civic Engagement***

Letters of civic engagement serve as formal communications that connect institutions with the community, often addressing important initiatives, requests, or collaborative efforts. These letters incorporated key thematic outlines that help convey their message clearly and effectively. Common themes include Civic Responsibility and Youth Engagement through Education, Community Engagement through Coordinated Service Initiatives, Organized Youth Involvement in Community-Oriented Initiatives, Appeal for Support and Shared Responsibility in Community Initiatives, and Responsible Implementation and Community Partnership.

Firstly, the theme of Civic Responsibility and Youth Engagement through Education underscores the importance of integrating civic education into academic curricula to foster active citizenship from an early age. By embedding civic learning within subjects like history and social studies, students develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of democratic principles, preparing them to participate meaningfully in societal affairs. Second, Community Engagement through Coordinated Service Initiatives highlights the role of structured programs in promoting collective action. Initiatives such as community clean-up drives, tree planting, and charity events provide platforms for individuals to contribute to societal well-being, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Thirdly, Organized Youth Involvement in Community-Oriented Initiatives emphasizes empowering young individuals to lead and participate in projects addressing local challenges. By engaging in activities like environmental campaigns or social entrepreneurship, youth not only address pressing issues but also develop leadership skills and civic consciousness. Fourth theme, The theme of Appeal for Support and Shared Responsibility in Community Initiatives reflects the necessity of collaborative efforts between institutions and community members. Letters often serve as calls to action, inviting stakeholders to contribute resources, time, or expertise towards common goals, thereby reinforcing communal bonds and mutual accountability.

Lastly, Responsible Implementation and Community Partnership focuses on the importance of executing initiatives with transparency and inclusivity. Establishing partnerships with local organizations and ensuring community involvement in decision-making processes enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of civic projects. Collectively, these themes illustrate the multifaceted nature of civic engagement letters as tools for promoting active participation, fostering collaboration, and driving positive change within communities.

This particular finding is supported by Al-Urain (2022), who analyzed Abū al-Qāsim al-Shābbī's letters to Muhammad al-Heliwi and highlighted themes of friendship, pain, and idealism. These letters not only reflect the writer's personal struggles but also offer insights into Tunisian society, demonstrating how personal correspondence can serve as a medium for emotional expression and cultural reflection. In this way, civic engagement letters become more than just communication—they help preserve social values and reveal the emotions of individuals during specific historical periods. Through such letters, we can better understand how people connected with each other and responded to the challenges in their communities.

Similarly, Haji (2023) emphasizes the role of thematic progression in academic letters, particularly in graduate personal statements. The study found that patterns such as Reiteration and Zigzag contribute to the structure and identity of the writer, reinforcing the idea that academic correspondence follows distinct organizational strategies. These patterns help writers present their thoughts clearly and build a strong sense of purpose throughout the letter. This suggests that civic engagement letters can also benefit from similar techniques to create a more organized and persuasive message.

Furthermore, Ashadi and Triyono (2023) support this by showing how thematic structures in students' writings correlate with proficiency levels, where high-scoring essays exhibit more sophisticated thematic development compared to lower-scoring ones. This finding suggests that using clear and organized themes can help writers show their ideas more effectively. It also implies that teaching students to plan their themes well can lead to more consistent and higher-quality writing.

In the context of criminal letters, Pramudita et al. (2020) provide evidence that the Zodiac Killer's correspondence maintains consistent themes, indicating a singular authorship and underlying personal motivations. This reinforces the notion that even in anonymous or criminal contexts, letters maintain identifiable thematic patterns that reveal aspects of the writer's intent and psychological state. Such

consistent themes make it possible for analysts to link separate messages back to the same individual with greater confidence. Studying these patterns also offers a window into the writer's emotions and thought processes at the time of writing.

### ***Assertive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements***

Assertive statements help make political messages clear and memorable by highlighting key points and guiding readers' understanding. Including factual reports builds trust and shows why issues matter, while strong endorsements reinforce commitment and encourage shared support. Varying the level of force in different messages shows how writers adapt their tone to fit each audience and situation. When used thoughtfully, these techniques boost the persuasiveness of communication and motivate people to take action. However, relying too heavily on assertive language can sometimes backfire by causing resistance or doubt.

This finding is supported by Iredele (2021), who examined Obasanjo's letters and highlighted the strategic use of assertive speech acts to state political positions. His analysis demonstrates how assertive acts function as tools for shaping public perception and influencing political discourse. These clear and confident statements help writers make their views stand out. They guide readers to focus on important points and understand the writer's goals. When used consistently, these techniques increase the overall impact and persuasiveness of the message.

Similarly, Aini and Vivi (2023) emphasize the role of assertive speech acts in reporting and affirming key issues in civic engagement letters. Their study found that reporting serves as a means to inform or persuade the audience, while affirming strengthens the speaker's stance, reinforcing their commitment to a particular cause. By laying out clear facts and details, writers build trust and help readers understand why an issue matters. Including affirmative statements shows confidence and dedication, which can encourage readers to share the same level of commitment. When facts are presented alongside strong endorsements, messages become both credible and motivating. Together, these techniques create communication that is both trustworthy and persuasive.

The frequency and impact of assertive speech acts also align with previous studies. Iredele (2021) observed that Obasanjo's letters to Buhari contained a higher proportion of assertive acts compared to those addressed to Jonathan, suggesting a calculated use of language to exert political influence. This contrast reveals a deliberate strategy of adapting tone and forcefulness to suit different recipients. Such careful word choice indicates an awareness of power dynamics and a goal to press issues more strongly when needed. By examining these variations, we gain insight into how writers shape their messages to guide responses and achieve their aims.

Moreover, Abdelshahid (2024) found that assertive speech acts function as persuasive strategies in political discourse, with politicians frequently employing them to encourage civic participation. However, while assertive speech acts play a crucial role in civic engagement, their effectiveness is influenced by contextual factors and audience receptiveness. In some cases, an overreliance on assertive acts may provoke resistance or skepticism, demonstrating the nuanced nature of political communication.

### ***Directive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements***

Directive speech acts are a major part of political messages, making up almost half of the total acts in some letters. The most common form is commands, but requests, suggestions, questions, and advice also help guide reader behavior. These language tools work by providing clear instructions and motivating readers to pay attention and act. The way directives are structured can boost their impact by tapping into how people process information. However, their strong persuasive power also means they can be used to manipulate opinions, creating ethical challenges.

Significantly, this finding is bolstered by Iredele (2021), who found that directive speech acts accounted for 48.3% of the total speech acts in Obasanjo's letters, illustrating their significant role in influencing political discourse. This high percentage suggests a deliberate strategy of guiding the audience toward specific viewpoints. By using clear commands and requests, the writer signals what actions readers should take or which ideas to prioritize. Such an approach boosts the persuasive power of the message and helps steer the overall conversation in a targeted direction.

Similarly, Chaerunnisah (2023) observed that commands were the most frequent directive type in Megawati Sukarnoputri's speech, highlighting the use of authoritative language in political communication. These findings reinforce the idea that directive speech acts serve as essential tools for compelling action and engaging audiences in civic matters. Such a directive style helps audiences know exactly what is expected of them. It also keeps the focus on important issues and prevents confusion. Over time, this consistent use of commands can create a sense of urgency and unity among listeners.

Moreover, the classification of directive speech acts aligns with prior research. Chaerunnisah (2023) identified commands, requests, and suggestions as the primary types, with 121 instances of commands, 35 instances of requests, and 28 instances of suggestions in Sukarnoputri's speech. The predominance of commands highlights a strong use of direct instructions to guide the audience. Requests help involve readers by inviting their cooperation and input. Suggestions offer a gentler way to influence behavior, giving people room to decide how to act. This mix of directive styles shows a balanced approach to steering attention while still respecting individual choice.

Additionally, Fitriyah (2022) examined directive speech acts in literary contexts, particularly in Alcott's *Little Men*, and found that questioning and advising also function as effective means of directing behavior—patterns that are similarly applicable in civic

engagement letters. Questioning invites readers to reflect on shared concerns and consider how they can contribute solutions. Advising provides clear suggestions that guide participants toward positive actions and community goals. When combined, these strategies create a supportive dialogue that encourages active involvement and collaboration.

Most importantly, the impact of directive speech acts on civic engagement is further emphasized by Iredele (2021), who noted that these acts serve to mobilize public sentiment and encourage action, demonstrating the strategic use of language in political discourse. These directive statements clearly call on readers to respond and join in shared efforts. By framing messages as direct calls to act, writers can create a sense of urgency and importance. This approach shows how carefully chosen words can turn public opinion into concrete steps and foster greater participation.

Furthermore, Ruytenbeek (2019) supports this perspective through cognitive linguistics, explaining how the form and function of directives influence communication effectiveness. However, while directive speech acts are powerful in shaping civic participation, their potential for manipulation must be acknowledged. The persuasive nature of directives can be exploited to sway public opinion, raising ethical concerns regarding their use in political and civic discourse.

### ***Commissive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements.***

Commissive speech acts, such as promises and offers, play an important role in political messages by showing commitment and building trust with the audience. Although they make up a smaller portion of speech acts, their use is often intentional to reassure people of the speaker's goals and sincerity. Politicians often use these statements to influence public opinion and gain support by appealing to what voters hope to see happen. These acts are powerful in shaping public discussion and encouraging people to get involved. Still, they work best when used alongside other strategies like giving clear facts or directing action, making communication more balanced and effective.

This particular finding is supported by Iredele (2021), who found that commissive speech acts constituted 15% of the total speech acts in Obasanjo's letters, indicating a moderate but deliberate use of promises and commitments in political discourse. The presence of these speech acts shows that the writer aimed to express responsibility and build a sense of trust with the audience. Promises and commitments can help strengthen the relationship between the writer and the public by showing a willingness to take action. Even if used less often, they carry strong meaning and contribute to the overall persuasiveness of the message.

Similarly, Rahayu (2021) emphasized that commissive acts, particularly promises and offers, are essential in political dialogues as they help build trust and rapport with constituents. These findings highlight the strategic role of commitments in letters of civic engagement, where authors seek to assure the public of their intentions and credibility. When writers express clear commitments, they show that they are serious about taking action and responding to public concerns. This helps create a sense of connection between the writer and the readers, making the message more personal and sincere. Over time, repeated use of such promises can strengthen public confidence and support.

Moreover, the persuasive function of commissive speech acts aligns with previous research. Abdelshahid (2024) examined the 2018 Italian electoral campaign and found that politicians frequently used promises as a strategy to influence voter opinions. This shows that commitments are not just expressions of intention but also tools to shape how people think and feel about political figures. By making promises, politicians aim to create hope and confidence among voters. These promises can also serve as a way to highlight their priorities and show alignment with public concerns.

Likewise, Long and Thanh (n.d.) analyzed the 2016 U.S. presidential election and noted that both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump employed commissive acts to assert their political ideologies, with Trump demonstrating a higher frequency of such acts. This suggests that commitments serve as a powerful tool in political rhetoric, reinforcing the speaker's stance while appealing to the audience's expectations.

The broader implications of commissive speech acts in civic engagement letters are further underscored by Iredele (2021) and Abdelshahid (2024), who point out that these acts function as a strategic component of political communication. Their effectiveness lies in their ability to mobilize civic action and shape public discourse. However, while commitments and promises are vital, it is equally important to recognize that political communication does not solely rely on commissives. Other speech acts, such as directives and assertives, also play a crucial role in influencing public perception and guiding civic participation. A combination of these speech acts creates a more balanced and persuasive message, helping writers connect with their audience, express their goals clearly, and encourage action in meaningful ways.

### ***Expressive Speech Act Features in Letters of Civic Engagements***

Expressive speech acts such as gratitude and praise help strengthen community bonds by showing appreciation and encouraging participation. Complaints and criticism are also important because they bring attention to problems and open the way for solutions. Although less common, apologies and even insults can play a role in resolving conflict and expressing strong emotions. These acts can either promote unity or highlight urgent concerns, depending on how they are used. Because their impact depends on tone and context, they must be expressed carefully to avoid misunderstandings and maintain positive communication.

This finding is supported by Ariska and Yanti (2022) and Dini and Rika (2023), who emphasize that gratitude and praise are commonly found in civic letters, serving as tools to foster appreciation and recognition within communities. These expressive speech acts reinforce positive social bonds and encourage civic participation by acknowledging efforts and contributions. When individuals feel seen and valued, they are more likely to stay engaged and continue their involvement in community activities. These acts of appreciation can also inspire others to contribute, creating a cycle of encouragement and support. In this way, simple expressions of thanks or admiration help build a stronger sense of unity and shared purpose.

Similarly, Dini and Rika (2023) and Putri and Juita (2024) highlight that complaints and criticism also play a vital role in civic discourse, as they bring attention to grievances and prompt discussions that may lead to problem-solving. These expressive speech acts help identify issues that affect the community and push leaders or institutions to respond. When concerns are clearly expressed, they create opportunities for dialogue and collaboration. Although they may seem negative, complaints and criticism are important for making change and improving systems. They reflect the public's desire for accountability and better outcomes.

The significance of apologies and insults in civic engagement is further explored by Rahmah (n.d.) and Putri and Juita (2024), who assert that while these acts are less frequent, they are crucial in addressing conflicts and maintaining social harmony. The inclusion of apologies in civic letters can demonstrate accountability, whereas criticisms or even insults may serve as expressions of frustration or calls for urgent action. Apologies help rebuild trust and show a willingness to make amends, which can ease tensions between parties. On the other hand, strong or emotional language like insults, while risky, may reflect the urgency or seriousness of a situation that requires immediate attention. Both forms of expression, when used carefully, can open paths for dialogue and resolution.

The broader functions of expressive speech acts in civic engagement align with the findings of Putri and Juita (2024), who categorize these acts into convivial and conflictive functions. Convivial functions contribute to unity and solidarity, reinforcing shared values and cooperation within a community. On the other hand, conflictive functions highlight tensions or pressing issues, pushing for action and discussion. While expressive speech acts are essential in fostering engagement and community-building, their impact depends heavily on context and intent. Misinterpretations or emotional responses to these acts may lead to conflicts, emphasizing the importance of careful articulation in civic communication.

### ***Implications in Language Teaching***

The findings of this study have significant implications for language teaching, particularly in enhancing students' understanding of speech acts and their role in written communication. Since civic engagement letters are structured with clear thematic outlines and distinct speech act features, educators can use these letters as authentic teaching materials to illustrate how language is employed to achieve specific communicative goals. By analyzing assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive speech acts within these letters, students can gain a deeper understanding of how linguistic choices influence meaning, persuasion, and audience reception. This approach aligns with communicative language teaching, which emphasizes real-world language use and the pragmatic functions of speech. Furthermore, integrating these letters into classroom discussions can help learners recognize the strategic use of language in formal writing, ultimately improving their ability to construct well-organized, purpose-driven texts.

Additionally, the study's findings highlight the importance of speech acts in shaping discourse, which can be directly applied to teaching writing and rhetoric. For instance, assertive speech acts demonstrate how factual statements and affirmations are used to establish credibility, while directive acts illustrate how requests and commands can influence readers. Teaching students to identify and apply these speech acts in their own writing can enhance their ability to craft persuasive arguments, whether in academic essays, business communication, or civic discourse. Moreover, analyzing the pragmatic functions of speech acts in different contexts can cultivate students' critical thinking skills, allowing them to evaluate the effectiveness and ethical implications of language use in political, legal, and social communication. By incorporating these elements into language instruction, educators can equip students with the skills necessary to engage in meaningful discourse, both in formal writing and everyday interactions.

Beyond improving writing proficiency, the study's insights also support the development of media literacy and critical reading skills. Given that civic engagement letters often employ strategic language to influence public opinion, students can benefit from analyzing the rhetorical and persuasive techniques used in these texts. This practice enables learners to deconstruct messages in political, journalistic, and social media contexts, helping them identify bias, intent, and framing strategies. Additionally, by comparing the use of speech acts in different types of civic writing, such as campaign letters, petitions, and advocacy statements, students can develop a nuanced understanding of how language functions in different sociopolitical settings. Overall, the integration of speech act analysis into language teaching fosters both linguistic competence and critical awareness, preparing students to navigate complex communication land.

### **Conclusions**

This study highlights how different speech acts play a crucial role in civic engagement letters, shaping how messages are communicated and received. Assertive speech acts help establish credibility and reinforce key points, while directives encourage action and persuade audiences to get involved. Commissive speech acts build trust by making commitments, and expressive acts foster emotional connections, whether through praise, gratitude, or criticism. Together, these elements demonstrate how language is carefully used to influence public opinion and drive civic participation. Understanding these speech acts gives us valuable insights into how written

communication can be a powerful tool for engagement and change.

Beyond the academic perspective, these findings have practical implications for education, media literacy, and public discourse. Teaching students to recognize how speech acts function in persuasive writing can help them develop stronger critical thinking and analytical skills. This awareness is particularly important in today's digital landscape, where political messages, activist campaigns, and media narratives constantly shape public perception. By learning how language can be used strategically—and sometimes manipulatively—individuals can become more informed and discerning participants in civic discussions.

While this study provides valuable insights, there is still more to explore. Future research could examine how speech acts in civic letters vary across different cultures or political systems, as well as how they evolve in online communication, such as social media activism. Additionally, an interdisciplinary approach that combines linguistics with political science or psychology could offer a deeper understanding of how language influences public behavior and decision-making. By continuing to explore these connections, scholars can further uncover the role of language in shaping civic engagement and social change.

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