

# Beyond Mere Words: Unveiling the Speech Acts behind Netanyahu's October 7 Speech

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## Abstract

Pragmatics, especially speech act theory, is crucial for analyzing political discourse. It goes beyond simple information exchange to reveal the strategic use of language for influence, persuasion, and action. This paper investigates the speech acts employed by Netanyahu in his speech delivered on 7 October, 2023, considering both his intent and the contextual circumstances surrounding his utterance. Findings revealed that 38.46% of Netanyahu's speech is dedicated to assertives, 23.07% to directives, 15.38% to declaratives and 7.69% to commissives. Two statements were employed for two different purposes: assertive-directive (7.69%) and declarative-commissive (7.69%). Combining assertions with directives and declarations indicates that the speech emphasizes the delivery of information and action taken, with a degree of authority and commitment. This analysis also suggests that, through a strategic use of language, the speaker employs a calculated approach which aims to inform, guide, and persuade, emphasizing authority and purpose over emotional expression. However, this study, while offering insights into Netanyahu's communication, is limited by its dependence on a single speech, which might possibly misrepresent his overall style and neglect broader contextual factors. To achieve a more comprehensive understanding and validate the findings, future research should expand data sources by analyzing more speeches for the same speaker, incorporate a wider contextual analysis, and investigate audience reception.

## Keywords

Communication, Political Discourse, Pragmatics, Speech Act Theory

## 1. Introduction

Human communication goes beyond simple word delivery. It actively shapes reality through speech acts, which drive actions, feelings, and social interaction (De

Stefani & De Marco, 2019). This intricate relationship between intention and meaning within speech acts profoundly influences our perception of the world and our role in it.

This paper presents an analysis of the speech acts, based on Searle's (1969) classification, in the political speech delivered by Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu on 7 October 2023 after Hamas' surprising attacks. This analysis attempts to find the meaning of utterances based on the context of the speaker, the audience's perception of the situation and potential reaction.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Political Discourse

Political discourse refers to the specific ways language is used in the context of politics and governance. It encompasses spoken and written communication by politicians (van Dijk, 1997), media outlets (Wodak & Meyer, 2001), activists (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), and even the public itself (Chilton, 2004) when discussing political issues and ideologies. This field of study examines not just the content of the communication, but also its effects, structures, and underlying strategies.

Political language does not just reflect reality; it is a tool used by politicians who actively shape it through speech acts in order to influence public opinion and mobilize support (Mohammed Hashim, 2015). Politicians control speech acts to assert power and authority through pronouncements that have real-world consequences (Dunmire, 2012). Moreover, they strategically employ speech acts, including promises and appeals, to persuade and influence the audiences' beliefs and actions (Harris & McKinney, 2021). Politicians also use language to promote specific public images and connect with various communities, employing inclusive or exclusive rhetoric, distinct speaking styles, and speech acts to shape political identities (Fogal et al., 2018). Furthermore, they strategically manipulate language to influence public opinion, dictate narratives, and frame events, using declarations to solidify their interpretations and suppress opposing viewpoints (Gao et al., 2016). Political communication also contributes to shaping and reinforcing ideologies through the use of repetitive phrases, emotionally charged language, and loaded language to spread and strengthen ideological structures (Addae et al., 2022). In politics, language serves as a tool for either unifying or dividing different groups. Inclusive language and appeals to shared values promote social cohesion, while divisive and inflammatory rhetoric fuels polarization (Alqahtani, 2024).

Political discourse research focuses on language, power, social and cultural context, and political effects. Scholars analyze specific linguistic choices, including metaphors and understatements, and how media shape political realities (Harris & McKinney, 2021; Fairclough, 2003; Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Additionally, they investigate how language reinforces or challenges power structures, and how leaders manipulate discourse to maintain control (van Dijk, 2002). Furthermore, the nature and consequences of political discourse cannot be understood without regard to the social and cultural circumstances of the context in which it occurs.

Demographics, historical background, culture, and media are taken into account, suggesting a link between language, power and identity with specific reference to political struggles (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Finally, how political issues are talked about and perceived can influence the public, determine the voters' decision, and the policies formed (Entman, 2004).

## 2.2. Speech Act Theory

Pragmatics is the field of linguistics concerned with how language is used effectively in communication (Taguchi & Kadar, *in press*). It goes beyond the literal meaning of words to consider the context in which they are spoken, the speaker's intention, the listener's understanding, presuppositions assumed by the speaker and implications of what is indirectly conveyed (Bull & Waddle, 2021; Usmani & Almashham, 2024; Zou & Yiye, 2022). Pragmatics, the study of language use in context, plays a crucial role in understanding political discourse. Political speeches, debates, and media coverage are types of political discourse which are not simply concerned in conveying information; they are strategic attempts to influence, persuade, and call to action (Awal, 2022). These types of communication can be analyzed through pragmatics, speech acts in particular, i.e., the propositions/locutions performed, depending on the speaker's intention and the context in which these propositions are uttered.

Speech Act Theory, a prominent framework within linguistic pragmatics, suggests that language is not merely used to describe the world but also to perform actions. This viewpoint, pioneered by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969), moves beyond the traditional focus on sentence meaning (semantics) to examine how language is used in context to achieve communicative goals.

According to Searle (1969), Speech Act Theory distinguishes between three interconnected levels of analysis: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. The locutionary act is the basic act of uttering words and their literal meaning, the phonetic and semantic content of the utterance. The illocutionary act is the act performed in saying something, the speaker's intention or the force of the utterance. The same locutionary act can have different illocutionary forces depending on the context and the speaker's intention. The perlocutionary act is the effect the utterance has on the hearer, the consequence or result of the speech act. The perlocutionary act is not directly under the speaker's control, for it depends on the hearer's interpretation and reaction.

Searle (1969) categorized illocutionary acts into several types, including:

- 1) Assertives are statements of fact or belief that involve announcing, claiming, stating, and reporting.
- 2) Directives attempt to give order, command, request, or advice or get the hearer to take a particular action.
- 3) Commissives commit the speaker to do something like promising or offering.
- 4) Expressives are expressions of the speaker's feelings or attitudes such as

thinking or apologizing.

5) Declaratives are utterances that bring about a change in the state of affairs such as resigning, declaring war, dismissing, accepting something.

This study is based on the proposition that political communication is fundamentally concerned with the creation and interpretation of meaning, a process which relies on analyzing the illocutionary acts in the speaker's utterances. The diverse range of illocutionary acts utilized by politicians, encompassing informing, assuring, promising, directing, suggesting, apologizing, and criticizing, highlights the analytical value of Speech Act Theory in this study. Employing this theory will enable a detailed examination of the linguistic strategies the speaker uses to encode intended meanings within the formal linguistic structures of the chosen political speech.

### 2.3. Speech Acts and Political Strategies

Speech Act Theory, which originated from Austin (1962), is especially significant in the study of political discourse since it considers the hidden performative value of utterances beyond the coded meaning. This theory encompasses several considerations:

- **Performative Utterances:** These are statements used in political speeches to effect a change. These basically include declaring war, offering an apology for any scandal or offering a new program for economic change. Using these concepts with reference to Austin's (1962) theory, it becomes possible to understand the motives of the speaker and possible implications of their speeches.
- **Indirect Speech Acts and Cooperative Principle:** Rarely does political discourse occur with complete transparency. Politicians frequently use indirect speech acts to persuade the audience by inferring messages through implication. Analyzing these utterances by using Grice's (1989) Cooperative Principle and its four associated maxims of quality, quantity, relation, and manner helps to expose undeclared motives and unveil the manipulative strategies behind them.
- **Power Dynamics and Speech Act Choice:** Political discourse involves the use of certain speech acts reflecting inherent power relations. Assertives (statements presented as factual) may be employed by politicians to gain authority, overpower the conversation and control public discourse. On the other hand, they might use directives (command or request) to threaten opponents or encourage followers (Baider, 2019). Examining how frequently certain speech acts are used helps reveal dominance strategies and manipulative attempts to influence behavior.
- **Context and Framing:** A speech act can only be effective based on the particular context in which it is performed. Pragmatics allows to explain how politicians manage issues by choosing words, expressions, and metaphors that are likely to please the audience and manipulate public opinion. This framing, realized through speech acts, determines how the audience visualizes the problem and possibly change their attitudes (Wodak & Meyer, 2001).

## 2.4. Analyzing a Text Using Speech Acts

Applying speech acts in text analysis can help identify the author's purpose, establish and negotiate meaning and dynamics of interaction in the text. With regard to political speeches, speech acts provide an effective way to understand the speaker's intents, strategies and possible influence on the audience. Examining the organized and meaningful patterns of purpose and interaction in language ultimately sheds light on the creative and functional aspect of language (Taguchi, 2019).

According to Charteris-Black (2018), several steps must be considered to successfully analyse political speeches. First, keywords and phrases which pinpoint specific speech act categories must be identified. Moreover, the context must be taken into consideration with questions like "Who is the speaker addressing?" "What is the political climate?" "What is the speech's purpose?"

The second step is to analyse illocutionary force and function: "What specific action does the speaker aim to perform?" "Does it aim to inform, persuade, inspire, criticize, legitimize, attack, consolidate power, etc.". The function of each speech act within the broader context of the speech should be analysed "Does it frame issues, appeal to emotions, build narratives, establish credibility, create relationships with the audience?"

Third, patterns and strategies must be explored. The patterns in the types of speech acts used should be defined: "Is there a dominant category?" "How does the mix of speech acts shift throughout the speech?" Then, rhetorical strategies employed through speech acts must be identified such as using repetition, metaphor, parallelism, humor, appealing to logic or emotion. In addition, how the speaker uses speech acts to create coherence and build a compelling argument should be inspected.

Fourth is to examine the perlocutionary effects. The potential impacts of the speech act on the audience should be considered: "Can it change their opinions, inspire action, reinforce existing beliefs, or spark controversy?" How audience characteristics (demographic, political affiliation, etc.) might influence the perlocutionary effect must be analyzed.

The last step is to draw conclusions: "What does the speech act analysis reveal about the speaker's political identity, goals, and relationship with the audience?" "How does the use of speech acts contribute to the speech's effectiveness and potential impact?" "What broader insights does this analysis offer about the political discourse and dynamics of power within society?"

Analysing a political speech through speech acts is an ongoing process of interpretation and engagement. A successful analysis entails employing effective criticism, asking questions, and enjoying the intellectual journey of uncovering the hidden meanings and persuasive power within political discourse (Lawan, 2016).

## 3. Objective of the Study

This research undertakes a general analysis of the speech acts in Israeli PM Ben-

jamin Netanyahu's political speech delivered on 7 October, 2023 after Hamas' attacks. It aims to identify the speech act characteristics present in this speech, analyze these characteristics in relation to its contextual setting, and determine how these features contribute to the overall message conveyed.

#### 4. Research Questions

This research aims to answer the following questions:

- 1) What types of speech acts are most frequently used in Netanyahu's speech?
- 2) How do the speech acts in Netanyahu's speech contribute to its overall persuasive effect?
- 3) How does Netanyahu use speech acts to construct a particular image of himself?

#### 5. Methodology

This paper follows the qualitative research approach to analyze Netanyahu's 7 October 2023 speech, using the Speech Acts Theory based on Searle's (1969) classification of speech acts. This approach allows the exploration of the layers of meaning, delving into the speaker's intended force (illocutionary act) and the potential impact on the audience (perlocutionary act). It allows the researcher to go beyond simply identifying the words used and explore why those words were chosen and what they were meant to do. Also, it provides the tools for the examination of the linguistic features of the speech, which includes analyzing word choice, sentence structure, rhetorical devices, and other linguistic cues that contribute to the performance of speech acts.

The speech under scrutiny was delivered in Hebrew by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in Tel Aviv, Israel after Hamas launched a devastating surprise attack on the country on Saturday, 7 October 2023. The speech was translated into English and posted on The Guardian at 13:00 p.m. BST (The Guardian, 2023) and on The Times of Israel at 12:49 p.m. EEST) on the same day.

"The statement, which appeared to have been filmed at the Israel Defense Forces headquarters in Tel Aviv, was posted at around 11 a.m., several hours into the fighting that erupted after Hamas fired thousands of rockets into Israel and hundreds of gunmen crossed the border with the Gaza Strip and invaded multiple Israeli towns and communities" (Times of Israel, 2023).

Data collected in the research depend on Netanyahu's statements in the speech. These statements are analyzed as per Searle's (1969) five types of illocutionary acts: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives. The perlocutionary effects of these statements on the audience are also assessed. However, the paper does not cite any empirical data to support these assessments, so these perlocutionary effects are hypothetical.

The researcher's role in this study was restricted to the objective analysis of the speech without any potential biases or perspectives that might have influenced the research process.

## 6. Findings

In his speech, Netanyahu uses several speech acts, each of which is employed for a specific purpose. To uncover his real intentions, the speech is divided into three parts. In each part, the speech acts are identified, the illocutionary force and function are analysed, and the perlocutionary effects are examined. The illocutionary acts are summarized in a table at the end of each part.

### 6.1. Part One: Introduction

i) Locutionary Act:

“Citizens of Israel, we are at war. Not an operation, not a round [of fighting,] at war! This morning Hamas initiated a murderous surprise attack against the state of Israel and its citizens.”

ii) Illocutionary Acts (**Table 1**):

- “We are at war.” is an assertive, performing the act of stating a fact or belief. However, its force is closer to a directive, aiming to change the hearer’s perception of the situation and potentially initiate specific actions.
- “Not an operation, not a round [of fighting], at war!”: This repetition reinforces the assertive act and adds intensity through exclamations, further emphasising the gravity of the situation.
- “This morning Hamas initiated a murderous surprise attack against the state of Israel and its citizens.” is an assertive used to inform the citizens of the real situation the country is facing.

iii) Perlocutionary Effects:

- The speech acts used could potentially create fear, anger, and a sense of solidarity among the audience.
- They can also justify future military actions by the government and potentially dehumanize the opposing party.

**Table 1.** Illocutionary Acts in the Introduction.

No. of Statements	Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Percentage
3	Assertive	3	100

### 6.2. Part Two: Body

i) Locutionary Act:

“We have been in this since the early morning hours. I have convened the heads of the defense establishment. I’ve given directives, first and foremost, to clear the [affected] urban areas of the terrorists who penetrated them. This is happening right now. In parallel, I am initiating an extensive mobilization of the reserves to fight back on a scale and intensity that the enemy has so far not experienced. The enemy will pay an unprecedented price.”

ii) Illocutionary Acts (**Table 2**):

- “We have been in this since the early morning hours.” is an assertive, informing the audience about the ongoing situation.

- “I have convened the heads of the defense establishment.” is an assertive and a directive, indicating action taken and signaling his leadership.
  - “I’ve given directives, first and foremost, to clear the [affected] urban areas of the terrorists who penetrated them.” is a directive, conveying specific orders to address the immediate threat.
  - “This is happening right now.” is an assertive again, emphasising the immediacy of the operation.
  - “In parallel, I am initiating an extensive mobilization of the reserves” is another directive, announcing a further escalation of action.
  - “to fight back on a scale and intensity that the enemy has so far not experienced” is a threat disguised as a declarative, promising severe consequences for the attackers.
  - “The enemy will pay an unprecedented price.” is a declarative and a commissive indicating warning and a threat which highlights the determination and expected outcome of the response.
- iii) Perlocutionary Effects:
- Concern and panic among the population may be triggered by the details of the attack and threats of revenge.
  - Showing strength and action might entail greater public solidarity and support for the government and military.
  - The heavy dosage of forceful rhetoric may raise the stakes and escalate the conflict, with the threat of an “unprecedented price.”

**Table 2.** Illocutionary Acts in the Body.

No. of Statements	Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Percentage
7	Assertive	2	28.57
	Directive	2	28.57
	Assertive-Directive	1	14.28
	Declarative	1	14.28
	Declarative-Commissive	1	14.28

### 6.3. Part Three: Conclusion

#### i) Locutionary Act:

“I urge the public to follow strictly the directives of the military, the Home Front Command. We are at war and will win.”

#### ii) Illocutionary Acts (Table 3):

- “I urge the public to follow strictly the directives of the military, the Home Front Command.” is a directive which emphasises the significance of public obedience of official instructions.
- “We are at war” is an declarative which repeats the framing of the situation established earlier.
- “and will win” is a promise which occurs in the form of a commissive to demonstrate confidence and determination for future victory.

iii) Perlocutionary Effects:

- The sense of urgency and authority might lead the public to follow instructions.
- Anxieties might be escalated due to war framing and firm declaration of victory.
- The leadership and its action might lead to patriotism which unites the public.
- The complexities and possible sufferings of the conflict might be ignored by the promise of victory.

**Table 3.** Illocutionary acts in the conclusion.

No. of Statements	Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Percentage
3	Directive	1	33.33
	Declarative	1	33.33
	Commissive	1	33.33

## 6.4. Summary

**Table 4** depicts a summary of the illocutionary acts used by Netanyahu throughout the whole speech.

**Table 4.** Summary of illocutionary acts in the speech.

No. of Statements	Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Percentage
13	Assertive	5	38.46
	Directive	3	23.07
	Assertive-Directive	1	7.69
	Declarative	2	15.38
	Declarative-Commissive	1	7.69
	Commissive	1	7.69

## 7. Discussion of Findings

### 7.1. Research Question 1

**What types of speech acts are most frequently used in Netanyahu's speech?**

The analysis of Netanyahu's speech suggests that the speech acts employed are not just informative but aim to shape attitudes and potentially gather action in response to the perceived threat. It highlights the power of language to influence emotions and perceptions, particularly in such a tense political situation.

The introductory part of Netanyahu's speech is made up of three statements. All three statements (100%) are assertives (**Table 1**) used to emphasize the truth of the situation. The speaker's primary focus is on conveying information, presenting what he perceives as a fact, laying strong emphasis on the perceived truth value of the utterances. Moreover, the absence of directives or commissives indicates that the speaker apparently does not intend to get the audience to do anything (directives) or commit himself to future actions (commissives). Further-

more, by avoiding expressives, he tends to be more objective, presenting the situation as is without the intervention of his emotions or feelings.

The body of the speech consists of seven statements that comprise a blend of information, instruction, and a touch of commitment, creating a structured and purposeful tone. The illocutionary speech acts in this part are distributed as follows: 28.57% assertives, 28.57% directives, 14.28% assertive-directive, 14.28% declaratives and 14.28% declarative-commissive (**Table 2**). The assertives suggest a foundation of information or factual claims. The speaker is providing data, stating beliefs, or outlining a situation, giving the speech a sense of substance and grounding. The equal number of assertives and directives indicates that the speaker is not just informing, but also trying to influence the audience's actions through the commands and requests. This adds a dimension of purpose and organisation to the speech, aiming to guide or direct the listeners. As for the declaratives, both are significant in that they bring about a change in the state of affairs "promising severe consequences for the attackers" especially since they are uttered under the right conditions "murderous surprise attack". These declaratives add a sense of weight and finality to this part of the speech. The single commissive act introduces an element of commitment from the speaker. It's a promise, pledge, or expression of intention to do something in the future "The enemy will pay an unprecedented price". This adds a touch of personal investment and creates an expectation in the audience.

The concluding part of the speech comprises three illocutionary acts as follows: directive 33.33% declarative 33.33% and commissive 33.33% (**Table 3**). The fact that this part opens with a directive, followed by a declarative, and concluding with a commissive would likely create a sense of urgency, justification, and hopeful commitment. This organizational framework aims to inspire action, establish a supporting foundation, and ultimately secure the audience's confidence in the speaker's leadership. Starting this part with a directive immediately captures the audience's attention and establishes a sense of clear intent. The speaker is immediately calling for action through a direct command "I urge the public to follow strictly the directives of the military". This directive directly captures attention and conveys urgency, portraying the speaker as decisive and action-oriented. Subsequently, the declarative statement "We are at war" provides the necessary context and justification for the directive. It goes beyond being a simple command to explain the necessity to act. Finally, the concluding commissive, "and will win," reinforces the speaker's commitment and reassures the audience of their personal investment in the outcome.

All in all, Netanyahu's speech mostly consists of assertives (38.46%), followed by directives (23.07%), declaratives (15.38%) and commissives (7.69%). Two statements were employed for two different purposes: assertive-directive (7.69%) and declarative-commissive (7.69%) (**Table 4**). This indicates that the speech is characterized by a strong emphasis on information and action, with a prominent degree of authority and commitment. The high percentage of assertives (38.46%)

indicates the significance of information conveyed in the speech while the notable use of directives (23.07%) stresses the directions given by the speaker who is not just informing but also guiding the audience. The declaratives (15.38%) reinforce the speaker's statements, revealing his power and sense of control. The low percentage of commissives (7.69%) suggests that although the speaker makes commitments, he is more focused on conveying information and directing action. The use of assertive-directive (7.69%) and declarative-commissive (7.69%) statements adds to the complexity and strategic communication of the speech.

## 7.2. Research Question 2

### **How do the speech acts in Netanyahu's speech contribute to its overall persuasive effect?**

The speech acts used by Netanyahu significantly contributed to the overall persuasive impact. Despite the fact that Netanyahu's main aim in the introduction is to inform the audience about the state of war, his words carry additional forces, mainly persuading the audience to accept the definition of "war" and its implications, mobilizing the audience to prepare for potential consequences, and legitimizing the government's actions in response to the attack. He fulfils his message through the use of strong verbs ("initiated", "attack"), emotive language ("murderous surprise") to create a fearful and urgent tone, and repetition which serves as a persuasive strategy, aiming to fix the belief of war in the listeners' minds. Finally, the comparison with "operation" or "round" diminishes past conflicts, possibly suggesting this attack is more significant and justifies further action.

In the body of the speech, Netanyahu updates the public about the situation and ongoing actions and tries to convince them of the government's competence and commitment to offer security. In order to execute his plan, he calls for action, encouraging public support and mobilisation. This happens through leadership of the project at hand, the ability to make decisions, and readiness to use force, threatening to escalate the situation in order to prevent further attacks. The urgency of the situation is stressed through the use of phrases such as "early morning hours", "right now", and "extensive mobilization". His solid resolution is conveyed through phrases like "first and foremost", "scale and intensity", and "unprecedented price". Leadership, authority and control are confirmed through "convened", "directives", and "initiate", intentionally distancing attackers by referring to them as "terrorists" and "enemy" to justify possible punitive reactions. The body of Netanyahu's speech has a structured and purposeful feel. It is a blend of speech acts, revealing a speaker who is informed, proactive, and committed. The assertives establish a foundation, the directives provide guidance, the declaratives highlight pivotal moments or decisions, and the commissives offer insight into future intentions. The equal use of assertives and directives suggests the speaker's desire to inform and persuade, not just command, utilizing declaratives to convey authority and commissives to inject a personal element.

The final part fosters trust and confidence in the speaker's leadership. It leaves

the audience with a sense of hope and shared purpose, reinforcing the call to action and solidifying the speaker's commitment. All in all, the structure of the conclusion itself creates a framework for a powerful and persuasive message. In his concluding part, Netanyahu commands compliance to ensure the public abide by the safety measures during the conflict. Therefore, he repeats how serious the situation is to stress public attention, injects optimism and confidence in the face of adversity and asserts control and responsibility for guiding the nation through the crisis. To this end, he highlights the importance to follow directions immediately by using the words "urge" and "strictly". He also frames the situation as "war" to evoke patriotism as well as national unity and solidarity. His statement "and will win" projects an unwavering belief in victory, to reassure the audience.

A speech structured in this way would likely be dynamic and persuasive. It is a structure designed to motivate and mobilize, moving from presenting the problem, to a call to action, to the justification for that action, and finally, to a pledge of commitment. The overall effect is one of urgency, purpose, and confident leadership.

### **7.3. Research Question 3**

#### **How does Netanyahu use speech acts to construct a particular image of himself?**

Netanyahu structured his speech with six assertives, four directives, three declaratives, and two commissives, projecting his personality which is informative, action-oriented, authoritative, and somewhat personally invested. The high number of assertives suggests a speaker who prioritizes conveying information and establishing a foundation of facts "We are at war", "We have been in this since the early morning hours", "This is happening right now." He presents himself as someone who has done their research and is confident in their understanding of the situation. This builds credibility and establishes him as a reliable source of information. The four directives demonstrate a clear intent to guide and influence the audience's behavior. He is not just discussing a problem, but calling for action "I've given directives... to clear the urban areas.", "I am initiating an extensive mobilization", indicating a decisive and purposeful personality. The three declaratives, which create or change realities, reinforce the speaker's authority "to fight back". He is making not only suggestions but also pronouncements "We are at war", "The enemy will pay an unprecedented price", implying a position of power or influence. Though few, both commissives add a personal touch. They demonstrate commitment "The enemy will pay an unprecedented price" and a willingness to be held accountable, suggesting a degree of personal investment in the issue at hand "and will win". The combination of speech acts into assertive-directive and declarative-commissive "I have convened the heads of the defense establishment", "The enemy will pay an unprecedented price" indicates a speaker who is capable of combining different speech act functions within a single utterance to create a strategic speech.

The overall impression suggested in this speech portrays a speaker who would likely come across as competent and confident, presenting himself as someone who knows what he is talking about and is confident in his abilities. The speaker's deliberate selection of speech acts indicates a strategic use of language to accomplish specific objectives. The integration of information, guidance, and authority enhances their potential for persuasion. While there is a degree of personal commitment shown through the commissives, the overall tone is more focused on facts and actions than on overt emotional expression. The speaker's strategic use of assertives and directives indicates a preference for informing and guiding rather than dominating. The use of declaratives and directives reveals a focused approach to achieve specific goals. By emphasizing factual information, the speaker establishes credibility, hence strengthening the impact of his directives and commitments. Ultimately, Netanyahu projects an image of a capable, authoritative, and goal-driven leader, perceived as influential and persuasive, yet less emotionally expressive.

## 8. Conclusion

Speech act analysis goes beyond simple word analysis, revealing the interplay of intentions, context, and effects in communication (Ramanathan et al., 2020). Understanding speech acts, particularly locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary forces, enhances communication skills, facilitates effective social interaction and highlights the power of language. Examining these forces provides a deeper understanding of human interaction and meaning-making (Dunmire, 2012). In political discourse, speech act analysis reveals communication strategies, power dynamics, and the construction of political realities (Oyewole, 2023). By analyzing the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effects of political utterances, researchers can gain insights into how language shapes politics, leading to more informed engagement in public discourse.

In his speech, Netanyahu strategically employs assertive statements to establish credibility and position himself as an expert. Through the use of directives and declaratives, he displays a sense of authority and control, clearly demonstrating a defined agenda and a drive to accomplish particular objectives. The combined speech acts suggest his pragmatic approach, using language to achieve multiple goals simultaneously. Finally, the relatively low number of commissives suggests that the speaker is more focused on logic and action than on emotional appeals. Netanyahu knows well what makes a good speech. He knows language is not only powerful on the imagery front but dramatic with its choice of words. He also knows that periods of war are times when political leaders must employ their rhetorical strategies to a large extent since words can strengthen resolve, bring people together, and rally troops. Netanyahu, thus, uses a convincing mix of speech acts in his speech to strengthen his message and influence the public.

It is worth noting that understanding the impact of Netanyahu's short televised, previously filmed speech on the interpretation and effectiveness of speech acts in-

volves considering several factors. First, the fact that the televised speech seemed to be filmed at the Defense Forces headquarters adds significant symbolic weight. It reinforces the speaker's authority and connects the message to military power and national security. The setting can also enhance the perceived seriousness and legitimacy of the speaker's words. Second, the controlled environment of the pre-recorded televised speech enables careful control over the visual and audio presentation, and the production quality of this televised speech could possibly enhance the impact of the speech on the audience. This includes camera angles, framing, lighting, sound, and editing, all of which can significantly influence how the audience interprets the speaker's speech acts and perceives his intentions. These elements might be fine-tuned to create a desired atmosphere by emphasizing the speaker's facial expressions and body gestures to convey sincerity or determination. Lighting might also be used to create a sense of drama or solemnity and editing can be used to emphasize key moments and create a compelling narrative. Finally, the 46-second duration necessitates a highly condensed message. This can amplify the impact of specific speech acts, as the speaker aims to deliver a powerful message in a limited time. In such a short time frame, Netanyahu rapidly summarizes the situation, informs the audience, gives directions, calls for action, and presents the consequences "and will win", indirectly relying on a strong emotional appeal "We are at war" to maximize impact. The brevity could also heighten the sense of urgency and importance, influencing how the audience perceives the speaker's intentions.

This paper attempted to analyze one political speech delivered by Netanyahu on a specific occasion. Although the findings present a general idea of Netanyahu's personality and strategic communication, there are some limitations to be considered. First, relying on a single speech might not provide a comprehensive picture of the speaker's overall communication style. A single speech can be tailored to a specific audience and occasion, potentially deviating from the speaker's typical patterns. Second, while this research considers the immediate context of the speech, it does not fully capture the broader political, social, and cultural context that influences the speaker's choices and the audience's interpretation. Finally, without comparing the speech to other speeches or forms of communication from the same speaker, it is difficult to ascertain whether the observed patterns are consistent or situational. Therefore, future research should address these limitations by employing multiple data sources, incorporating a broader context together with audience reception.

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The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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