

LAMPIRAN: KORESPONDENSI PENULIS DENGAN KEVIN J. VANHOOZER  
MELALUI SURAT ELEKTRONIK

**Surat Elektronik kepada Penulis, 23 September 2011**

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From: kevin.vanhoozer@wheaton.edu  
To: fandytanujaya@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Letter from an Indonesian student  
Date: Fri, 23 Sep 2011 14:52:15 +0000

Dear Fandy,

Many thanks for your note. You raise a good question, one that comes under the rubric of what I call "first theology": the study of first theological principles.

Which comes first in theology: the doctrine of Scripture or the doctrine of God? I think we cannot have one without the other, which is why I start my theology with the Bible as the Word of God. The way we refer to both at once is by expressions like "divine communicative action" or, more recently, "triune discourse" (see my "Triune Discourse in Daniel Treier and David Lauber, eds., *Trinitarian Theology for the Church*).

I believe that theology must not be taken captive by philosophy. However, as a theologian I am free to use whatever concepts from philosophy that will help faith's search for understanding. Speech act - or more precisely, illocution - is one such concept, in my view. But I found it helpful because I already knew that God does things with his word (see Isa. 55:10-11).

You ask about the link between speech act and drama. I see them as intimately connected. Both are getting at the same idea of communicative action. In the one case, the emphasis is on words that do; on the other, on acts that signify. We could therefore speak of speech acts and act speech.

To answer your question: it all stems from my doctrine of God and his Word, which I have at last set forth in *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion, and Authorship*. In short: the concept that links Scripture, speech act, and theodrama is communicative action, which in my book I suggest characterizes not only God's works but God's being itself.

I hope this helps. Let me know if you have further questions. Best wishes on your thesis!

Yours in Christ,  
Kevin J. Vanhoozer

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**From:** Fandy Tanujaya [fandytanujaya@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 23, 2011 4:29 AM  
**To:** Kevin Vanhoozer  
**Subject:** Letter from an Indonesian student

Dear Prof. Vanhoozer,

My name is Fandy Handoko Tanujaya. I am an M.Div student at an evangelical seminary in Jakarta, Indonesia. My growing interest in hermeneutics, systematics and contemporary philosophy has led me to encounter your writings. I am really fascinated with the way you integrate these three distinct disciplines in your theology while at the same time offering a "third way" of doing theology that moves beyond the propositionalist and the cultural-linguistic approach to theology.

I am now in my last semester and currently writing my thesis on you, Prof. :) To be specific, I'm trying to study how you use speech-act theory in your theological prolegomena and how it affects your understanding on the nature of Scripture and your theory of doctrine. I hope I am able to show in my thesis how your use of speech-act theory leads to a non-reductionistic, polyphonic and more authoritative view of Scripture, as well as more dramatic view of doctrine.

As I read your writings, I find that "speech-act theory" and "dramatic metaphors/analogies" might be the two most important tools you use in your works - please correct me if I'm wrong. At this point of my research, I'm trying to figure out the link between the two - between your use of "speech-act theory" and your use of "dramatic metaphors/analogies." I begin to ask: Which inspires/influences the other? To put it differently, how did you first begin to think in theo-dramatic terms? Who/what first inspired you to think in theo-dramatic terms? I would be very glad if you could kindly advise me on this.

In advance, please allow me to thank you for reading this email. I really look forward to your reply.

In Christ,  
Fandy H. Tanujaya.  
Amanat Agung Theological Seminary  
Jakarta, Indonesia.

**Surat Elektronik kepada Penulis, 8 Desember 2011**

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From: kevin.vanhoozer@wheaton.edu  
To: fandytanujaya@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Letter from an Indonesian student  
Date: Thu, 8 Dec 2011 03:16:05 +0000

Dear Fandy,

Thanks for your note. I use speech acts on written texts because I view both speech and writing as forms of discourse. Discourse is "something someone says to someone about something in some way." I think the key point of speech act theory - that we not only say things but do things in saying them - clearly applies to written texts as well.

I do make modifications: the early speech act philosophers were concerned with sentence long discourse only. More recent studies have applied speech act theory to larger genres (see, for example, Susan Snaider and Mary Louise Pratt on the particular illocutionary force of narrative).

For some years now I have found that speech act concepts, especially the notion of illocution, have given me a richer appreciation of biblical authority.

With all good wishes,  
Kevin J. Vanhoozer

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**From:** Fandy Tanujaya [fandytanujaya@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 07, 2011 7:15 PM  
**To:** Kevin Vanhoozer  
**Subject:** RE: Letter from an Indonesian student

Dear Prof. Vanhoozer,

Upon reading some materials about speech-act theory, I found that one of the issues usually brought up in the discussion is whether speech-act theory can be used/applied to written texts, and therefore to the Bible. May I ask whether you see this as an issue in your use of speech-act theory? If it is so, where exactly do you think the issue lies? What is your justification for using the speech-act theory to the Bible as a written text?

Thank you so much for your kind reply.

Blessings,  
Fandy.

## Surat Elektronik kepada Penulis, 8 Februari 2012

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From: kevin.vanhoozer@wheaton.edu  
 To: fandytanujaya@hotmail.com  
 Subject: RE: Letter from an Indonesian student  
 Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 21:05:44 +0000

Dear Fandy,

Many thanks for your note, and for giving me the opportunity to interact with your summary of my position.

I think the seven points provide a good summary. Just a few comments:

1. speech-acts help us better to understand how Scripture is revelatory. It's not that God is using words simply to make the unknown known (though this is part of it); rather, God makes himself known by doing various things with words, and not simply by conveying information. Speech acts allow me to see Scripture as more, but not less, than revelatory, and also enriches our understanding of revelation.

3. Speech acts enrich our understanding of the nature of biblical authority (i.e., it is multi-faceted); the dramatic analogy enriches our understanding of the function of biblical authority (i.e., it directs God's people in many ways - belief, desire, behavior, hope, etc.).

4. Yes, my appropriation of speech act theory gives to philosophy only a ministerial authority. The magisterial authority belongs to the triune God speaking in and through the Scriptures.

Thanks for your good work in trying to understand me!

Yours in Christ,  
 Kevin Vanhoozer

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**From:** Fandy Tanujaya [fandytanujaya@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 05, 2012 10:40 PM  
**To:** Kevin Vanhoozer  
**Subject:** RE: Letter from an Indonesian student

Dear Prof. Vanhoozer,

Since your last email, I have read about and study your uses of speech-act theory in your theological prolegomena, especially from 3 articles in your "First Theology" (chapter 1, 5, and 6), two articles on "Triune Discourse" from Daniel Treier and David Lauber, eds., "Trinitarian Theology for the Church," and certain parts of your "Remythologizing Theology."

As a result of this study, I have tried to write a simple summary of your use of speech-act theory in seven thesis below. May I ask you whether you could read and comment on it? May I ask whether these summary are an adequate-and-true representation of your thought? In what way do you think I have misread your thought, and in what way do you think I can correct, revise and improve this summary - so that I can better and more adequately present your thought?

In advance, thank you so much for commenting on this summary. Any suggestion is highly appreciated.

Blessings in Christ,  
Fandy.

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### **Summary of Vanhoozer's Use of Speech-Act Theory in His Theological Prolegomena**

1. Vanhoozer uses key insight of speech-act theory to integrate the doctrine of God and the doctrine of Scripture as a starting point of his prolegomena (he uses the term "first theology"). With this "first theology," God is understood to be the triune agent of communicative action and Scripture is understood as one of the triune communicative action.
2. Vanhoozer uses key concept and insight from speech-act theory within the framework of discourse/communicative action (more specifically: triune discourse/triune communicative action) which refers to language-in-communicative-use. The source of this communicative action is the Triune God who immanently and economically is known as God who speak-and-act. The framework of triune discourse/triune communicative action becomes the bridge between Vanhoozer's use of speech-act theory and his use of dramatic analogies.
3. Vanhoozer uses speech-act theory mainly to integrate his doctrine of God and his doctrine of Scripture and to build a theory for theological hermeneutics, whereas dramatic analogies are used mainly to build the relationship between God, Scripture, theology and doctrine within his canonical-linguistic approach to theology.
4. Vanhoozer uses speech-act theory within a theological framework. The use of this theory is not isolated from theological presuppositions, such as the concept of immanent and economic trinity, divine authorship, canon, covenant, etc.
5. Vanhoozer uses speech-act theory as one of (not the only) philosophical tools in his theological method. He uses speech-act theory along with another language theory, such as relevance theory which emphasizes the intention of a speaker/author in a communicative action.

6. Vanhoozer uses key concept and insight from speech-act theory in his doctrine of Scripture to defend Scripture Principle and the identity thesis. The goal is to produce a doctrine of Scripture that respect the authority of Scripture even more richly, respect both the personal and the semantic aspect of the Bible and break it free from the personal-propositional dichotomy.

7. Vanhoozer uses key concept and insight from speech-act theory (especially the concept of illocution) to build hermeneutics theory for communicative action from trinitarian perspective and use this theory to build hermeneutics theory for the canon of Scripture. In other words, the goal is to build a theory for theological interpretation of Scripture.

## Surat Elektronik kepada Penulis, 21 Maret 2012

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From: kevin.vanhoozer@wheaton.edu  
 To: fandytanujaya@hotmail.com  
 Subject: RE: Letter from an Indonesian student  
 Date: Wed, 21 Mar 2012 20:46:44 +0000

Dear Fandy,

Many thanks for your note and carefully framed questions.

The main reason I associate understanding with illocution is that I see understanding as a "success" term. We can say that someone has successfully understood a speech act when she has grasped its illocutionary point. I also wanted to distinguish between the successful "result" of a speech act (i.e., a correctly understood illocution) and the successful "effect" of a speech act (i.e., the perlocution accomplished).

The difference between Brown and me is rather subtle: she is inclined to group understand with the perlocutionary effect whereas I think it fits better under successful illocution. This distinction allows me to explain how, for example, disobedience is possible: Israel heard (and understood) God's word, but disobeyed. In the case of law, I would say that Israel understood the illocution but failed to respond in obedience to the perlocutionary intent.

Is there any theologically significant reason behind my placing understanding with illocutions? Well, it allows me to link the Spirit's work with each aspect of God's communicative action: first, the Spirit convicts us that the locutions of the Bible are indeed God's; second, the Spirit illumines our minds to understand what God is doing with his words (the illocutions); third, the Spirit creates in us the desire and ability to respond rightly to whatever God is saying (e.g., faith as perlocutionary effect).

It seems to me that understanding illocutions is prerequisite to perlocutionary effects. I would, however, be willing to speak of understanding as being appropriate with regard to all three aspects of the speech act: we have to understand the locutions to make sense of the illocutions, and we have to understand the illocutions to respond rightly to the perlocution, and the response itself could be a further indication of our understanding.

So: how far can a non-believer understand the Bible? It seems clear that one can understand the locutions without the aid of the Holy Spirit. I would say the same for lower-level illocutions (e.g., one can understand law as law, promise as promise). However, I don't think unbelievers really grasp the higher-level illocutions (e.g., testifying to Jesus Christ - cf. Lk 24) that come to light on the canonical context. The

Spirit needs to open our eyes, minds, and heart for that all-important perlocutionary effect!

Blessings,  
Kevin Vanhoozer

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**From:** Fandy Tanujaya [fandytanujaya@hotmail.com]

**Sent:** Monday, March 19, 2012 9:52 AM

**To:** Kevin Vanhoozer

**Subject:** RE: Letter from an Indonesian student

Dear Prof. Vanhoozer,

I am writing to ask you about your view on the relationship between illocution, perlocution, and "understanding."

To make my question clearer, please allow me to contrast your view with Jeannine K. Brown's in her book "Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics." In her explanation about "perlocution," Brown says that "[p]erlocutions include a whole range of what hearers do in response to utterances (although the response of the hearer is not a part of the utterance itself)." (p. 33). Then, with regard to "understanding," she says that "[u]nderstanding is the characteristic perlocution, because it precedes and grounds all other hearer responses." (p. 33 - *italics mine*).

When I searched for your view on this matter, I found out that you prefer to locate "understanding" as the effect of illocutionary act, not part of the perlocutionary effects. (Am I right in understanding your view?)

In your "First Theology" p. 179, agreeing with William Alston, you said the following:

"Alston is right: an illocutionary act may well produce perlocutionary effects, but it does not consist in such effect. The only effect that properly belongs to the author's illocutionary act is understanding – the recognition of an illocutionary act for what it is." (*italics mine*)

If I may quote you fuller:

Understanding is a matter of recognizing an author's illocutionary act for what it is. A communicative act succeeds in the illocutionary purpose for which it has been sent simply by virtue of its being recognized. Communication succeeds when the speaker's communicative intention becomes mutually known. The reader need not believe or obey what is said in order to understand it. The reader's role in the covenant of discourse is nothing less than to seek understanding. (p. 180).

My questions are the following:

1. Why do you view “understanding” as part of illocution and not of perlocution (like Brown)? Is there any particular reasons (theological/philosophical) behind your view? What are the significant implications of locating “understanding” under the category of illocution rather than perlocution? Is there anything wrong with identifying “understanding” as part of the perlocutionary effects (or even as *the first perlocution*)?
2. You imply in p. 155 of your “First Theology” that BOTH “understanding” AND “perlocutionary effects” are the work of the Holy Spirit. You says the following:

First, the Spirit illumines the reader and so enables the reader to grasp the illocutionary point, to recognize what the Scriptures may be doing. Second, the Spirit convicts the reader that the illocutionary point of the biblical text deserves the appropriate response... (p. 155).

My question is, how far we can say that a non-believing Christian can also “understand” Scripture (e.g. a Jew who writes an extended exegesis and commentary on OT books)? Can we say that the most they can “understand” (without the work of the Holy Spirit within them) is the locution of the text (but not the illocution)? Or... can we say that they can also understand the illocution, but only in a limited way (they will probably get the illocutions in the sentence and paragraph level and the generic illocutions right, but never get the testamental and the canonic illocutions right)?

Thank you for your kind response, Prof. Have a blessed week.

Blessings in Christ,  
Fandy.