

Performative Verbs as Marking of Ideology in Prabowo Subianto's Speech at the UNGA

Habib Ilyasa Hanafi¹, Adam Damanhuri, S.S., M.Hum.²

¹Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Surabaya

²Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Surabaya

Corresponding author: habib.22049@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Abstract

This study analyzes the use of performative verbs in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the 80th United Nations General Assembly, on September 23rd 2025, that discuss about the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The linguistic mechanisms behind the construction of ideology and diplomatic position in discourse have not been studied much, especially in Indonesian diplomatic discourse about Palestine. This study integrates Speech Act Theory, Theory of Ideology, and intertextuality in the descriptive qualitative design. The data are in the form of speech transcripts that are analyzed through data condensation, data sorting, and conclusion drawing. 12 utterances that contain performative verbs are identified and classified into 4 illocutionary classes: directive (five), commissive (four), assertive (two), and expressive (one), without any declarative act. The ideological analysis uncovered 3 patterns: anti-colonialism and constitutional solidarity on Palestine, bebas dan aktif ideology through moral leadership, collaborative multilateralism, and tension between historical solidarity and multi-alignment pragmatism, which ranges from absolute non-recognition to conditional recognition of Israel. These patterns are strengthened by the intertextual anchor from other textual authorities. These verbs build Indonesia's layered diplomatic position, which is a moral challenger, guardian of the principle, pragmatic peacemaker, and dependable multilateral partner, formed from the institutional legitimacy of the UNGA and the reference of intertextual anchor around it. This finding shows that the performative verb choice in the diplomatic speech functions as an ideological instrument.

Keywords: Speech Act Theory; Ideology; Diplomatic Discourse

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan kata kerja performatif dalam pidato Prabowo Subianto di Majelis Umum PBB pada 23 September 2025 yang berfokus pada pembahasan konflik Israel-Palestina. Mekanisme linguistik di belakang konstruksi ideologis dan posisi diplomatik dalam wacana masih belum banyak dikaji, terutama dalam wacana diplomatik Indonesia yang berfokus pada Palestina. Kajian ini menggabungkan teori tindak tutur, teori ideologi, dan juga intertekstualitas dalam desain penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Data dalam penelitian ini adalah transkrip pidato yang dianalisis melalui kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. 12 tuturan yang mengandung kata kerja performatif yang telah diidentifikasi dan diklasifikasikan ke dalam 4 kelas ilokusi: yakni direktif (lima), komisif (empat), asertif (dua), dan ekspresif (satu), tanpa adanya tindak tutur deklaratif. Analisis ideologi menemukan 3 pola: yakni solidaritas antikolonialisme dan multilateralisme kolaboratif, dan juga ketegangan antara solidaritas historis dan pragmatisme multi-alignment, yang didapat

dari non-pengakuan absolut menjadi pengakuan bersyarat terhadap Israel. Pola ini diperkuat oleh jangkar intertekstualitas dari otoritas tekstual lain. Semua kata kerja ini membangun posisi diplomatik Indonesia yang berlapis, yakni penantang moral, penjaga prinsip, pembawa perdamaian pragmatis, dan mitra multilateral yang dapat diandalkan, yang dimungkinkan melalui legitimasi institusional dari UNGA dan jaringan rujukan tekstual di sekitarnya. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pemilihan kata kerja performatif dalam pidato diplomatik berfungsi sebagai instrumen ideologis.

Kata kunci: *Teori Tindak Tutur, Ideologi, Wacana Diplomatik*

Received
30 July 2026

Revised
29 August 2026

Accepted
30 August 2026

1. Introduction

Language can be understood as a fundamental instrument in international diplomacy because countries can build their identity, negotiate their business, and build legitimacy in the international space by using language (Bjola & Kornprobst, 2013). The speech delivered by the country leaders plays an important role in giving political impact on the audience and forms their country's image. In his speech at the 80th United Nations General Assembly (to be mentioned as UNGA) on September 23rd 2025, Indonesian president Prabowo Subianto used several choices of diction such as "deploy", "reject", and "committed" as instruments to deliver messages and show speech acts that potentially bring diplomatic consequences, especially regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict. The language choice indicates that Subianto used language as an instrument to highlight Indonesia's commitment to the justice value and world peace.

The speech act theory developed by Austin (1962) revealed that speaking is an action that is done through utterance, and its vision marked the shift of linguistic paradigm from language structure into functional meaning. Austin (1962) divided speech acts into three levels: locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. Among these speech act levels, the illocutionary act is the most relevant level to use in analyzing diplomatic discourse because it contains communicative meaning and the ideological position of the speaker. This theory was then developed by Searle (1979) into five levels of illocutionary act: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. UNGA was chosen as the forum to be studied because it is the only United Nations body that has universal representation, where 193 countries have equal voice and rights, which is different from the UN Security Council that has only 15 country members or ECOSOC that has only 54 country members (United Nations, n.d.). Methodologically, these characteristics make the UNGA the highest diplomatic stage, where utterances and performative verbs that are used by the speakers are aimed at the international community, resulting in illocutionary power and maximum political legitimacy.

This research focuses on the illocutionary analysis of Prabowo Subianto's official speech in the UNGA 2025, which discussed the issue of Israel-Palestine, by applying a descriptive qualitative approach to the data in the form of an official transcript from the Indonesian official presidential website. This research does not analyze the audience response nor practical political aspects, and only highlights linguistic and pragmatic aspects in language diplomacy. Theoretically, this research is expected to strengthen the application of Speech Act Theory in the international diplomacy context and expand the application of Fairclough's CDA (1993) to analyze how the choice of words can determine diplomatic position, political identity, and ideological meaning in international forums. Practically, this research is expected to be useful for linguistic and pragmatic scholars and diplomatic and international relations practitioners.

2. Literature Review

Language is a fundamental instrument in contemporary diplomatic practice because countries build identity through it, negotiate business, and build legitimation in international public space (Bjola & Kornprobst, 2013). Country leaders speeches in multilateral forums such as UNGA can be seen as illocutionary act that is institutional, because it is delivered to highlight position and international credibility (Bjola & Manor, 2022); the symbolic capital becomes the source of power of the language that gives legitimacy to utterances as social authority (Bourdieu, 1991), which makes the utterance from the country leaders in this forum gains stronger illocutionary power because it is supported by institutional legitimacy and representation of sovereign countries.

This study uses Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1979) as the micro-linguistic framework. Austin (1962) divided speech acts into illocutionary, locutionary, and perlocutionary, with the illocutionary act becoming the most relevant for diplomatic discourse because it contains communicative meaning and the speaker's ideological position. Searle (1979) developed this classification into 5 illocutionary classes: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. The performative verbs become the main analysis unit because it explicitly shows the action that is done using the utterance, give direct social impact, reflect the speaker's intention, and are only effective if uttered in the official institutional order (Searle, 1979).

To interpret ideological content behind the performative verbs, this research uses Fairclough's (1993) ideological theory as a construction of reality that is planted in discourse practice produced through how humans utter something (van Dijk, 2008). The central concept is naturalization, a condition where ideology no longer appears as an ideology, but a universal truth that happens by itself. Fairclough (1993) also puts intertextuality, the reference of text to text, figure, or other events, as a part of discursive practice that connects textual analysis with wider social context; this study analyzes the trail to complete the micro-linguistic and macro-ideological reading.

There are some prior research is cited for this research, but each of them have their limitations. Degaf et. al. (2025) and Palowa et. al. (2025) used Speech Act Theory to analyze Joe Biden's speech about the Israel-Hamas conflict and the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), but both of them do not cover the ideological dimension. On the other hand, Isnaeni et. al. (2025), Santoso (2018), and Alfianyah et. al. (2025) applied Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) proposed by Fairclough on Indonesia's political discourse, but do not integrate it with Speech Act Theory to identify linguistic mechanisms such as performative verbs. Meanwhile, Jelita et. al. (2025) analyzed Prabowo Subianto's speech using Aristotle's rhetorical approach, without using either Speech Act Theory or Critical Discourse Analysis. Furthermore, no research focuses specifically on the performative verbs of Indonesian political discourse in an international forum regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict. This research fills the gap by integrating Searle's Speech Act Theory and Fairclough's theory of ideology in one analysis framework, by using analytical units in the form of performative verbs in the speech that was delivered in the UN forum regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Based on that gap, this research was formulated to answer three research questions: (1) Identifying the types of illocutionary acts of performative verbs that appeared in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the UN General Assembly 2025; (2) Analyzing the functions of performative verbs to reveal Indonesia's ideology regarding the Israel Palestine conflict; and (3) Analyzing how the use of performative verbs plays a role in constructing and strengthening the diplomatic position of Indonesia on the Israel-Palestine conflict in international forums. In-line with these research questions, this research aims to identify the types of illocutionary acts from the performative verbs that are found, analyze the function of performative verbs in uncovering Indonesia's ideology, and analyze the role of performative verbs in the construction and strengthening of Indonesia's diplomatic position on the Israel-Palestine conflict in an international forum.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This research applies a descriptive qualitative approach because it focuses on the meaning and the interpretation of the language usage in the context of social and diplomatic relations, and not statistical measurements or linguistic frequency (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, 2018). The case study design is used to analyze the meaning and functions of performative verbs in one specific diplomatic event, which is Prabowo Subianto's speech at the UNGA 2025.

The analysis is conducted through 3 layers of analysis which are micro linguistic analysis using Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969, 1979) to identify and classifying the performative verbs; macro-sociopolitical reading using Fairclough's (1993) Theory of Ideology to interpret the ideological content behind every verbs; and intertextual searching to see how the speech referring and gains legitimacy through texts, figures, or other historical events that comes with it. This is in line with Creswell's (2014) vision of the researcher as the main instrument in qualitative research, with identification and data coding that is done directly by the researcher without the involvement of an external assessor.

3.2 Data and Data Source

The data of the research is in the form of performative verbs and speech acts in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the 80th UNGA on September 23rd 2025, which discussed the conflict of Israel-Palestine. The source of the data is the official transcript of the speech, which was published on Indonesia's presidential official website (president.go.id); then, the accuracy is verified with the video recording of the speech that is published on the UN WebTV (<https://media.un.org/avlibrary/en/asset/d345/d3450115>), specifically to ensure the correctness of punctuation that might affect the meaning of the utterance. The research data are fully obtained from the speech transcript, without involving any additional data such as media coverage or responses of other countries' delegations.

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher uses documentation and thematic analysis techniques (Creswell, 2014). The data collection procedure involves 4 steps: downloading transcripts and audiovisuals from the official source and then comparing them to ensure accuracy; adjusting transcripts and segments of utterances based on audiovisuals; identifying and coding utterances with numeric code (U1, U2, etc); and compiling a corpus in the form of an utterance collection that contains performative verbs that are ready to be analyzed. The research instrument is in the form of an analysis sheet that contains utterance code, performative verbs, illocutionary class, ideological functions, and an intertextual anchor column, as exemplified in Table 1, which records three layers of analysis in the same instrument throughout the process.

Table 1
Example of performative verb found

Code	Verb	Illocutionary act	Ideological Function	Intertextual Anchor
U1	Reject	Directive	Anti-	Thucydides

3.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis technique applied was Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018), which integrated with the thematic analysis approach by Creswell (2014), through 3 steps: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. In data condensation, the researcher re-read the transcript, sorting out the relevant utterances with diplomatic context, and identifying performative verb types in every chosen utterance. In data display, the utterances were classified into types of illocutionary acts; the illocutionary function was determined based on diplomatic context, and the ideological content was analyzed using Fairclough's mechanisms (naturalism, legitimation, ideological equivalence, ideological mystification, and double-voicing), and searched for intertextual anchors, which are the references to texts, figures, or events in the context of the speech. In conclusion drawing, the researcher interprets the function of performative verbs as diplomatic acts and connects it with Indonesia's construction of position in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

4. Results

The analysis identified 12 utterances that contain performative verbs in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the 80th UNGA, on September 23rd 2025. Every utterance was analyzed using illocutionary act classification based on Searle's taxonomy (1979) and ideological content based on Fairclough's mechanisms (1993). The 12 verbs were distributed into 4 illocutionary classes: directive (5 utterances, commissive (4 utterances), assertive (2 utterances), and expressive (1 utterance); there is no declarative class found. Table 2 summarizes these findings, followed by a narrative explanation for the most significant datums.

Table 2

Performative verbs found in the speech

Code	Verb	Illocutionary act	Ideological Function	Intertextual Anchor
U1	Reject	Directive	Anti-imperialism	Thucydides doctrine
U3	Propose	Directive	Constructivism, moral leadership	Speech of the president of the General Assembly
U7	Act	Directive	Humanitarian activism, procedural contestation	Collective reference from other speakers
U11	Stand for	Directive	Human rights universalism, ideological equivalence	Thucydides doctrine
U12	Work Together	Directive	Collaborative multilateralism	The ideals of the founding of the UN
U2	Deploy	Commissive	Activism diplomacy,	Track record of Indonesian

			middle power	peacekeeping forces
U6	Contribute	Commissive	Diplomatic philanthropy, burden sharing	UN peacekeeping mission
U8	Support	Commissive	Defensive multilateralism	Speech of the President of the General Assembly, ICAO
U9	Remain Committed	Commissive	Tension between non-bloc vs multi-alignment	Statement of the UN Secretary-General
U4	Reiterate	Assertive	Anti-colonial solidarism	Bandung conference 1955, Preamble to the 1945 Constitution
U5	Recognize/respect/guarantee	Assertive	Diplomatic pragmatism, ideological equivalence	Two-State-Solution framework
U10	Choose	Expressive	National sovereignty, anti-dependency	Rice self-sufficiency, Paris Agreement 2015

Directive

U1: “reject” (“we must reject this doctrine”).

Grammatically, “reject” is a transitive verb with the object of “this doctrine”, which refers to the Thucydides doctrine cited from the previous sentence. The modal “must” strengthens the illocutionary power to make it urgent, while the inclusive subject “we” distributes the responsibility of rejection to all international audiences. This utterance is classified as a directive illocutionary act because it urges a collective rejection of a doctrine. Ideologically, this utterance uncovers the anti-imperialism that is already rooted in Indonesia’s diplomatic identity since its independence; through the mechanism of naturalization, this rejection is displayed as a truth that does not need to be argued. This verb also uncovers Indonesia’s solidarity with Palestine by positioning Indonesia as a representation of a country that was once a victim of the logic that it rejects. It can be concluded this way because the intertextual anchor of this utterance is the quotation of Thucydides’ doctrine that was uttered before, which makes it a rejection target of this utterance. The solidarity of Indonesia with global south countries, especially Palestine, is in line with the research by Fajriyah & Setiawati (2025), which explains that Indonesia has a complementary relationship with Palestine.

U3: “propose” (“I propose to this assembly a message of hope and optimism — grounded in action and execution.”).

The verb “propose” is transitive with the object “a message of hope and optimism”; the nuance of the verb is more cooperative than verbs such as “demand”. The phrase “to this assembly” highlights the institutional context, while “grounded in action and execution” functions as a justification for accepting the proposal. This utterance is classified as a directive because it proposes a solution and directs the audience’s collective focus to the constructive action. Ideologically, this

verb uncovers constructivism, which is a belief that Indonesia plays a role as a critic of the injustice of the international order and a proposer of constructive solutions, which is a manifestation of “aktif” in the ideology of *bebas dan aktif*. The legitimation mechanism is applied in this utterance through the phrase “grounded in action and execution”, that construct Indonesia’s image as an actor that has already proved its capacity. This verb also uncovers the ideology of moral leadership, the narrative power claim that is different from material power. The intertextual anchor of this utterance is the speech of the President of the General Assembly that has been delivered before Prabowo delivered his speech, which borrows the inter-discourse legitimacy for this proposal.

U12: “work together” (“Maybe, but this is the beautiful dream that we must work together towards.”).

The phrase “work together” is intransitive, and the collective goal has been clarified by the phrase “towards this beautiful dream”, an evaluative noun phrase that gives optimism nuance. The modal “must” and inclusive subject “we” spread the obligation of work together to the entire audience. This utterance is classified as directive because it initiates a collaborative action. Ideologically, this verb unveils the collaborative multilateralism, which is a pure expression from the collaborative dimension of the *bebas dan aktif* ideology. In this utterance, hegemony by consensus is happening because by inviting all parties to join the collaborative project, this utterance uncovered the ideology of inclusive leadership that constructs influence through the construction of a collective vision that is difficult to reject because it actually calls the audience to realize the vision of the UN itself, which shall be the goal of all the country members of the UN. The word “maybe” also uncovers the pragmatic idealism, which is an ideological realism that distinguishes the speaker from other actors that might talk with baseless certainty. The intertextual anchor of this utterance is the ideals of the founding of the UN itself as an institution, and not a specific textual reference.

Commissive

U9: “Remain committed” (“We remain committed to internationalism, to multilateralism, and to every effort that strengthens this great institution.”).

The verb “remain” functions as a linking verb, which is combined with the adjective “committed” that is aimed at the three parallel objects “internationalism, multilateralism, every effort...”, which strengthen the meaning of continuity of the commitment even though the political situation might change over time. This utterance is classified as commissive because it reemphasizes the ideological commitment of the country. Ideologically, this verb shows the tension between non-bloc ideology, which has been in effect for 7 decades, and the multi-alignment pragmatism that is quietly implemented. The continuity claim “remain” applies the ideological mystification that hides a shift behind the claim of stability; the double voicing also works here because this phrase talks to the domestic audience with the continuity ideology, while communicating the reinterpretation of the ideology to the international audience. The intertextual anchor of this utterance is the explicit reference from the UN Secretary General’s statement that was quoted beforehand: “As the United Nations Secretary General said, we cannot give up”, which means that Prabowo borrows the UN leadership authority to support this commitment.

Assertive

U4: “Reiterate” (“I would like to reiterate again Indonesia’s complete support for the Two State-Solution in Palestine.”).

The verb “reiterate” is formed from the prefix “re-“ and “iterate”, which means restating a statement to emphasize or clarify intention; this verb is transitive with the object of “Indonesia’s complete support...”. The phrase “complete support” closes the interpretation gap that Indonesia’s commitment is partial or conditional. This utterance is classified as assertive because Prabowo

restated the proposition that is right based on his belief, which is Indonesia's full support for the Two-State Solution. Ideologically, this verb uncovers the anti-colonialism solidarity that is rooted in the Bandung Conference 1955; through a naturalization mechanism, the commitment to Palestine's independence is constructed as a part of Indonesia's undeniable identity. This also shows the constitutional ideology, because the support for Palestine is an expression of the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, which states that independence is the right of every nation, which also uncovers the firmness of principle that rejects compromise on fundamental values. There are 2 intertextual anchors of this utterance: the Bandung Conference 1955 and the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution; both of the historical-textual references legitimized this position as a constitutional mandate.

U5: "Recognize/Respect/Guarantee" ("We must also recognize, we must also respect, and we must also guarantee the safety and security of Israel.").

All three of these verbs show the commitment escalation: "recognize" acknowledging existence, "respect" honoring, "Guarantee" promising certainty in the future; these verbs are transitive with the same object, which is "the safety and security of Israel". The repetition of "we must also" creates a rhetorical effect of affirmation, while the inclusive subject "we" spreads the obligation to all delegations in the UNGA. This utterance is classified as assertive because it delivers the proposition that positioned as a political reality that must be accepted for the sake of peace. Ideologically, all of these verbs simultaneously reveal the diplomatic pragmatism, marking a shift from Indonesia's historical position that does not recognize Israel as a country, into a conditional recognition that puts the safety of all parties as a requirement for peace. Ideological equivalence is applied here by grammatically aligning the obligation on Israel's safety with the obligation on Palestine; all these verbs reveal the universalism of peace that puts regional stability into ideological affiliation, while hiding the power asymmetry in the conflict at the same time. The intertextual anchor of the utterance is the framework of the Two-State Solution as an established international diplomatic discourse, which allows this sensitive recognition to be framed as peace-building pragmatism instead of ideological reversal.

5. Discussion

The distribution of 4 illocutionary classes shows a meaningful pattern. The domination of the directive class reflects the urgent need to push changes from rhetoric to real action, which is in line with Chilton's (2004) vision that the speech from country leaders is generally dominated by directive acts because leadership is basically a capability to mobilize collective actions. The high proportion of commissive acts shows that this speech contains commitment that binds the speaker's country institutionally, which differentiates it from ceremonial speech. The absence of the declarative act is a logical consequence of the limitations of Prabowo's authority, who speaks as a delegation from a country member, and not as the president of the General Assembly nor the UN Secretary General, who is authorized to change the order of the UN. The domination of this directive act supports the finding from Palowa et. al. (2025) In Indonesian delegation's speech at the OIC. However, the high frequency of commissive and the low frequency of assertive are opposing the finding from Degaf et. al. (2025), which found that Joe Biden's speech was dominated by assertive and expressive illocutionary acts to build credibility without promising binding commitment. This difference shows that Prabowo's diplomacy is going through the opposite pragmatic way: which is by demanding real action through directive while binding institutional commitment using commissive acts. Thus, the first research question is answered.

The ideological analysis uncovers 3 patterns that are connected and strengthened by the intertextual anchor of each verb. The first pattern is anti-colonialism and constitutional solidarity on Palestine ("reject", "reiterate"), anchored in the Thucydides doctrine, which is rejected, and the reemphasis of the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, showing that this ideological legitimacy was built through explicit references to other textual authorities. The second pattern is the ideology of

bebas dan aktif (“propose”, “work together”), which is anchored to the speech delivered by the president of the General Assembly and the ideals of the founding of the UN, which both borrowed legitimacy from the UN institution to support Indonesia’s claim of moral leadership. The third pattern is the ideological historical and pragmatic tension (“recognize/respect/guarantee”, “remain committed”), that anchored to the established external authorities, which are the framework of Two-State solution and the statement from the UN General Secretary, and not Prabowo’s or Indonesia’s own claim, which is a pattern that hinting the most sensitive ideological shift are legitimized through references to other parties. This finding is in line with and deepens the analysis by Alfianyah et. al. (2025), which studies how the firmness in rejecting imperialism in international forums is actually balanced with pragmatic maneuvers that are legitimized through intertextual anchors to external authority. Thus, the second research question is answered.

Regarding the construction of diplomatic position, Searle’s (1969) three performative characteristics, which are direct social impact, speaker’s intention, and the dependency on institutional legitimacy, still become the main mechanism; however, the intertextual dimension adds the fourth mechanism, which is legitimacy by cross-referencing. Every performative verb in this speech depends on the UNGA forum as marking of institutional legitimacy and intertwine themselves with the text from other authorities, which are Thucydides doctrine, the Bandung Conference, a statement from the UN General Secretary, the Two-State solution framework, the Paris Agreement, and the speech of the President of the General Assembly, to strengthen the validity of the claim. Indonesia’s layered diplomatic position is constructed by the illocutionary power of the utterance and the network of textual references around it. This finding is in line with conclusions that are formulated by Palowa et. al. (2025) and Degaf et. al. (2025) about institutional legitimacy, by showing that in multilateral forums such as UNGA, performative legitimacy is also constructed intertextually. Thus, the third research question is answered.

6. Conclusion

This study identifies 12 utterance than contains performative verbs in Prabowo Subianto’s speech in the 80th UNGA, on September 23rd 2025, which are distributed into four illocutionary act classes: directive (5 utterances) as the dominant class, commissive (4 utterances), assertive (2 utterances), and expressive (1 utterance), with no declarative act. The domination of the directive act reflects the mobilization of the speech, while the significant proportion of commissive acts shows the commitment that binds institutionally. The ideological analysis reveals three patterns: which are the anti-colonialism constitutional solidarity on Palestine through the mechanism of naturalization (“reject”, “reiterate”); the tension between historical and pragmatic ideolog from the absolute non-recognition into conditional recognition on Israel through the ideological equivalence (“recognize/respect/guarantee”), and from the non-bloc into multi-alignment through the ideological mystification and double-voicing (“remain committed”). All of these patterns are strengthened by the intertextual anchors: Thucydides doctrine, Bandung Conference 1955, Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, Two-State Solution, and the statement from the UN Secretary-General.

The use of performative verbs contributes to the construction of Indonesia’s diplomatic position through Searle’s (1969) performative characteristics, which are the direct social impact, speaker’s intention, and the dependence on the UNGA’s institutional legitimacy, plus a fourth mechanism that is in the form of legitimacy through cross-references within the text. Three of them simultaneously build Indonesia’s layered diplomatic position: a moral challenger and defender of principle, a pragmatic peacemaker, and a dependable multilateral partner. These findings highlight that performative verbs in diplomatic speech are instruments of power that build diplomatic reality and reveal the structural tension of a middle-power country in projecting influence that is not commensurate with its material capacity.

References

- Alfianyah, M. H. A., Megah, S. I., & Sugiharti, S. (2025). A critical discourse analysis of President Prabowo Subianto's political speech to the Turkish Parliament. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, 7(2), 246–367. <https://doi.org/10.18326/jopr.v7i2.246-367>
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford University Press
- Bjola, C., & Kornprobst, M. (2013). *Understanding international diplomacy: Theory, Practice and Ethics*. Routledge.
- Bjola, C., & Manor, I. (2022). The rise of hybrid diplomacy: from digital adaptation to digital adoption. *International Affairs*, 98(2), 471–491. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iia005>
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Harvard University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE.
- Degaf, A., Hidayah, R., Anggrisia, N. F., & Setyawan, A. H. (2025). Speech Acts in Strategic Diplomacy: An analysis of Joe Biden's address on the Israel– Hamas conflict. *Langkawi Journal of the Association for Arabic and English*, 11(2), 313–334. <https://doi.org/10.31332/lkw.v11i2.11716>
- Fairclough, N. (1993). *Discourse and social change*. Polity.
- Isnaeni, I., Wahyuni, S., Nurhayati, N., & Sakkir, G. (2025). Critical Discourse analysis of Norman Fairclough model on Dedi Mulyadi's angry sentences in Tirto.id. *ARRUS Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 5(3), 1032–1039. <https://doi.org/10.35877/soshum4018>
- Jelita, U., Corry, A., Aryanti, N. Y., Trenggono, N., & Utaridah, N. (2025). Analysis of the rhetoric in the First President's speech Prabowo Subianto at the inauguration ceremony President of 2024. *Electronic Journal of Education Social Economics and Technology*, 6(1), 642–646. <https://doi.org/10.33122/ejeset.v6i1.674>
- Karim, M. F. (2025). Layered incoherence in middle power foreign policy: Indonesia and the U.S.-China rivalry. *Global Policy*, 17(S1). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.70093>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2018). *Qualitative data analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. SAGE Publications.
- Palowa, M. F., Muassomah, M., & Munjiah, M. (2025). Language of Diplomacy in Palestinian discourse: Analysis of illocutionary Speech acts in the speech of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. *Insyirah Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Arab Dan Studi Islam*, 8(2), 205–225. <https://doi.org/10.26555/insyirah.v8i2.13759>
- Subianto, P. (2025, September 23). *General debate session of the 80th United Nations General Assembly* [Speech transcript]. President of the Republic of Indonesia. Retrieved April 15, 2026, from <https://presidenri.go.id/transkrip/sesi-debat-umum-sidang-majelis-umum-ke-80-perserikatan-bangsa-bangsa/>
- Subianto, P. (2025, September 23). *Indonesia – General debate, 80th session* [Video]. UN Web TV; United Nations Audiovisual Library. Retrieved April 15, 2026, from <https://media.un.org/avlibrary/en/asset/d345/d3450115>
- Santoso, W. (2018). Examining a News Discourse of a Female Politician in Indonesia: Fairclough's Model of Critical Discourse Analysis and its Implication in English Language Teaching. *Journal of English Language and Culture*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.30813/jelc.v9i1.1453>
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge University Press.

Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Cambridge University Press.

United Nations. (n.d.). *Main bodies*. Retrieved July 9, 2026, from <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/main-bodies>

.

Author Profile

First Author

Habib Ilyasa Hanafi is an undergraduate student at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts at Universitas Negeri Surabaya. The author's research interested is in speech act and diplomatic discourse and the diplomatic position that is reproduced by the application of Speech Act Theory and CDA in the diplomatic speech.
