



SPEECH FUNCTION OF SELECTED TOPICS IN THE FIRST 2020 AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE.

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ABSTRAK: Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menentukan, mendeskripsikan, dan menemukan tipe-tipe fungsi bahasa berdasarkan teori Halliday yang digunakan oleh para pembicara, khususnya pedebat dan moderatornya dalam debat presiden Amerika pertama 2020. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dan kuantitatif, dan metode observasi. Data berupa ujaran-ujaran dengan memilih sampel data dari tiga topik perdebatan yang diseleksi. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa para kandidat dan moderator menggunakan seluruh tipe fungsi bahasa yaitu inisial dan responsnya yang dihitung menggunakan rumus oleh Sudijono. Tipe inisial fungsi bahasa yang paling sering digunakan dalam debat ini adalah ujaran *pernyataan*, dan responsnya adalah ujaran *pembantahan*. Dalam debat fungsi pernyataan dan bantahan dipakai sebagai alat untuk mempertahankan argument.

Kata Kunci: *linguistik sistemik fungsional, fungsi bahasa, debat.*

ABSTRACT: The purposes of this research were to determine, describe, and find out the types of speech functions based on Halliday theory which is used by speakers, especially the candidates and the moderator in the first 2020 American presidential debate. This research used qualitative and quantitative descriptive research, and video observation method. Data were taken from the utterances produced by chosen sample data from three topics selected of the debate. The result shows that the candidates and the moderator use all types of speech function; initial and response, which is counted using the formula by Sudijono. The most frequent type of initial speech function is *statement*, and the response is *contradiction*. In a debate, the function of statement and contradiction is used to defend the argument.

Key Words: *systemic functional linguistic, speech function, debate*

INTRODUCTION

Language is an intermediary for humans to interact and communicate. By communicating, they can mutually express their ideas and feelings. Language plays an important role to have a communication and its function is used to connect people in the world in speech communities to convey messages or ideas. Effective communication should be organized the message which is conveyed in any conversation. Through conversation we establish relationships with others, achieve a measure of cooperation (or fail to do so), keep channels open for further relationships, and soon (Wardhaugh 2006:284). But not only that, in a conversation or dialogue, there will be two contradictory ideas that cause debate between the two parties.

Debate is an art of speech to convey a critical idea. Individuals may use the debate to reach a decision in their minds; alternatively, individuals or groups may use it to bring others around to their way of thinking (Freeley & Steinberg, 2009:6). A debate exists as public dialogue, where each debater will



stand as the opposition and the government party to give and demand something, based on the topic of talk. The language function of utterance in a dialogue or conversation determines the meaning of direct speech produced by the speaker.

Speech function is any utterance of someone's act of talking with the various speech kinds containing function into the language itself. The subject of speech function study is included in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory. It is a theory of language that involves language into the structure and meaning functionally. Language can be studied in terms of properties of performances and products (in text), coordination and interaction of collections of speakers from small groups to entire societies (in groups), operations and mechanisms that might be responsible for the capabilities and actions of the individual speakers observed (in heads) and situations, generally social, in which language is occurring (in contexts) (Barlett and O'Grady 2017:11). The study of language in this case is the study of the text.

Halliday is a linguist who developed the Systemic Functional Linguistics and also known as the Systemic Functional Grammar (SFL) theory. The term 'system' is set to 'choice' of language and act. It means that language is a choice when the speaker and listener do the interaction. The choice is a common word borrowed to function technical terms in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The meaning is created, and it must be involved in semiotic (sign study). Language is as 'social-semiotic' (Mehawesh, 2014:258). Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is an approach of linguistics that considered the language in meaning and function related to the social context. Systemic Functional Linguistics provides a social perspective to language and regards as a social semiotic resource (Liu, 2014:1238). In 1960, Halliday and his followers started their work at this study. Halliday's major contribution to linguistics is in his development of systemic functional grammar which pays attention to the senses of the language of text, system, and element of linguistics structure. The term systemic functional grammar is now well known as the wide perspective of language. The focus of both Systemic Functional Linguistics and systemic functional grammar approach are clauses and sentences of the text.

Language function exists to influence the listener about the purpose the speaker wants to convey. Speech function is included in the interpersonal metafunction in Systemic Functional because it exists in conversation or dialogue that involves the speaker and the listener collaborating in personal conversation. Halliday developed the three models of language function found in the speech theory of metafunction namely; ideational,

interpersonal, and textual meaning. The three models of metafunction are usually found in every text of language or discourse. Ideational labels to meaning in language as the experiential function and logical function, Interpersonal function in the language is used as social action to give or offer information or goods, to direct the behavior of others, and to enact attitudes, evaluations, feelings, and judgments, while the natural language has a discourse function or the term of textual function (Barlett & O'Grady, 2017:35).

As interpersonal of metafunction, speech has roles in every interaction. It reaches the speech in clause exchange in every conversation. The most fundamental types of speech role which lie behind all the more specific types that may we eventually be able to recognize are just two; giving and demanding (Halliday, 1994:68). The distinction of giving and demanding is as the basic of speech that carries (1) goods and services and (2) information in exchange for a commodity. 'Giving or demanding' can be either a semiotic commodity (labeled as information) or a non-semiotic commodity (labeled as goods & services) (Barlett & O'Grady, 2017:116).

Here occurs an exchange role of speech functions to initial and response. Halliday defines the four primary speech functions as the initials into *offer*, *command*, *statement*, and *question*. The exchange role of the four primaries of speech functions runs as the initiation in role and commodity exchange which conducts the possible response. There are only two possible responses in positive or negative. A positive



response runs as expected responses or supporting responses to the initiation such as; *acceptance*, *undertaking*, *acknowledgment*, and *answer*. While the other one, negative is a discretionary alternative or confronting responses such as; *rejection*, *refusal contradiction*, and *disclaimer* (Halliday, 1994:69). The speaker is not only doing something himself, but he is also requiring something of the listener (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2014:135). The two different responses are results of the exchange role of ideas, where each utterance issued will get a different response depending on the context. In example, spk: *Give me a teapot!* (Initial of speech function), listnr: *All right I will/No, I won't.* (response). The example shows the function of speech as the *command* to suggest other people do what the speaker said. The response of *all right, I will* tell the *undertaking* response of the speaker's *command* while the utterance *no, I won't* is to refuse (refusal) the speaker.

A debate is like any discussion or dialogue which presents arguments against one another. Systemic Functional Linguistic theory is an approach closer to this research where the analysis will determine the function of language in the exchange of speech between the speakers. It means that each debater will contradict in judgment, giving or demanding services or some information. The interesting analysis uses the theory of Halliday is to look out the types of speech function with the possible response as the moves of speech function. In the first 2020 Presidential Debate between Trump and Biden, the use of speech function may be different from the simple dialogue used in daily conversation. In a formal discussion in a debate situation like this, the candidates including the moderator may produce the utterances in a formal form of speech. That could be the reason why the research.

concentrated to analyze types of speech function used by the two candidates and the moderator, criticizing if the speech used is found in the daily conversation. The research aims was not just to determine and describe the types of speech function and to find the most frequent type used but also concerned the meaning of context to make certain about the function itself, which could affect the debate.

METHODS

Two primary methods have been devised to address research inquiries: descriptive qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research is used to explore, robustly investigate and learn about a social phenomenon, to unpack the meanings people ascribe to activities, situations, events, or artifacts, or to build a depth of understanding about some dimension of social life (Leavy, 2017:9). Quantitative research on the other hand is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. Data were derived from the first 2020 American Presidential Debate's video live on the C-SPAN YouTube channel with the title "*The First 2020 Presidential Debate between Donald J.Trump and Joe Biden.*" This research concerned the three topics chosen from the six issues were discussed; Covid-19, economics, and race and violence in America. The data collection methods used in this research were documentary analysis and observation, with several steps; watching and observing the video, transcribing the utterances, coding data, and identifying the utterances. Analysis of data ran by classifying data, counting data used a simple quantitative formula (Sudijono, 2011:43), and drawing the conclusion.

DISCUSSION

Of the total data of 490 utterances that containing the initial and response of speech function produced by Trump (T), Biden (B), and Wallace (W), 318 utterances are the initial of speech function and 172 utterances are the responses. The result is showed in the following table:

Table 1. Summary Types of Speech Function and Responses, Frequency, and Percentage

Spk.	Speech Function	Total
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	Initial							Response					
	O	C	S	Q	Acc	Rej	Under	Ref	Ack	Contra	A	Disc	
W	15	31	43	27	3	1	0	6	7	6	1	1	141
T	3	20	67	24	3	3	2	2	16	32	8	6	186
B	1	14	58	15	4	3	1	4	8	29	15	11	163
Total <i>f</i>	19	65	168	66	10	7	3	12	31	67	24	18	490
(%)	3,88	13,27	34,29	3,47	2,04	1,43	0,61	2,44	6,33	13,67	4,90	3,67	100

In this case, the data which is presented in the table shows that the speakers in the debate created the speech function. The dominant speech function found that *statement* as the most utterances used of speech function initiation, on the other hand, *contradiction* is as the most speech response used in the debate. So that, in this case, the debate has been running properly where the debaters have the right to give arguments, defend their arguments, and reject or refute the argument of their opponent. Trump produces many *statements* as the dominant initial speech function and also produces *contradiction* utterances as the dominant response after analyzing the three subjects chosen. They have contributed to giving statements and contradictions speeches to defend their ideas and information so that the audience could appreciate and vote for them during the debate performance.

Types of Speech Function of Selected Topics in the First 2020 American Presidential Debate Offer

Offer is a type of speech function that gives service to one another. The concern of language structure here is the use of modal verbs depending on the situation and context to deliver the speech purpose. In this debate, the speaker only produced a little utterance containing offer by using modal verbs such as *can*, *will*, *want*, *could*, and *would*.

SF Spk (turn) Utterance O Wallace (150)

Will you tell us how much you paid in Federal Income Taxes in 2016 and 2017?

[r] A Trump (151) *million of dollars..*

This is a kind of directive asking for the answer from the speaker to the hearer. The use of modal verb *will* here has a function as an utterance marker with a tone of asking the hearer to do something which is offered. In this case, Wallace's utterance remarks a subtle attempt to find out the truth about how much Trump paid the taxes for two consecutive years as evidence of facts which is previously presented by the moderator. The question gave by the moderator is used as a trap to give pressure to Trump dealing with the economic subject, where the moderator has been got the information about the taxes paid by Trump.

Command

The command is a type of basic speech in talking to ask someone to do something. The commodity of this type is to demand goods and services to someone to do with an imperative mood. In this debate, the speaker only produces a few commands intending to control the hearer.

SF Spk. (turn) Utterance

[i] C Biden (140) **Show us your tax return!**

Ref. Trump (141) *I paid \$38 million one year, I paid \$27 million one year.*

C Biden (142) **Show us your tax returns** [interrupt]

Under. Trump (143) *You'll see it as soon as it finished, you'll see it.*



In the case above, it is a pure command speech type. A command speech pattern should be complete with verb + object. *Show us your tax returns* is a type of a common and formal command that we usually use to allow somebody else to do something. In the realization, this is a pure imperative mood of speech. In this case, the speaker would like the hearer, Trump, to give his proof of the tax bill he paid to the audience. When we look out the context of talk in the debate, this utterance has function as a provocation word.

Statement

Statement is any utterance of speech that contains information. It is a kind of speech function that uses to give some information from the speaker to the hearer. A statement is always uttered in any communication to state any idea or opinion to the hearer which includes a fact or evidence of that information.

SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
S	Biden	(122)	<i>The difference is millionaires and billionaires like him in the middle of the Covid crisis have done very well, another billionaires have raised-</i>
C	Trump	(123)	<i>that's wrong</i> [interrupt]

In this case, the statement clause of Biden came after the moderator gave a question about the difference between V-shape recovery and K-shape recovery dealing with the economic recovery in America. The function of the statement sample above is to give the hearer or audience some ideas about the terms of that. In any discussion, we also enlighten things to say with the fact to make the hearer believe and understand well the purpose of our statement. When we state any statement, sometimes it goes easily without thinking about the impact or what response comes from the next speaker or the hearer.

Question

Conversation or dialogue is usually started with a question in the interaction. A question may be used to begin the talk. It is used to ask someone for something or means to demand some information needed. However, sometimes question sentences also do not require an answer because it is only to ensure something.

SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
Q	Wallace	(119)	<i>...President Trump you say we are in a V-shaped recovery. Vice President Biden, you say it's more of a K-shape. What difference does that mean to the American people in terms of the economy?</i>
Disc.	Trump	(120)	<i>so, we built the great economy in history, we closed it down because of the China plague...</i>

In this case, the moderator built the information to give the question to both debaters Trump and Biden. The use of *what* is a determiner of the question tag which functioned to ask for particular information of something or an idea, to know about something such as the definition of things. In the case above, the speaker gives a question to both debaters to make them give their opinion about the difference of economic recovery in V-shaped and K-shaped. The two different ideas of both candidates are the way how they will build the economic situation in America.

The Response of Speech Function

Acknowledgement

Acknowledgment is a response to a statement in speech function. That response is a positive response which is the hearer as the receiver of the information gave an expected response of the initial statement to the first speaker.



SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
S	Wallace (45)		<i>she said that public health experts quote “will be muzzled, will be suppressed”</i>
Ack.	Biden (46)		<i>Yes. That’s what he’s going to try to do...</i>

It is an acknowledgment response of Biden to agree with what has been said by Wallace. Biden gave the supporting response to Wallace about what has been said by his running mate Senator Harris. In this case, the acknowledgment response is shown through the response “yes” to point out that the speaker is acknowledged about the quote. Biden was directly saying the agreement statement response to support the statement by the first speaker. This is a common response that we usually found in daily conversations.

Contradiction

Contradiction is a negative response to a statement. The response may consist of the opposite or something saying is not true. In this debate, there are so many utterances including to contradiction response of the statement. As we know, in a debate the term contradiction stands as the opposition team. Contradiction is used to make such a vision in a discussion.

SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
S	Biden (87)		<i>Well maks, masks make a big difference. His own head of the CDC said if we just wore masks between now- ..if they’re-</i>
Ack.	Trump (88)		<i>and they have also said the opposite. They’ve also said..</i>
Contra.	Biden (89)		<i>No serious person has said the opposite. No serious person.</i>
	Wallace (90)		<i>okay, I want to ask you...</i>
S	Trump (91)		<i>Dr.Fauci..Dr.Fauci said the opposite</i>
Contra.	Biden (92)		<i>he did not say the opposite..</i>

This part of the talk is included in the statement-contradiction exchange of speech function. Contradiction marker is very clearly shown at statements of negative pitch clauses matched by Biden. In this case, the contradiction statement is done by Biden with “no serious person..and he did not say the opposite” to block his opponent’s statement of acknowledgment. Biden gave a statement about the use of mask, the acknowledgment response of Trump provoked a contradiction between the two debaters. Contradiction responses here were used to be a manifestation of protection to the side party of CDC (Central of Diseases Control) where Trump was trying to accuse them about the prediction of using masks to prevent the spreading of corona virus in America.

Answer

The answer is a type of response for the initial speech function that has function as the positive response of the question. In this debate, the function of answer plays an important role for both debaters to have an assessment or rating and for a debate can run as expected of the two pro-contra parties. When the moderator gives them any question dealing with the issue, they have to answer if they want to share their idea, facts content, and solve the problem by answering the question.

SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
Q	Wallace (101)		<i>all right, in case, why you holding the big rallies? Why you not? You go first, sir.</i>
A	Trump (102)		<i>because people want to hear what I have to say. I mean I’m doing my job as President and I’ll have 25, 35000 people show up at airports..</i>
Q	Wallace (103)		<i>are you not worried about the disease issues, sir? –interrupt..</i>



A Trump (104) *well so far we have had no problem whatsoever, it is outside, that's a big difference according to the experts..*

It can be seen that in this pair the two speakers were done the process of demanding something of someone. In this case, the moderator Wallace would demand the reason about the two candidates done with the campaign. To know the reason, the speaker then built the question with a question tag of *why* to imagine that the hearer would answer as it expected. The reason marker of answer is shown clearly in the first part of the question with the answer given by Trump started with *because* as the suitable part of this question-answer part. In many cases, to answer the question problem which starts with *why* people may choose conjunction *because* as the helping word for reason that of something. Moreover, the question tag with the yes/no response is going to the question with auxiliary verb question, and we do the response in many conversations to demand some important information from the opposite speaker.

Disclaimer

Disclaimer is a type of response that is revealed as a negative response to the question. When the speaker gives any question then the hearer would not give any comment about the problem. In this debate, the two debaters and the moderator have done the discussion with many questions and more questions are disclaimed.

	SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
Q	Trump	(217)		<i>...Why is it just out of curiosity, the mayor of Moscow's wife gave your son three and a half-million dollars?</i>
Disc.	Biden	(218)		<i>That is not true.</i> [interrupt]
Q	Trump	(219)		<i>what did he do to deserve it? What did he do with...</i>
Disc.	Biden	(220)		<i>None of that is true.</i>

In this case, the question which begin with *why...* of question tag do not get the response such as the reason or the purpose of the question. Biden was clear done disclaimed that what is talking about his son *was not true*. This kind of utterance is used to disagree with something. In the second pair of exchanges, the disclaimer response of Biden *none of that is true* is used to affirm the question as if it accused his son. The speaker could give this expression of an utterance like this is expected to not agree with the question given by, so the question function does not have the response as the answer should be conveyed.

Acceptance

Acceptance is a type of supporting response for an offer of speech function. It is a positive response that is given to receive something. Acceptance is the possible response or the expecting response of offer. The speaker that offers something wants the hearer to agree. The expected response of acceptance becomes a part of it when the two debaters or maybe the moderator agree to the offering utterance conveyed.

	SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
O	Wallace	(110)		<i>all right, do you want to just quickly finish up? Because I want to move on to our next..</i>
[r]	Acc.	Biden	(111)	<i>yes I would.</i>

In this pair of speech function, the speaker was given the offering question to the hearer and the expected response of acceptance is complete. Wallace offered the chance to Biden to complete his statement and the possible response was given by Biden *yes, I would* was clear agreeing to take the chance from Wallace. In daily conversation, we also decide to accept an offer from someone. The form of expression that states an offer and the positive response to accept something is usually the use of modal verbs (as in the case above, *want – would*) in polite request and response.



Rejection

Rejection is a typical discretionary alternative to respond to an offering. It has a negative label that may affect or make people felt if they are not wanted, valued, or accepted. After identifying this debate, it can be seen that the rejection expression used by the debaters and moderator was not well played. It means that data found only a bit of utterance containing this type of response.

	SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
[i]	O	Wallace	(70)	<i>all right..I want to move onto another subject...</i>
[r]	Rej.	Biden	(71)	<i>I got to respond to that.</i>
[i]	O	Wallace	(72)	<i>I want to move...</i>
[r]	Rej.	Trump	(73)	<i>...but those states...</i>
O	Wallace	(74)		<i>Gentlemen, I want to move on to another subject.</i>
Rej.	Trump	(75)		<i>Those states are not doing well that is shut down right now.. [interrupt]</i>
	Biden	(76)		<i>I got to respond to that.</i>

It can be seen that the speaker offer to change the topic of debate or meant to continue the next subject but the listener, Biden and Trump did not well to respond him. Indirectly, the statement which was given by Trump is a rejection, where he wanted to finish up his statement. In this case, Wallace came as the mediator to set the time of debate with his offer speech function. To reject someone's offer, the listener sometimes does not have to make give a contrary statement such as saying *no* or *I would not* bring a new idea to put the speaker down with his offer could be the way to reject someone's idea. There are many parts of debate which found that rejection utterances produced by the speakers do not show the characteristic of *no response*, but the speakers make a response by giving the statement to show that they would not be taking the offer.

Undertaking

An undertaking is a type of supporting response of command speech function. Command itself is identic with an imperative mood of clauses, here the speaker demand something from the listener. In this debate, the data found that the role of undertaking produced is prominent. It means that the speakers almost do not use the response to undertake of command.

	SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
[i] C	Biden	(142)		<i>show us your tax returns!</i>
Under.	Trump	(143)		<i>you'll see it as soon as it finished, you'll see it.</i>

The possible response to undertaking given by Trump above is a function to demand the command by his opponent. Biden would like to know and see the proof of taxes that have been paid by Trump. Dealing with the subject of the economy, Biden was expecting that Trump was lying about the tax that he paid when the moderator asked about how much he paid to the Federal Income Taxes in 2016 and 2017. Trump then undertook the command by giving a promise to Biden that he could be soon seeing the reported tax. The pola of the undertaking response is such a kind of statement pola, but it has function meaning to agree with the command. In many ways, to respond the command, the listener does not should respond by speech language, sometimes body language can be used as the undertaking response.

Refusal

Refusal is a type of discretionary alternative response to command initiation of speech function. The refusal has the function to push aside something away or in other words, a refusal is a form of response to disobedience to the command or an order expression.

	SF	Spk.	(turn)	Utterance
[i] C	Trump	(270)		<i>Hey, let me just tell you, Joe!</i>



Ref. Biden (271) *No, no Mr.President...
Mr.President.*

It showed that the exchange of speech function which occurred between Trump and Biden in command-refusal. Trump was trying to command his opponent to listen to him for he would to say something, he would like to give his arguments but Biden was directly refusal his command by saying *No!*. This refusal response sample is a type of normal response in every conversation. By blocking someone's command with this expression, the speaker refuses to do something from the previous speaker. In this case, Biden did not want to give the chance for Trump to speak up more. So, he blocked his opponent speeches by refuting his command.

CONCLUSION

It can be summarized that all the types of speech function are found in The First 2020 American Presidential Debate between Donald J.Trump and Joe Biden. In the debate statement must play a good role for giving some arguments, claim, provided facts and information as done by the candidates or the moderator. Moreover, contradiction is a good pair for the initial speech function that must be standing beside the statement as the gun used by each debater to oppose or refute the information he received. It concludes that first, a word can function for different meanings in each utterance depending on the context of the sentence where that word is used. Second, the meaning of the context of the speech served is depending on the situation and topic of speaking. The third, speech function does not deal with the grammatical pattern but give the priority to the role of speech itself which has a function in what purpose or context of speaking.

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