

## An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts used in Joe Biden's Speech Before the 77th un General Assembly

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### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Speech Act, Illocutionary Act, Joe Biden's Speech

*Received :* 10, June

*Revised :* 16, July

*Accepted:* 25, August

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### ABSTRACT

The study analyzes illocutionary acts in Joe Biden's speech at the 77th UN General Assembly using Yule's (1996) and Leech's (1983) theories. The data from the UN YouTube channel and the White House website, underwent descriptive qualitative analysis. A total of 72 illocutionary acts were Identified. The data set comprised 39 representatives (54.17%), 17 directives (23.61%), 11 commissive (15.28%), 3 expressive (4.16%), and 2 Declarative (2.78%). The functions were 78.38% collaborative, 10.81% conflictive, 8.11% convivial and 2.70% competitive. The findings indicate the predominant use of representative acts to convey information and collaborative functions to express concerns and report challenges.

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## INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings that require communication to engage and acquire much knowledge. There are two ways that people can communicate. According to Mailani et al. (2022), Verbal and non-verbal communication are the two ways humans can communicate. Non-verbal communication is the transmission of messages via body language, which includes hand gestures, facial expressions, voice tone, and speaking rate. Verbal communication is the conveyance of information through words.

Pragmatics is a prominent theory in communication studies, particularly regarding interpreting meaning in discourse. Yule (1996:3) stated that Pragmatics is the study of meaning as delivered by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). Speakers not only use linguistic sounds to communicate, but they also perform actions such as requesting, commanding, apologizing, etc. According to Yule in Wiliastini et al. (2021:42); Rohmadi, et al (2023), In the process of making an utterance, a person acts in addition to speaking. Pragmatics encompasses deixis, implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and discourse structure. However, in this study, researchers will focus on speech acts, particularly illocutionary acts.

Many social media sites, including Facebook, Instagram, Path, Twitter, and WhatsApp, are available in the digital age. One of the most frequently utilized social media platforms is YouTube. The YouTube platform offers a vast repository of videos that provide insight into global events and developments. One of the videos available for viewing is the recording of the president's address. According to Baok et al. (2021:99); Nabila, et al (2023, September), speech is a type of public speaking in which a speaker or leader shares their thoughts or assertions regarding significant issues or occurrences. Meaningless speech is useless (Setyaningrum and Susanto, 2019: 39). Therefore, speech must be delivered appropriately and with effective language so that the intended meaning is clearly understood and there is no ambiguity.

Joe Biden is the 46th President of the United States. As President, Biden frequently offers opinions, input, and information regarding specific situations, as well as during sessions of the United Nations General Assembly. This research examines Biden's use of illocutionary acts in responding to the issues discussed in the 77th UN session. The use of illocutionary acts by Joe Biden, as a representative of the United States, can be evaluated in terms of the demands, promises, threats, and other forms of speech he employs. This study aims to identify the type of illocutionary act and the function of the illocutionary act used in Joe Biden's speech, as well as to ascertain the frequency of dominant illocutionary acts in the speech.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Pragmatics*

Pragmatics is a linguistic field that was developed in the late 1970s. Christianto (2020:69) defines pragmatics as a branch of linguistics that studies

meaning in context or speaker meaning. This includes how context affects meaning in communication. The study of pragmatics examines language from the perspective of its users, focusing on the decisions they make, the barriers they face when utilizing it in social situations, and the impacts their language use has on other participants in the communication process (Shakki et al., 2020).

### *Speech Act*

Speech act theory was first put forth by American philosopher J.R. Searle and further elaborated by language philosopher J.L. Austin in 1962. According to Austin, a person does something in addition to speaking (Siregar, 2021:96). Austin noticed that when someone says anything, they do more than say it they also carry out specific actions in addition to speaking. According to Austin (1962) in Anjani et al. (2024:507); Ayuningtyas, et al (2023), speech acts are divided into three categories: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary.

### *Illocutionary Act*

According to Austin (1962) in Hariati et al. (2020:387), an illocutionary act is any speech that possesses a specific (conventional) force. It can be defined as something that a person does when they speak. Yule (1996) in Haucsa et al. (2020:12) classifies illocutionary acts into five classes: declarations, representatives, expressive, directives, and commissives.

- a. Representative. Representative speech acts express the speaker's beliefs, whether true or false. Duha (2023:43); Hartono, et al (2022) said that representatives commit the speaker to the integrity of the stated proposition. It can be posited that representative speech acts are related to facts and straightforwardly explain them.
- b. Commissive. Commissive is a speech act used by speakers to bind themselves to future actions. Sofyan et al. (2022) said that commissive engages the speaker in multiple subsequent actions.
- c. Expressive. Searle defines expressive as expressions that convey a psychological state (Levinson in Duha et al., 2023). Expressive indicates a speaker's desire to express her feelings.
- d. Directive. Yule (1996) in Fitriani et al. (2020) says that Speakers use directive acts to persuade listeners to take action based on their intentions. This kind of directive speech act seeks to generate an action from the speaker's spoken sentence. In directives, the speaker tries to convince the listener to take a particular action.
- e. Declarative. Declarative illocutionary speech acts can result in a change or the creation of a new situation. It means that the utterance produced by the speaker can alter the situation. Based on Yule (1996) in Fitriani et al. (2020:173); Pitaloka, et al (2021); Susanto, D. A., & Rahayu, P. M. (2014) said that declarative speech acts are those that, by their very words, alter the world

Based on Leech (1983) in (Baok et al., 2021); Marlinda, M., & Susanto, D. A. (2022), functions of illocutionary acts consist of four points: competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive.

- a. Competitive. Competitive is the function of illocutionary acts that seek to compete with social objectives. In other words, the speaker disregards manners in favor of focusing solely on how to achieve their goals. Competitiveness consists of threatening, demanding, begging, and complaining.
- b. Convivial. This function's goal aligns with the objectives of society. To convey the speaker's attitude toward the hearer, positive politeness is incorporated. Good manners are encouraged by positive politeness, which also seeks chances to build positive relationships with society.
- c. Collaborative. Collaborative work is unaffected by societal objectives. Since it is unrelated to this role, politeness is excluded. Moreover, written speech serves this purpose. The collective expressions of reporting, affirming, declaring, and instructing.
- d. Conflictive. Conflictive is intended to result in violations since it seeks to conflict with social goals. Politeness is unnecessary because it is aimed at offending or violating. Accusatory, reprimanding, threatening, and swearing are examples of conflictive phrases.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher use Qualitative Research to analyze the data. Creswell (2018:41) states that qualitative research is an approach for analyzing and comprehending the meaning individuals or groups assign to a social human problem. This study employs descriptive qualitative research since the data it collects is verbal and sentence-based rather than numerical.

As a data collector, the researcher watched the video of Joe Biden's speech before the 77th UN session. The researcher then analyzes the video. Using Yule's theory (1996), the researcher determined the illocutionary acts depicted in the video and speech script. Furthermore, the researcher input the percentage of each data element to ascertain the type of illocutionary act that often appears in Joe Biden's speech video. Afterward, using Leech's theory (1983), the researcher determines the function of illocutionary acts in the video and speech script.

The data source in this study is the text of Joe Biden's speech at the 77th UN session on 21 September 2022. Joe Biden's speech script was taken from the White House website. In addition, researchers will also take data from the video of the president's speech on the United Nation's YouTube channel.

## **RESEARCH RESULT**

### ***Types of Illocutionary Acts***

The researcher discovered 72 illocutionary acts. There are representative, expressive, commissive, directive, and declarative. The table below displays the data-finding outcome.

Table 1. Types of Illocutionary Act

No	Types of illocutionary act	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Representative	38	52,78%
2.	Directive	17	23,61%
3.	Commissive	11	15,28%
4.	Expressive	4	5,55%
5.	Declaration	2	2,78%
<b>Total</b>		<b>72</b>	<b>100%</b>

The information above indicates 72 illocutionary acts in Joe Biden's speech before the 77th United Nations General Assembly. The 39 (54,17%) representative acts, 3 (4,16%) expressive acts, 11 (15,28%) commissive acts, 17 (23,61%) directive acts, and 2 (2.78%) declarative acts make up the illocutionary acts. The results are described in the sections that follow.

a. Representative

The outcomes findings of the representative act in Joe Biden's speech before the 77th UN General Assembly, totaling 38 (52,78%) data, included asserting, informing, retelling, and stating. Sample data findings representative act described in the table below:

Table 2. Sample Data Findings Representative

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Asserting	So let me be clear about something: Our sanctions explicitly allow – explicitly allow Russia the ability to export food and fertilizer. No limitation. It's Russia's war that is worsening food insecurity, and only Russia can end it.	Joe Biden asserted that the US does not restrict Russia from exporting fertilizer and food. This assertion makes Joe Biden's statement part of asserting.

2.	Informing	The United States has marshaled massive levels of security assistance and humanitarian aid and direct economic support for Ukraine – more than \$25 billion to date.	The utterance provides factual information about the United States' aid to Ukraine, including the specific amount of aid. Thus the utterance can be categorized as a representative act.
3.	Retelling	As I said last year, the United States is opening an era of relentless diplomacy to address the challenges that matter most to people's lives – all people's lives: tackling the climate crisis, as the previous spoker [sic] – speaker spoke to; strengthening global health security; feeding the world – feeding the world.	In the utterance, Joe Biden states the diplomatic steps that the United States will take to address global challenges, and the words "As I said last year" indicate that the utterance is a retelling
4.	Stating	A permanent member of the United Nations Security Council invaded its neighbor, attempted to erase a sovereign state from the map.	Joe Biden claims that Russia as a permanen member of the UN has violated the UN Charter by invading Ukraine. The utterance is stating because the speaker expresses an opinion.

b. Expressive

Joe Biden used up to four (5,55%) expressive acts throughout his address, including greeting, rejecting, and thanking. Sample data findings expressive act described in the table below:

Table 3. Sample Data Findings Expressive

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Thanking	I'm grateful for the work here at the U.N. – including your leadership, Mr. Secretary- General – establishing a mechanism to export grain from Black Sea ports in Ukraine that Russia had blocked for months, and we need to make sure it's extended.	The speaker expresses gratitude for the work done at the UN. Joe Biden clearly says "I'm grateful" which shows the speaker's psychological attitude and it is included in the expressive act.
2.	Rejection	I reject the use of violence and war to conquer nations or expand borders through bloodshed.	The word "reject" in this utterance express the soeaker's strong opposition to violence and war. Although, it does not explicitly mention emotion, the rejection of violence and war implies a strong feeling of disapproval, which is an expressive act.
3.	Greeting	Mr. President, Mr. Secretary- General, my fellow leaders	The speaker welcomed the president, the secretary- general, and the leaders and delegates of the countries attending the UN General Assembly. This

			utterance can be classified as a greeting and an expressive act.
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c. Commissive

Joe Biden made 11 (15,28%) compassionate act utterances, all of which involved making promising and pledging. Sample data findings commissive act described in the table below:

Table 4. Sample Data Findings Commiss

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Promising	We made that priority. And one year later, we're keeping that promise.	The speaker expresses gratitude for the work done at the UN. Joe Biden clearly says psychological attitude, and it is included in the expressive act.
2.	Pledging	The United States will work with every nation, including our competitors, to solve global problems like climate change.	Joe Biden reaffirmed the United States government's commitment pledge category.

3.	Pledging	The United States will always promote human rights and the values enshrined in the U.N. Charter in our own country and around the world.	The speaker in his speech committed that the US will always support human rights and the principles contained in the UN Charter, both at home and abroad. The phrase "will always" is used, which emphasizes the statement included in the commissive act.
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d. Directive

There are up to 17 (23,61%) findings of the directive act in Joe Biden's speech. This consists of requesting, suggesting, inviting, commanding, and warning. Sample data findings directive act described in the table below:

Table 5. Sample Data Findings Directive

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Requesting	Let us speak plainly.	This speech is an example of a directive act when the speaker requests that the listener speak clearly.
2.	Suggesting	So, we – each of us in this body who is determined to uphold the principles and beliefs we pledge to defend as members of the United Nations – must be clear, firm, and unwavering in our resolve.	Joe Biden instructs the United Nations' members to be relentless, decisive, and uncompromising in their intentions. "Must be clear, firm, and unwavering in our resolve" is a solid call to action made by the speaker to the audience.
3.	Inviting	If you're still committed to a strong foundation for the good of every nation around the world, then the United States wants to work with you.	This statement aims to invite the listener to work with the United States, even though it is not stated as an order, provided that they pledge to a solid foundation for the

			benefit of all countries. The statement is therefore a directive act.
4.	Commanding	Think about the vision of those first delegates who undertook a seemingly impossible task while the world was still smoldering.	Joe Biden commands the audience to reflect on the vision and endeavors of the first delegates, aiming to inspire or motivate the audience by highlighting the challenges that the delegates have overcome.
5.	Warning	But the United States is clear: We will not allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon.	The statement is a warning from the US to Iran and the international community. It can therefore be classified as a warning.

e. Declarative

Joe Biden made two directive utterances (2,78%) in his address. Sample data findings declarative act described in the table below:

Table 6. Sample Data Findings Declarative

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Declare	Now, it's no secret that in the contest between democracy and autocracy, the United States – and I, as President – champion a vision for our world that is grounded in the values of democracy.	Joe Biden as US president declared himself and his country as defenders of democracy by championing a world vision based on democratic values.

2.	Declare	Ukraine has the same rights that belong to every sovereign nation. We will stand in solidarity with Ukraine. We will stand in solidarity against Russia's aggression. Period.	In this speech, Joe Biden declares that Ukraine is a sovereign state. "Ukraine has the same rights that belong to every sovereign nation" is the statement that emphasizes Ukraine's status as a sovereign state, and statements like "Period" indicate that the speech is a declarative act.
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**Functions of Illocutionary Acts**

After analysing his speech, the researcher discovered 37 utterances in Joe Biden's speech that included illocutionary act functions. The table below will explain the findings.

Table 7. Function of Illocutionary Act

No	Function of illocutionary act	Frequency of Occurrence	Percentage
1.	Collaborative	29	78,38%
2.	Conflictive	4	10,81%
3.	Convivial	3	8,11%
4.	Competitive	1	2,70%
<b>Total</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

Joe Biden's speech contains 37 utterances that comprise illocutionary act functions, as seen in the table above. The findings show that there were 29 collaborative utterances (78,38%), 3 convivial utterances (8,11%), 4 conflictive utterances (10,81%), and 1 competitive utterance (2,70%). The results are explained in the sections that follow.

a. Collaborative

Joe Biden used 29 (78,38%) instances of the collaborative function in his speech. It includes instructing, reporting, asserting, and

announcing. Sample data findings collaborative function described in the table below:

Table 8. Sample Data Findings Collaborative

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Asserting	Now, it's no secret that in the contest between democracy and autocracy, the United States – and I, as President champion a vision for our world that is grounded in the values of democracy.	As US President, Joe Biden claims that he and his country are defenders of democracy by fighting for vision of the world based on democratic values. The statement does not conflict with social goals, so it can be considered collaborative
2.	Reporting	The United States is also working closely with our allies and partners to impose costs on Russia, to deter attacks against NATO territory, to hold Russia accountable for the atrocities and war crimes.	Joe Biden provides information that the US works with allies and partners for specific Russia-related purposes. So, the utterance can be classified as a collaborative function because it is aligned with social goals.
3.	Instructing	Members of the U.N. Security Council, including the United States, should consistently uphold and defend the U.N. Charter and refrain – refrain from the use of the veto, except in rare, extraordinary situations, to ensure that the Council remains credible and effective.	Joe Biden instructed members of the UN Security Council to uphold and protect the UN Charter and refrain from using their veto power unless necessary. The term "should" instructs that the speaker is providing guidance.

4.	Announcing	With as many as 193 million people around the world experiencing acute – acute food insecurity – a jump of 40 million in a year – today I’m announcing another \$2.9 billion in U.S. support for lifesaving humanitarian and food security assistance for this year alone.	Joe Biden announced that he would provide additional humanitarian aid and food security. Announcing is part of the collaborative function.
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b. Convivial

Joe Biden produces 3 (8, 11%) speech-related statements, including greeting and thanking. Sample data findings convivial function described in the table below:

Table 9. Sample Data Findings Convivial

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Greeting	Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, my fellow leaders	As a speaker, Joe Biden welcomed the president, the secretary-general, and the leaders and delegates of the countries attending the UN General Assembly. The utterance cannot potentially damage social relationships, so it is classified as a convivial function.
2.	Thanking	Thank you for your tolerance, for listening to me. I appreciate it very much. God bless you all.	The utterance is consistent with social purpose because Joe Biden expresses his gratitude to the audience for listening

			to his speech.
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c. **Conflictive**

Joe Biden made 4 (10,81%) statements accusing acts of conflictive functions in his 77th UN General Assembly address. Sample data findings conflictive function described in the table below:

Table 10 Sample Data Findings Conflictive

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Accusing	Russia has shamelessly violated the core tenets of the United Nations Charter – no more important than the clear prohibition against countries taking the territory of their neighbor by force.	Joe Biden shows offence by claiming that Russia has violated UN charter principles.
2.	Accusing	China is conducting an unprecedented, concerning nuclear buildup without any transparency.	Joe Biden accused China of development without transparency, a statement that runs counter to social objectives and is therefore included in the conflictive function.

d. **Competitive**

Joe Biden made 1 (2,70%) refusing statement that belongs to the competitive function category. Sample data findings competitive function described in the table below:

Table 11. Sample Data Findings Competitive

No	Classification	Utterance	Context
1.	Refusing	I reject the use of violence and war to conquer nations or expand borders through bloodshed.	In the utterance, Joe Biden shows rejection which is included in the competitive function.

### *The Dominant Illocutionary Act*

The researcher employed a pie chart that displays the percentage types of illocutionary acts and the function of illocutionary acts to convey the calculation results and identify the dominating illocutionary act used in the Joe Biden's speech.

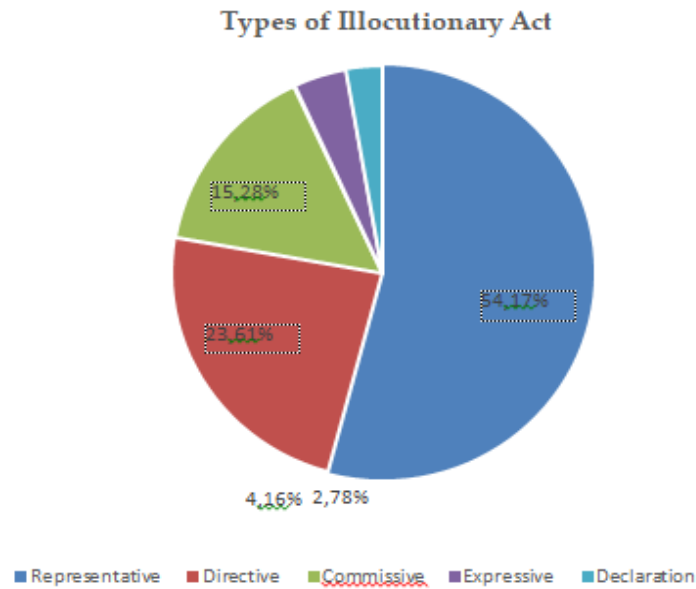


Figure 1. Type Of Illocutionary Act

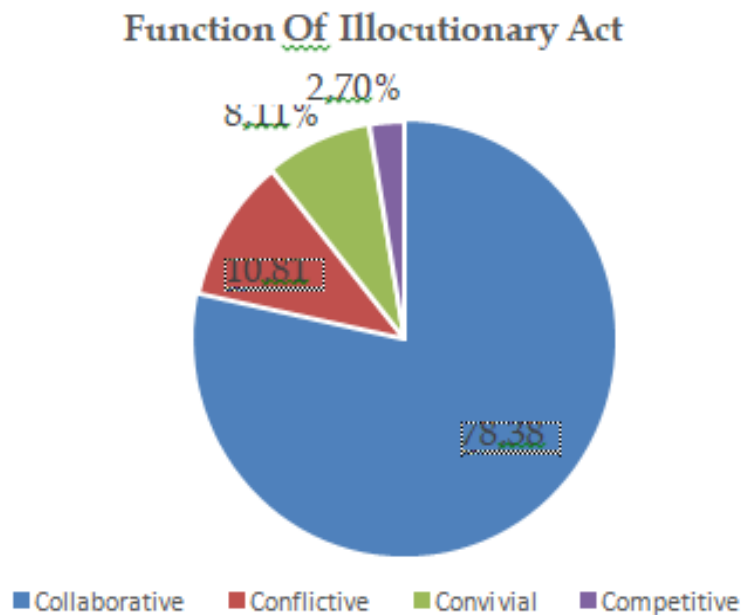


Figure 2. Function of Illocutionary Act

Based on pie chart 4.1 presented from the results of data analysis of types of illocutionary acts and analysis of the functions of illocutionary acts used in Joe Biden's speech before the 77th UN General Assembly., researchers discovered that the type of illocutionary act most often used by Joe Biden is representative with a percentage of 52.78%, followed by directives with a rate of 23.62%. The following illocutionary act is commissive with a proportion of 15.28%, followed by expressive with a percentage of 5.55%, and declarative with a rate of 2.78%. In the meantime, based on pie chart 4.2, the most pervasive function of illocutionary acts is that of collaboration, which accounts for 78.38% of the total, followed by the conflictive function (10.81%), the convivial function (8.11%), and the competitive function (2.70%).

## **DISCUSSION**

This study aims to identify the types and functions of illocutionary acts in Joe Biden's speech to the 77th UN General Assembly. Joe Biden's remarks were examined using Yule's (1996) theory of illocutionary acts. The researcher then examined the function of illocutionary acts in Joe Biden's speech using Leech's theory (1983)

The most frequently used illocutionary act in Biden's speech is the representative act, with 39 occurrences (54.17%), including stating, informing, retelling, and asserting. Expressive acts occurred 3 times (4.16%), including thanking and greeting. Commissive acts occurred 11 times (15.28%), including promises and assurances. Instructive acts occurred 17 times (23.61%), including requests, suggestions, invitations, orders, and warnings. Finally, declarative acts occurred 2 times (2.78%), including official statements such as declarations. Regarding the function of illocutionary acts, the collaborative function is most dominant, with 29 occurrences (78.38%), showing Biden's focus on cooperation and mutual support. Conflict functions occurred 4 times (10.81%), reflecting Biden's strong stance against war and violence. Convivial functions occur 3 times (8.11%), including expressions of gratitude and greetings. The competitive function occurs only 1 time (2.70%), as seen in Biden's rejection of violence and war.

The findings indicate that symbolic acts are the most dominant illocutionary acts, which suggests that Joe Biden frequently makes assertions in his speeches. Furthermore, within the context of his remarks, he provided information regarding the world's challenges and the role of the United States in addressing these issues, as discussed in the UN session. Additionally, Joe Biden made directive utterances, extending invitations to other countries to assist in ending the Russian war and supporting countries under attack. By employing the verbs "will" and "commit," he pledges future endeavours and expresses gratitude.

The function of illocutionary acts is also a topic of analysis in this study. The researcher determined that the collaborative function in Joe Biden's speech is the most prevalent function of illocutionary acts. The high frequency of

affirmation indicates that Joe Biden frequently offers his audience a sense of affirmation. In the context of his speech, this affirmation conveys his seriousness regarding discussing the global issues at hand.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study aims to analyze the use of illocutionary acts in Joe Biden's speech before the 77th UN General Assembly. The findings show that there are 72 utterances consisting of five illocutionary acts: representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Representational illocutionary acts are the most dominant of these five types, with 39 utterances (54.17%).

Furthermore, the functions of illocutionary acts are also analyzed and categorized into collaborative, convivial, competitive, and conflictive. The collaborative function is the most dominant, with 29 utterances (78.38%), indicating that Biden often uses illocutionary acts to cooperate and provide information.

The main findings of this study are that the most dominant type of illocutionary acts is representative acts, and the most dominant function of illocutionary acts is collaborative. This shows that in his speeches, Biden often makes statements and provides information about the world's challenges and the role of the United States in addressing these issues.

## **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

This research can give readers a general idea of the use of illocutionary acts in conveying messages, especially in the context of speech. For researchers interested in conducting similar research, this research can be a reference for further research. Apart from that, readers will better understand the context of Joe Biden's speech as a source for further study.

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