

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the study. It provides the background of the study, outlines the research questions and objectives, and explains the significance of the study. In addition, this chapter discusses the scope and limitations of the research to provide a clear direction for the study. Overall, this chapter serves as the foundation for understanding the focus and development of the research.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is essential in human life because it enables people to communicate ideas, share information, and develop relationships with others. It exists in practically every aspect of daily life, from casual discussions to formal communication in educational, cultural, and political settings. According to David & Ejiro (2023) language is an integral part of society's structure, and studying how it is utilized can reveal the social processes and ideas that underpin it. People use language to express their thoughts, emotions, and intentions, allowing them to interact meaningfully with their listeners. Without language, the flow of information and the formation of social interactions would be severely limited.

Furthermore, language can be viewed as an active social activity that is constantly modified by encounters anchored in specific cultural, social, and historical contexts. Rather than serving as a neutral channel for information, language is used by humans to negotiate meaning, express and act out their identities, and navigate the complex web of social relationships that surrounds them. Everyday linguistic choices are not arbitrary; they both reflect and reinforce the values, conventions, and structures of the communities in which they occur. As Liddicoat (2016) argues, language both reveals and perpetuates the social frameworks that shape human interaction. Similarly, Zavala (2018) emphasizes that language is situated within dynamic and historically embedded social practices that are deeply intertwined with power relations, rather than functioning merely as a neutral code. Viewing language in this way emphasizes its dynamic function in shaping cognition, behavior, and communal knowledge. This

perspective is beneficial for studying political circumstances, as language goes beyond mere communication to affect public perception, legitimize authority, and wield power within society. By defining language as a social practice, researchers can acquire a better understanding of how meaning, identity, and influence are produced and sustained through ordinary communicative activities.

Political communication cannot be reduced to the mere delivery of information. In political contexts, language is deliberately employed by actors to frame issues, construct identities, and influence how events and policies are interpreted by the public (Fairclough, 1995). Political actors deliberately choose words, metaphors, and rhetorical frames not just to communicate policy viewpoints, but also to shape public perception, evoke emotional responses, and enforce societal norms. As a result, language becomes a key weapon for establishing power, molding national identity, and influencing public opinion. Taubaldiyeu et al., (2024) highlights the importance of terminology in political discourse in shaping how voters interpret governmental priorities and national issues, demonstrating how language operates as a power mechanism in political situations.

Over these surface processes, Political discourse does not stand apart from society; it is shaped by the social structures in which it emerges and, at the same time, contributes to shaping them. Institutions, hierarchies, and social norms influence who is considered authoritative, whose voices are heard, and which perspectives are sidelined. Through language, political actors do more than describe events; they frame issues, position themselves and others, and promote particular interpretations of reality. In this way, discourse becomes a space where ideology is articulated and power is exercised. As Fairclough (1995) explains, discourse functions as a form of social practice that both reflects and shapes power relations, while Wodak & Meyer (2001) emphasize that discourse must be understood within its broader socio-political and historical context. Therefore, analyzing political speech requires attention not only to linguistic features but also to how these features contribute to constructing ideology and representing power within society. It reflects underlying relations of power, along with reinforcing

them, showing that communication influences and is influenced by social realities. Political messages then have to be examined not just at the level of linguistic content but also at the strategies, conventions, and societal assumptions that subtend their production and reception. As Bouyahi (2021) implies, language may shape human consciousness to such an extent that political actors may employ it in manipulative ways to direct public opinion and perception. Locating political language within a socially embedded practice facilitates the concrete linguistic alternatives into broader discourse analysis, opening the door to research on how meaning, ideology, and power intersect in specific communicative arenas.

Discourse Analysis examines language beyond individual sentences, emphasizing how it operates in real-life contexts to build meaning, social connections, and realities. Rather than focusing solely on grammatical or structural aspects, this approach explores how particular linguistic choices express and influence social interaction, ideology, and power. Schiffrin (1994) notes that Discourse Analysis investigates how language functions in communication by taking into account both its form and its social environment. In a similar vein, Gee (2005) highlights that discourse represents a social practice that simultaneously mirrors and constructs reality. By applying Discourse Analysis, researchers can explore how meaning is formed, how individuals position themselves and others through language, and how social or political frameworks determine what can be expressed and in what manner. Consequently, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a relevant framework for examining how ideology and power are embedded in political texts. Rather than merely describing linguistic features, CDA investigates how discourse contributes to the production and reproduction of social dominance and inequality. As Fairclough (1989) argues, CDA seeks to uncover how language can sustain or challenge power relations within society. Similarly, Wodak & Meyer (2001) emphasize that discourse analysis must account for the socio-political contexts in which texts are produced and interpreted

In this study, CDA is specifically operationalized through the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), which focuses on how discursive strategies construct

social actors, represent events, and legitimize particular viewpoints. DHA is particularly suitable for this research because it systematically links linguistic choices to broader ideological positions and power structures. Fairclough (1989) points out that the primary purpose of CDA is to expose how certain linguistic practices can reinforce, justify, or even challenge dominance and social inequality. In a similar vein, Wodak & Meyer (2001) argue that CDA goes beyond describing linguistic patterns; it critically investigates how discourse contributes to shaping public understanding and political behavior. Therefore, CDA offers an essential framework for examining political speeches because it helps researchers identify how language functions as a persuasive and ideological instrument within particular social and historical situations.

Furthermore, it can be noted that this research employs CDA, specifically the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) introduced by Wodak & Reisigl (2009), with a focus on discursive strategies. This analytical framework concerns itself with mental representations, opinions, attitudes, and evaluations that belong to individuals or members of certain social groups. The approach is closely connected to the concepts of ideology and power. However, the DHA is adopted in this study for several particular reasons. Firstly, CDA is widely used to critically examine discourses that reflect issues of social transformation, including those found in political speeches. Political discourse serves as a medium that can shape and influence people's perspectives in society. Secondly, this approach is appropriate for analyzing how a speaker conveys and exercises ideology and power through language. Since both ideology and power are employed to affect audiences, their realization requires the use of various linguistic strategies by the speaker. Therefore, this study applies five discursive strategies to investigate how power and ideology are expressed in the analyzed speech.

Analyzing ideology and power within speech is closely related to the framework of CDA. Various scholars have contributed to the understanding of these concepts, including Van Dijk (2012), who stated that ideology represents an abstract mental structure influencing how social groups form their knowledge and attitudes. Ideology encompasses a collection of beliefs, values, goals, and

expectations that shape individuals' perspectives. It serves as a crucial mechanism in constructing hegemonic identity through the control of discourse. Van Dijk (2009) further explained that ideological analysis focuses on how in-groups are portrayed positively and out-groups negatively. Hence, ideology plays a role in reinforcing the speaker's discourse, making it capable of shaping and persuading others.

An examination of ideology and power in political speech, for example, can be observed in Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural address, when he proclaimed, "From this day forward, it's going to be only America first." This utterance conveys a strong ideological stance by promoting nationalism and prioritizing the interests of one nation above others. Within the framework of the Discourse Historical Approach (Wodak & Reisigl, 2009), This line exemplifies the nomination strategy, in which the speaker defines group membership by emphasizing "America" as the in-group that deserves priority and protection. By foregrounding this collective identity, the statement establishes a symbolic boundary between "us" and "them," constructing ideological unity and legitimizing authority. Moreover, it demonstrates the predication strategy through the association of positive values such as pride, independence, and moral superiority with the in-group, while indirectly framing outsiders as potential threats or competitors.

The study is highly relevant in that it examines the strategic use of language by political leaders to construct ideology, mold public perception, and gain strength in society. Political discourse in the contemporary world is no longer a performance of communication, but a deliberate exercise of power designed to shape collective consciousness. As Dahal (2024) argues, language is a powerful ideological tool whereby political agents can acquire and consolidate power by insidiously shaping the means by which individuals perceive social and political reality. Analyzing political discourse from the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, more precisely, the Discourse Historical Approach, this research seeks to unveil the implicit strategies whereby ideology becomes reproduced and legitimized. Therefore, this study adds not only theoretical significance to studies

of discourse but also practical significance in sensitizing the public to how language can be used as a powerful tool in political discourse.

To support and add to the writer's insight, the author attempted to find several previous studies that were similar to the topic of this research. Several previous studies have examined how language reflects power and ideology in political speeches through the lens of CDA. Marlis (2022) analyzed Boris Johnson's speeches using the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA), as proposed by Wodak, and found that the use of discursive strategies, such as nomination, predication, and argumentation, played a role in revealing power and ideology, and influencing public opinion. Susilowati & Ulkhasanah (2021) analyzed Trump's speech recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital using Wodak's Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) and determined that all five discursive strategies, including perspective and intensification, were employed to rationalize ideological positioning along with positive self-presentation. On the other hand, Dewi & Susylowati (2025) analyzed Prabowo Subianto's speech at the G20 summit using Fairclough's CDA approach and found that he constructed a political narrative related to food security and the conflict in Gaza to strengthen Indonesia's image both domestically and internationally. These three studies show that political leaders carefully use language to legitimize power and ideology, and underline the effectiveness of CDA in revealing the hidden meanings behind political discourse.

The difference between this study and the previous study lies in the theory used. Previous research applied Fairclough's CDA model, whereas this study uses current data and adopts Ruth Wodak's DHA to investigate how ideology and power are depicted. Prabowo's speech at the United Nations General Assembly is analyzed by the author because it is a highly relevant object to analyze using the DHA approach, which critically examines discourse in its historical and political context. This is because speeches of this type are structured in a very measured way to negotiate power relations, legitimize political agendas, and build appeal to the international community. This speech also contains a wealth of data for this research.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What types of discursive strategies are used in Prabowo's speech at the 2025 United Nations General Assembly?
2. How do these discursive strategies construct ideology and power in the speech?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the types of discursive strategies employed in Prabowo's speech at the 2025 United Nations General Assembly.
2. To analyze how these discursive strategies contribute to the construction of ideology and power in Prabowo's speech at the 2025 United Nations General Assembly.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study has significant meaning both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of critical discourse analysis (CDA), particularly through the application of the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) developed by Ruth Wodak to analyze political discourse. This study provides an understanding of how ideology and power are reflected in Indonesian political speeches in the international arena. From a practical perspective, this study provides insight into how language is used as a means to shape political identity and diplomatic legitimacy. In addition, this study can help the public understand the deeper meaning of the diplomatic language used by Indonesian leaders on the international stage.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is concerned with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), specifically the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) proposed by Ruth Wodak (2009), with a focus on the examination of the discursive strategies used by political actors in the formation of ideology and power. Furthermore, in terms of

data limitation, this study only analyzes a single speech delivered by Prabowo at the 2025 United Nations General Assembly.

The analysis is limited to the five discursive strategies proposed by Wodak & Reisigl (2009), namely nomination, predication, argumentation, perspectivation, and intensification or mitigation. These strategies are examined to identify how social actors are constructed, how particular viewpoints are legitimized, and how relations of power are discursively represented. The study does not attempt to analyze non-verbal elements, audience reception, or broader comparative political discourse. Instead, it concentrates on the linguistic realization of ideology and power within the selected speech.