

Gricean Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature in Prabowo Subianto's United Nations General Assembly Speech : a Pragmatic Analisis of Ideological Positioning

Frisky Muharram^{#1}, Sulistyarningsih^{#2}

[#]Universitas PGRI Delta Sidoarjo
Jl. Raya Kemiri, Sidoarjo, Indonesia 61234
friskymuharram2001@gmail.com

Abstract — This study examines the realization of Grice's Cooperative Principle and conversational implicatures in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the 2025 United Nations General Assembly, focusing on their role in constructing diplomatic meaning and ideological positioning. Drawing on Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and Levinson's (2022) theory of implicature, the research employed a qualitative descriptive design within a pragmatic discourse analysis framework. The data consisted of ten strategically selected utterances containing significant pragmatic features. The findings reveal that the speaker predominantly observes the maxims of Quality and Relation to establish credibility, relevance, and moral commitment to global issues. Meanwhile, the maxims of Manner and Quantity are strategically flouted to convey implicit criticism, ideological stance, and diplomatic politeness. Two types of implicatures were identified: generalized and particularized. Generalized implicatures reflect universal values such as peace, justice, and humanitarian solidarity, whereas particularized implicatures signal Indonesia's political alignment and long-standing foreign policy orientation. The interplay between cooperative strategies and implicature enhances persuasive communication without direct confrontation. This study demonstrates that pragmatic strategies in diplomatic discourse function not only to construct meaning but also to project national identity and moral authority in contemporary political communication.

Keywords — Cooperative Principle, Conversational Implicature, Diplomatic Discourse, Political Speech, Pragmatics

I. INTRODUCTION

Language plays a crucial role in diplomatic communication, particularly in multilateral forums where political actors must articulate national interests while maintaining international legitimacy. In such contexts, meaning is conveyed not only through explicit statements but also through strategically constructed implicit messages. Pragmatics, as a branch of linguistics, examines how speakers convey intentions within specific contexts to achieve communicative goals (Thomas, 2020). Two central concepts in pragmatics—the Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature introduced by Grice (1975)—provide an essential framework for understanding how meaning is negotiated beyond literal expression. The Cooperative Principle emphasizes that participants in conversation generally adhere to communicative norms to achieve mutual understanding, while implicature explains how additional meaning emerges when these norms are either observed or strategically flouted.

Recent studies indicate that Grice's principles remain highly relevant in analyzing contemporary political and diplomatic discourse (Syafitri et al., 2022). In many political speeches, particularly those delivered in international forums, implicature and inferential strategies play a significant role in shaping audience interpretation, especially when direct statements may provoke political sensitivity (Puri & Baskara, 2023). Consequently, political leaders often employ subtle pragmatic mechanisms to construct ideological positioning, negotiate power relations, and maintain diplomatic politeness. Nevertheless, most previous research has primarily focused on implicature in political debates or national campaign contexts (Barriyah, 2025), while the use of cooperative principles in multilateral diplomatic forums by Southeast Asian leaders has received relatively limited scholarly attention.

One notable example of strategic diplomatic language can be observed in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). As the President of Indonesia, the speech functions not only as a political statement but also as a diplomatic act aimed at projecting national identity, strengthening international cooperation, and reaffirming Indonesia's moral and political position within the global order. In a high-stakes international forum such as the UNGA, communicative effectiveness depends not only on the clarity of the message but also on the speaker's ability to strategically manage implicit meanings through appropriate linguistic choices.

Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on implicature in domestic political discourse, this study examines an Indonesian presidential speech delivered in a global diplomatic forum. The research aims to analyze the realization of Grice's Cooperative Principle, identify the types of conversational implicatures employed in the speech, and explain how these cooperative and implicature strategies contribute to communicative effectiveness and the construction of pragmatic meaning within the address. Thus, this study not only identifies the observance and flouting of conversational maxims but also interprets how these pragmatic strategies construct diplomatic meaning, ideological positioning, and international legitimacy.

The scope of this study is limited to the analysis of pragmatic elements in Prabowo Subianto's UNGA speech using the framework of Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975) and the theory of conversational implicature. The data were obtained from the official transcript and publicly available video recording of the speech to ensure contextual accuracy. Theoretically, this study contributes to expanding the understanding of how conversational implicature and cooperative principles function within international diplomatic discourse. Practically, it also provides an analytical model for examining political and diplomatic speeches and offers insights for public speakers and diplomats in utilizing indirectness and cooperative strategies to convey persuasive messages while maintaining diplomatic norms.

To support the discussion in this study and to establish a comprehensive conceptual framework for the research findings, the researcher employs the following theoretical foundations:

a. **Pragmatics and the Gricean Cooperative Framework**

Pragmatics examines how meaning is interpreted within a communicative context by considering shared knowledge, assumptions, and the situational dynamics of interaction (Thomas, 2020). Within this framework, Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975) explains that effective communication is guided by four conversational maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. In practice, however, speakers may intentionally observe or flout these maxims to generate implicature—implicit meanings that are not directly stated. Therefore, the Cooperative Principle functions not only as a guideline for conversation but also as a pragmatic mechanism through which speakers convey implicit meanings and negotiate ideological positions across various forms of discourse, including political and institutional communication (Syafitri et al., 2022; Puri & Baskara, 2023).

b. **Conversational Implicature in Political Discourse**

Political discourse represents a strategic domain within pragmatic studies because political actors often employ indirect language, ambiguity, and implication to shape public perception and avoid direct confrontation. In this context, conversational implicature allows politicians to convey persuasive or ideological messages without explicitly stating them (Barriyah, 2025). Research indicates that the flouting of conversational maxims in political speeches is frequently used to strengthen rhetorical impact and encourage audiences to actively interpret implied meanings (Khairunisa & Nugroho, 2024). Consequently, apparent violations of cooperative norms do not necessarily weaken communication; instead, they can enhance the effectiveness of messages within political discourse.

c. **Pragmatics in Diplomatic and International Contexts**

Diplomatic discourse operates within a highly formal, multilateral, and politically sensitive communicative environment, such as international forums like the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). In such contexts, pragmatic strategies are employed to balance clarity with strategic ambiguity so that national interests can be articulated without provoking open conflict. Studies show that diplomatic language frequently utilizes cooperative principles and implicature to maintain diplomatic politeness while simultaneously advancing a nation's political interests (Ahmed, 2023). Furthermore, indirect linguistic choices also function to build persuasion, solidarity, and legitimacy in international relations

(Rahmawati & Lestari, 2022), making pragmatics an essential analytical tool for understanding the dynamics of global political communication.

This study is also supported by the following theoretical perspectives:

a. **Pragmatics**

Pragmatics provides the conceptual foundation for analyzing how meaning is negotiated within a particular context. This field examines how an utterance acquires communicative force beyond its literal semantic meaning by considering situational factors, shared knowledge, and the speaker's intentions (Thomas, 2020). In political and diplomatic communication, pragmatic analysis becomes particularly significant because leaders often employ indirect expressions to maintain politeness, preserve authority, and retain strategic flexibility (Khairunisa & Nugroho, 2024).

b. **Grice's Cooperative Principle**

Grice (1975) proposed that conversational interaction is guided by four fundamental maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. Adherence to these maxims promotes clarity and mutual understanding in communication. However, deliberate violations of these maxims may generate conversational implicature, allowing speakers to convey additional meanings indirectly. Contemporary studies demonstrate that Grice's model remains highly relevant in analyzing political and diplomatic communication, where strategic ambiguity often coexists with cooperative intent (Syafitri et al., 2022; Barriyah, 2025).

c. **Conversational Implicature**

Conversational implicature refers to the implied meaning that arises when a speaker appears to violate a conversational maxim. This concept enables audiences to interpret intentions beyond the literal expression of an utterance (Puri & Baskara, 2023). In diplomatic contexts, implicature functions as a strategic communicative tool that allows leaders to simultaneously express ideological positions, moral authority, and political sensitivity (Ahmed, 2023).

d. **Pragmatics in Political and Diplomatic Communication**

Pragmatic strategies in political and diplomatic discourse play an essential role in negotiation, persuasion, and alliance-building. Rahmawati and Lestari (2022) argue that pragmatic analysis reveals how leaders balance national interests with international norms through their linguistic choices. Consequently, cooperative principles and implicature function not only as conversational mechanisms but also as instruments of soft power and international positioning.

II. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design to analyze the pragmatic elements in Prabowo Subianto's speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). A qualitative approach is chosen because the objective of the study is to interpret meaning and understand communicative practices within their natural context (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Through this approach, the research focuses on how Grice's Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature are realized in diplomatic discourse. Rather than emphasizing statistical measurement, the study prioritizes the interpretation of pragmatic functions and contextual meanings that emerge in the speech as a form of diplomatic communication in an international forum.

The research data are derived from the official transcript and video recording of Prabowo Subianto's speech at the UNGA, obtained from verified public sources, including official documentation and international media coverage (ANTARA News, 2025). The dataset includes all utterances delivered in the speech, as it represents Indonesia's formal diplomatic communication within a high-level multilateral forum. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument in the processes of data collection and analysis (Miles et al., 2023). The researcher is responsible for identifying relevant utterances, coding instances of maxim observance and flouting, and interpreting the conversational implicatures that arise. Supporting instruments

include note-taking sheets and analytical coding tables used to classify utterances according to the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, as well as the types of implicatures identified.

The data collection process was conducted through several stages: downloading and transcribing the speech from official sources, verifying the transcript by repeatedly listening to the video recording, and conducting close readings to identify utterances containing observance or flouting of conversational maxims (Miles et al., 2023). Relevant excerpts were then categorized based on the four conversational maxims proposed by Grice (1975). The data analysis employed Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975) and Levinson’s (2022) theory of conversational implicature, following several steps: identifying relevant utterances, interpreting implied meanings, classifying implicatures into generalized and particularized types, and explaining how these pragmatic strategies contribute to the construction of diplomatic meaning. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied triangulation techniques, contextual verification, peer debriefing, and expert consultation to validate the coding process and interpretation of data. These procedures were intended to maintain credibility, confirmability, and transparency so that the analysis remains grounded in textual data and contextual evidence (Nowell et al., 2022).

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Description of the Data

The data for this study were derived from Prabowo Subianto’s speech delivered at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2025, which consists of approximately 1,200 words and was selected because it represents significant communication and diplomatic strategies through language use. The utterances in the speech were carefully transcribed from the official video published on the United Nations’ YouTube channel and official website to ensure data accuracy. The analysis was conducted using Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975), focusing on the observance and flouting of the four conversational maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. Based on an initial review, ten utterances containing potential implicatures were identified. These utterances were then classified according to the cooperative maxims and further analyzed using Levinson’s (2022) classification of conversational implicature, namely generalized implicature and particularized implicature. The ten selected utterances became the primary focus of the analysis, and the results are presented systematically in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Ten Selected Utterances from Prabowo Subianto’s UNGA Speech (2025)

| No | Utterance | Maxim Observed/Flouted | Implicature | Type of Implicature (Levinson, 2022) |
|----|---|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | “Indonesia will always stand with Palestine.” | Maxim of Relation | Expresses Indonesia’s strong moral stance and long-term commitment to justice and humanitarian values. | Particularized |
| 2 | “We must not remain silent in the face of suffering.” | Maxim of Quantity | Suggests that indifference implies moral complicity; global leaders must respond to injustice. | Generalized |
| 3 | “We cannot achieve prosperity while others suffer.” | Maxim of Quality | Implies that genuine development requires justice and global empathy. | Particularized |
| 4 | “The world needs cooperation, not domination.” | Maxim of Manner | Indirectly criticizes hegemonic practices while promoting equality among nations. | Generalized |
| 5 | “Let us unite to create a just and peaceful world.” | Maxim of Relation | Emphasizes solidarity beyond political and national interests. | Generalized |
| 6 | “Indonesia’s democracy is not perfect, but it reflects the spirit of our people.” | Maxim of Quality | Demonstrates humility and sincerity, implying credibility and transparency. | Particularized |

| No | Utterance | Maxim Observed/Flouted | Implicature | Type of Implicature (Levinson, 2022) |
|----|---|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 7 | “We respect all nations striving for independence and dignity.” | Maxim of Relation | Aligns Indonesia’s values with principles of sovereignty and human rights. | Generalized |
| 8 | “Our responsibility is not only to our people, but also to humanity.” | Maxim of Quantity | Expands moral responsibility beyond national boundaries. | Generalized |
| 9 | “Peace will never be achieved through fear or oppression.” | Maxim of Manner | Rejects coercive approaches and promotes peace through mutual understanding. | Particularized |
| 10 | “Together, we can build a better future for all.” | Maxim of Relation | Conveys optimism and shared responsibility in international cooperation. | Generalized |

Table 4.1 presents the analysis of ten selected utterances from Prabowo Subianto’s speech examined through Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975). The findings indicate that the speech utilizes both the observance and strategic flouting of conversational maxims to generate implicatures. Observance of the maxims of Relation, Quantity, and Quality is employed to emphasize the relevance, clarity, and credibility of the message, while the flouting of the Maxim of Manner is used to convey implicit meanings through more indirect language.

Based on Levinson’s (2022) classification, the identified implicatures consist of six generalized implicatures and four particularized implicatures. Generalized implicatures convey universal moral values such as peace, solidarity, and humanity, whereas particularized implicatures reflect Indonesia’s diplomatic stance and national values. Overall, these findings suggest that implicature in the speech functions not only to convey information but also to construct Indonesia’s image as a nation committed to peace, humanitarian values, and international cooperation.

2. Discussion

The analysis was conducted using Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975) and Conversational Implicature Theory, particularly Levinson’s (2022) classification of generalized and particularized implicatures. This section discusses how Prabowo Subianto’s utterances in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly demonstrate both observance and strategic flouting of the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, and how these pragmatic choices function within a diplomatic context.

a. Maxim of Quantity

Several utterances in the speech demonstrate observance of the Maxim of Quantity by providing sufficiently clear information without unnecessary elaboration, such as Indonesia’s commitment to cooperate for global peace. However, some statements are intentionally less explicit. For instance, the statement “We have suffered enough from injustice” does not specify a particular context. This deliberate vagueness generates a particularized implicature that strengthens Indonesia’s moral stance while avoiding direct confrontation.

b. Maxim of Quality

Most utterances adhere to the Maxim of Quality, thereby reinforcing the speaker’s credibility and sincerity. Statements such as “We must work together, not against each other” reflect ethical values within diplomatic communication. Beyond factual claims, expressions such as “Every nation is equal” also function as ideological affirmations that position Indonesia as a supporter of international relations based on justice and equality.

c. Maxim of Relation

Observance of the Maxim of Relation ensures that the speech remains relevant to the global issues discussed in the international forum. Some utterances employ metaphorical expressions, such as “Our planet does not belong to us; we belong to it,” which shift the discussion from technical policy matters to moral reflection. This statement produces a generalized implicature that emphasizes collective responsibility for the environment while reinforcing Indonesia’s image as a nation committed to global values.

d. Maxim of Manner

Overall, the speech is delivered in a clear and structured manner; however, certain parts employ strategic indirectness. The statement “We will never forget what our ancestors endured” illustrates deliberate ambiguity intended to evoke national identity and resilience without explicitly referring to specific actors or historical events. This flouting of the Maxim of Manner produces a particularized implicature that strengthens ideological positioning while maintaining diplomatic politeness.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study examined the pragmatic strategies employed in Prabowo Subianto’s speech at the 2025 United Nations General Assembly through the framework of Grice’s Cooperative Principle and Levinson’s theory of conversational implicature. The findings reveal that diplomatic discourse operates not only through explicit statements but also through carefully constructed implicatures generated by both the observance and strategic flouting of conversational maxims.

Beyond identifying maxim observance and violation, this study highlights how pragmatic choices function as instruments of ideological representation and international positioning. Through implicature, the speaker is able to construct moral authority, negotiate political sensitivity, and project Indonesia’s national identity within a global forum without resorting to direct confrontation.

The findings contribute to the field of political pragmatics by demonstrating that cooperative principles extend beyond conversational efficiency and can serve as strategic resources in diplomatic communication. This research also underscores the importance of pragmatic analysis in understanding how language shapes power, identity, and persuasion within the context of international political discourse.

REFERENSI

- Ahmed, M. (2023). Pragmatic strategies in diplomatic discourse: Cooperation and implicature in UN speeches. *Journal of Language and Global Communication*, 45–58.
- ANTARA News. (2025, September 24). *President Prabowo’s speech at the general debate of the UNGA’s 80th session*. <https://en.antaranews.com/news/381920/president-prabowos-speech-at-the-general-debate-of-the-unga>
- Barriyah, S. (2025). Conversational implicature and maxim flouting in the U.S. presidential debate 2024. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 18(1), 33–47.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2022). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics: Speech acts* (Vol. 3, pp. 41–58). Academic Press.
- Khairunisa, R., & Nugroho, A. (2024). Conversational implicatures in political campaign speeches: A pragmatic perspective. *International Journal of Linguistics and Discourse Studies*, 88–102.
- Levinson, S. C. (2022). *Pragmatics and the structure of conversation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2023). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.



- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., & Moules, N. J. (2022). Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research: A practical guide for researchers. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 28(4), 567–580.
- Puri, A., & Baskara, R. (2023). Conversational implicature and inference in cross-cultural discourse. *EAI Proceedings on Linguistics and Communication*, 11(7), 2021–215.
- Rahmawati, D., & Lestari, P. (2022). Pragmatic analysis of cooperative principles in ASEAN leaders' statements. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Global Studies*, 99–112.
- Syafitri, N., Sari, D., & Mulyani, T. (2022). An analysis of conversational implicature and cooperative principle in Indonesian talk shows. *Elsya: Journal of English Language Studies*, 4(2), 90–99. <https://journal.unilak.ac.id/index.php/elsya/article/view/1111>
- Thomas, J. (2020). *Meaning in interaction: An introduction to pragmatics*. Routledge.