

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language plays a important role in human life as the main tool of communication. Since ancient times, humans have used language to interact, express thoughts, share information, and build social relationships. Communication is not only meant for exchanging messages but also for creating understanding, maintaining relationships, and achieving common goals. Therefore, language cannot be seen merely as a tool for speaking but also as a means to shape social reality. Through language, people can influence others, give orders, express hopes, or even make important decisions that have real consequences. For example, when a leader takes an oath of office, the words spoken are not only symbolic but also mark an official act that changes their status. This shows that language and social actions are closely connected, since every utterance can bring certain effects to both the speaker and the listener.

This idea is closely related to linguistics, the scientific study of language. One important branch of linguistics that focuses on how language is used in real situations is pragmatics. Pragmatics studies how meaning is shaped by context and the relationship between speaker and listener. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener within a particular context. Similarly, Leech (1983) stated that pragmatics explores how people convey and interpret intentions in different communicative situations. In other words, pragmatics helps us understand that communication does not

depend only on words or sentence structure but also on who is speaking, to whom, when, where, and for what purpose. Thus, pragmatics emphasizes the flexible and dynamic use of language to achieve communicative goals and maintain social relationships in real life.

One of the most influential theories in pragmatics is the Speech Act Theory, introduced by J.L. Austin (1962) and later developed by John Searle (1979). Austin (1962: 94) stated that when someone speaks, they are actually performing an action. John Searle (1979: 12) classified speech acts into five categories: assertives (stating or claiming something), directives (ordering, requesting, suggesting), commissives (promising or committing to something), expressives (showing feelings or attitudes), and declaratives (changing a situation or status through speech). This classification shows that language is not only used to describe reality but also to perform actions. In other words, through language, people can invite, promise, decide, or even change social realities. Therefore, the speech act theory helps us understand how language functions as a form of social action that carries meaning and real effects in everyday life.

Among these types, the illocutionary act is the one that reveals the speaker's true intention. For example, when someone says, "Let's work together," it expresses a directive act, which is an invitation to act. Meanwhile, when a leader says, "I promise to improve our country," it represents a commissive act, a commitment to future action. In political contexts, illocutionary acts are very significant because they show the communicative strategies used by leaders to influence the public. Through particular utterances, political leaders can build trust, strengthen their

image, and gain support. Therefore, analyzing illocutionary acts in political speeches helps us understand how language functions as a persuasive tool and a means of exercising power.

Political speeches are a unique form of public communication that serves specific purposes, such as presenting visions, persuading citizens, and expressing ideological values. Unlike everyday conversations, political speeches are carefully prepared to influence emotions and shape public opinion. In such speeches, language is not only used to convey facts but also to inspire, demonstrate authority, and reinforce the identity of the speaker. Therefore, analyzing political speeches can help reveal how language functions both as communication and as a tool for persuasion. Using a pragmatic approach allows us to explore how word choice, sentence structure, and delivery style contribute to achieving political objectives.

In this study, Donald Trump's 2025 inaugural address is chosen as the main data source. Trump is well known for his direct, assertive, and emotional speaking style. His speeches often use short, repetitive, and motivational sentences to create impact. The 2025 address is particularly interesting because it was delivered during a period of political division in the United States, when issues of national unity and public confidence were under intense discussion. In the speech, Trump frequently used directive acts such as commands and appeals, and commissive acts such as promises to his people. For instance, when he said, "We will make America great again," the statement not only functions as a promise but also evokes a sense of shared hope. By analyzing his speech acts, we can understand how Trump used language to assert his leadership, awaken national spirit, and construct his political

image in the public eye. Through an analysis of his speech acts, we can see how Trump employed language to demonstrate his leadership, inspire a sense of national pride, and shape his political persona in the eyes of the public. The passage below provides a clear example of these illocutionary acts from his 2025 inaugural address:

Data 1

“Today I will sign a series of historic executive orders. With these actions, we will begin the full restoration of America and a revolution of common sense. It’s all about common sense. First, I will declare a national emergency at our southern border. All illegal entries will stop immediately. And we will begin the process of returning millions and millions of criminal aliens to their home countries. We will reinstate my Remain in Mexico policy. I will end the practice of catch and release. And I will send troops to the southern border to repel the disastrous invasion of our country.”

(Donald Trump’s Inauguration Speech, 10:27-11:53)

The data above clearly shows a directive speech act, where Trump, as the speaker, gives orders and instructions to government agencies and national authorities. Sentences such as “All illegal entries will stop immediately” and “I will send troops to the southern border” express a strong intention to command and enforce action. Through these utterances, Trump not only declares his policy decisions but also asserts authority and seeks public support for his leadership in protecting national security.

According to Halliday and Hasan’s (1985) theory of situational context, the field of this speech centers on political activity and national security policy. The tenor reflects the relationship between the president and both the citizens and state institutions a formal relationship that carries authority and responsibility. The mode is spoken and formal, delivered in a ceremonial setting. Together, these elements create a speech style that is firm, persuasive, and action-oriented. Moreover,

Trump's repeated use of the phrase "we will" emphasizes optimism, determination, and collective unity. These expressions do not merely issue commands but also invite the audience to participate in the shared mission of national renewal. Thus, the directive speech acts in this address function as tools to mobilize people's spirit and strengthen Trump's political legitimacy as a leader.

Based on the example above, studying speech acts in political speeches is important because it helps us understand how leaders use language to exercise power, encourage action, and shape their public image. The analysis does not only focus on the literal meaning of words but also explores the social and political functions behind them. This shows that language plays a strategic role in influencing public opinion and strengthening political legitimacy through the speaker's tone and choice of words. In addition, research on directive speech acts in Trump's speech reveals that the meaning of language is always shaped by context, communicative goals, and the speaker's social position. By examining utterances that contain commands, invitations, or calls to action, we can see how a leader asserts authority and guides people toward shared goals.

As a result, studying speech acts in political discourse provides a deeper understanding of how public communication shapes social and political perspectives. A speech is not merely a presentation of policy but also a form of linguistic practice that reflects power, ideology, and the relationship between leaders and their people. This kind of study contributes significantly to the fields of linguistics, pragmatics, and political discourse analysis.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the issues presented in the background, the problems of this study are formulated as follows:

- 1) What are types of illocutionary acts are found in Donald Trump's inauguration 2025 speech in YouTube?
- 2) What are the intended meanings of illocutionary acts found in Donald Trump's inauguration 2025 speech in YouTube?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to provide a clearer understanding of how speech acts are used in communication and how they can influence interaction between speakers and listeners. The research focuses on how language functions not only as a way to share information but also as a tool to perform certain actions:

- 1) To identify the types of illocutionary acts, found in Donald Trump's Inauguration 2025 Speech in YouTube.
- 2) To examine the intended meaning of illocutionary acts within the context of situations illustrated in the Donald Trump's Inauguration 2025 Speech in YouTube.

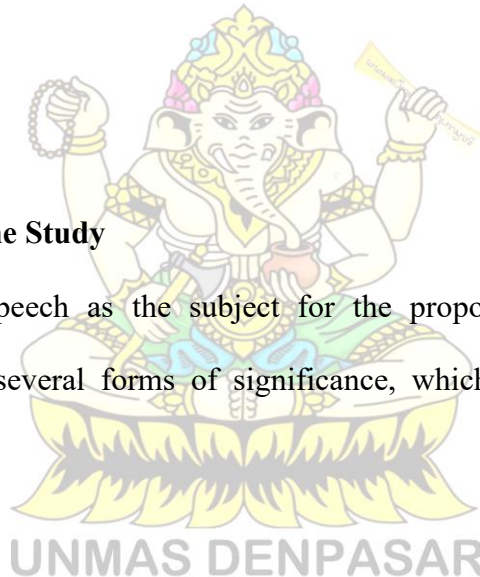
1.4 Limitations of the Study

In this study, the author focused only on the use of illocutionary act as mentioned in the research questions. However, the analysis was limited to the following areas:

- 1) To find out the classifications of illocutionary acts that are found in Donald Trump's Inauguration 2025 Speech in YouTube.
- 2) The intended interpretation of illocutionary acts within the context of the situations depicted in Donald Trump's Inauguration 2025 Speech in YouTube

1.5 Significance of the Study

Selecting a speech as the subject for the proposal writing project is anticipated to yield several forms of significance, which can be described as follows:



1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This study is expected to contribute to the field of English Literature, particularly for those interested in pragmatics and speech acts. By analyzing illocutionary acts, this research aims to deepen the understanding of Searle's theory. The analysis of Donald Trump's inauguration speech on January 20, 2025, demonstrates how speech acts are used to convey vision, command actions, and influence social status. This study benefits students and researchers exploring the

pragmatic aspects of language and encourages an analytical approach to interpreting dialogue in literature and political discourse.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

This study looks at the different types of illocutionary acts and their meanings based on the situations in Donald Trump's speech. The results of this study can serve as a reference for students, researchers, and educators in linguistics and communication studies. Moreover, it may help the public gain a better understanding of how language in political speeches can influence thought and action.



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE, CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

2.1 Review of Related Literature

In writing this study, five previous studies were reviewed as references in the literature review related to illocutionary acts in speeches. These studies were used to gain a deeper understanding of the topic, strengthen the research foundation, and demonstrate the connection between this study and earlier works. Moreover, the findings of those studies provided useful insights and comparisons that enriched the analysis of the present research.

The first study is an article written by Pratika (2025), entitled “Illocutionary Acts in the 2024 ABC News Presidential Debate between Harris and Trump: A Pragmatic Study”, examined how illocutionary acts were used in the 2024 U.S. presidential debate. This research applied a pragmatic approach based on Searle’s (1979) theory while also referring to the foundational ideas of Austin (1962). Using a qualitative descriptive method, the study identified five types of illocutionary acts: assertive, commissive, declarative, expressive, and directive. The findings revealed that assertive acts were the most dominant, as they were employed by the candidates to demonstrate credibility, highlight political achievements, or deliver criticism. Commissive acts were used to express promises or commitments, while directive acts served to challenge or confront opponents. Meanwhile, expressive and declarative acts appeared in the form of emotional expressions and formal stances toward policies. These results indicated that language was strategically used to

construct political image, influence public perception, and strengthen positions through persuasive discourse. Both this study and Pratika's (2025) research used a descriptive qualitative method and applied Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1979) theories to analyze illocutionary acts. Pratika examined the 2024 presidential debate, where assertive acts dominated, while this study focuses on Donald Trump's 2025 inauguration speech, highlighting promises, persuasion, and leadership image. Its contribution lies offering a different context an inaugural speech and added Halliday's (1989) context of situation to explain the social and political meanings of Trump's language.

The second study is an article written by Agagon (2024), entitled "Illocutionary Speech Acts Used by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. in His 2022 and 2023 State of the Nation Addresses." This research examined the types and functions of illocutionary acts used in two of President Marcos's national speeches. It applied Searle's (1979) classification of speech acts as the main theoretical basis. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the researcher identified five categories of illocutionary acts: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. The findings showed that assertive acts were the most common, especially when Marcos shared national accomplishments, explained government policies, or delivered factual information to the public. Directive and commissive acts were also often used to influence the audience and show commitment to policy goals. The study concluded that these speech acts were important in political communication because they help build the president's image and credibility as a leader. Both this study and Agagon's (2024) research use Searle's (1979) theory with a qualitative

descriptive approach. However, Agagon focused on Marcos's State of the Nation Addresses, while the current research analyzes Donald Trump's 2025 inauguration speech to explore how speech acts express promises, persuasion, and authority. The significance of the present study lies in its comparative viewpoint, analyzing political language in a different social and political setting and using Halliday's (1989) concept of context of situation to understand meaning beyond the words themselves.

The third study is a thesis written by Doe (2021), entitled "Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in Political Speeches: A Case Study of Donald Trump's 2020 Campaign Speech." This study examined the use of illocutionary acts in Donald Trump's political speech and explains how these speech acts are employed to influence the audience and convey political goals. The study applied Searle's speech act theory, which classifies illocutionary acts into five categories: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. The findings revealed that directive and commissive acts were the most dominant types used in the speech. Directive acts appeared in the form of commands, requests, and invitations aimed at guiding the audience's actions. Meanwhile, commissive acts were expressed through promises and statements of commitment related to future political agendas. Assertive acts were used to present claims and beliefs as facts in order to strengthen Trump's political position. Expressive acts functioned to convey emotions such as confidence and concern, while declarative acts were used to deliver formal political statements and authoritative decisions. This study shares similarities with the present research because both analyze illocutionary acts in political speeches using

Searle's (1979) theoretical framework and focus on how directive speech acts function to influence public perception. However, the main difference lies in the context and data source. Doe (2021) analyzes a campaign speech delivered in an electoral context, whereas the present study examines Donald Trump's 2025 inauguration speech, which represents a formal and institutional political context. The contribution of the present study is its pragmatic interpretation of directive speech acts in an official inauguration speech by integrating Halliday's (1989) concept of context of situation. This approach helps explain how language, situational context, and political power interact in shaping meaning and audience responses within formal political discourse.

The fourth study is an article by Haryanti, Saddhono, and Anindyarini (2024), entitled "Illocutionary Speech Acts in President Jokowi's Instagram Account: A Multimodal Pragmatic Study", explored how President Jokowi used Instagram as a tool of communication. This research applied a multimodal pragmatic approach, which means it analyzes not only the language but also the visuals or images in social media posts. The findings showed several types of illocutionary acts, namely directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. Among these, directive acts appeared most frequently, since Jokowi often used utterances in the form of invitations, appeals, or guidance directed to the public. Expressive acts occurred when Jokowi expressed gratitude, pride, or empathy. Commissive acts were identified in his promises or commitments on behalf of the government, while declarative acts appeared in the form of official statements or political stances. This study is similar to Haryanti, Saddhono, and Anindyarini

(2024) because both use Searle's (1979) theory and examine illocutionary acts such as directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. The difference is that their study analyzed President Jokowi's Instagram using a multimodal approach, while this study focuses on Donald Trump's 2025 inauguration speech in a formal political context. The contribution of this study is providing insight from an actual political speech, interpreting the pragmatic meanings and communicative purposes of the acts, and applying Halliday's (1989) context of situation to explain the relationship between language, context, and political meaning.

The fifth study is an thesis written by Smith (2022), entitled "Illocutionary Acts in the Indonesian President's Speech: An Analysis of Joko Widodo's 2021 State Speech." This study explored the used of illocutionary acts in President Joko Widodo's 2021 state speech and seeks to explain how different types of speech acts are used to communicate government policies and political goals. The study applied speech act theory proposed by Austin and Searle within a pragmatic approach to examine the communicative role of political speech and its function in gaining public support for government programs. The results indicated that assertive acts were the most dominant type in the speech. These acts are mainly used to describe government policies, achievements, and national conditions as statements of fact. Directive acts also appear frequently, especially in the form of invitations and appeals encouraging the public to take part in government initiatives. Expressive acts are used to show empathy and concern toward social problems faced by citizens, while commissive acts are found in statements that reflect the government's commitment to national development and future policy plans. This

study is related to the present research because both examine illocutionary acts in official presidential speeches using the speech act theories of Austin and Searle. Both studies also emphasize how language is strategically used to influence public understanding and response, particularly through the use of directive speech acts to guide audience behavior. The main difference between the two studies lies in the research focus and political setting. Smith (2022) analyzes President Joko Widodo's 2021 state speech within the Indonesian political context, whereas the present study focuses on Donald Trump's 2025 inauguration speech delivered in the formal context of the United States presidential transition. Furthermore, the present study places stronger attention on directive speech acts and applies Halliday's (1989) concept of context of situation to explain how situational factors influence meaning in political discourse. The contribution of the present study is offering a pragmatic analysis of directive speech acts in an official inauguration speech. By combining illocutionary act theory with the context of situation framework, this study provides a clearer understanding of how political leaders use directive language to build authority, legitimacy, and public alignment within formal political communication.

In conclusion, the five previous studies provided a broader understanding of illocutionary acts by examining their types, functions, and most frequently used forms in various contexts. All of them are based on Searle's (1979) theory as the main framework. This research differs in that it not only applied Searle's theory but also integrates Halliday's (1989) concept of context of situation to analyze Donald Trump's 2025 inauguration speech, aimed to uncover the social and political meanings embedded in his language.

2.2 Concepts

The concept of research methods includes various stages and principles that serve as guidelines in the process of collecting, processing, and interpreting data in a study. The purpose of research methods is to obtain accurate and reliable results, enabling researchers to find answers to research questions objectively and systematically.

2.2.1 Illocutionary Act

Illocutionary acts are a concept in pragmatic theory that describe the actions performed by a speaker through utterances to achieve specific goals in communication. According to Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* (1962: 94), an illocutionary act is an action that occurs when a person utters a sentence with a particular intention. Austin classifies speech acts into three categories: locutionary acts (the act of producing utterances), illocutionary acts (the intended action conveyed by the speaker through speech), and perlocutionary acts (the effects or outcomes produced by the utterance on the listener).

2.2.2 Donald Trump

Donald Trump was a businessman, television personality, and politician who served as the 45th President of the United States from 2017 to 2021. According to

Encyclopedia Britannica (2020), Trump was known for his strong nationalist and populist views. During his presidency, he implemented several policies, including major tax reductions, stricter immigration regulations, and the withdrawal of the United States from several international agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the TPP trade pact. In terms of foreign policy, Trump prioritized what he believed to be in the best interest of the United States, often criticizing longstanding allies and adopting protectionist measures to strengthen the nation's economy.

2.2.3 YouTube

YouTube is the largest video-sharing platform in the world that allows users to upload, watch, and share a wide variety of videos. According to Google, YouTube is utilized not only by individuals but also by companies, institutions, and governments as a medium to share information and engage with audiences around the world. Along with the increasing use of mobile devices and faster internet connections, YouTube has transformed the way people access and enjoy media globally.

2.2.4 Speech

A speech is a form of oral communication delivered by a speaker to an audience with the purpose of informing, persuading, or inspiring listeners. Speeches can be presented in various settings, such as formal events, seminars, ceremonies, or public gatherings. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a speech is a form of

public speaking intended to evoke emotions, convey information, or influence the audience in a persuasive manner.

2.3 Theories

This study was based on the speech act theory proposed by John Searle (1979), which classifies illocutionary acts into five types: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. This classification helped to understand how language was used for various purposes, such as stating facts, making requests, making promises, expressing emotions, or creating change through speech. Searle's theory is particularly important for analyzing the illocutionary acts found in Donald Trump's inauguration speech, as it shows how these utterances function within political and social contexts. This study aimed to examine how Trump's speech reflected different illocutionary intentions, such as persuasion, promises, and declarations, and how these speech acts influenced public perception, shaped the atmosphere of the inauguration, and affected audience reactions.

Furthermore, this study also drew on Halliday and Hasan (1985) theory of the context of situation, which asserts that the meaning of language is closely linked to its use in social interactions. Halliday emphasizes three key elements: field (what is happening), tenor (who is involved and their relationships), and mode (the role of language in the interaction). These elements show that language is not only a tool for conveying information but also serves to shape social roles, purposes, and relationships. In political speeches like Donald Trump's, language is used to

persuade, influence, and build a public image. Halliday's framework helped explain how language functions in communication to create meaning and achieve social goals.

2.3.1 Speech Act

In pragmatic studies, speech acts are used to understand the hidden meanings behind utterances, how a speaker can influence their interlocutor, and how a statement can function as an action. According to Austin (1962: 1-6), speech acts are a theory in pragmatic linguistics that emphasizes that utterances do not merely convey information but also perform actions. He divides speech acts into three types: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. This theory helped us understand how language was used in everyday life, including how it could influence others, convey intentions, and effectively express the speaker's feelings.

2.3.1.1 Locutionary Act

According to Searle (1979: 16-19), a locutionary act refers to the act of producing a meaningful utterance, which involves the pronunciation of words, grammatical structure, and the expression of a particular proposition. The main focus of this act lies in what is said the literal meaning of an utterance without considering the speaker's intention or the effect it may produce. In other words, a locutionary act is related to the linguistic aspect of communication, where words

and sentences are used to convey messages accurately in terms of grammar and meaning.

Example: “It is raining outside.”

(Searle, 1979:16)

In this example, the utterance simply conveys information about the weather. It does not aim to influence or persuade the listener. Thus, the locutionary act serves as the basis for understanding the illocutionary act (the intended meaning) and the perlocutionary act (the effect of the utterance) in communication.

2.3.1.2 Illocutionary Act

According to Searle (1979), an illocutionary act is a speech act in which the speaker expresses a particular intention through their utterance, such as giving an order, making a request, offering advice, or making a promise. This act focuses on the purpose or function that the speaker wants to achieve by speaking, not merely on the literal meaning of the words used.

Example: “Please close the window.”

(Searle, 1979:23)

In this case, the speaker’s utterance serves as a request for the listener to close the window. The illocutionary act highlights the speaker’s intention behind the statement, showing that language is not only used to convey information but also to perform specific actions in communication.

2.3.1.3 Perlocutionary Act

According to Searle (1979), a perlocutionary act refers to the impact or reaction that an utterance brings about in the listener. It is concerned with the effect produced by the speaker's words, such as influencing, convincing, frightening, or encouraging the hearer.

Example: "There's a snake behind you!"

(Searle, 1979:25)

In this situation, the listener might feel scared or quickly move away. Such a response illustrates the perlocutionary act, showing that spoken language not only conveys meaning or intention but can also cause real emotional or behavioral effects on the listener.

2.3.2 Types of Illocutionary Act

The speech act theory, introduced by Austin and later developed by Searle, explains that language is not only used to share information but also to perform various actions. This theory identifies five main types of speech acts: assertives (statements expressing facts or beliefs), directives (commands or requests), commissives (promises or commitments), expressives (expressions of feelings or attitudes), and declarations (utterances that bring about a change in reality). These categories are useful for understanding the speaker's intentions and how language operates in different communication situations.

According to Searle (1979), speech acts are divided into five main categories based on their communicative functions. The following is a more detailed explanation of each category:

2.3.2.1 Assertive

Assertives are a type of speech act that functions to convey something the speaker believes to be true. In this case, the speaker shows their commitment to the truth of the statement they make. Therefore, this type of speech act is used to express facts, opinions, or beliefs that the speaker considers true. For example, assertive speech acts can be seen in the following sentences:

- 1) “The earth revolves around the sun.”
- 2) “The cat is on the mat.”

(Searle, 1979:23)

Both sentences serve to convey information or present factual statements. The speaker's purpose is not to command, request, or make a promise, but rather to express something they consider true based on their perception or belief.

2.3.2.2 Directives

Directives are a type of speech act that aim to encourage or influence the listener to perform a certain action. In this case, the speaker attempts to get the hearer to act according to their wishes or intended purpose. In other words, this type of speech act is used to give commands, make requests, offer advice, or provide

suggestions to the listener. For example, directive speech acts can be seen in the following sentences:

- 1) "Please sit down."
- 2) "Close the door."

(Searle, 1979:24)

These sentences are intended to request or command the listener to carry out an action. The main purpose of these utterances is not to convey facts but to prompt the listener to do something according to the speaker's intention.

2.3.2.3 Commissive

Commissives are a type of speech act in which the speaker expresses their commitment to perform a certain action in the future. In this way, the speaker directly binds themselves to a specific action or obligation. For example, commissive speech acts can be seen in the following sentences:

- 1) "I promise to call you tomorrow."
- 2) "We will finish this project on time."

(Searle, 1979:25)

These sentences demonstrate the speaker's commitment to actions that will be carried out in the future, such as promises or intentions. The main focus of this type of speech act is not on present facts but on the speaker's responsibility and sincerity in fulfilling what has been stated.

2.3.2.4 Expressive

Expressives are a type of speech act used to convey the speaker's feelings, attitudes, or emotions toward a certain situation. In other words, the focus is not on the truth of the proposition but on the speaker's emotional expression. For example, expressive speech acts can be seen in the following sentences:

- 1) "I'm sorry for being late."
- 2) "Congratulations on your success!"

(Searle, 1979:26)

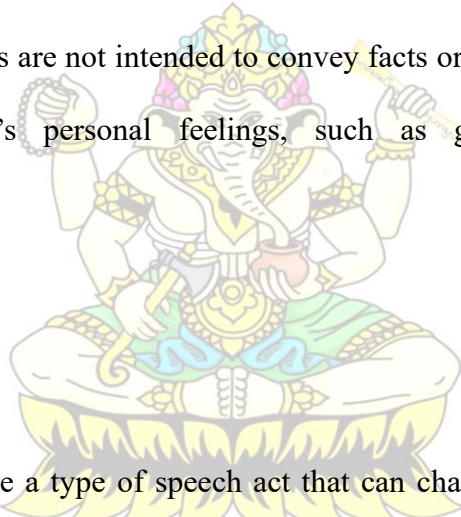
These sentences are not intended to convey facts or issue commands but to express the speaker's personal feelings, such as gratitude, apology, or congratulations.

2.3.2.5 Declaratives

Declarations are a type of speech act that can change the social status or situation simply through being spoken. In this way, these utterances have a performative power; when spoken by an authorized person, social reality is truly altered. For example, declarative speech acts can be seen in the following sentences:

- 1) "I now pronounce you husband and wife."
- 2) "You are fired."

(Searle, 1979:27)



These sentences bring about a real change in the social world. Once spoken, the status of the listener or the relevant party is altered, such as changing from unmarried to married, or from being an employee to no longer being one.

2.3.3 Context of Situation

According to Halliday and Hasan (1985:12), the context of situation consists of three key elements: field, tenor, and mode. These elements are used to describe the social background where language takes place and to understand how meaning is shaped within a given circumstance. The concept highlights the link between language and its surrounding environment, illustrating how people's language choices are influenced by the situation in which communication happens. The three elements are described as follows:

2.3.3.1 Field

The concept of field refers to the type of social activity taking place, or in other words, what the participants are actually doing in a particular situation. It focuses on the ongoing action within a certain context, which is generally understood in social, cultural, or institutional terms as a recognized activity. Therefore, field helps us understand what is happening, the purpose of the activity, and how language is used according to the topic and situation of communication. This concept can be illustrated through the following example, which demonstrates how the field is reflected in a real communication context.

Text 1.3 (from a political speech by a national leader)

“My fellow citizens, today we stand at the crossroads of history. The challenges before us are great, but our determination is even greater. Together, we will rebuild our economy, strengthen our security, and restore faith in our democracy. I call upon every citizen to take part in this national renewal not for personal gain, but for the common good of our nation.”

(Halliday and Hasan, 1985:13–14)

Based on this text, the field is governance and political leadership, focusing on national unity, economic recovery, and public participation. The social activity involved is a political appeal, in which the speaker aims to motivate the audience to take collective action for the progress of the nation. The language used is semiformal to formal, reflecting the institutional and official context of a political speech.

2.3.3.2 Tenor

Tenor refers to the roles and relationships between people involved in a communication, whether spoken or written. It focuses on who is participating, how they relate to each other, and the level of authority, status, or familiarity they hold. Since people have different positions and levels of power in an interaction, tenor helps us understand how these differences influence the way messages are delivered and interpreted. In short, tenor deals with the interpersonal aspect of language who the speaker or writer is addressing, the type of relationship they share, and the social context surrounding the interaction. This concept can be seen in the following example, which illustrates how tenor shapes the tone and relationship between the speaker and the audience

Text 1.3 (from a motivational speech by a national leader)

“My fellow citizens, we have faced many challenges and uncertainties, yet our spirit remains strong. As your leader, I urge each of you to rise together, build our future, and stand united as one nation. Let us show that courage and unity can overcome every obstacle.”

(Halliday and Hasan, 1985:13–14)

Based on this text, the tenor reflects the relationship between a leader and the citizens. The speaker holds higher authority and responsibility, while the audience represents the general public. The relationship is formal and institutional, with the leader addressing the people respectfully and encouragingly. In this context, the tenor emphasizes motivation and leadership, aiming to foster unity and a shared sense of purpose.

2.3.3.3 Mode

Mode is a concept that emphasizes the role of language in a particular situation. It relates to how communication takes place whether spoken or written and how this choice affects the meaning being conveyed. More specifically, mode refers to the rhetorical function or the role a text plays within its social and situational context. Understanding mode means not only recognizing the form of communication being used but also the purpose it serves in interaction. This concept can be illustrated through the following example, which shows how mode influences the way language is organized and delivered in a specific communicative setting.

Text 1.3 (from a televised speech by a national leader)

“My fellow citizens, today we face challenges that test our strength and unity. Through this broadcast, I speak directly to all of you, encouraging everyone to actively participate in rebuilding our communities, supporting our economy, and upholding the values we share. May this message guide our collective actions and inspire a sense of responsibility in every citizen.”

(Halliday and Hasan, 1985:13–14)

Based on this text, the mode is spoken and broadcasted, intended to reach a wide audience. The language is persuasive and instructive, combining a formal style with rhetorical strategies designed to motivate public participation. In this context, the mode reflects the interactive purpose of the message, as the speaker not only informs but also encourages the audience to take action.

