

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In human interaction, language is not only exchanging information but also a way to construct meaning, influence perspectives, and shape social reality. This function becomes particularly important in political communication, where leaders carefully craft their speeches to connect with the audience, deliver important messages, and leave a lasting impact. According to Chomsky, (2002), language is a natural part of human cognition and is deeply connected to our biology. Oxford University Press, (2005) defined language as a system of spoken and written communication used by people in specific regions or countries. Language can be expressed in two main ways spoken and written. Spoken language is used in conversations and speeches, while written language appears in books, articles, poems, and other forms of media. From the definition of language, it can be concluded that language as human tool to express thoughts, feelings, ideas, and emotion that we use in daily communication with each other. Among the various languages spoken worldwide, English holds a special position as an international language. As a global language, English facilitates communication across nations and cultures, playing a key role in diplomacy, business, science, and politics. Political speeches, in particular, are significant instances where language is used strategically to influence, persuade, and convey messages to the public.

One of the linguistic fields that examine how language functions in communication is pragmatics. Pragmatics focuses on the speaker's intended

meaning and the ways in which context shapes the interpretation of utterances. A central concept within pragmatics is speech act theory, which explores how language is used to perform actions rather than merely convey information. According to Yule (1996), speech acts consist of three interrelated components, locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. A locutionary act refers to the actual act of producing sounds, words, and sentences that form an utterance essentially, the basic act of saying something with a specific meaning and reference. However, an illocutionary act is the speaker's intended communicative function in delivering the utterance for example, asserting, questioning, commanding, promising, or requesting. It represents what the speaker is doing in saying something, such as making a statement, giving an order, or offering an apology. Whereas, a perlocutionary act refers to the effect the utterance has on the listener, such as persuading, frightening, amusing, or inspiring them. It is concerned with the actual outcome or response elicited by the speech act. Among these three, illocutionary acts are particularly significant in political discourse, as they allow speakers to assert authority, express intentions, influence public opinion, and effectively persuade their audience. Understanding illocutionary acts is crucial for analysing how politicians use language strategically to perform various functions, such as making commitments, issuing commands, or seeking support, all within specific social and cultural contexts.

According to Searle (1979), illocutionary acts are a fundamental part of communication, reflecting the speaker's intention behind an utterance and the function it serves beyond the mere production of words. Unlike simply stating

something, an illocutionary act involves performing an action through language, such as making a promise, giving a command, or expressing an opinion. Searle (1979) classifies illocutionary acts into five categories based on their communicative purposes. Representatives are statements that convey the speaker's belief or assertion about a fact or truth. Directives are utterances intended to prompt the listener to take a particular action, including commands, requests, or suggestions. Commissive express the speaker's commitment to a future action, such as promises or vows. Expressive communicate the speaker's emotions or attitudes, like thanking or apologizing. Finally, declarations are utterances that bring about an immediate change in the external world simply by being spoken, such as pronouncing someone married or declaring a meeting open. Understanding these categories is essential for analyzing how language functions in various contexts, particularly in political discourse, where speakers strategically use different illocutionary acts to inform, persuade, commit, express feelings, or enact change.

In political discourse studies, political speeches are one of the most important forms of communication because they are a medium for leaders to convey ideas and interact with the public. Unlike everyday conversations or other written texts, political speeches are composed to achieve specific goals, such as convincing the audience, asserting authority, and framing political issues. Therefore, speeches are an appropriate and strategic choice for research data and speeches contain plethora illocutionary acts which are very suitable to discuss in this case. Illocutionary acts are often found in political speeches because leaders do not merely convey information but also take action through their words. By declaring,

promising, warning, or persuading, political leaders are able to influence attitudes, build support, and shape public perception. In other words, speech acts play an important role in how political messages are conveyed and received. This study specifically analyses Joe Biden's political speeches because he is one of the most influential political figures in the United States, and his style of language reflects the communication strategies used by modern leaders to connect with the public. Biden's speeches often combine assertive and persuasive elements, making them relevant for analysis through the lens of illocutionary acts. By focusing on this data, the study aims to provide a clear understanding of how political discourse works, particularly how language functions as a tool of persuasion and power in shaping public understanding.

This study aims to identify and analyze the illocutionary acts in Joe Biden's selected political speech using Yule's theory to examine their functions and Searle's classification to categorize their types. By doing so, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how political speeches utilize language to convey meaning, persuade audiences, and establish connections with listeners. The result of this study is expected to provide meaningful insights into the pragmatic aspects of political discourse and the role of illocutionary acts in shaping public communication.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Political speeches function as a means through which political leaders communicate ideas and perform actions by using language. From a pragmatic

perspective, language is not only for deliver information but also to convey intentions and fulfil communicative purposes, which are referred to as speech acts Austin (1962) Among the various types of speech acts, illocutionary acts are particularly significant as they emphasize the speaker's intended meaning and function behind an utterance Searle (1979). Examining illocutionary acts in political discourse is therefore essential to reveal how language is used to influence audiences Yule (1996a). Based on the background, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of illocutionary acts are found in Biden's selected political speech?
2. What are the functions of these illocutionary acts found in Biden's selected political speech?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This research is conducted to gain a deeper understanding of how language functions in political discourse, especially in political speech contexts. Through the analysis of illocutionary acts, this study aims to show the communicative intentions expressed by speakers in political speeches. The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify and classify the types of illocutionary acts found in Biden's selected political speech
2. To analyze the functions of these illocutionary acts in Biden's selected political speech

1.4 Limitation of the Study

This study has limited scope, focusing on the analysis of illocutionary acts identified in Biden's selected political speeches. The study concentrates on examining the types and functions of illocutionary acts as the primary units of analysis. This study applied Yule (1996) theory is employed to interpret the functions of illocutionary acts, while Searle (1979) framework is used to classify and categorize their types. Other aspect of speech acts, including locutionary and perlocutionary acts, as well as non-linguistic elements and broader discourse perspectives, are excluded from the scope of this study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research lies support students in gaining a deeper understanding of English literature. It focuses on illocutionary acts, examining their importance from both a theoretical and practical perspective, as detailed below.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this research is hopefully used as information in studying illocutionary acts from a pragmatic perspective, particularly through the analysis of political speeches accessed via digital media such as YouTube. Through this research, students and researchers can understand how language is not only used to convey information, but also to perform actions such as persuading, inviting, or influencing the audience. With this hopefully, this research contributes to the development of theoretical understanding of the function of language in the

context of political discourse, while enriching references in pragmatic learning in the digital age.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

The practical significance of this research may benefits students, researcher, and political analysts by offering insights into how language is used strategically in political speeches. Additionally, it can help the general public develop a better understanding of political rhetoric and its impact on communication.



CHAPTER II

REVIEW RELATED OF LITERATURE, CONCEPT, AND THEORY

In this chapter, the researcher presents a review of relevant literature, concepts, and theoretical frameworks. The discussion of these theories serves as a foundation for addressing the research questions. Additionally, previous related studies are examined to provide supporting data and enrich the overall understanding of the topic.

2.1 Review related of literature

There have been several studies on illocutionary acts, each focusing on different contexts and types of speech acts. These studies provide valuable insights into how illocutionary acts function in various forms of communication.

The first study was conducted by Prabawa, I. D. G. B., & Permana (2024), titled Directive Illocutionary Act Used by the Main Character in “The End of the F**ing World”. The aim of this study was to identify the types of directive illocutionary acts used by the characters in the TV series and to explain how they function in different situations. The researcher used Yule’s (1996) theory to classify the directive acts into four types orders, commands, suggestions, and requests. To understand how the situation influenced the speech, the study also applied Halliday and Hasan’s (1985) theory of context of situation. This theory includes three important elements field (what is happening), tenor (who is involved), and mode (how the language is used). The research used a descriptive qualitative method and

library research. The results showed that the characters used all four types of directive acts depending on their roles and relationships in the story. This study is similar to this research because it also uses Yule's theory. However, there are some key differences. Prabawa focused only on directive illocutionary acts, while this research analyze all five types of illocutionary acts based on Searle's (1979) theory. In addition, Prabawa used data from a fictional TV series, while this study focuses on a real political speech Joe Biden's farewell address. Therefore, although both studies use similar theories, the data sources and focus are different.

The second study was conducted by Ngurah, S. M. N. P., & Candra (2024), entitled *An Analysis of Expressive Illocutionary Act Found in Night School Movie*. This research aimed to explore how expressive illocutionary acts function in human communication, particularly as portrayed in the movie *Night School*. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the researcher applied Searle and Vanderveken's (1985) theory to analyze the speech acts found in the dialogues between the characters. The study identified twelve types of illocutionary acts, with 48 instances classified as expressive acts. These expressive acts included speech such as thanking, apologizing, congratulating, and complaining each reflecting the speaker's psychological state or emotional attitude in various situations. These studies have some similarities with this research, especially in the use of speech act theory and qualitative analysis. However, there are notable differences. Paramaatha focused solely on expressive illocutionary acts and used fictional dialogues from a comedy film as the data source. In contrast, this study examines all five types of illocutionary acts based on Searle's (1979) classification. While

both studies aim to understand how language reflects intention and emotion, the current research places more emphasis on political discourse and the broader communicative function of speech acts in a formal, real-life context.

The third study was conducted by Putri & Skolastika (2022), entitled Directive Speech Act Used by the Students of the English Study Program During Online Learning. This research aimed to analyze the types and functions of directive speech acts used by second-semester students at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar during online classes. Employing a descriptive qualitative method, the study utilized Searle's (1999) classification of directive speech acts as cited in Yule (1996). The researchers categorized directive speech acts into three main sentence types: interrogative, declarative, and imperative. The findings showed that interrogative directives were the most frequently used (50%), followed by declarative (30%) and imperative (20%) forms. These speech acts were primarily used to request, command, suggest, or advise within the context of classroom interaction. This study shares some similarities with the present research, particularly in its use of speech act theory and qualitative approach. However, there are significant differences. Putri and Skolastika focused exclusively on directive speech acts in a student-teacher academic setting, using real-life utterances from classroom dialogue. In contrast, the current study analyzes all five types of illocutionary acts representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives based on Searle's (1979) theory. Moreover, it examines political discourse through Joe Biden's farewell address, a formal speech delivered in a public context. While both studies explore the pragmatic functions of

language, this research emphasizes the strategic use of illocutionary acts in political communication, offering broader implications for rhetorical analysis in leadership discourse.

Another study was conducted by Fathurohman et al. (2023), entitled *Analysis of the Function of Locutionary, Illocutionary and Perlocutionary Speech Acts in the Novel Ingkar by Boy Candra*. The aim of this study was to describe the forms and functions of speech acts specifically locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts found in the literary work. This study used a descriptive qualitative method, the researchers analyzed various utterances from the dialogues in the novel to identify the types and functions of speech acts. The study applied the Divide Direct Elements (BUL) technique to categorize each utterance based on its communicative purpose. In this study, the researchers focused on four types of illocutionary acts according to Searle's theory assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive. The results showed that expressive speech acts were the most frequently found, followed by assertive, perlocutionary, directive, and commissive acts. This study shares some similarities with this research, particularly in the use of speech act theory as a framework and the application of a qualitative descriptive method. Both studies aim to explore how language functions beyond its literal meaning and how speakers use language to perform actions such as promising, requesting, or expressing feelings. However, there are important differences. The data in Fathurohman's study comes from a fictional narrative in the form of a novel, where the speech acts occur in a literary and imaginative context. In contrast, this research

analyzes a political speech delivered by President Joe Biden, which is a real, formal, and public communication with political intentions and rhetorical goals.

The last study was conducted by Szabo (2023), entitled A Pragmatic Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in the Speech About Pandemic COVID-19 Performed by European Commission President (Von Der Leyen). The aim of this study was to analyze the types and functions of illocutionary acts found in Ursula von der Leyen's public speech regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. This study used a descriptive qualitative method, the researcher applied document analysis to examine how illocutionary acts were used throughout the speech. The theoretical framework used in the study is based on Austin's and Searle's speech act theory, with a focus on five categories: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, expositives, and behabitives. The study identified 28 utterances that contained illocutionary acts. The results showed that the most frequent type was exercitives, such as advising, warning, recommending, and giving orders. These acts reflected the speaker's intention to persuade the public to follow safety protocols and take precautionary actions during the pandemic. The researcher highlighted how Von Der Leyen's speech functioned not only to inform but also to guide and influence public behavior during a global health crisis. This study has some similarities with this research. Both use a descriptive qualitative method and apply speech act theory to analyze a political speech. Both also aim to explore how language is used to perform actions and achieve communicative goals. Moreover, each study focuses on a speech delivered by a political leader during an important event: Eca's study during the COVID-19 pandemic and the present study during President Joe Biden's farewell.

There are several important differences, Sboz's research focuses on a European leader's speech that emphasizes public health communication in a time of crisis, while the current study analyzes a farewell address by a U.S. president, which is more reflective and political in nature. Another key difference is the classification used; Eca uses Austin's extended categories verdictives, exercitives, whereas the current study applies Searle's five main types assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, declaratives. Furthermore, Eca's analysis highlights how language is used to command and direct behavior, while this research focuses more broadly on the expressive, persuasive, and strategic use of language in political discourse. These differences reflect the unique context and objectives of each study, despite their shared theoretical foundation.

These previous studies contribute significantly to the understanding of illocutionary acts in different contexts, such as movies, literature, academic interactions, and political speeches. However, this research differs as it specifically analyses Joe Biden's farewell address speech using (Yule, 1996a) theory to examine the functions of illocutionary acts and (Searle, 1979) classification to categorize their types. This study aims to explore how Biden uses illocutionary acts to communicate his intentions, persuade his audience, and shape his final message as a political leader.

2.2 Concepts

To avoid ambiguity, this study explained concepts that are related with this study. Those concepts include pragmatic, illocutionary act, and speech. The definition of the concepts is presented below.

2.2.1 Illocutionary act

An illocutionary act is an essential part of a of speech acts, focusing on how language is used in specific contexts to express the speaker's intended meaning. (Yule, 1996a) explain that an illocutionary act refers to an utterance made with a particular purpose, utilizing the communicative force of a statement. This could involve making a declaration, extending an offer, providing an explanation, or fulfilling any other communicative function.

2.2.2 Speech

According to (Lucas, 2020) in his book *The Art of Public Speaking*, speech is a form of public communication where someone speaks in front of a group with a clear purpose whether it's to inform, persuade, or entertain. It's more than just speaking out loud; it's about organizing your thoughts, shaping your message carefully, and delivering it in a way that connects with the audience.

2.3 Theories

This study applies two main linguistic theories to analysed illocutionary acts in Joe Biden's farewell address speech. Searle (1997) are used to categorized,

identify, and classify the types of illocutionary acts found in the speech. Yule (1996) theory used to explain the speech acts function in the communication. In addition, Searle and Yule theory will help you to explain general classification of speech act theory.

2.3.1 Pragmatic

Pragmatic is the study of meaning in speech situations Leech (1983). It means that pragmatics is concerned with how language is used and interpreted depending on the context of communication. In other words, pragmatics focuses not only on what is said, but also on how, when, and why it is said, making context a crucial factor in understanding meaning. Therefore, pragmatics provides meaningful insights into how speakers use language to achieve certain goals, such as persuading, requesting, or asserting. This perspective is particularly important when analyzing political speeches, where meaning is often shaped by context, intention, and audience interpretation.

2.3.2 Speech Act Theory

A speech act is an utterance that performs an action rather than just conveying information. According to Yule (1996) in his book *The Study of Language*, when people use language, they are not only producing a string of words but also performing various types of communicative actions. These actions can include making requests, giving commands, making promises, offering apologies, or asking questions. Yule also explains that every utterance carries not just a literal

meaning, but also an intended function within a specific context. Meanwhile Austin (1962), speech act is divided into three parts, namely locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts.

2.3.2.1 Locutionary Act

Locutionary act refers to the basic act of producing a meaningful linguistic expression. In simpler terms, it is the literal meaning of the words spoken. According to Austin (1962), a locutionary act is the basic art of saying something, and focuses on the actual words that are spoken, their literal meaning, and how they formed into the sentence. *For example:*

Teacher: “how is life?”

Student: “I’m great and you?”

Teacher: “I’m fine too. Thank you. Now Steffi can you please take the Impact on English textbooks in the library?” Christiano (2020)

From the dialogue above, illustrates clear examples of locutionary acts, as each utterance focuses on the literal meaning of the words spoken. In the utterance **“How is life?”**, the teacher produces a meaningful linguistic expression in the form of a question. At the locutionary level, this phrase only asks about the student's condition without considering any other intentions.

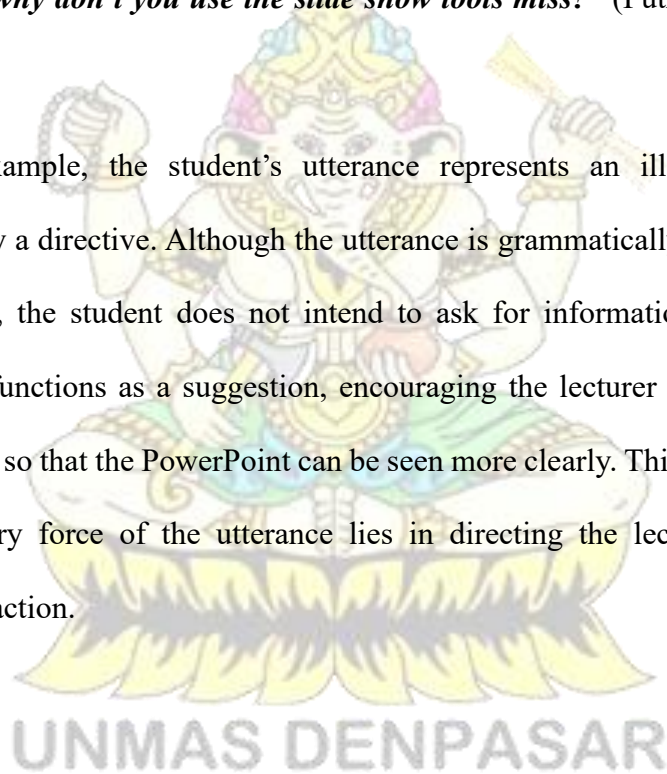
2.3.2.2 Illocutionary Act

According to Austin (1962) an illocutionary act, refers to the speaker's intention behind an utterance what the speaker is actually doing *by* saying those words. It's not just about the words themselves, but what you're doing with those words. *For example:*

Lecturer: "can you see my power point clearly?"

Student: "why don't you use the slide show tools miss?" (Putri & Skolastika, 2022)

In this example, the student's utterance represents an illocutionary act, specifically a directive. Although the utterance is grammatically in the form of a question, the student does not intend to ask for information. Instead, the utterance functions as a suggestion, encouraging the lecturer to use the slide show tools so that the PowerPoint can be seen more clearly. This shows that the illocutionary force of the utterance lies in directing the lecturer to take a particular action.



2.3.2.3 Perlocutionary Act

A perlocutionary act is concerned with the effect the utterance has on the listener Austin (1962). This includes how the listener reacts, what they feel, or what they do as a result of the speaker's words.

For example:

Teacher: "Alright. Shannon and Farel please come to the front of the class?"

Student: (preparing to come to the front of the class) Christianto (2020)

A perlocutionary act refers to the effect produced by an utterance on the listener. In the example taken from Christianto (2020) the teacher says **"Alright. Shannon and Farel, please come to the front of the class."** This utterance results in the students preparing to come to the front of the class, which shows that the teacher's speech successfully causes the intended action.

2.3.2 Type of Illocutionary Act

Searle (1979) in his book entitled *Expression and Meaning* presented five categories of illocutionary acts that will be outlined bellows.

2.3.2.1 Assertive

Searle (1979) stated that assertive are speech acts in which the speaker expresses a belief or conveys information that they believe to be true. These acts commit the speaker to the truth of the proposition. Assertive acts include: asserting, claiming, reporting, concluding, and describing. For example: the earth is flat.(Yule, 1996)

From the utterance above, the speaker represents the speaker's belief about reality, and by saying it, the speaker is asserting that this idea reflects the world. Even though the statement is scientifically incorrect, it is still an assertive act because the speaker is presenting it as a fact.

2.3.2.2 Directive

Directives are speech acts that are used to get the listener to do something, representing the speaker's desire or request for the hearer to act (Searle, 1979). This category includes: ordering, requesting, advising, commanding, questioning, inviting. For example: don't touch that! (Yule, 1996).

In the utterance above speaker said "Don't touch that!" the speaker is giving a command or prohibition, telling someone not to perform an action. The goal of the utterance is to control the listener's behavior. Therefore, it fits the definition of a directive because it clearly aims to influence the actions of the hearer.

2.3.2.3 Commissive

Commissive commit the speaker to some future course of action. Commissive acts involve the speaker promising or committing to do something in the future. The responsibility lies with the speaker. Common forms include: promising, vowing, offering, guaranteeing, and volunteering. For example: I'm going to get it right next time. (Yule, 1996)

In this example the speaker is making a promise or commitment to do better in the future. The focus is on the speaker's intention and responsibility to carry out

the action. Since the speaker is voluntarily expressing a future plan or promise, it clearly falls under the commissive category.

2.3.2.4 Expressive

Expressive are speech acts whose main purpose is to convey the speaker's psychological state, as described in the condition of sincerity, in relation to a particular state described in the propositional content. (Searle, 1979). This illocutionary act reveals that the speaker expresses their emotions, attitudes, or psychological states. These acts do not convey facts or commands but express feelings and examples include: thanking, apologizing, congratulating, welcoming, and deploring. For example, Congratulations! (Yule, 1996)

The utterance above when speaker says congratulations, to the listener, they are expressing happiness or praise toward someone success or achievement. The speaker is showing a positive emotion in response to a good event that happened to the listener.

2.3.2.5 Declarations

Declaration refers to a speech act that causes a change in the status or condition of the object or situation being referred to. This declaration changes reality simply through the act of speaking, and is usually performed by someone who holds an official role or authority. Examples include declaring war, performing baptisms, resigning from office, naming something, and passing judgment.

For example, when a priest says, “I now pronounce you husband and wife” (Yule, 1996), this statement officially changes the couple's status from unmarried to married. The words themselves create this new reality.

2.3.3 Structural Realization of Speech Act

The structural realization of speech act refers to the relationship between the grammatical form of an utterance and its communicative function. In other words, it explains how the structure of sentence is used to perform a particular illocutionary act. According to Yule (1996) speech acts can be structurally realized in two main ways: direct and indirect speech acts. This distinction emphasizes whether the grammatical form of an utterance corresponds directly to its intended function or not. In a direct speech act, there is a clear and transparent relationship between the syntactic structure and the communicative purpose of the utterance. The speaker's intention is explicitly conveyed through the conventional function of the sentence type. On the other hand, an indirect speech act occurs when the grammatical form of the utterance does not match its communicative function. In such cases, the speaker conveys their intention implicitly rather than explicitly.

2.3.3.1 Direct Speech Act

According to (Yule, 1996) direct speech act happens when the form of the sentence matches the speaker's intended meaning. The speaker says exactly what they want, think, or feel, without hiding or implying anything. In another words, the structure and the meaning of direct speech act are straightforward. The listener

can easily understand the speaker means because there is no hidden message. For example, when we say, “close the window” the sentence is as a command and it shows a clear relationship between the form and function of the utterance.

2.3.3.2 Indirect Speech Act

An indirect speech act is when the form of the sentence does not match the speaker’s true meaning or intention. The listener needs to understand the speaker’s real message by using context or common sense. An indirect speech occurs when someone uses words that have one meaning but actually express another intention. For example, when someone says, “it’s cold here,” they just not giving information but actually asking someone to close the window. The meaning depends on context and listener’s ability to interpret it.

