

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problems

Language plays a crucial role in human life because it serves as the primary medium for communication, interaction, and the exchange of ideas. Beyond its communicative function, language also functions as a social resource through which individuals construct meaning, express attitudes, and influence others. In contemporary society, language is not only used in everyday interactions but also in various institutional contexts such as education, media, law, and politics. In political contexts, language becomes a powerful instrument for shaping public opinion, legitimizing authority, and communicating ideological values.

Political speeches are among the most influential forms of political communication because they allow political leaders to convey their visions, policies, and commitments directly to the public. Through speeches, politicians attempt to persuade audiences, establish credibility, and construct particular representations of social realities. Consequently, the language used in political speeches is often carefully selected to achieve specific communicative purposes. Linguistic choices made by political leaders can reveal how they represent issues, position themselves in relation to the audience, and communicate their intentions.

However, political speeches are not always interpreted in the same way by all audiences. The meanings embedded in political discourse are often constructed through specific linguistic features that may not be immediately visible to listeners or readers. Many political leaders employ particular grammatical structures to emphasize certain ideas, conceal responsibility, express commitment, or strengthen persuasion.

As a result, understanding how language is used in political speeches becomes an important issue in linguistic studies.

One important example can be found in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech delivered on October 20, 2024. As the newly elected President of the Republic of Indonesia, Prabowo used the speech to communicate his vision, priorities, and commitments to the Indonesian people. The speech attracted public attention because it addressed various national issues such as economic development, corruption, poverty, national unity, and public welfare. In presenting these issues, the President employed various linguistic forms that contribute to the construction of meaning and the delivery of political messages.

The problem addressed in this study is how meanings are realized through the use of linguistic features in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech. In particular, the study focuses on nominalization, passivization, and modality, which are frequently used in political discourse. These linguistic resources can influence how events, actions, responsibilities, and commitments are represented within a text. Therefore, investigating these features is important for understanding how political messages are linguistically constructed and communicated to the public.

Despite the importance of political speeches in influencing public understanding, many studies on political discourse tend to focus on the content of political messages rather than on the linguistic mechanisms used to construct those messages. As a result, the ways in which grammatical features contribute to the representation of social issues, responsibilities, and political commitments often receive less attention. This creates a need for a more detailed linguistic analysis that can explain

how meaning is systematically constructed through language choices in political discourse.

Another problem is that political leaders frequently present national issues such as corruption, poverty, economic development, and public welfare through specific linguistic forms that may influence audience interpretation. For example, responsibility for certain actions may be obscured through nominalization and passive constructions, while commitment and certainty may be expressed through modality. Without examining these linguistic features, it becomes difficult to understand how political messages are strategically formulated and how particular meanings are emphasized within a speech. Therefore, an analysis of nominalization, passivization, and modality is necessary to reveal how language is used to represent social realities and communicate political intentions in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech.

To investigate these linguistic phenomena, this study employs Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) developed by Halliday. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), language is not merely a system of rules for forming sentences but a resource for making meaning in social contexts. SFL views language as a social semiotic system through which speakers and writers use linguistic choices to achieve particular communicative purposes. Therefore, language is closely connected to the social and cultural contexts in which it is used.

Halliday proposes that language simultaneously performs three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational metafunction is concerned with how people represent experiences, events, actions, and realities in the world. The interpersonal metafunction focuses on how speakers establish relationships, express

attitudes, and interact with others. Meanwhile, the textual metafunction explains how messages are organized into coherent and meaningful discourse. These metafunctions enable researchers to examine how meaning is systematically constructed through language.

Among these metafunctions, the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions are particularly relevant to this study. The ideational metafunction helps explain how social realities and experiences are represented through grammatical structures, while the interpersonal metafunction reveals how speakers express commitment, certainty, obligation, and attitudes toward their messages. Through these metafunctions, political speeches can be analyzed not only in terms of what is said but also in terms of how meanings are linguistically constructed.

Within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics, nominalization, passivization, and modality are important linguistic resources for constructing meaning. Nominalization refers to the transformation of processes, actions, or qualities into nouns. This process allows speakers to condense information and sometimes obscure the actors responsible for particular actions. Passivization refers to the use of passive constructions in which the focus is shifted from the actor to the action or the affected participant. Meanwhile, modality is a linguistic feature that expresses degrees of certainty, probability, obligation, and commitment. These features are frequently found in political speeches because they help speakers represent social realities, present viewpoints, and influence audience interpretation.

The use of nominalization, passivization, and modality is particularly significant in political discourse because political leaders often need to address sensitive issues, communicate commitments, and

construct persuasive messages. Through these linguistic choices, politicians can emphasize particular aspects of reality, reduce the visibility of responsibility, and strengthen their authority and credibility. Therefore, examining these features can provide valuable insights into how political meanings are constructed and communicated in presidential speeches.

Nominalization is one of the most prominent linguistic features in Systemic Functional Linguistics. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), nominalization occurs when processes, actions, or qualities are transformed into nouns. This transformation enables speakers to package complex information into compact expressions and often shifts attention away from the actors involved in an action. In political discourse, nominalization is frequently used to present social issues as abstract entities rather than as actions performed by specific individuals or institutions. Consequently, it may contribute to the construction of objectivity while simultaneously reducing the visibility of responsibility.

Passivization is another important linguistic feature commonly found in political speeches. Passivization refers to the use of passive constructions in which the focus is placed on the action or the affected participant rather than on the actor. Through passive voice, information can be presented in a way that emphasizes outcomes while backgrounding or omitting the agent responsible for the action. In political discourse, passivization is often employed when discussing sensitive issues, allowing speakers to avoid direct attribution of responsibility while maintaining the focus on the event itself.

In addition to nominalization and passivization, modality plays a significant role in the construction of political messages. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) define modality as a linguistic resource used to

express probability, certainty, obligation, willingness, or commitment. Modality belongs to the interpersonal metafunction because it reflects the relationship between the speaker and the audience. Through modality, political leaders can demonstrate confidence in their policies, express commitments to future actions, and encourage public support. The use of modal expressions such as *must*, *should*, *will*, and *can* allows speakers to convey authority and persuade audiences effectively.

The analysis of nominalization, passivization, and modality is important because these linguistic features reveal how meanings are constructed within political discourse. They provide insights into how political leaders represent social realities, communicate commitments, and influence public interpretation of national issues. Therefore, examining these features in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech can contribute to a deeper understanding of how language functions as a resource for meaning-making in political communication.

Several previous studies have investigated political speeches from different linguistic perspectives. The first study was conducted by Muhammad Hafiz Alfianyah entitled *A Critical Discourse Analysis of President Prabowo Subianto's Political Speech to the Turkish Parliament*. The study revealed that Prabowo's speech emphasized the importance of bilateral relations between Indonesia and Turkey while promoting diplomatic cooperation and international solidarity. The research focused primarily on ideological meanings and political messages conveyed through discourse.

The second study was conducted by Sutarman entitled *Unveiling Power: A Van Dijk Discourse Analysis of Prabowo's Presidential Inauguration Speech*. Using Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis framework, the study examined the relationship between discourse,

power, and ideology in Prabowo's inaugural speech. The findings showed that the speech was strategically structured to construct political legitimacy, national unity, and leadership authority.

The third study was carried out by Muhammad Riza Fachruddin entitled *The Prabowo Subianto's Language of Political Speech on Campaign: A Critical Discourse Analysis*. The study found that Prabowo's political strategy was reflected through lexical choices, sentence structures, and figures of speech. The language used in the campaign speech was intended to shape public understanding of national issues and strengthen political support.

Another relevant study was conducted by Hariati and Purwarno entitled *Ideological Rhetoric: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Prabowo's First Inauguration Speech*. The study analyzed rhetorical strategies and ideological representations in Prabowo's inaugural speech. The findings indicated that the speech employed ideological rhetoric to promote nation-building, unity, and political legitimacy.

Although these studies provide valuable insights into political discourse and President Prabowo Subianto's speeches, most of them focus on Critical Discourse Analysis, ideology, political rhetoric, and power relations. Limited attention has been given to the linguistic realization of meaning through nominalization, passivization, and modality within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics. Therefore, the present study differs from previous studies by specifically investigating how these linguistic features are used to construct meaning and achieve communicative purposes in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech.

Although numerous studies have investigated political speeches from the perspectives of Critical Discourse Analysis, ideology, political

rhetoric, and power relations, relatively few studies have focused on the linguistic realization of meaning through nominalization, passivization, and modality within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics. Previous studies on President Prabowo Subianto's speeches have primarily examined ideological representations, rhetorical persuasion, and political strategies, while limited attention has been given to how specific grammatical features contribute to the construction of meaning in his discourse.

Furthermore, most previous studies tend to analyze political discourse from a macro perspective by emphasizing ideology, power, and social context. As a result, the role of grammatical resources in representing experiences, expressing commitment, and shaping audience interpretation has not been explored comprehensively. In particular, there is still a lack of studies that simultaneously investigate nominalization, passivization, and modality in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech through the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining how nominalization, passivization, and modality are employed in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech and how these linguistic features contribute to the realization of meaning and communicative purposes. By focusing on these grammatical resources, the study is expected to provide a more detailed understanding of meaning construction in Indonesian political discourse and contribute to the application of Systemic Functional Linguistics in political speech analysis.

Based on the background and research gap described above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "An Analysis of Nominalization, Passivization, and Modality in President Prabowo

Subianto's Inaugural Speech: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Perspective.”

B. Research Gap

Several studies have examined President Prabowo Subianto's political speeches from different perspectives. Alfianyah (2025) analyzed Prabowo's speech to the Turkish Parliament using Critical Discourse Analysis and focused on diplomatic relations and political meanings. Sutarman (2024) investigated Prabowo's inaugural speech through van Dijk's discourse analysis framework, emphasizing power and political legitimacy. Similarly, Fachruddin (2023) explored the linguistic strategies used in Prabowo's campaign speeches, while Hariati and Purwarno (2025) examined ideological rhetoric and nation-building ideology in Prabowo's first inaugural speech.

Although these studies have provided valuable insights into political discourse, ideology, power relations, and rhetorical strategies, they primarily focus on Critical Discourse Analysis and rhetorical perspectives. Limited attention has been given to the analysis of specific linguistic features from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly nominalization, passivization, and modality. These linguistic resources are important because they contribute to the representation of experiences, the expression of commitment, and the construction of meaning in political discourse.

Furthermore, previous studies have mainly concentrated on revealing ideological messages and persuasive strategies embedded in political speeches. However, there remains a lack of research investigating how meanings are realized through grammatical resources and how these resources contribute to the communicative purposes of political discourse. In particular, the use of nominalization,

passivization, and modality in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech has not been thoroughly examined within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing nominalization, passivization, and modality in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. The study aims to explore how meanings are realized through these linguistic features and to identify the communicative purposes achieved through their use in the speech.

C. Research Questions

Based on the background described above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How are nominalization, passivization, and modality realized in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech?
2. What meanings and communicative purposes are conveyed through the use of nominalization, passivization, and modality in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech?

D. Research Objectives

Following the formulation of the problems, the objectives of the research are:

1. To identify and analyze the realization of nominalization, passivization, and modality in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech.
2. To explain the meanings and communicative purposes conveyed through the use of nominalization, passivization, and modality in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech.

E. Research Significance

The findings of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of linguistics, particularly in the study of political discourse and Systemic Functional Linguistics.

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly in understanding how nominalization, passivization, and modality function as linguistic resources for constructing meaning in political discourse. By examining these grammatical features in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech, this study may enrich existing literature on the application of SFL in political speech analysis. Furthermore, the study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how language is strategically used to represent experiences, express commitments, and influence audiences through grammatical choices. The findings may also serve as an additional reference for scholars interested in discourse studies, functional grammar, and political communication.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Students

This study is expected to help students, particularly those majoring in English Education and Linguistics, gain a better understanding of Systemic Functional Linguistics and its application in discourse analysis. Through the analysis of nominalization, passivization, and modality, students can learn how linguistic features contribute to the construction of meaning in authentic texts. In addition, the study may encourage students to develop

critical thinking skills when analyzing political speeches and other forms of public discourse.

b. For Researchers

This study may serve as a valuable reference for future researchers who are interested in political discourse, Systemic Functional Linguistics, and language analysis. The findings can provide insights into the use of grammatical resources in political speeches and may inspire further studies on similar topics. Moreover, the research may help future scholars identify new perspectives and research opportunities related to language, meaning construction, and political communication.

c. For Readers and Society

This study is expected to increase readers' awareness of how language is strategically employed in political communication. By understanding the functions of nominalization, passivization, and modality, readers may become more critical in interpreting political messages and public speeches. The findings may also help society recognize how linguistic choices can shape perceptions, present particular viewpoints, and influence public understanding of social and political issues.

d. For English Language Teaching

The findings of this study may contribute to English language teaching by providing authentic examples of language use in real social and political contexts. Lecturers and teachers may use the results as supplementary materials for courses related to linguistics, discourse analysis, functional grammar, and language studies. In addition, students may benefit from learning how

grammatical structures function beyond sentence-level analysis and contribute to broader communicative purposes in discourse.

F. Definition of Key Terms

In leading the analyst, it is important to figure the meaning of key terms which is planned to evade misunderstanding of the ideas utilized in this exploration, the terms should be defined are following:

1. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language developed by M. A. K. Halliday that views language as a resource for making meaning in social contexts. SFL emphasizes that language performs three metafunctions simultaneously, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions. In this study, SFL is used as the main theoretical framework for analyzing nominalization, passivization, and modality in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech.

2. Nominalization

Nominalization refers to the process of transforming actions, events, or qualities into nouns. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), nominalization is a form of grammatical metaphor that enables speakers to condense information and represent processes as entities. In this study, nominalization refers to the linguistic forms found in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech that transform processes or qualities into nominal expressions.

3. Passivization

Passivization refers to the use of passive constructions in which the focus is shifted from the actor to the action or the affected participant. Through passivization, the agent may be backgrounded or omitted while greater attention is given to the event or its outcome. In

this study, passivization refers to passive structures identified in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech and their contribution to meaning construction.

4. Modality

Modality is a linguistic feature that expresses the speaker's degree of certainty, probability, obligation, willingness, or commitment toward a proposition. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), modality belongs to the interpersonal metafunction because it reflects the relationship between the speaker and the audience. In this study, modality refers to modal expressions used in President Prabowo Subianto's inaugural speech to convey attitudes, commitments, and intentions.

5. Inaugural Speech

An inaugural speech is a formal speech delivered by a newly elected leader at the beginning of their term of office. It generally contains the leader's vision, mission, priorities, and commitments to the public. In this study, the inaugural speech refers to the speech delivered by Prabowo Subianto on October 20, 2024, during his presidential inauguration ceremony.