

President Mahmoud Abbas' Speech about Unilateral Recognition of Jerusalem: A Semantic-Pragmatic Study

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Abstract

The research is based on Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' political speech at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Summit on December 13, 2017 in Istanbul, Turkey containing semantic and pragmatic elements. The study aims to describe and discover the use of semantics and pragmatic speech acts used by President Mahmoud Abbas in his speech of OIC Summit 2017. This research uses qualitative method with descriptive approach. While the theory is used as a foundation in the theory of semantic relation and the theory of speech act Searle (1979). The results of this study indicate that speech acts used by President Mahmoud Abbas in his speech cannot be separated from the context of the problems faced by the Palestinians after US President Donald Trump declared Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Based on a speech, the authors successfully identified 44 propositions containing semantic and pragmatic elements that have been reviewed. From the findings, 35 propositions contained an act of illustrative speech and the majority of them were expressive speech acts with 19 propositions. This shows the fact that President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinians are only able to express the form of condemnation and the inability of their nation in facing the US unilateral decision. In addition, at least the declarative speech in the speech with a proposition indicates that Palestine has not been able to declare itself as an independent nation over the occupation of Israel.

Keywords: Mahmoud Abbas, semantics, pragmatics, speech act.

Introduction

This research is grounded on the speech of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in the Summit of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (Summit of OKI) in Istanbul, Turkey on December 13, 2017 which contains semantic and pragmatic elements. In the speech, there are utterances that contain very interesting contexts and contents related to sense relations of semantic and pragmatic speech act. As it is known that the political speech delivered by President Mahmoud Abbas is a recent issue of Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which contains a response to the unilateral and controversial US President Donald Trump's declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel on December 6, 2017 (BBC Indonesia, 2017). Trump's decision had become a trending topic of the world and was criticized by world leaders, especially from Islamic countries including Palestine itself.

Speech in Arabic known as "خطابة" /*khiṭābah*/ (Munawwir, 1997, p. 349). It is a part of oral discourse which is often encountered in everyday life, not least in the political sphere like a state speech delivered by a president. Assessment of speech texts cannot be separated from semantic and pragmatic studies. Semantics is a linguistic field that studies the meaning of the language signs. In semantic studies, there are various types of meaning, including denotative and connotative meanings, affective meaning, reflective meaning, and lexical meaning. However, in this study the authors only discuss the lexical meaning in President Mahmoud Abbas's speech which includes synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, metonymy, and collocation.

In addition to semantics, the branch of linguistics that cannot be separated from the study of speech texts is pragmatic. Pragmatics is the study of meaning in relation to speech situations (Leech, 1983, p. 6). Similar to semantics, pragmatic studies talk about the underlying context of a text conveyed by speakers. Aspects of pragmatic study include several things, namely pre-emption, entailment, implicature, speech acts, and the principle of decency. However, in this study, the authors focus on the analysis of speech acts in the speech of President Mahmoud Abbas, especially the act of illocution acts. Searle (1979) divides the act of speech of illocution into five types, namely assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative.

Based on the significance of the background in terms of linguistics above, the authors explore the contents and context of the speech through the following two questions: (1) How the semantic application in President Mahmoud Abbas's political speech in the OIC Summit 2017 is, and (2) the application of pragmatic speech utterance of President Mahmoud Abbas' speech in OIC Summit 2017. So, this study aims to answer the research questions which is to describe how the application of semantics and pragmatic utterances used by the Palestinian president in the speech.

Literature Review

To underlie this study, the authors use semantic and pragmatic theory, i.e. the theory of semantic relation which includes synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, metonymy, and collocation; and the theory of speech acts Searle (1979) which includes assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Semantics as a science that can interpret the intent or message conveyed in a writing or speaking cannot be separated from the element called meaning. Meanings in the level of semantics are classified into various types, one of which is the lexical meaning which includes synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, metonymy, and collocation. Synonym is a semantic relation expressing the similarity of meaning between utterances with another utterance (Chaer, 2012, p. 297). While Umar (1998) explains that synonymy is a collection of words that have one meaning (p. 145). For example, the word "smart" is synonymous with the word "clever". Unlike the case with synonymy, antonymy is a semantic relationship between two utterances whose meaning reverses, contradicts, or contrasts between one another (Chaer, 2012, p. 299). For example, the word "life" is antonymous with the word "death", and "man" is antonymous with "woman".

Hyponymy is a semantic relation between utterances whose meaning is included in another form of speech (Chaer, 2012, p. 105). In hyponyms, there are several terms such as superordinate (hypernym or generic), hyponym (specific), and co-hyponym. For example, "father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, sister, and brother" are hyponyms with "family". Thus, the word "family" is a hypernym or superordinate for family type (father, mother, grandparents, sister, and sister).

Metonymy is the substitution of the name of an attribute or adjunct for that of the thing meant. This metonymy has a resemblance to hyponymy because of its hierarchical semantic relation, but not one-way. For example, the word "computer" has a metonymic relationship with the words "monitor", "mouse", and "keyboard".

While collocation is a language element that has aspects of meaning that tend to collaborate with other words around it (Leech, 1983). So this collocation is also called juxtaposition. For example, the word "noon" has a match when juxtaposed with "night", so that in Indonesian culture known as "day and night".

Pragmatics is the study of meaning in its relation to speech situations which include elements such as speakers and speech partners, context, purpose, speech, time, and place (Leech, 1983). One aspect of pragmatic study is speech acts. Searle (1969) defines speech acts as a theory that attempts to examine the meaning of language based on the relationship of speech with the actions performed by the speaker to the speech partner in communicating. Searle (1969) classifies speech acts into three forms, namely locution, illocution, and perlocution. Gunarwan (1994) defines locution as an act of speech intending to express something, expressing something according to the meaning of the word and the sentence itself either literally or in the syntactic level. Meanwhile, perlocution according to Levinson (1983) is an action which emphasizes the results because a perlocutionary action succeeds if the partner does something which is desired by the speaker. Illocution is a speech act done by the speaker to the said partner in the hope of the said partner to take action (implication) of the act of said. Illocution is also called the "act of doing somethings in saying somethings" which not only states something but produces the actions of a speech. Searle (1979, p. 12) divides illocution into five types which are explained below:

1. Assertiveness are kinds of illocution to commit the speaker to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition (Searle, 1979, p. 12). In other words, this assertive action aims to explain or express something based on what is actually experienced. The types of illocutionary acts, among which states, propose, brag, complain, express opinions, and report.
2. Directives. The illocutionary point of these consists in the fact that they are attempts (of varying degrees, and hence, more precisely, they are determinates of the determinable which includes attempting) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something (Searle, 1979, p. 13). Yule (1996, p. 54) defines directive illocution as a kind of speech acts that speakers use to get someone else to do something. The types of directive illocutions include demanding, commanding, ordering, pleading, inviting, and giving advice.
3. Commissives are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use to commit themselves to some future action (Yule, 1996, p. 54). While Searle (1979) defines commissives are those illocutionary acts whose point is to commit the speaker to some future course of action. The types of commissives speech acts include promising, offering, making commitment, and promising.
4. Expressives are kinds of speech acts to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content (Searle, 1979, p. 15). Whereas Yule (1996, p. 53) defines expressiveness as kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker feels. Types of expressive illocutionary acts, among them thanking, congratulating, giving condolences, condemning, praising, worrying, disappointed, and forgiving.
5. Declaratives are those kinds of speech acts that change the world via their utterance (Yule, 1996, p. 53). This act of speech is called a special speech act because it is usually done by someone who has high authority and power in an institution. The types of declarative acts of speech include approval, resignation, dismissal, sentencing, appointment, naming, excommunication, and baptism.

In acting speech, there is often a sign indicating the type of pressure the illusion is used. The marker device is called the illocutionary force indicating device (IFID). IFID is an expression of the type shown in (1) where there is a slot for a verb that explicitly names the illocutionary act being performed (Yule, 1996, p. 49). The indicator of the illocutionary force indicating device is called the performative verb (Vp). Yule (1996) illustrates Vp implementation as below:

I + performative verb (Vp) + you that....

I promise you that.....

(1) I declare you that....

Research Method

This research applies descriptive qualitative approach. The data corpus used is the text of President Mahmoud Abbas's speech at the OIC Summit on December 13, 2017 in Istanbul, Turkey. The one-hour speech was taken from Channel Aljazeera Mubasher on Youtube via site <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ldy3bvH-Y5s>. Based on the video recordings, the author found 343 speeches in the text of a speech delivered by President Mahmoud Abbas. In the utterance, there are 44 propositions containing semantic and pragmatic elements to be examined in this study. Based on the number of propositions, propositions containing the elements of semantic relation are 9 propositions, whereas propositions containing pragmatic speech acts are 35 propositions.

To get the data corpus, the authors undertook several steps, among which the authors transcribe the Arabic speech from the footage of a speech that has been downloaded from Youtube. After that, the speech was translated into Indonesian to help the writer in understanding and analysing speech texts. Once translated, then the data are processed by observing and analysing the utterances contained in the text of the speech associated with the semantics of meaning and pragmatic speech acts. The results of this analysis are based on theories and framework of thought of linguists who are considered relevant to the topic of research through study of literature.

Research Findings

Semantic Analysis of President Mahmoud Abbas' Speech

Based on the results of the text analysis of President Mahmoud Abbas's speech at the 2017 OIC Summit held in Istanbul, Turkey, the authors found 9 propositions that contain elements of lexical meaning relations in semantics. The propositions are classified into five types, namely synonyms (3 propositions), antonyms (2 propositions), hyponyms (2 propositions), metonym (1 proposition), and collocation (1 proposition). But in this article the authors analyse only two propositions that can represent the 9 propositions that contain relations of lexical meaning, namely hyponymy, and metonymy.

Proposition (1)

وفي ختام كلمتي هذه أجدد الشكر لتركيا رئيساً وحكومة وشعباً على هذه الاستضافة الكريمة لهذه القمة التاريخية.

/wa fī khitām kalimatī hāzihi ujaddidu asy-syukru liturkiyā raīsan wa ḥukūmah wa sya'ban 'alā hāzihi al-istiḍāfah al-karīmah lihāzihi al-qimmah at-tārikhiyyah/

"To close my speech, I would like to repeat my gratitude **to Turkey, the president, the government and his people** for their noble welcome in this historic summit."

Proposition (1) above shows the form of meaning relation related to the coverage of a specific generic meaning or known as the term hyponymy. The word *تركيا/turkiyā/* "Turki" is a generic form that becomes superordinate for *رئيساً/raīsan/* "president", *حكومة/ḥukūmah/* "government", and *شعباً/sha'ban/* "people". In other words, the word *رئيساً/raīsan/*, *حكومة/ḥukūmah/*, and *شعباً/sya'ban/* is a specific form that is associated with *تركيا/turkiyā/*. While the relationship between these three specific elements are called the co-hyponym that need each other. So, in the context of the speaker thanked Turkey, which includes the president, the government, and his people.

Proposition (2)

إن هذه الخطوات الأحادية للرئيس ترامب، لن تعطي أية شرعية لإسرائيل في القدس فهي مدينة فلسطينية عربية إسلامية مسيحية، عاصمة دولة فلسطين الأبدية

/inna hāzihi al-khuṭuwāt al-uḥādiyyah li raīs Trām lan tu'ṭī ayah syar'iyah li Isrāil fī al-Quds fahiya madīnah filisṭīniyyah 'arabiyyah Islāmiyyah masīḥiyyah 'āṣimah dawlah filisṭīn al-abdiyyah/

"Unilateral steps by President Trump will not legitimize Israel in Jerusalem, which is a **city of Palestine, Islam and Christianity**, as well as the eternal capital of a Palestinian state."

The authors consider the proposition (2) contains semantic relation of metonymy arguing the semantic units used by the speaker. The semantic units here are the word مدينة فلسطينية/*madīnah filisṭīniyyah/* "Palestinian city", عربية/*'arabiyyah/* "Arab", إسلامية/*Islāmiyyah/* "Islam", and مسيحية/*masīḥiyyah/* "Christian" which contain partial meaning of the word القدس/*al-Quds/* "Jerusalem". So, Jerusalem is not only part of Palestine, but also part of Arab, Muslim and Christian countries.

Analysis of Acts of Speech in President Mahmoud Abbas' Speech

Based on the text analysis of President Mahmoud Abbas's speech in OIC Summit 2017, the authors found 35 propositions containing illustrative speech acts. The propositions are classified into five types based on Searle's theory of speech acts (1979) with details of 5 assertive assumptions, 8 directive propositions, 2 command propositions, 19 expressive propositions, and 1 declarative proposition.

For more details, authors put the propositions in the table as below:

Table 1. Propositions classified into five types of speech acts

No.	Act of Speech	Implication	Quantity
1	Assertive	Stating	4
		Proposing	1
2	Directive	Commanding	6
		Pleading	2
3	Commissive	Promising	1
		Hoping	1
4	Expressive	Thanking	4
		Praising	6
		Condemning	7
		Disappointed	1
		Worrying	1
5	Declarative	Appointment	1
Total			35

Assertive

Based on the analysis of the speech text, five propositions containing assertive speech acts are found, among which assertive implying stating (4 propositions), and proposing (1 proposition). One of them are stated below:

إننا هنا اليوم، لكي نقول جميعاً وبلغاً واضحة: إن القدس كانت، ولا زالت، وستظل إلى الأبد، عاصمة دولة فلسطين، وهي ذرة التاج، وهي زهرة المدائن، وهي أرض الإسراء والمعراج التي لا سلام ولا استقرار دون أن تكون كذلك.

/innanā hunā al-yaum likai nakūlu jamī'an wa bilugatin wādihah inna al-Quds kānat wa lāzalat wa satazullu ila al-abad 'āṣimah dawlah filisṭīn wahiya durrah at-tāj wahiya zahrah al-madāin wahiya arḍu al-isrā' wa al-mi'rāj al-latī lā salām wa lā istiqrār dūna an takūna kaẓālik/

"We are here today, to tell you all in a clear language: **Jerusalem is always and will remain forever the capital of the Palestinian State**, which is the city of flowers, the land of Isra and Mi'raj, in which no peace and stability exist without Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine."

The authors assess the proposition above is a form of assertive illocution that implies giving a statement. This argument is based on the existence of units of semantics used by speakers in the form of sentence إن القدس كانت، ولا زالت، وستظل إلى الأبد، عاصمة دولة فلسطين/inna al-Quds kānat wa lāzālat wa satazullu ila al-century 'āṣimah dawlah filistīn/ "Jerusalem from ancient to the present remain forever the capital of a Palestinian State ". Speakers use the verb كان/kāna/ along with its similar particles لازال/lāzāla/ "still" and ظل/zalla/ "fixed" which implies that Jerusalem will forever remain the capital of Palestine. Therefore, the context of the situation constructed in the proposition contains an interpretation that the speaker tried to explain firmly and plainly to the speaking partner that Jerusalem will remain forever the capital of Palestine. This statement is corroborated by the phrase نقول جميعا وبلغه واضحة/nakūlu jamī'an wa bilugatin wādīḥah/ "we tell you all in clear language" which indicates that the speaker is not afraid of the US President's decision.

Directive

Based on the speech text analysis, 8 propositions containing expressive speech acts are found. Two propositions among them have implications demanding, and the other six have implications commanding. One example of directive speech acts in the speech text is as below:

وفي هذا المجال فإننا ندعو قمتكم الموقرة إلى اتخاذ جملة من القرارات الحاسمة لدعم هذه القضية المفصلية لأمتنا.
/wa fī haṣā al-majāl fa innanā nad'ū qimmatukum al-muwaqqarah ilā ittikhāzi jumlah min al-qarārāt al-ḥāsimah lida'mi haṣihī al-qadiyyah al-mufaṣṣalah li ummatinā/

"Through this summit **we invite you** to take a number of critical decisions to support the major issue of our nation."

The authors consider the proposition to be a directive illocution arguing the semantic unit used by speakers in the form of VP ندعو/nad'ū/ "we invite". Speaker used VP ندعو/nad'ū/ "we invite" to indicate an asserting in the form of an invitation. In addition, the use of imperfective verb ندعو/nad'ū/ and not using other verbs of similar meaning signifies that what the speaker is speaking is not just a speech, but shows a seriousness accompanied by concrete steps. It is characterized by the use of particle إن/inna/ "surely" as a form of emphasis and to reinforce the proposition of the command.

Looking at the context, in the forum, speaker ordered the speaking partners to take a number of important decisions related to issues of Palestine. The proposition of the command is indicated by the phrase اتخاذ جملة من القرارات الحاسمة/ittikhāzi sum min al-qarārāt al-ḥāsimah/ "taking a number of critical decisions". The use of the word القرارات الحاسمة/al-qarārāt al-ḥāsimah/ "critical decision" explains the significance of the decision for Palestine. Therefore, with the use of VP in the form of invitation ندعو/nad'ū/ "we invite", speaking partners are expected to carry out what is ordered by the speaker which is to take a number of decisions and implement the decisions.

Commissive

Two propositions are found to have commissive speech acts element. Both of the propositions implicate promise and hope. One of the propositions is as below:

وسوف نواصل جهودنا في بناء مؤسساتنا الوطنية على أساس سيادة القانون والنهوض باقتصادنا بمقدار ما نستطيع

/wa saufa nuwāšilu juhūdunā fi bināi muassasātīnā al-waṭaniyyah 'alā asās siyādah al-qānūn wa an-nuhūd bi iqtīšādīnā bi miqdāri mā nastāṭī'/

"We will continue to strive to build national institutions based on legislation, promoting the national economy."

The authors consider that proposition is a form of commissive illocution because of some semantic units used by speaker in the form of VP سوف نواصل */saufa nuwāšilu/* "we will continue". The use of this verb to show the function of commissive action is making promise. As it is explained earlier that commissive illocution is a speech act which some influence in the future. Moreover, in the syntactic level, the existence of سوف */saufa/* "will" particle in the imperfective verb فعل المضارع */fi'il al-muḍāri'/* greatly affects the syntactic and semantic form of Arabic. So that if the particle is juxtaposed with the imperfective verb will produce meaning of future المستقبل */al-mustaqbal/*.

Contextually, speaker used commissive illocution to express a promise in the form of a commitment to bring Palestine into a better country in the future by continuing efforts to build the state, both in terms of government and economy in order to improve the welfare of the people. This is marked by the phrase وسوف نواصل جهودنا في بناء مؤسساتنا الوطنية */wa saufa nuwāšilu juhūdunā fi bināi muassasātīnā al-waṭaniyyah/* "we will continue to struggle to build a national institution". In addition, speakers also pledged to continue to end the occupation of Israel by realizing reconciliation and implementing Cairo Agreement hosted by the Egyptian President Abdul Fatah Al-Sisi.

Expressive

The authors find 19 propositions which contain expressive speech acts. Those propositions are classified into five types, which are: thanking (4 propositions); praising (6 propositions); condemning (7 propositions); disappointed (1 proposition); and worrying (1 proposition). One of those expressive speech acts is:

إن إعلان الرئيس ترامب بأن القدس هي عاصمة إسرائيل وتعليماته بنقل سفارة بلاده إليها انتهاك صارخ للقانون الدولي والاتفاقات الموقعة وبخاصة قرارات مجلس الأمن.

/Inna i'lāna ar-raīs Trump bi anna al-Quds hiya 'āšimah israīl wa ta'limātahu bi naqli sifārah bilādihi ilaihā intihākun šārukḥ li al-qanūni ad-dawli wa al-ittifāqāt al-muwaqqa'ah wa bi khāshah qarārāt majlis al-amni/

"President Trump's statement that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and instruction to move its embassy **are shameful violations** of international law, as well as signed agreements, particularly with respect to UN Security Council resolutions."

Authors note the above proposition as an expressive form of speech acting implicating criticism with the argument of a semantic unit used by speaker in the form of the adjective noun انتهاك صارخ */intihākun šārukḥ/* meaning "shameful transgression". Speaker using the adjective noun to describe the form of anger and speaker's resentment to President Trump's statement was denounced as a very shameful act. This is marked with the phrase انتهاك صارخ للقانون الدولي والاتفاقات الموقعة */intihākun šārukḥ li al-qanūni ad-dawli wa al-ittifāqāt al-muwaqqa'ah/* "is a shameful violation of international law and signed agreements".

Seen from its context, it is known that on December 6, 2017, US President Donald Trump announced unilaterally that Jerusalem was the capital of Israel and would move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Trump's statement received global criticism, not to mention the speaker himself as Palestinian president. In the proposition, speaker criticizes President Trump's statement by calling it an embarrassing offense and certainly harmful to the Palestinians. He considers that President Trump has violated international law and betrayed agreements that have been mutually agreed upon.

Declarative

In the speech text, only one proposition which embodies declarative illocution. It is explained below:

إن منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية الممثلة الشرعي والوحيد للشعب الفلسطيني بمسلميه ومسيحيه.

/inna munazzamah at-tahrir al-filistiniyyah al-mumassil asy-syar'iy wa al-wahid li sya'bi al-filistiniy bi muslimihi wa masihih/

"PLO is the only **official representative** for the Palestinians, Muslims, and Christians."

The authors believe that the proposition is a declarative illocution implying appointment (of a position). It is grounded on the occurrence of semantic unit used by the speaker which is an adjective phrase of noun الممثل الشرعي */al-mumassil asy-syar'iy/* "official representative". The noun is a form of emphasis to the implication of appointing PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) as official Palestinian representative. Syntactically, the word الممثل */al-mumassil/* "representative" comes from the word يمثل */mas'ala-yumassilu/* meaning "to represent, to symbolize, to act and to carry out."

Observing the meaning contained in the word الممثل الشرعي */al-mumassil asy-syar'iy/* "official representative", it is an expression of the declaration that the PLO is the only official representative of the country standing for the Palestinian people. As is known to the PLO is an organization founded in 1964 as a political entity that will represent the interests of Palestine and function independently from the Arab government. In addition, speaker used the word الممثل */al-mumassil/* "representative" to point out to the speaking partners that the existence of PLO is not only a representative, but as a symbol of the struggle of the people and has an important role in realizing Palestine peace and independence.

Conclusion

Based on semantic analysis of President Mahmoud Abbas's speech in OIC Summit 2017, the authors managed to find semantic relations influenced by the context of the situation. The author succeeded in identifying 9 propositions related to the relations of semantics, which are: synonyms (3 propositions), antonyms (2 propositions), hyponyms (2 propositions), and metonym and collocation each with one proposition. While from pragmatic analysis, the writer found 35 propositions that include acts of speech of illocution, which are assertive acts (5 proposition), directive acts (8 proposition), commissive acts (2 proposition), expressive acts (19 proposition), and declarative act (1 proposition).

High number of expressive speeches (19 propositions) illustrates the fact that President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinians have no power to confront US unilateral decision that declares Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. He was only able to express the inability of the Palestinians in expressive utterances in the form of condemnation, anger, and can only express the form of his disillusionment with President Trump's statement. Moreover, least declarative act with only one proposition indicates that President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian people have not been able to declare their nation as an independent nation over the Israeli occupation.

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