

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the introduction of the research. This chapter examines the research background, research question, research objectives, research significance, and definition of key terms.

### **1.1 Research Background**

The United Nations General Assembly plays a vital role in uniting nations to address the world's most pressing challenges and to promote peace, security, and sustainable development on a global scale. As a matter of fact, the General Assembly of the United Nations, created in 1945, is an important policymaking and representative organ whose functions are to provide states with recommendations regarding international problems on the one hand, and to find solutions to problems that affect people at the political, economic, legal and humanitarian level, on the other (United Nations, 2011). The 79<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly was an important step in global efforts to accelerate the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this highly anticipated event, Summit of the Future, the world emphasizes the importance of international cooperation in facing major challenges such as climate change, poverty, inequality, as well as the impact of conflict and the ongoing global health crisis (United Nations, 2024). Therefore, this event is also a forum for dialogue on important issues for people around the world.

In the international forum, speech has a role as a means of conveying the views and interests of a country. Every country leader or representative who speaks at this forum brings political, social, and ideological perspectives that represent their country. In the realm of public communication, political speeches have an important role in conveying messages that can influence public perception and support. Political speeches function as a tool to build and maintain social relationships, express views and emotions, and promote political ideas, policies and

programs to the public (Dylgjeri, 2017). Therefore, the choice of language can greatly determine how messages and views are understood by a global audience. To understand how messages are delivered in speeches, linguistic analysis is needed to reveal the structure and meaning behind the text.

Speech derives from a text which consists of the language in it. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) stated that text is the result or a product when someone speaks or writes, it is also not just a collection of words or sentences, but language that functions to convey social meaning in real situations through the text. In this context, language is a means of creating meaning while text is the process of creating that meaning (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). As a collection of meanings, language provides a variety of resources for referring to entities in the world and describing how those entities act or relate to each other (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In this regard, language plays an important role as a shaper of meaning, which is then mentioned in SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistics) whereas language is functional and can be explored in many ways point of view. According to Gerot & Wignell (1994), language that represented by clause simultaneously carries meaning called as metafunctions which contained of three metafunctions. These three metafunctions are 1) ideational metafunction, (2) interpersonal metafunction, and (3) textual metafunction. As structure terms, ideational metafunction refers to transitivity, interpersonal metafunction refers to mood, and textual metafunction refers to theme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

The unit of analysis of metafunctions in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a clause (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). One of the functions of a clause is as a representation, where clause functions as a tool to describe an event or activity that occurs in human life (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Clause as representation that represents the world is the focus in transitivity system introduced by Michael Halliday. Halliday (2014) explained that Clause as a representation means describing real (and unreal) world events and circumstances. There are three elements that explain phenomena of the real world represented in transitivity structures: circumstances, processes, and participants. Therefore, transitivity

analysis functions to understand how leaders direct the agent (who performs the action), object (who receives the action), and context (where and how the action occurs) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). The explanation above shows that transitivity can be applied to analyze text. Recent studies further demonstrate that transitivity can be used to analyze different types of texts, genres, and registers: advertisement (Ayoola, 2015), editorial (Vinchrsto, 2022), gender sensitivity (Yang & Han, 2022), novel (Alaei & Ahangari, 2016), poem (Isti'anah, 2014), short story (Anjum, 2019; Cunanan, 2011& 2019), and speech (Mushtaq et al., 2021).

This research takes the speech of Masoud Pezeshkian at the 79<sup>th</sup> session UN General Assembly. Masoud Pezeshkian is the new president of Iran and he has been sworn in as Iran's ninth president, replacing Ebrahim Raisi who died in a helicopter crash in May 2024 (Aljazeera, 2024). The significance of this research also stems from Iran, a country that has long been involved in global conflicts, particularly in the Middle East and with the United States. The relationship between the United States and Iran remain tense for more than forty years since Iranian Revolution in 1979 (Shannon, 2019). Iran is also involved in the Middle East crisis, which began with the Hamas-Israel conflict on October 7, 2023 where the conflict then spread to other regions, including Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and involved various parties supported by Iran (Nada & Barron, 2024). Thus, transitivity analysis in this research is used to find out what ideas Masoud Pezeshkian as a new president wants to deliver at the 79th session UN General Assembly. Besides that, political speech is not only a representation of individual opinions but also represents a country or a certain group. Furthermore, Iran is a country that has a long history of conflict and political tension. Therefore, this research also aims to understand the ideas of Iran at the 79th session UN General Assembly.

Some related previous studies with this research also found. Rahayu (2022) in her study explored the transitivity processes and what messages are conveyed based on the transitivity processes implemented by RM, the leader of a boy band named BTS. The data was collected from a speech at the 75th United Nations General Assembly. The researcher found 43 clauses in the speech. Behavioural

process and material process are the two most used processes, followed by mental process, material process, verbal process, and existential process. This study revealed that RM wanted to inform the audiences about the physiological and psychological actions done by him and his teammates during the pandemic of COVID-19. Moreover, the speech delivered by RM emphasized hope, imagination, and taking good for one another during a global pandemic. It also showed how RM shares his experiences and his feelings during COVID-19.

The study by Xiang (2022) also describes an in-depth transitivity analysis was carried out on the inauguration speech of the 46<sup>th</sup> US President, Joseph Robinette Biden. Through this research, the article seeks to reveal how English is used to hide ideology in political speeches and how Biden utilizes certain language features to convince and inspire the American public to achieve his political goals; at the same time, it also verifies the practicability of Systemic Functional Grammar in the analysis of political speech discourse.

Megah S (2019) explains that his research employed systemic functional linguistics theory of Halliday, particularly transitivity system as a tool of analysis. The data obtained from the victory speech of the presidential election, this speech was conducted during his inaugural speech occasion. The data was downloaded, then analyzed qualitatively. The study found that there are 31 material processes (36%), 23 mental processes (26%), 27 relational processes (31%), and 6 existential processes (7%). But verbal and behavioral are not found. This study concluded that Jokowi tended to uses material process, in contrast with verbal and behavioral processes which have no occurrences in his speech, it shows that he prefers to action to show his action.

Based on the previous studies above, the use of Halliday's transitivity is a tool for analyzing speech. However, it is still a gap in the analysis of the Masoud Pezeshkian's speech especially at the 79th session UN General Assembly with the Halliday's transitivity as a tool of analysis. Researchers rarely find research on Iran's new president. The researcher has not also found the transitivity analysis of the Masoud Pezeshkian's speech at the 79th session UN General Assembly

considering that it's his first speech at the UN General Assembly. Thus, this study will focus on what ideas Masoud Pezeshkian as a new president wants to deliver at the 79th session UN General Assembly.

## **1.2 Research Question**

In Systemic Functional Linguistics, text as a unit of analysis reveals experiential meaning through elements of the transitivity system, such as processes, participants, and circumstances. Thus, two research questions have been devised in this research as follows:

1. What process, participant, and circumstance types are used in Masoud Pezeshkian's speech at the 79th session UN General Assembly?
2. How those processes, participants, and circumstances realize the experiential meaning of Masoud Pezeshkian's speech at the 79th session UN General Assembly?

## **1.3 Research Objective**

Based on two formulated research question above, this research is intended:

1. To find out the processes, participants, and circumstances types which used in Masoud Pezeshkian's speech at the 79<sup>th</sup> session UN General Assembly.
2. To identify the experiential meaning which is realized from the processes, participants, and circumstances on Masoud Pezeshkian's speech at the 79<sup>th</sup> session UN General Assembly.

## 1.4 Research Significance

This research departs from the rare research discussing Masoud Pezeshkian's speech, especially at the 79th session UN General Assembly. Masoud Pezeshkian is the new president of Iran and has been sworn in as Iran's ninth president, replacing Ebrahim Raisi who died in a helicopter crash in May 2024 (Aljazeera, 2024). The speech that will be analyzed in this research is the first speech delivered by Masoud Pezeshkian at the UN General Assembly. Furthermore, the significance of this research stems from Iran, a country that has long been involved in global conflicts, particularly in the Middle East and with the United States. The relationship between the United States and Iran remain tense for more than forty years since Iranian Revolution in 1979 (Shannon, 2019). Iran is also involved in the Middle East crisis, which began with the Hamas-Israel conflict on October 7, 2023 where the conflict then spread to other regions, including Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and involved various parties supported by Iran (Nada & Barron, 2024). Given these conditions, researchers consider this research is important to conduct.

The analysis of transitivity in Pezeshkian's speech at the UN General Assembly aims to analyze three main aspects of transitivity—process (material, mental, verbal and relational processes), participants (actors, targets), and circumstances (time, place, reason, method). The choice of transitivity analysis in this research was also initiated by the need to understand the ideological nuances in political speeches. Political speeches reflect not only Pezeshkian's personal views, but also the broader policies and ideology of a country. Thus, this research is not only relevant for linguistic academics, but is also useful for those interested in the study of international relations and political communication. It is hoped that this analysis can show the importance of understanding linguistic choices in diplomacy and how state leaders use discourse as a means to advance their respective political and ideological interests.

## 1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Some key terms in this section aims to clarify and avoid misunderstanding or overlapping the meaning of key terms used in this research. Thus, the following are the key terms used in this research:

1. **Transitivity.** Transitivity is a term by Halliday that involved in Systemic Functional Linguistics and belongs to one of the metafunction of language namely ideational metafunction. The term of transitivity that is used in this research as a tool of analysis refers a system that aims to describe the entire clause, not just the verb and object, but also focuses on identifying the elements of the transitivity system such as process, participant, and circumstance (Thompson & Thompson, 2014).
2. **Process.** this term that is used in this research represents one of elements in transitivity system. Process in transitivity is usually expressed and realized through the verb in the clause (Thompson & Thompson, 2014).
3. **Participants.** Participants are one of the elements in the transitivity system. Participants involved in the process play certain roles depending on the type of process (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).
4. **Circumstances.** Circumstances is the term used as the other element of transitivity system. Circumstances are usually realized by groups of adverbs or prepositional phrases that reflect their 'background' function in the clause (Thompson & Thompson, 2014).
5. **Experiential meaning:** Experiential meaning is meaning related to how language is used to represent world experiences, both the external world (objects, events, traits) and the internal world (thoughts, feelings, beliefs) (Thompson & Thompson, 2014). Experiential meaning focuses on the content or message a person conveys, although the way of representing the world varies depending on the purpose of the communication (Thompson & Thompson, 2014).
6. **Speech.** The term speech used as the object of this research is defined as the unique human ability to convey information through sound. According to

Aristotle in Politics, the ability to speak is given to humans to distinguish between good and bad, just and unjust, and to build life together in the family and state (Simpson, 2000).

7. **Masoud Pezeshkian.** Masoud Pezeshkian is the new president of Iran replacing President Ebrahim Raisi who died in a helicopter crash in May 2024. Masoud Pezeshkian won the election which was held on Friday (5/7/2024). Initially, Masoud Pezeshkian was an Iranian heart surgeon and reformist politician but now he is the president of Iran (Puspapertiwi & Dzulfaroh, 2024).

