

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research topic's introduction. There are several sections that state the main foundation for conducting an investigation into netizens' reactions to Joe Biden's Instagram post about his future plans to become President of the United States. This chapter is divided into some sub-chapters such as background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the research, significance of the research, conceptual framework, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Social media, based on the *Oxford University Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000), is a website and software program for social networks. It is a website or program that lets users to communicate with one another by uploading images, videos and so on to the social network. In other words, social media is an online medium for people to socialize with one another. It allows people to interact with each other without being limited by distance and time.

Another function of social media is business and politics. A campaign may be a frame of one-way communication carried out by someone who has the authority to convey something in front of many people with a specific purpose. The term campaign is widely used in various activities, such as commercial marketing campaigns, presidential campaigns, and social media event promotions. When the spread of the Covid-19 virus is still high, campaigning through virtual media is the best step to stop the Covid-19 surge. Many candidates who participated in the political election posted speeches and other activities on social media (such as Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook) or write some information about their activities on the web page.

Joe Biden is frequently shared his speeches and activities in presenting himself as one of the candidates of United States Presidential Elections 2020, and his post

received a lot of responses from his followers, who are known as netizens. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000), netizen is a term for someone who frequently uses the internet. Instagram is part of the internet, so people who use it are referred to as netizens. As the newly elected president, Joe Biden's Instagram account is flooded with various kinds of comments from netizens. Everyone must have their reactions and comments on this thing, especially the president's post. By commenting on Joe Biden's post, all citizens of the United States expressed their excitement and feelings. Netizen comments can also indicate whether or not the candidate is accepted by society. All of those comments were used as a research data sources.

In the comment column of the Joe Biden's post, netizens expressed thanking, congratulating, wishing, and attitude. In linguistics, the way the netizens expressed such expressions to something can be seen in pragmatics. Pragmatics is the study of aspects of language use that are crucial to comprehend language as a system and to grasps meaning in particular (Levinson, 1983). One of the important points of pragmatics is speech act. A speech act is one of the pragmatic elements that involve the speaker, listener, or reader and the content of the discussion (Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, 1969). A speech act is an action performed by the speaker while the speaker is uttering a sentence. In a conversation, the speaker must hope that the listener understands what the speaker is saying. The speaker can convey physical action through speech acts by using words and phrases. For example, when someone is talking to the other person, "Can you close the door?" What the speaker wants is for the other person to close the door. The act of closing the door is called physical action, or Austin (1962) named it a perlocutionary.

Austin (1962) formulated three classifications of speech acts. Those are the locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. A locutionary act is an actual utterance made by the speaker and containing something as it is. An illocutionary act is the utterance made by the speaker and it has an implicit meaning (the speaker's

reason for saying something and the speaker's intention to do something). A perlocutionary act is the effect of the illocutionary act (feeling, thought, or action).

Searle (1969) continued Austin's (1962) classification. Searle (1969) criticized it and added a classification for the illocutionary act. Searle (1969) classified types of the illocutionary act into five: representatives, directives, commissives, declarative, and expressive. Representative is a speech act that commits the speaker to the truth of what the speaker said. Directive is a speech act in which the speaker attempts to persuade someone to do something. Commissive is a kind of speech act in which the speaker commits to future action. In other words, once the speaker has performed a commissive speech act, the speaker is obligated to act in the future based on the purpose and intent of the previous utterance. Declarative is a kind of speech act in which the speaker intends to create new things that have an immediate impact on the institutional state of affairs. Expressive is a kind of speech act that expresses the speaker's emotions and psychological attitude toward a situation (Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, 1969).

The research object has already been described; next is the topic. Because the research object is netizen's responses and feeling in commenting on social media, a suitable topic for this research is speech acts, particularly expressive speech acts. Using pragmatics, especially expressive speech acts, all comments from netizens can be thoroughly analyzed. The writer chose the expressive speech act as a topic of the research because the expressive speech act is a kind of speech act in which express how the speaker's feels. Expressive speech act has a function to express, to utter, or to convey the speaker's psychological state to a statement of the state predicted by the illocutionary, such as thanking, congratulating, apologizing, blaming, praising, condoling, and so on (Sigit Kurniawan, 2018).

Searle categorized the expressive speech act by writing that the kinds of expressive speech acts include thanking, congratulating, apologizing, condoling,

deploring, and welcoming (Searle, A Classification of Illocutionary Acts, 1976). Searle (1976) also stated that some verbs mark an expressive speech act point such as 'lament', 'criticize', 'accuse', and 'warn'. Then, Clark added Searle's (1976) expressive speech act categorizations with the expressive speech act of greeting. Clark (1996) classified the kinds of expressive speech acts as thanking, apologizing, congratulating, and greeting. Yule also stated about the categorization of expressive speech act. According to Yule (1996), expressive speech act is that are used to express or state a psychological attitude of the speakers, such as joy, sorrow, and like/dislike.

This research aims to use expressive speech act theory to observe netizens' reactions to the posting of Joe Biden's account by using Searle's expressive speech act theory. As a psychological meaning related to the speaker's feelings and expressions, it is related to the way people interact with each other. This can be achieved in the social phenomenon represented by this research, which illustrates how people react to Joe Biden's Instagram account. In the comments of Joe Biden's post, the writer found the kind of expressive speech act, then identify and describe the purposes of expressive speech acts in each comment found on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account. The writer follows the public reaction in Joe Biden's Instagram account to analyze the number of comments made by netizens in the social media crowd. Because netizens frequently comment based on their feelings, netizens' comments are frequently related to the success or failure of the party for the people.

This research referred to several published research on the subject (the topic of the research) and the object of the research. The previous studies serve as a reference for relevant studies. It also shows that the research has never been conducted, and the writer has no plagiarism from some of the previous studies.

The first previous reading material comes from the thesis of Andi Herman (2020), which examined the illocutionary act with the title *Illocutionary Acts in Trump's Speech of 2020 American President General Election Campaign in Toledo Ohio*. This research was used as a guide for the writer's research because it has the

same topic as the writer's research, which is an expressive speech act. This research also employed Searle's theory and a qualitative method, which means that the data is reduced by describing the phases of data selection, information arrangement, and data conclusion. By using Searle's theory, this research found conclusion that there are four types of illocutionary acts and representative is the most commonly used illocutionary act in Trump's speech during the 2020 United States presidential election campaign. The difference between this research and the writer's research is that this research focused on an illocutionary act which is more general than an expressive speech act.

The second material read by the writer was written by Laili Qurbatul Maula. The thesis was published in 2019 entitled *Speech Acts Study on Twitter Comments of The United Nations Speech Video about Youth and Self-Acceptance Delivered by RM (Kim Namjoon) of BTS (Beyond the Scene)*. The writer chose this research as a guide for the writer's research because it makes netizen comments on social media, which is a speech act. This research used the same method as the writer's research, which is a qualitative method. This research has the same topic and method as the writer's research. The only difference is the social media platforms that both of them used. The data for this research came from Twitter comments on a video of Kim Namjoon of BTS giving a speech about youth and self-acceptance at the United Nations, while the writer took the data from the Instagram platform, specifically from netizen comments on Joe Biden's Instagram account.

The last previous study supporting this research was written by Reni Murniati. The thesis was published in 2016 with the *Directive Speech Act in Mark Twain's The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. This research can support the writer's research because it examines the speech act as well, but in this case, it analyzed directive speech acts. This research employed the same method and theory as the writer's, namely the qualitative method and Searle's theory. The object of the research distinguishes this research from the writer's research. This research used a novel as the object of the research.

Each of the previous studies mentioned above has similarities and differences with the writer's research. Mostly, the writer chose the previous study which analyzed using the same topic, which is a speech act. This is meant to point the writer in the right direction so that the writer can analyze effectively.

This research builds on the previous studies by including a fresh object. One of the previous studies used the same object as the writer, which are netizens' comments. The writer used netizen's comments on Joe Biden's Instagram account as the object of the research, which makes this research unique and gives it a new feel. This is about the recent American presidential election in 2020, which featured Joe Biden and Donald Trump. As someone who served as vice president and before becoming president in 2020, Joe Biden's Instagram account is certainly full of public responses to him and his party. Those comments used several speech acts. This research aimed to find out the kinds of expressive speech acts that often appear in Joe Biden's comments published on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2020-20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 that is from the campaigning period for the presidential candidates of the United States to the term of the inauguration day of Joe Biden, and identify the purposes for their use of these expressive speech acts on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account. The writer used expressive speech acts to analyze public comments on Joe Biden's Instagram account.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Presidential election in 2020 is the most eagerly awaited event for the citizens of the United States. One way to find out the profile of a presidential candidate is to check their social media. It made Joe Biden's Instagram account is filled with netizen comments. Some of them have implied meanings. By using a speech act, this research aims to identify the expressive speech acts that often appear in Joe Biden's comments published on September 13, 2020, to January 20, 2021, and to describe the reasons for their use of these expressive speech acts. The writer used expressive speech acts to

analyze public comments on Joe Biden's Instagram account. It is divided into the following two research questions:

1. What types of expressive speech acts found on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account?
2. What are the purposes of the expressive speech act found on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account?

### **1.3 Purpose of the Research**

According to the research questions, it is formulated as the following two research purposes:

1. To find out the types of expressive speech act found on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account.
2. To identify the purposes of expressive speech act found on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account.

### **1.4 Significance of the Research**

Significance of the research is the measurement of how significant research is linked to the two parameters of significance dealt into theoretical significance and practical significance below:

1. Theoretical significance, research results can enrich the comprehension and understanding of pragmatics, especially expressive speech acts. The research can be used as a reference for similar research in the future, guided by Searle's theory, to learn and analyze discourse through expressive speech acts.
2. Practical significance, research result can be used by anyone who teaches English formally (elementary school, junior high school, high school), informally (courses), and non-formally (any form other than the formally and informally) about how expressive speech acts can analyze the pattern of

people's feelings through the classification of speech acts, especially in the Instagram comment column. The research is an assessment of the public's ability to react to an ongoing phenomenon, in this case, a comment on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account.

### **1.5 Conceptual Framework**

This research aims to identify the kinds and purposes of expressive speech act in each of the comments found in Joe Biden's Instagram comments column that published on September 13, 2020, to January 20, 2021, that is from the campaigning period for the presidential candidates of the United States to the term of the inauguration day of Joe Biden. The research methods and techniques used in this research are explained in detail in the next chapter.

This research used expressive speech act, which is a part of speech act theory. The purpose of this research is to illustrate the expressive speech acts contained in Joe Biden's comments published on September 13, 2020, to January 20, 2021, and identify the purposes for their use of these expressive speech acts on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account.

The writer employed several theories to help carry out this research to analyze it. Searle's theory of speech acts is used by the writer. An expressive speech act is the main topic of this research because it discusses the speaker's perception. Searle (1979) pointed out that the expressive speech act demonstrates sincerity in relation to a situation. According to Searle (1976), as cited by Siregar (2018), expressive speech acts could be divided into thanking, apologizing, congratulating, greeting, wishing, and attitude. In accordance with Searle's notion of expressive speech acts, the research's conceptual framework is as follows:



### Conceptual Framework

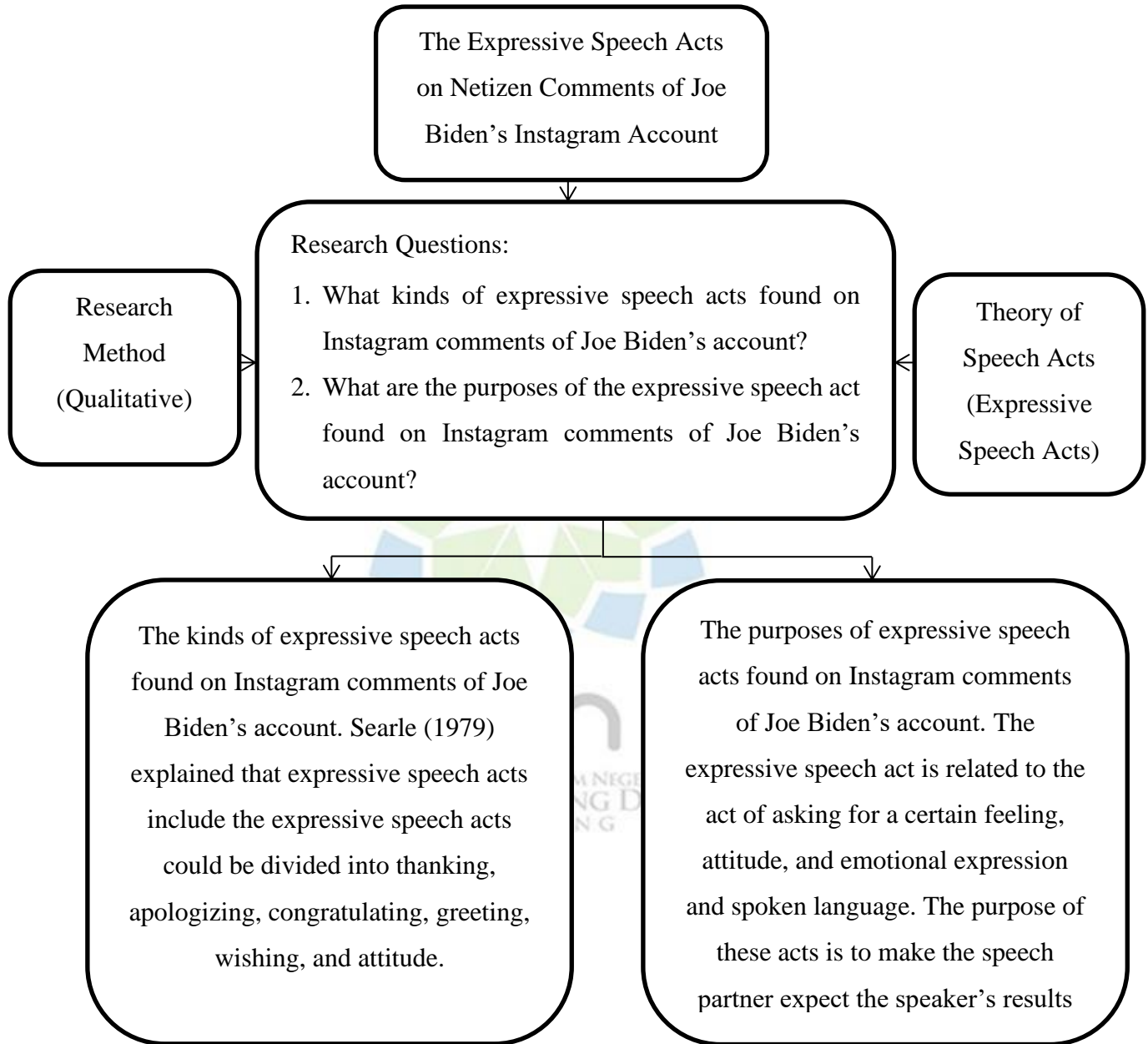


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

### **1.5.1 Pragmatics**

According to Searle (1980), pragmatics gives the impression that something very specific and technical is being discussed, when in fact it frequently has no clear meaning. The study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they occur is known as pragmatics. Linguistic pragmatics is related to the meaning of utterances defined by their function. It can be concluded that pragmatics not only studies language in terms of literal meaning, but also studies the meaning of language in relation to all factors that support the occurrence of language communication.

#### **1.5.1.1 Speech Acts**

A speech act is one of the pragmatic elements that involve the author of the speaker, listener, or reader and the content of the discussion. When an utterance is uttered, the speech act or acts that are performed are a function of the sentence's meaning in general (Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, 1969).

Searle (1980) pointed out in the book *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics* states that the speech act theory assumes that the sentences or other expressions are not the smallest unit of human communication, but the smallest unit of human communication is the performance of specific acts such as making claims, asking inquires, giving instructions, describing, explaining, apologizing, thanking, congratulating, and so on.

Austin (1962) categorized three kinds of speech acts. There are three of them: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. A locutionary act is an actual utterance made by the speaker that contains something as it is. An illocutionary act is a speaker's utterance that has an implicit meaning (the speaker's reason for saying

something and the speaker's intention to the listener to do something). The illocutionary effect (feeling, though, or action) is a perlocutionary act.

#### **1.5.1.1.1 Expressive Speech Act**

The expressive speech act is the main object of this research. Searle (1979) pointed out that the expressive speech act demonstrates sincerity in relation to a situation.

Searle categorized the expression speech act by writing that the kinds of expressive speech acts include thanking, congratulating, apologizing, condoling, deploring, and welcoming (Searle, *A Classification of Illocutionary Acts*, 1976). Searle (1976) also stated that some verbs mark an expressive speech act point such as 'lament', 'criticize', 'accuse', and 'warn'. Then, Clark added Searle's (1976) expressive speech act categorizations with the expressive speech act of greeting. Clark (1996) classified the kinds of expressive speech acts as thanking, apologizing, congratulating, and greeting. Yule too, stated about the categorization of expressive speech act. According to Yule (1996), expressive speech act is that are used to express or state a psychological attitude of the speakers, such as joy, sorrow, and like/dislike.

#### **1.5.2 Instagram**

Daniel Miller (2016) unanimously agreed that Instagram is the most widely used social media platform for connecting people all over the world. Instagram has some features where users can take, edit photos or videos and post them to the feed on Instagram and share them with other social networks. The shared photo or video eventually appeared in the feeds of your followers' other users. People can follow family, friends, and even strangers who can appreciate their images, and then if users follow each other, people can make new friends.

### **1.5.3 Comments**

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2000), a comment is what you say or write that expresses an opinion about or explains someone or something.

### **1.6 Organization of Writing**

This research's writing organization is divided into five chapters. Sub-chapters are included in each chapter.

#### **Chapter I Introduction**

This chapter is broken down into six sub-chapters: background of the research, statement of the problem, purpose of the research, significance of the research, conceptual framework, previous study, definition of key terms, and organization of writing.

#### **Chapter II Theoretical Review**

This chapter is divided from the theoretical foundation which basic of this research such as pragmatics, speech acts, classifications of illocutionary acts, and the classifications of expressive speech acts.

#### **Chapter III Research Method**

This chapter discussed the methodology of research such as research design, source of data, sample of data, technique of collecting data, and technique of analyzing data.

#### **Chapter IV Finding and Discussion**

This chapter explains how the writer analyzes the type and the purpose of expressive speech act found on Instagram comments of Joe Biden's account.

## **Chapter V Conclusion and Suggestion**

The chapter includes the writer's research conclusion and suggestions for how the research should be used. This chapter provides an answer to the research question. In this final chapter, the writer expressed the view on the main point of the research explanation.

