

A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS IN PRESIDENT PRABOWO SUBIANTO'S SPEECH AT THE INDONESIA-JAPAN BUSINESS FORUM 2026

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Abstract

This study aims to identify and analyze the types of illocutionary acts found in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the 2026 Indonesia-Japan Business Forum. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method with a pragmatic approach. The data source for this study is a transcript of the speech obtained from the official website of the Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, while the research data consists of utterances containing illocutionary acts. Data collection was conducted through documentation and note-taking, while data analysis utilized the theory of illocutionary acts proposed by John Searle. The results indicate that assertive illocutionary acts were the most dominant type used in the speech. This finding indicates that Prabowo Subianto's speech was primarily used to convey information, beliefs, and views regarding economic cooperation between Indonesia and Japan. This study is expected to contribute to the development of pragmatic studies, particularly in the analysis of illocutionary acts in political speeches.

Keywords: pragmatics, illocutionary acts, political speech

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis jenis-jenis tindak ilokusi yang terdapat dalam pidato Prabowo Subianto pada Indonesia-Japan Business Forum 2026. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan pragmatik. Sumber data penelitian ini adalah transkrip pidato yang diperoleh dari situs resmi Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia, sedangkan data penelitian berupa tuturan yang mengandung tindak ilokusi. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui teknik dokumentasi dan pencatatan, sedangkan teknik analisis data menggunakan teori tindak ilokusi yang dikemukakan oleh John Searle. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tindak ilokusi asertif merupakan jenis yang paling dominan digunakan dalam pidato tersebut. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pidato Prabowo Subianto lebih banyak digunakan untuk menyampaikan informasi, keyakinan, serta pandangan mengenai kerja sama ekonomi antara Indonesia dan Jepang. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan kajian pragmatik, khususnya dalam analisis tindak ilokusi pada pidato politik

Kata kunci: pragmatik, tindakan ilokusi, pidato politik

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Introduction

Language plays an important role in political communication because it enables speakers to convey information, influence audiences, and achieve specific communicative goals. In international contexts, political speeches serve not only as a means of delivering information but also as a strategic instrument for establishing relationships and promoting national interests. As Almahasees and Mahmoud (2022) explain, politicians use language to influence others and achieve particular political goals. Therefore, examining how language functions in political speeches is important for understanding the intentions behind a speaker's utterances.

One linguistic approach to understanding these intentions is pragmatics, particularly speech act theory. Speech acts explain how utterances can perform actions beyond their literal meanings. Among the different types of speech acts, illocutionary acts refer to the intended actions performed through utterances. Searle classifies illocutionary acts into five categories: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. These categories provide a framework for identifying how speakers state information, encourage actions, express commitments, convey feelings, and perform acts that change social or institutional circumstances. This framework is particularly relevant to political speeches, in which language may serve informative, persuasive, and diplomatic purposes.

Previous studies have examined illocutionary acts in various political and non-political contexts. Effendy and Simatupang (2024), for example, investigated illocutionary acts in the 2023 Indonesian presidential candidate debate involving Prabowo Subianto. Octavianna et al. (2024) also examined illocutionary acts in Prabowo's campaign-related speech, while Brahmantya and Juniarto (2025) analyzed speech acts in his interview during the 2024 Qatar Economic Forum. More recently, Laoli et al. (2025) investigated speech acts in Prabowo's address at the United Nations General Assembly. These studies demonstrate the relevance of illocutionary act analysis to political communication. However, the speech delivered at the Indonesia-Japan Business Forum represents a distinct context in which language is used to discuss economic cooperation and bilateral relations.

Based on the reviewed studies, the present research focuses on identifying the types of illocutionary acts and determining the most dominant type in President Prabowo Subianto's speech at the Indonesia-Japan Business Forum in Tokyo, Japan, on March 30, 2026. Unlike studies examining presidential debates, campaign speeches, interviews, or speeches at multilateral international forums, this study examines a bilateral business forum concerned with economic cooperation between Indonesia and Japan. Its contribution lies in providing a context-specific analysis of the distribution of illocutionary act types in this speech using Searle's classification. Accordingly, this study aims to answer two research questions: (1) What types of illocutionary acts are found in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the Indonesia-Japan Business Forum 2026? and (2) What is the dominant type of illocutionary act used in the speech?

Method

In this study, a qualitative descriptive method is employed. "Research using a qualitative descriptive method is primarily characterized by systematically and accurately describing phenomena based on the facts under investigation" (Furidha, 2024). This method is suitable for this study because it is focused on analyzing different types of illocutionary acts found within utterances in speeches delivered by President Prabowo Subianto. The object of the research

was the use of illocutionary acts in the speech, focusing on their types and the most dominant type based on John Searle's classification.

The primary data consisted of utterances containing illocutionary acts in the speech transcript published on the official website of the Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia. The video recording of the speech uploaded to YouTube was used as a supporting source to verify the utterances and provide contextual understanding. Secondary data, including books, journal articles, and previous studies related to pragmatics and speech act theory, were used to support the theoretical analysis and interpretation of the findings.

Data were collected using the documentation method. The researcher obtained and read the official speech transcript while watching the corresponding video recording. Relevant utterances were identified and recorded for further analysis. The collected data were then organized according to their respective illocutionary act categories.

The data were analyzed through several stages. First, the researcher identified utterances containing illocutionary acts in the transcript. Second, the identified utterances were classified into five categories based on Searle's theory: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Third, each utterance was examined pragmatically by considering its linguistic content, situational context, and the speaker's communicative intention. Finally, the occurrences of each category were counted to determine the dominant type of illocutionary act in the speech. The findings were then described and interpreted to answer the research questions.

Hasil dan Pembahasan

In this study, the data were analyzed based on the five types of illocutionary acts proposed by John Searle, namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative illocutionary acts. The research data were obtained from transcripts accessed via the official website of the Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia. Subsequently, all collected data were organized into tables and separated by sentence units, where each sentence ending with a period was analyzed to determine the type of illocutionary act it contained. Through this process, a total of 206 sentences were identified and became the subjects of analysis in this study.

Of the total 216 sentences analyzed in this study, it was found that 8 sentences contained more than one type of illocutionary act. This is due to the use of commas in these sentences, which separate two clauses or parts of the utterance that have different illocutionary meanings. Therefore, each part separated by a comma was analyzed as a standalone illocutionary unit because each has a different function and meaning according to the context of the utterance. Thus, a single sentence can produce more than one illocutionary data point. Based on this, the total number of illocutionary act data identified in this study is 214.

- (22:57-23:19): *Every government must work for the good of their people and the beneficial result of good economic relations will end in the good of all the peoples.* **Directive + Assertive** = "must work" - directive (encouraging or normative obligation) and "the beneficial result of good economic..." - assertive (Providing information about expected economic outcome)
- (26:34-26:44): *Remember me when I retire, okay? I'm a strong brand ambassador for Indonesian coffee.* **Directive + Assertive** = "remember me when I retire, okay?" -

directive (encouraging or soft request for remembrance) and “I’m strong brand ambassador for Indonesian coffee” - assertive (providing information about opinion claim).

- (26:53-26:58): *I’m sorry, I’m sorry, President Lula, you’re my friend, but my coffee is better than your coffee.* **Expressive + Assertive** = “I’m sorry... you are my friend” - expressive (expressing apology and friendliness) and “but my coffee better than your coffee” - assertive (providing comparative evaluation)
- (27:08-27:17): *So please, as a micromanager, you know, sometimes you don’t believe it, but if you have any problems, you can directly complain to me.* **Expressive + Directive** = “as a micromanager” - expressive (humorous self-reference) and “you can directly complain to me” - directive (Encouraging or inviting action).
- (27:18-27:34): *You can directly complain to me, through your ambassador, through your representatives, through MITI (The Ministry of Trade and Industry) or JETRO or whatever, Keidanren, I’m willing to receive complaints.* **Directive + Commissive** = “you can directly complain to me...” - directive (encouraging or providing access for action) and “I’m willing to receive complaints” - commissive (showing commitment to receive complaints)
- (28:08-28:15): *We have to capitalise what we have, but they know what I want.* **Directive + Assertive** = “we have to capitalise what we have” - directive (Encouraging or normative obligation) and “but they know what I want” - Assertive (Providing information about knowledge or state)
- (29:48-29:58): *So, Japan-Indonesia partnership, get the best brains from both sides, work together, we can achieve good things very fast.* **Directive + Commissive** = “work together” - directive (Encouraging or urging cooperation) and “we can achieve...” - commissive (showing commitment to shared goal (implied))
- (30:26-30:31): *We are ready to work fast and we welcome you.* **Commissive + Expressive** = “We are ready to work fast” - Commissive (Showing commitment or readiness to work fast) and “we welcome you” - Expressive (expressing friendliness or acceptance)

Below is a table of findings showing the number of each type of illocutionary acts identified in this study out of a total of 214 data points.

No	Types of Illocutionary Acts	Total
1	Assertive	115
2	Directive	25
3	<u>Commissive</u>	43
4	Expressive	31
5	Declarative	0
Total		214

Based on the table above, it was found that the most dominant type of illocutionary act in the data was the assertive illocutionary act, with 115 occurrences. This number is significantly higher than that of other types: the directive illocutionary act (26 occurrences), the commissive illocutionary act (43 occurrences), and the expressive illocutionary act (30

occurrences), while the declarative illocutionary act was not found in the data. The dominance of assertive illocutionary acts indicates that the speech focuses more on conveying information, stating facts, and expressing the speaker's views or beliefs regarding a matter, rather than on other language functions such as commands, expressions of emotion, or institutional actions.

Conclusion

This study analyzes illocutionary acts in President Prabowo Subianto's speech at the Indonesia-Japan Business Forum in Tokyo, Japan, on March 30, 2026. The research data was obtained from a YouTube video transcript lasting more than 30 minutes. From the transcript data, 206 sentences were identified based on the separation of each sentence ending with a period. However, 8 sentences were found to contain two types of illocutionary acts due to the separation of clauses by commas, bringing the total data analyzed in this study to 214 data points.

Based on the analysis using John Searle's speech act theory, it was found that assertive illocutionary acts were the most dominant type with 115 instances, commissive illocutionary acts were found in 43 instances, expressive illocutionary acts in 31 instances, and directive illocutionary acts in 25 instances. Meanwhile, declarative illocutionary acts were not found in the research data.

Overall, the research findings indicate that the speech was dominated by assertive illocutionary acts, suggesting that the speech primarily served to convey information, state facts, and express the speaker's views and beliefs regarding economic cooperation between Indonesia and Japan. Other illocutionary acts served as complementary elements, such as expressing commitment, making appeals, and conveying appreciation.

Thus, it can be summed up that the speech by President Prabowo Subianto at the forum was informative, persuasive, and collaborative, with a primary emphasis on conveying information and a commitment to cooperation.

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