PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF SPEECH ACTS IN PRESIDENT PRABOWO SUBIANTO'S REMARKS AT THE HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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***ABSTRACT**- This study identifies the types and purposes of speech acts contained in President Prabowo Subianto's speech at the High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution (New York, 2025). This study uses Searle's (1979) classification of speech acts: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives. This research was conducted qualitatively and focused on how language functions as a tool for political action and persuasion. Using a descriptive pragmatic approach, the analysis shows that all five types of speech acts appeared in the speech. Representative speech acts affirm Indonesia's humanitarian position, directive speech acts call for international cooperation, commissive speech acts express commitment to the future, expressive speech acts demonstrate empathy and respect, and declarative speech acts demonstrate diplomatic intent. The study concludes that President Prabowo's speech reflects Indonesia's moral, diplomatic, and humanitarian leadership through the strategic and persuasive use of language in the context of international diplomacy.*

***Keywords**: speech acts, pragmatics, political discourse, President Prabowo Subianto, high-level international conference.*

INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only as a medium for communication but also as a tool for action, especially in political contexts. As Austin (1962) explains in *How to Do Things with Words*, language is performative. Speakers perform acts like promising, declaring or commanding through words. Searle (1979) also expanded on this by highlighting that every utterance carries illocutionary force, it is a speaker's intent to produce a specific effect or action.

In political communication, language functions not only as a means of expression but also as a tool of influence. Political language deals with the use of power to organize people's mind and opinion (Hashim, 2015). It is an instrument used to control the society in general. Political speech can be seen as a means of establishing and maintaining social relationships, expressing feelings and selling ideas, policies and programmes in any society. In pragmatics

aspect, this means Speech Act Theory. Speech act performed by particular word often depends on the speaker's intention and the context in which the word uttered. While in politics, speech acts become instruments of persuasion, legitimacy, and solidarity (Chilton, 2004).

Chilton (2004) also notes that political discourse is deeply tied to persuasion, ideology and the calculated use of language to achieve power and consensus. Political leaders employ language to perform actions, it is a concept known as "doing things with words," as proposed by Austin (1962). In international relations, these performative utterances are essential to demonstrate national principles, commitments and moral authority. Van Dijk (1998) states that political discourse uses language to shape perceptions, build ideologies and influence actions. In line with that, Fairclough (1995) views political speech as a form of social practice that constructs meaning and power relations, while Wodak (2001) notes that leaders use language to assert moral authority and guide collective decision-making.

President Prabowo Subianto's remarks at the High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution is an example of a political discourse. It represents an important moment in Indonesia's diplomatic journey. President Prabowo Subianto's presence in international forum reflected Indonesia's committment to stand with Palestine. His speech communicates Indonesia's moral responsibility and commitment to global peace and humanitarian values. It means that the speech reflects Indonesia's identity as a peace-seeking nation. Through his speech, President Prabowo not only expresses opinions but also performs political acts since his utterances carry illocutionary power that shows Indonesia's long-standing diplomatic principles.

Therefore, the present study aims to identify and analyze the types of speech acts used in the President's speech by using Searle's speech acts classification (1979) . By examining their pragmatic functions, this research will show us how language is used as a tool of political action which reflecting Indonesia's diplomatic identity and its commitment to global peace and humanitarian values.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach by utilizing content analysis to examine the speech acts in the President Prabowo Subianto's speech. The data is the text of the President Prabowo Subianto's remarks at the High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. The speech

was delivered at the United Nations General Assembly Building, New York, on September 23, 2025. The speech was downloaded from the internet and analyzed based on Searle's (1979) speech act classification: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives to show the speech acts performed in the course delivering the speech.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The analysis of speech acts is rooted in linguistic and pragmatic theories, which examine how context, speaker intentions and audience interpretations influence meaning. In this framework, language is seen not merely as a system of signs but as a dynamic tool for interaction. Pragmatics, the study of language use in context, explores how meaning is constructed and understood in specific situations. By applying speech act theory to President Prabowo's speech, the different types of speech can be identified and how these are employed to achieve his communicative goals (Ilinawati, Tuti & Yoki, 2025).

Searle (1979) improves on Austin's (1962) Speech Act theory by distinguishing between two types of speech acts: Direct and Indirect Speech Acts. Searle (1979) categorizes the illocutionary act into five classes:

1. Representatives: These are statements that describe a state of affairs in the world which could be true or false. They commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition.

2. Directives: These are statements that compel or make another person's action fit the propositional element. It is usually used to give order thereby causing the hearer to take a particular action, request, command or advice.

3. Commisives: These statements commit the speaker to certain future action. It could be in the form of a promise.

4. Expressives: The purpose of expressive statements is to express sincerity of the speech act like excuses and sympathy.

5. Declaratives: These statements are used to say something and make it so, such as pronouncing someone guilty and declaring a war.

Furthermore, Yule (1996) supports this classification, noting that speech acts serve distinct communicative functions based on context.

According to Van Dijk (1998), political discourse is a form of communication where language embodies and reproduces power relations. Pragmatic analysis allows us to see not only what is stated but also what is intended, how it is framed and what outcomes it aims to

achieve. Additionally, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory explains how political leaders use indirectness and inclusive language to promote harmony and avoid face-threatening expressions in diplomatic contexts.

There are some previous relevant study to this present study. The first was done by Ilinawati, Tuti & Yoki (2025) with the title *The Study of Speech Acts of Joko Widodo's Speech in Annual Session People' Consultative Assembly (MPR) 2024.* The result of the study shows that through speech act theory, this study explores how Jokowi tactfully combines information with emotion to convey authority, empathy, and stability. The integration of hybrid speech acts, such as assertive-expressive forms, enhances the speech's impact by embedding emotional weight into factual statements, promoting deeper audience engagement. This analysis reveals Jokowi's ability to use language as both a communication tool and a means to shape public sentiment. The findings offer insight into the essential role of language in political discourse, showing how speech acts can consolidate leadership and unity in structured political environments.

Another research was done by Al-Faki (2014) with the title *Political Speeches of Some African Leaders from Linguistic Perspective (1981-2013).* This paper is conducted on the analysis of political speeches for some African leaders. Politicians under this study use many rhetorical and metaphorical devices. These devices have great effect in manipulating the mind of the mob, covering and softening truths and befogging the thoughts. Pronouns and lexical choices are also used by politicians as linguistic tools that are used to persuade and manipulate the audience.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis identified that all five categories of speech acts were found within President Prabowo's speech.

a. Representative acts commit the speaker to the truth of what they say. They describe the speaker's beliefs or perceptions about a situation (Searle, 1979). Yule (1996) defines them as expressions of belief in the truth of a proposition. Representative acts occur when the President expresses beliefs or states facts, such as in:

"It is with a heavy heart that we recall the ongoing unbearable tragedy in Gaza."

"We condemn all acts of violence against innocent civilians."

"The New York Declaration has provided a peaceful and just pathway towards peace."

These statements express empathy, assert facts, and affirm Indonesia's moral stance. They build credibility and a shared understanding with the audience, framing Indonesia as a humanitarian advocate.

b. Searle (1979) defines directives as utterances that aim to get the listener to perform an action. Yule (1996) includes requests, suggestions, and commands under this category. Directive acts encourage action, as seen in phrases like "*We must recognize Palestine now*" or "*We must stop the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.*" These indirect commands encourage action without sounding confrontational. The phrase "*We must*" creates urgency while maintaining politeness, aligning with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory that indirectness preserves diplomatic harmony. Pragmatically, these utterances appeal to shared moral responsibility rather than authority.

c. Commissive acts express the speaker's commitment to future actions or decisions (Searle, 1979; Yule, 1996), such as in:

"Indonesia once again reiterates its commitment to the Two-State Solution."

"Indonesia will immediately recognize the State of Israel and we will support all guarantees for the security of Israel."

"We are willing to provide peacekeeping forces."

These statements express promises and pledges. Prabowo's commissive acts show Indonesia's readiness to act and strengthen its credibility in international diplomacy. As Verschueren (1999) notes, commissives build trust and reliability—key components of political communication.

d. Expressive acts reveal the speaker's emotions or attitudes (Searle, 1979; Yule, 1996), for examples:

"It is with a heavy heart that we recall the ongoing unbearable tragedy in Gaza."

"We wish to extend our deepest appreciation and highest regards to the Governments of France and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

"Peace, peace now, peace immediately."

These sentences express sorrow, gratitude, and urgency. As Goffman (1974) explains, expressives help maintain harmony and sincerity in communication. Here, emotional expression amplifies the humanitarian and moral tone of the speech.

e. Declarative acts solidify Indonesia's diplomatic position through official statements. Declarative creates real-world change through speech itself (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979), for example:

"Indonesia also declares that once Israel recognizes the independence of the statehood of Palestine, Indonesia will immediately recognize the State of Israel."

This statement performs a political act in which it formally announces Indonesia's conditional recognition policy. The utterance has performative power because it enacts an institutional decision in real time.

President Prabowo's speech employs all five types of speech acts identified by Searle (1979): representatives to assert truth, directives to influence others, commissives to bind the speaker to future action, expressives to show feelings, and declaratives to enact changes through institutional authority. This balanced use of speech acts demonstrates how political discourse operates as both representation and action (Chilton, 2004). Through these linguistic strategies, Prabowo constructs Indonesia's image as a moral, credible, and peace-oriented nation. Prabowo's speech demonstrates each of these strategically to merge moral conviction with political action. Similar results were reported by Al-Faki (2014), who found that political leaders often blend speech acts to build credibility and persuasion.

The repeated use of *"We must"* functions as an indirect directive, invoking shared responsibility and urgency. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), this indirectness enhances politeness in sensitive contexts. Phrases like *"It is with a heavy heart..."* represent expressive acts that appeal to empathy and heighten emotional impact. The conditional statement, *"Indonesia also declares that once Israel recognizes the independence of the statehood of Palestine...,"* serves as a declarative act, enacting policy change through language that is perfectly illustrating Austin's concept of performative speech.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that President Prabowo Subianto's speech employed all five types of speech acts classified by Searle (1979). Representative acts emphasize Indonesia's moral and humanitarian values; directives encourage international unity; commissives express ongoing dedication to peace; expressives display empathy and respect; and declaratives formalize Indonesia's diplomatic intent. It shows that these acts reveal the pragmatic strength of political language in diplomacy. Through purposeful and persuasive words, the President presents Indonesia as a principled and peace-oriented nation advocating justice and humanity on the world stage.

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