

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the background of the study explaining the reasons of choosing the topic. This chapter also presents the statement of the problems and the objectives of this study. Furthermore, this chapter also elaborates the significance of this study for both theoretical and practical significance and then it explains the scope and limit of this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is one of the most fundamental aspects of human life. It is because language does not only serve as a means to communicate, but also serves as a medium to convey ideas, opinions, feelings, and arguments to others (Nasution & Tambunan, 2022). Meanwhile, language, according to Tseng (2018), is a structured way of conveying ideas or feelings through widely recognized signs, sounds, gestures, or signals that have various meanings. Thus, the study of language has been extensively conducted across multiple disciplines due to its central role in human communication (Yule, 2010). Linguistics, as the study of language, involves a variety of components that are used in forming various languages. Those components of language are covered in several branches of linguistics, such as pragmatics, morphology, phonology, semantics, and discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis is a study of the use of language in context, both in written or spoken language. In line with it, discourse analysis is necessarily the analysis of language in use. So, the scope of discourse analysis itself is vast because discourse analysis associates with the content and structure of discourse (Brown & Yule, 1983). It examines how the message of a discourse is organized, used, and interpreted in order to understand the essential intention or meaning conveyed through the discourse. Further, as a complex study, discourse analysis examines a lot of tools in language to enhance the understanding of the idea expressed by the speaker. One of the tools in discourse is discourse markers. In the scope of discourse analysis, discourse markers are known as linguistic elements like *well*, *so*, *you know*, and *I mean*, that not only represent lexical meaning, but can also

connect ideas, represent the speaker's attitude, and organize the structure of the conversation (Schiffrin, 1987). In other words, they can help listeners to follow the flow of the speech and recognize the messages. In the context of oral communication, especially in public speech, discourse markers also can help the speaker adjust pacing, build emotional closeness, and maintain audience attention. Here is an example of the use of discourse markers in a speech.

“Good afternoon, you know there are moments in this life. I mean, this literally when pure unadulterated evil is unleashed on this world.”

The underlined words, “you know” and “I mean,” are examples of discourse markers used in the speech. From the example above, it can be seen that discourse markers are used to make the speech well-organized, meaningful, and also help the listener to understand what the speaker conveyed. Moreover, the use of discourse markers such as “you know” and “I mean” shows how the speaker tries to build interpersonal connection with the listeners. Thus, the researcher views that the study of discourse markers needs to be carried out because of its important role in language use, especially in speech. The use of inappropriate discourse markers might cause unconnected statements and make it difficult to understand.

Having good communication in delivering speeches is vital for a president, because a president's speech has large audiences. Also, as the central figure, the president's speech can significantly influence public perception, shaping how people think, interpret, and how they understand political messages (Chilton, 2004). It means that a speech from president can contribute in shaping national discourse, control opinion, or even influence political decision. Therefore, in delivering a speech, a president has to use the correct language features to avoid misunderstanding among people. One of the important language features is the use of effective discourse markers, which can help the speaker avoid a string of brief, disconnected statements.

Recently, the United States of America held its 60th presidential election. Donald Trump, as one of the candidates, won the election with 50.3% of the vote as of November 11, 2024 (Associated Press News, 2024). Donald Trump had previously served as president of the United State from 2017 to 2021. In this election, he ran again and won the most votes. After being officially appointed as president, Donald Trump and his team held a big event called a rally. It was a large-scale gathering attended by supporters and sympathizers on January 6, 2025, in Washington, D.C. This rally victory speech became one of his first major public speeches after the election. In this rally victory speech, Donald Trump showed his typical communication style. He used repetition, emotional expressions, and also many discourse markers to guide the flow of his speech. This phenomenon is interesting to observe because it shows how a political figure uses language strategically in a high stake public moment. This specific context makes the use of the discourse markers even more significant to analyze, as it happened during a moment filled with political significance, audience excitement, and national attention.

Moreover, this rally victory speech has not been widely studied in academic research. This gives the researcher an opportunity to provide a fresh analysis that is relevant and timely. For these reasons, the researcher chooses to analyze Donald Trump's rally victory speech, which was retrieved from the YouTube channel of FOX 5 Atlanta. This study focuses on the use of discourse markers in that speech using Fraser's (1999) theory of types and Schiffrin's (1987) theory of functions.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study above, this study is arranged to answer the problems formulated in these following questions:

1. What are the types of discourse markers used in Donald Trump's rally victory speech 2025?
2. What are the functions of discourse markers used in Donald Trump's rally victory speech 2025?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to answer the statement of those research questions above:

1. To find out the types of discourse markers used in Donald Trump's rally victory speech 2025
2. To explain the functions of discourse markers used in the Donald Trump's rally victory speech 2025

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to be beneficial theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study is hoped to give more knowledge because this study presents data based on the type and function discourse markers in Donald Trump's speech. The results of the analysis contribute supporting data for the development of the theory previously formulated by Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1999).

Practically, this study is likely to help language users or the readers to understand discourse markers. Furthermore, this study can also help the next researcher and students of the English study program because it has the potential to support other researchers in analyzing discourse markers by enriching previous studies and providing a foundation for the development of similar research in the future.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is focused only on discourse analysis, especially in discourse markers used by Donald Trump's rally victory speech 2025. Also, the theory that will be used in this study are the theory of Fraser (1999) about the types of discourse markers and theory of Schiffrin (1987) about functions of discourse markers. Specifically, the data of this study are words and phrases from the utterances of Donald Trump that considered discourse markers classified under Fraser's (1999) theory.