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A Forensic Linguistic Reading of Deontic Modality in Indonesian University Regulations

[1]Arjuna Satria Dewa Bagaskara, [2]Hilmy Mukhtar

[1,2]Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya, INDONESIA
[1,2]Jl. Veteran No. 10-11, Ketawanggede, Lowokwaru, Malang City, East Java 65145

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Correspondence:
Arjuna Satria Dewa Bagaskara
dewaagaskara@student.ub.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Institutional legal texts function not merely as administrative documents but as sites where authority formulates obligations and constructs legal subjects through particular linguistic choices. This study addresses that gap by comparing two Rector Regulations issued by the same university in 2023, purposively selected because they represent two contrasting regulatory functions within a single institution, namely a regulation oriented toward value formation and character building, and a regulation oriented toward disciplinary enforcement and sanction. Using a forensic linguistic approach and a modified version of Palmer's deontic modality taxonomy adapted to the Indonesian marking system, this study analyzes the distribution and gradation of deontic markers across all normative clauses in both documents. The findings show that the character-building regulation is dominated by Mid Deontic Obligation markers, accounting for 96% of its 25 occurrences with no prohibitive clauses at all, whereas the code of ethics regulation contains 89 deontic marker occurrences dominated by High and Soft Prohibitives at 63% combined. This divergence suggests that the two documents appear to perform distinct discursive functions, one operating as an aspirational law that shapes values through persuasion, and the other as an operational law that regulates conduct through procedure and sanction. The novelty of this study lies in its application of comparative deontic modality analysis across different legal text types within a single institution, a design rarely employed in forensic linguistic research on Indonesian institutional documents. These findings are expected to enrich the analytical framework for campus legal discourse and to serve as a methodological reference for similar studies on other higher education regulatory documents.

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INTRODUCTION

Written regulations constitute a significant yet relatively underexamined object of linguistic inquiry. As texts that govern the daily life of academic communities, campus regulations define the boundaries of permissible and prohibited conduct while simultaneously reflecting the linguistic strategies through which authority formulates its power (Fairclough, 2013; Tiersma, 1999). From this perspective, language functions not merely as a medium that conveys rules but as a constitutive component of the rules themselves, such that lexical and grammatical choices in legal texts carry direct consequences for how norms are understood and enforced.

This phenomenon can be observed concretely in two Rector Regulations issued by Universitas Brawijaya (UB) in 2023. Rector Regulation Number 108 of 2023 concerning Brawijayan Character carries markedly different content from Rector Regulation Number 63 of 2023 concerning the Student Code of Ethics. The former speaks of *jiwa suci* (pure soul), *kesadaran Ilahiah* (divine consciousness), and *memayu hayuning bawana* (adorning the earth). The latter prohibits LGBT conduct, narcotics, plagiarism, and political party activities, complete with a tiered examination procedure and sanctions including dismissal. Both were issued by the same authority, in the same year, under a single rector's name (Universitas Brawijaya, 2023b, 2023a). Although both regulations originate from the same authority and were promulgated within the same year, they exhibit markedly different patterns of obligation marking. This divergence constitutes the research problem addressed in this article.

This issue leads to a more fundamental linguistic question. In linguistic inquiry, the way a text formulates obligation and prohibition goes beyond mere word choice. It reflects differing degrees of coercion, differing legal subjects, and ultimately, differing power relations between institution and individual (Alwi, 1992; van Dijk, 1993). The language used to call upon someone to maintain the purity of their heart is not the same as the language used to forbid someone from bringing a weapon onto campus. This distinction is what linguistics refers to as a difference in deontic modality, the way language expresses obligation, permission, and prohibition that derive from an external authority (Li et al., 2016; Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 2001).

Deontic modality is among the most frequently encountered grammatical categories in legal and regulatory texts (Coates, 2015; Kiefer, 1987; Skorofatova, 2024). In Indonesian, deontic modal markers appear in lexical forms such as *wajib* (mandatory), *harus* (must), *dilarang* (prohibited), *tidak boleh* (must not), and various other impersonal passive constructions (Alwi, 1992; Kridalaksana, 2008). The selection of these markers is by no means arbitrary. The choice between *harus* and *hendaknya*, between *dilarang* and *dihindari*, reflects a difference in the normative strength of a given text (Matulewska, 2017; Nuyts, 2006; Shuy, 2017). A legal text that employs *mengejawantahkan* (to embody or manifest) to express obligation carries a very different degree of coercive force than a text that employs *dilarang melakukan* (prohibited from carrying out).

The relevance of forensic linguistics in this research extends beyond a mere methodological label. Forensic linguistics, as affirmed by Subyantoro (2022), Gibbons (2003), and McMenamin (2002), encompasses the study of language in legal products as one of its primary domains. Within this tradition, the analysis of institutional regulatory texts is understood as an attempt to read how authority formulates norms,

enforces limits, and distributes obligations among its legal subjects. Aziz (2021) and Subyantoro (2022) further note that in Indonesia, forensic linguistic inquiry into written legal documents remains wide open for development, particularly regarding institutional documents that circulate outside the courtroom yet exert direct influence over campus life.

Comparative studies of deontic modality across two different types of legal texts have also been rare. Research on modality in Indonesian legal texts has tended to select a single document as corpus, such as one statute or one government regulation (Chaer, 2012; Muniroh & Aziz, 2026). The tension between legal texts of an aspirational-spiritual nature and those of a punitive-operational character, especially within a single institutional ecosystem, has not yet become the focus of any study. Yet these two types of texts operate through different logics. Aspirational texts, as analyzed by Depoorter & Tontrup (2024) through the concept of *aspirational law*, seek to shape internal values through persuasion and moral guidance. Punitive texts operate through clear commands, rigid procedures, and measurable sanctions (Biel & Engberg, 2013; Neill et al., 2017; Solan, 1993).

This study aims to compare the distribution and degree of deontic modal markers between UB Rector Regulation Number 108 of 2023 concerning Brawijayan Character and UB Rector Regulation Number 63 of 2023 concerning the Student Code of Ethics. The analytical framework employed is Palmer's (2001) deontic modality taxonomy, modified to accommodate positive polarity (obligation and permission) and negative polarity (prohibition) in Indonesian. Through this approach, the study seeks to broaden understanding of how campus legal language operates ideologically and institutionally in shaping its academic subjects.

METHOD

Research Design

A qualitative descriptive design was adopted, employing a comparative forensic linguistic analysis approach. This design was chosen because the research aim is not merely to measure frequency, but to understand how deontic modal markers function in two legal texts of different orientations (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moleong, 2018). The data under examination are textual in nature, and therefore a qualitative approach centered on in-depth interpretation of legal clauses was considered more appropriate than a purely quantitative one.

Data Sources

The data sources consist of two rector regulations issued by Universitas Brawijaya in 2023, namely Rector Regulation Number 108 of 2023 concerning Brawijayan Character (Pertor 108/2023) and Rector Regulation Number 63 of 2023 concerning the Student Code of Ethics (Pertor 63/2023) (Universitas Brawijaya, 2023b, 2023a). Both documents are official regulations that have been promulgated in the Official Gazette of Universitas Brawijaya and electronically signed by UB Rector and the Head of the Legal Division. The first document was established on 29 December 2023 and recorded in the Universitas Brawijaya Gazette Year 2023 Number 132, while the second was established on 1 September 2023 and recorded in the Universitas Brawijaya Gazette Year 2023 Number 79.

The selection of these two documents was not incidental. Both were chosen purposively because they represent two poles of regulatory function within the same campus ecosystem. Pertor 108/2023 represents a legal text oriented toward character formation and value internalization, while Pertor 63/2023 represents a legal text oriented toward behavioral standardization, disciplinary enforcement, and the imposition of sanctions. This contrast makes the two documents an ideal data pair for a comparative analysis of deontic modality (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Subyantoro, 2022).

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through a reading and noting technique, involving the thorough reading of both source documents, followed by the noting and extraction of every clause containing deontic modal markers (Mahsun, 2017; Sudaryanto, 1993). The extraction process was carried out in two layered stages. In the first stage, all clauses containing positive deontic markers of obligation, such as *wajib* (mandatory), *harus* (must), *perlu* (necessary), *bertanggung jawab* (responsible), *memiliki kewajiban* (has the obligation), and other imperative active constructions, were identified and recorded. In the second stage, all clauses containing negative deontic markers of prohibition, such as *dilarang* (prohibited), *tidak boleh* (must not), *tidak melakukan* (not to carry out), and other prohibitive constructions, were identified and recorded separately.

Each extracted clause was then coded independently by both researchers based on three attributes, namely the type of deontic marker, the degree of modal strength, and the position of the legal subject within the clause, using a coding sheet developed on the basis of Palmer's (2001) taxonomy and the Indonesian modality framework from Alwi (1992).

Analytical Framework

The analytical framework is Palmer's (2001) deontic modality taxonomy, modified to accommodate the deontic marking system of Indonesian as described by Alwi (1992) and Kridalaksana (2008). Palmer (2001) distinguishes deontic modality along two primary poles, namely the *directive*, which encompasses obligation and necessity, and the *prohibitive*, which encompasses prohibition and interdiction. In this study, both poles were further developed into four analytical categories.

The first category is Absolute Obligation (High Deontic Obligation), comprising clauses that use obligation markers with the highest degree of coercive force, such as *wajib* (mandatory) and *harus* (must). This category reflects the expectation that the obligated action is non-negotiable and subject to sanction if not fulfilled (Coates, 2015; Palmer, 2001). The second category is Mid Obligation (Mid Deontic Obligation), comprising clauses that use obligation markers with a softer degree, such as *perlu* (necessary), *seyogyanya* (ought to), and descriptive performative constructions such as *mengejawantahkan* (to embody), *diorientasikan pada* (oriented toward), and *menghidupkan* (to enliven). Markers in this category are more in the nature of guidance than commands (Matulewska, 2017; Nuyts, 2006). The third category is Hard Prohibition (High Deontic Prohibitive), comprising clauses that explicitly prohibit certain actions using constructions such as *dilarang melakukan* (prohibited from carrying out), *tidak diperkenankan* (not permitted), and *tidak boleh* (must not). This category carries the highest degree of coercive force in the negative polarity and is characteristically found in disciplinary regulatory texts (Kiefer, 1987;

Palmer, 2001). The fourth category is Soft Prohibition (Soft Deontic Prohibitive), comprising clauses that counsel against certain actions through markers such as *menghindari* (to avoid), *menghindarkan diri dari* (to refrain from), and *tidak melakukan* (not to carry out) embedded within ethics clauses rather than explicit prohibition clauses.

This modification requires explanation, as Palmer (2001) developed his taxonomy on the basis of English language data. Indonesian possesses its own characteristics in the expression of deontic modality, including through affixation, zero-person passive constructions, and the use of predicative verbs without a copula, features that are not fully captured by Palmer's original taxonomy (Alwi, 1992; Chaer, 2012). This modification is consistent with the approaches taken by Biel & Engberg (2013) and Matulewska (2017) when applying deontic modality frameworks to languages other than English.

The four resulting categories were not constructed ad hoc but were validated through conceptual triangulation against established frameworks of Indonesian modality, particularly the deontic classification proposed by Alwi (1992) and the performative category outlined by Kridalaksana (2008), to confirm that each category corresponded to a recognized grammatical and pragmatic function rather than an interpretation unique to this study. Prior to full-corpus coding, both researchers also applied the four categories independently to the first ten clauses extracted from each document as a legibility check, to determine whether the boundaries between categories, for instance between Mid and High Deontic Obligation, were sufficiently distinct to be applied consistently across the entire corpus. Clauses that proved ambiguous at this stage, such as *diperlukan* (required), which could plausibly fall under either Mid Obligation or an ordinary descriptive construction, were resolved by attending to the broader pragmatic context of the clause rather than relying on the lexical marker in isolation.

Coding Reliability and Consistency

Reliability was maintained through independent coding by both researchers followed by consensus-based resolution, consistent with standard reliability procedures in qualitative document-based research (Mahsun, 2017; Sudaryanto, 1993). Each researcher independently coded the full corpus using the coding sheet developed from the framework above, after which the two sets of results were compared and discrepancies resolved through discussion until consensus was reached, following the principle that agreement achieved through structured discussion serves as an appropriate substitute for purely statistical inter-rater reliability in interpretive qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moleong, 2018). Three further measures supported this process. An audit trail was maintained, recording each coding decision together with its categorical justification. The entire corpus was also recoded after an interval of approximately one week to verify consistency between the initial and subsequent readings. Finally, clauses that remained ambiguous after the consensus discussion were consulted with an expert in Indonesian morphosyntax and modality as an additional external check.

Data Analysis Procedure

The coded data were then analyzed through three stages adapted from Subyantoro's (2022) forensic linguistic analysis procedure and Fairclough's (2013)

critical discourse analysis procedure. The first stage is *distributional descriptive analysis*, describing the distribution of deontic markers in each document based on the four established categories. This stage produces a comparative table showing the distribution patterns of deontic markers in both Pertors side by side.The second stage is *functional-pragmatic analysis*, examining the pragmatic function of each deontic marker within its clause. This analysis addresses the question of who is positioned as the obligation-holder (*obligator*), who is positioned as the prohibition subject (*prohibitee*), and how the gradation of deontic strength reflects the institutional orientation of each text (Solan, 1993; van Dijk, 1993). The third stage is *comparative interpretive analysis*, comparing the pattern of findings from both documents and interpreting them within the conceptual framework of *aspirational law* versus *operational law* as developed by Depoorter and Tontrup (2024). At this stage the central argument of the study is constructed, namely that the difference in the distribution and degree of deontic modality between Pertor 108/2023 and Pertor 63/2023 reflects fundamentally different institutional discourse strategies, rather than a mere difference in regulatory subject matter.

Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, by cross-referencing analytical findings against the original document texts on a repeated basis, and through persistent observation as recommended by Creswell (2009), Creswell & Poth (2018), and Moleong (2018) for document-based qualitative research.

FINDINGS

The analysis of both rector regulation documents produced a map of deontic modal marker distribution that differs strikingly between the two texts. Rector Regulation Number 108 of 2023 concerning Brawijayan Character and Rector Regulation Number 63 of 2023 concerning the Student Code of Ethics, despite originating from the same authority in the same year, employ language strategies that run in opposite directions. The findings are presented in three sections, covering the frequency distribution of deontic markers, a functional analysis of dominant markers, and a mapping of the position of legal subjects in both texts.

Frequency Distribution of Deontic Modal Markers

Table 1 presents a comparative distribution of deontic modal markers across the four established categories. Data were extracted from all articles in both documents, including annexes that form an inseparable part of each rector regulation. Counting was based on marker occurrences per clause, not per word. A single clause containing two markers was counted twice.

Table 1. Distribution of Deontic Modal Markers in Pertor UB No. 108/2023 and Pertor UB No. 63/2023

Deontic Category	Marker	Pertor 108/2023 (Brawijayan Character)	Pertor 63/2023 (Student Code of Ethics)
Absolute Obligation	*wajib* (mandatory)	0	3
	harus (must)	1	7
	memiliki kewajiban (has the obligation)	0	10
	Subtotal	**1**	**20**
Mid Obligation	*mengejawantahkan* (to embody)	2	0
	diorientasikan pada (oriented toward)	3	0

Deontic Category	Marker	Pertor 108/2023 (Brawijayan Character)	Pertor 63/2023 (Student Code of Ethics)
	menghidupkan (to enliven)	2	0
	diperlukan (required)	2	1
	menjadi (performative function)	8	2
	bertanggung jawab (responsible)	2	4
	meliputi / terdiri atas (encompasses / consist of)	5	6
	Subtotal	**24**	**13**
Hard Prohibition	*dilarang* (prohibited)	0	14
	tidak diperkenankan (not permitted)	0	0
	tidak boleh (must not)	0	0
	Subtotal	**0**	**14**
Soft Prohibition	*menghindari* (to avoid)	0	8
	menghindarkan diri dari (to refrain from)	0	3
	tidak melakukan (not to carry out, within ethics clauses)	0	31
	Subtotal	**0**	**42**
	Total	**25**	**89**

Table 1 reveals a striking disparity between the two documents. Pertor 63/2023 contains a total of 89 deontic marker occurrences, while Pertor 108/2023 contains only 25. Beyond the quantitative difference, the categorical distribution runs in opposite directions as well. In Pertor 108/2023, the dominant category is Mid Obligation with 24 occurrences, accounting for approximately 96 percent of the total, while Hard Prohibition and Soft Prohibition are entirely absent. In Pertor 63/2023, by contrast, the combined Soft Prohibition and Hard Prohibition categories account for 56 occurrences or approximately 63 percent of the total, supplemented by 20 Absolute Obligation occurrences or 22 percent. These figures already demonstrate, at a quantitative level, that the two texts operate within fundamentally different deontic logics. The categorical distribution of deontic markers across both documents is further illustrated in Figure 1, which presents the proportional composition of each deontic category in Pertor 108/2023 and Pertor 63/2023 side by side.

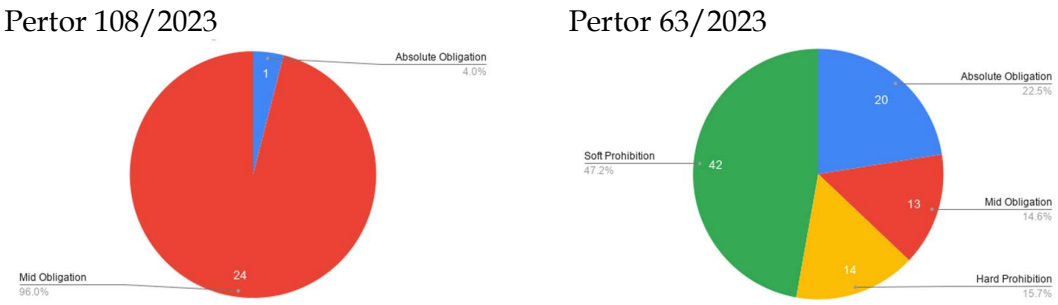


Figure 1. Distribution of Deontic Categories

Figure 1 makes visible what the numerical data in Table 1 already suggested. In Pertor 108/2023, the pie chart is almost entirely occupied by a single segment. Mid Obligation accounts for 96 percent of all deontic occurrences, leaving only the narrowest sliver for the sole instance of Absolute Obligation at 4 percent, and nothing

at all for either form of prohibition. The chart for Pertor 63/2023 tells a different story altogether. Four segments are present, and none of them disappears. Soft Prohibition dominates at 47.2 percent, followed by Absolute Obligation at 22.5 percent, Hard Prohibition at 15.7 percent, and Mid Obligation at 14.6 percent. Read together, the two charts capture the structural logic of each text at a glance. One document was built almost entirely around guidance. The other was built around restraint, with obligation and prohibition sharing the space in roughly equal measure. This visual contrast reinforces the argument that the two Pertors do not merely differ in topic; they differ in the very architecture of how authority is expressed through language (Palmer, 2001; van Dijk, 1993).

The Dominance of Philosophical-Performative Modality in Pertor 108/2023

In Pertor 108/2023, not a single prohibition marker was found. All obligations constructed in this text employ markers with a low to mid degree of coercive force. The most dominant marker is *menjadi* (to become) in a performative function, through constructions stating that something *becomes* a foundation, *becomes* guidance, or *becomes* a commitment, without specifying any sanction or consequence for non-compliance. This construction was found eight times, distributed throughout the Annex covering explanations of Divine Consciousness, Philosophy, Paradigm, Work Ethic, and the Brawijayan Pillars.

A representative clause can be found in Article 7(2) of Pertor 108/2023, which states that lecturers, educational staff, and students *mengejawantahkan* (embody) the Brawijayan Character in carrying out the Tridharma of Higher Education and campus life. The word *mengejawantahkan* is a Mid Obligation marker that semantically calls for the embodiment of values rather than compliance with prohibitions. It carries no legal consequence and refers to no enforcement procedure. A similar pattern appears in the Annex, which states that the Brawijayan Paradigm is *diorientasikan pada* (oriented toward) the discovery and practice of a character-building education model. This passive construction expresses direction and purpose rather than a sanctionable obligation. Table 2 presents representative clauses from Pertor 108/2023 along with their deontic categorization.

Table 2. Representative Clauses from Pertor 108/2023 and Their Deontic Categorization

Location	Clause	Deontic Marker	Category
Article 7 (2)	*Dosen, tenaga kependidikan, dan mahasiswa mengejawantahkan Karakter Brawijayan dalam pelaksanaan Tridarma* Lecturers, educational staff, and students embody the Brawijayan Character in carrying out the Tridharma	*mengejawantahkan* (embody)	Mid Obligation
Annex, Paradigm (d)	*Paradigma Brawijayan secara berkelanjutan digunakan untuk menemukan dan mempraktikkan model pendidikan pembentuk karakter* The Brawijayan Paradigm is continuously used to discover and practice character-building education models	*digunakan untuk* (used to)	Mid Obligation

Location	Clause	Deontic Marker	Category
Annex, Motto (d)	*Semua aktivitas...harus senantiasa diorientasikan pada pencapaian kehidupan yang damai, adil, mulia, dan sejahtera* All activities must always be oriented toward the achievement of a peaceful, just, noble, and prosperous life	*harus diorientasikan pada* (must be oriented toward)	Absolute Obligation (sole instance)
Annex, Philosophy (b)	*Filosofi Brawijayan...digunakan sebagai dasar untuk berpikir, berkata, dan bertindak* The Brawijayan Philosophy is used as the foundation for thinking, speaking, and acting	*digunakan sebagai dasar* (used as foundation)	Mid Obligation
Annex, Work Ethic (d)	*"Berkarya untuk kemuliaan dan kemanusiaan" menjadi komitmen bahwa semua aktivitas...dilakukan berdasarkan kasih saying* "Working for nobility and humanity" becomes the commitment that all activities are carried out on the basis of compassion	*menjadi komitmen* (becomes commitment)	Mid Obligation
Article 5 (c)	*Karakter Brawijayan diperlukan sebagai kekhasan UB* The Brawijayan Character is required as the distinctive identity of UB	*diperlukan* (required)	Mid Obligation

Of the six representative clauses in Table 2, only one employs an Absolute Obligation marker, namely *harus senantiasa diorientasikan pada* (must always be oriented toward) in the Motto section. Notably, even this instance of *harus* is not followed by any legal consequence or sanction. The sentence rests on a normative-teleological register, directing without threatening. This stands in sharp contrast to the way *harus* operates in Pertor 63/2023, where it consistently appears within a textual ecosystem that includes examination procedures and sanction schedules.

The Dominance of Punitive-Prohibitive Modality in Pertor 63/2023

Pertor 63/2023 presents a far greater deontic complexity. This text employs a broader range of markers and builds a layered deontic system encompassing obligations, ethics, prohibitions, procedures, and sanctions within a mutually reinforcing textual structure.

The Hard Prohibition marker *dilarang* (prohibited) in Article 15 appears 14 times within a single dedicated article titled Chapter VI on Prohibitions. This article opens with the single construction *Students are prohibited from carrying out the following actions and/or acts*, followed by 14 concrete prohibitions. This construction represents what Palmer (2001) calls a *high-prohibitive deontic*, a prohibition that allows no room for negotiation, requires no preconditions, and applies unconditionally to all named legal subjects.

At the same time, in Chapter IV on Student Obligations and Chapter V on the Code of Ethics, Pertor 63/2023 employs Soft Prohibition markers in even greater numbers, totaling 42 occurrences. These soft prohibitions appear in the form of *tidak melakukan* (not to carry out), *tidak menjanjikan* (not to promise), *tidak menyebarluaskan* (not to disseminate), *tidak mengajak* (not to invite), *tidak mengeluarkan* (not to issue), and various other negative constructions distributed from Article 6 through Article 14.

Although grammatically these markers appear gentler than *dilarang*, they remain legally binding and subject to sanction as stipulated in the Annex, which classifies all violations into three tiers of severity, namely minor, moderate, and serious.

Table 3. Representative Clauses from Pertor 63/2023 and Their Deontic Categorization

Location	Clause	Deontic Marker	Category
Article 4	*Setiap Mahasiswa memiliki kewajiban:* *a. menyelesaikan studinya sesuai beban studi* Every Student has the obligation to complete their studies in accordance with the applicable credit load	*memiliki kewajiban* (has the obligation)	Absolute Obligation
Article 15 (h)	*Mahasiswa dilarang melakukan perbuatan, kegiatan, kampanye/promosi, ideologi, dan/atau penyebaran LGBT* Students are prohibited from engaging in acts, activities, campaigns/promotions, ideology, and/or the dissemination of LGBT	*dilarang melakukan* (prohibited form engaging in)	Hard Prohibition
Article 15 (k)	*Mahasiswa dilarang menyimpan dan/atau memperdagangkan...narkotika, psikotropika, dan/atau minuman beralkohol* Students are prohibited from storing and/or trading and/or carrying and/or using narcotics, psychotropics, and/or alcoholic beverages	*dilarang...* (prohibited to)	Hard Prohibition
Article 11 (g)	*tidak menjanjikan atau memberikan sejumlah uang...kepada Dosen...untuk mempengaruhi penilaian* not to promise or provide a sum of money...to a Lecturer...for the purpose of influencing a Lecturer's assessment	*tidak menjanjikan* (not to promise)	Soft Prohibition
Article 9 (b)	*menghindari tindakan-tindakan yang bersifat anarkis, merusak, dan mengganggu ketertiban* to avoid actions that are anarchic in nature, destructive, and disruptive to public order	*menghindari* (to avoid)	Soft Prohibition
Article 16	*Penegakan Kode Etik dilakukan oleh Komisi Etik Fakultas/SPUB dan BPE* Enforcement of the Code of Ethics is carried out by the Faculty/SPUB Ethics Commission and BPE	*dilakukan oleh* (carried out by)	Procedural Obligation
Article 18 (1)	*Pemeriksaan laporan...dilakukan dengan tahapan:* *a. pemeriksaan laporan tahap I;* *b. tahap II;* *c. rapat permusyawaratan;* *d. pengucapan keputusan* Examination of the report is carried out in stages: a. Stage I examination; b. Stage II; c. Ethics Commission deliberation;	*dilakukan dengan tahapan* (carried out in stages)	Procedural Obligation

Location	Clause	Deontic Marker	Category
	d. pronouncement of decision		
Article 28 (3)	*Sanksi akademik untuk tingkat pelanggaran berat terdiri atas...c. pemberhentian sebagai mahasiswa UB* Academic sanctions for serious violations consist of...c. dismissal as a UB student	*terdiri atas* (consist of)	Procedural-Punitive Obligation

What stands out from Table 3 is the emergence of an additional category not found anywhere in Pertor 108/2023, namely Procedural Obligation. This category reflects deontic markers directed not toward students as primary subjects, but toward the institution as the enforcing agent. Article 16, which states that the enforcement of the Code of Ethics is *carried out by* the Faculty/SPUB Ethics Commission and BPE, constitutes a directive aimed at a university organ, not at students. The presence of procedural clauses of this kind signals that Pertor 63/2023 does more than regulate student behavior; it constructs an enforcement apparatus with the authority to examine, adjudicate, and impose sanctions. This is the hallmark of what Solan (1993) terms an *enforcement apparatus* in operational legal texts, a linguistic structure that is entirely absent from Pertor 108/2023.

DISCUSSION

The findings above open space for answering the two core questions posed in this research. The first is how the pattern of deontic modality distribution differs between the two UB Pertors, and the second is what can be read from that difference about the way campus authority formulates moral obligation versus legal command.

The Formulation of Legal Language: Aspirational Law versus Operational Law

The most striking feature of all the findings does not lie in the types of markers employed, but in what is *absent* from each text. Pertor 108/2023 contains not a single prohibition clause, not a single examination procedure, and not a single mention of any sanction. Pertor 63/2023, by contrast, contains all three in a layered and mutually reinforcing arrangement. It is precisely this absence and presence that speaks most loudly.

This condition aligns with what Depoorter and Tontrup (2024) describe as the distinction between *aspirational law* and *operational law*. Aspirational law establishes goals and ideal values that a community aspires to achieve, without providing hard coercive mechanisms for their attainment. Such law operates through internalization, persuasion, and the construction of collective identity. Pertor 108/2023 works precisely within this logic. When that text declares that all university activities *must always be oriented toward the achievement of a peaceful, just, noble, and prosperous life*, it is not threatening anyone. It is building a shared aspiration, a narrative about who the Brawijayan community is and where they are expected to be heading. The soft deontic modality in this text is not a technical weakness in legal drafting. It is a discursive choice appropriate to governing a domain that cannot be physically sanctioned, namely the domain of consciousness, conviction, and spirituality (Depoorter & Tontrup, 2024; Fairclough, 2013).

Operational law, by contrast, works through a different mechanism. It establishes clear behavioral boundaries, incorporates supervisory procedures, and

provides measurable consequences for those who transgress those boundaries (Solan, 1993; Tiersma, 1999). Pertor 63/2023 is the embodiment of operational law in a campus setting. The dominance of *dilarang*, *tidak melakukan*, and *memiliki kewajiban*, combined with the presence of a detailed enforcement mechanism running from Article 16 through Article 28 and its annex, shows that this text was designed to function as an operable disciplinary instrument. It is not merely moral guidance; it is an institutional tool capable of producing legal decisions in the form of suspension or dismissal.

The coexistence of these two texts within the same campus ecosystem is not without its logic. Fairclough (2013) and van Dijk (1993) demonstrate that modern institutions frequently employ two discourse styles simultaneously: a legitimation discourse that constructs narratives of value and identity, and a disciplinary discourse that operates power through procedures and sanctions. The former works on the ideological register; the latter works on the operational register. The two complement and sustain one another. Pertor 108/2023 constructs moral legitimacy for the entire campus order, while Pertor 63/2023 operates that order in day-to-day life.

The Gradation of Obligation and the Position of Legal Subjects

The findings on legal subjects in the two texts reveal an equally telling difference. In Pertor 108/2023, obligations are distributed in a collective-institutional manner. Article 7 states that the *Rector is responsible for the embodiment of Brawijayan Character*, while the following sub-article notes that *lecturers, educational staff, and students* collectively embody that character. The text, in other words, places all members of the academic community in a roughly equal position as bearers of a shared value mandate. Not a single clause in Pertor 108/2023 names students as the sole subject of any obligation.

Pertor 63/2023 moves in the opposite direction. The word *mahasiswa* (student/students) appears as the singular subject under regulation in almost all normative clauses, from Article 4 on Obligations, Articles 5 through 14 on various dimensions of ethics, to Article 15, which explicitly opens every prohibition with the phrase *Students are prohibited from*. Even when Article 16 names the Ethics Commission as the enforcing agent, the Ethics Commission is positioned in that text as an agent working *upon* students, not as an equally obligated subject. Students in this text appear as the party to be examined, assessed, and sanctioned. This positioning, within the framework of Fairclough (2013) and van Dijk (1993), is the position of an object within an asymmetrical power relation between institution and individual.

This pattern reinforces Solan's (1993) argument about *subject positioning* in legal texts. The way a legal text places its legal subjects is not merely a grammatical choice; it reflects ideological assumptions about who holds authority and who occupies the position of being controlled. Pertor 63/2023 linguistically positions students as objects of discipline to be monitored, examined, and when necessary, punished. Pertor 108/2023 positions students as co-bearers of collective values, to be guided, inspired, and enlightened. These two different positions generate two different deontic language styles, and together they reflect different ideological assumptions about what students are within the institutional imagination of Universitas Brawijaya.

The Mechanism of Institutional Surveillance Through Language

The findings on procedural markers in Pertor 63/2023 open a third dimension of this discussion, concerning how language is used to construct a surveillance

apparatus that functions systematically. Articles 16 through 26 of Pertor 63/2023 contain a chain of procedures designed with considerable detail: reports are received, Stage I examination is conducted, Stage II examination is conducted, an Ethics Commission deliberation is convened, a decision is pronounced, and if an objection arises, an appeal is submitted to BPE. This entire chain is expressed through procedural markers such as *carried out by*, *carried out in stages*, *convened within a period not exceeding*, and *may file an objection*.

Procedural language of this kind, according to Gibbons (2003) and McMenamin (2002), is the hallmark of legal texts designed for enforcement. It creates what might be termed a *linguistic cage*, a textual system that traps its legal subjects in a chain of formal procedures from which there is little escape once a violation report has been filed. No equivalent structure exists in Pertor 108/2023. There is no procedure for examining whether someone has genuinely *embodied* the Brawijayan Character. There is no mechanism for assessing whether someone's *jiwa suci* (pure soul) has met the required standard. And indeed there need not be, because that text was not designed to be examined. It was designed to be lived.

Both Pertors thus complement each other in forming what Fairclough (2013) terms an *order of discourse*, namely an institutional discourse order that operates through a combination of persuasion and coercion. Pertor 108/2023 provides a legitimating narrative that makes the entire campus value system feel noble and meaningful. Pertor 63/2023 provides the operational mechanism that ensures that narrative does not remain entirely adrift without boundaries. Together, they constitute a discourse governance system that works on two levels at once: the level of consciousness and the level of behavior.

These findings also reinforce the argument of Subyantoro (2022) and Aziz (2021) that forensic linguistic analysis of institutional legal documents in Indonesia carries its own urgency. Language is not merely a vessel that holds rules. It is the rule itself, in its most tangible and most consequential form in the daily life of the campus community (Alwi, 1992; Palmer, 2001; Tiersma, 1999).

CONCLUSION

The analysis of two Universitas Brawijaya Rector Regulations of 2023 reveals that two documents from the same institution speak in opposing linguistic directions. Rector Regulation Number 108 of 2023 concerning Brawijayan Character constructs its obligations through deontic markers with low to mid gradation, without a single prohibition or sanction. Rector Regulation Number 63 of 2023 concerning the Student Code of Ethics, by contrast, is dominated by hard prohibitions, soft prohibitions, and procedural obligations that interlock within a detailed enforcement mechanism. This contrast does not arise from a difference in topic or drafting style alone; it reflects two distinct discourse strategies in how campus authority formulates its relationship with the academic community. Pertor 108/2023 operates as aspirational law that shapes identity and values through persuasion and collective narrative, while Pertor 63/2023 operates as operational law that governs behavior through command, surveillance, and the threat of sanction. The two regulations do not contradict one another; they function as complementary components of a single institutional discourse system, one occupying the domain of consciousness and the other the domain of behavior.

These findings also indicate that the position of legal subjects in the two texts is far from equal. Pertor 108/2023 places students as one among several co-bearers of collective value, while Pertor 63/2023 places students as the singular object to be examined, assessed, and sanctioned when necessary. For campus policymakers, this distinction carries a practical implication, namely that the choice of deontic markers in drafting regulations is not a purely editorial matter but one with direct consequences for how a rule will be understood and enforced, suggesting that drafting teams attend deliberately to the intended function of a regulation, whether value-shaping or behavior-regulating, when selecting its linguistic register.

This study is nonetheless limited in several respects. The corpus is confined to two documents from a single institution, so generalization to other Indonesian universities should be made with caution. Coding relied on researcher interpretation reconciled through consensus rather than a formal statistical reliability coefficient, and the analysis remains textual, without addressing how students actually perceive or respond to these two forms of deontic discourse. Future research may extend the corpus to multiple institutions, incorporate additional coders to strengthen reliability, and include a reception-based dimension through interviews or surveys to capture how these linguistic differences are experienced by the legal subjects they address.

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