
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Speaking of Power: Personal Deixis in Prabowo's Presidential Rhetoric

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| ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate Prabowo's political perspective and perspective in building power relations through an analysis of the use of deixis persona. The focus of this research includes the types of personal deixis, power relations built using persona deixis, and the construction of Prabowo's political identity. The method used is qualitative research with data sources in the form of Prabowo's communication in interactions with the public and state officials taken from YouTube videos. The data collection technique is carried out through three stages, namely the transcription of all Prabowo's speeches in various forms of communication, the recording of all deixis personas that appear in various contexts, and the classification of data based on their type. The data was analyzed using a pragmatic matching method. The results of the study show that deixis in Prabowo's speech is not just a linguistic tool, but a rhetorical device that is full of ideological meaning. Prabowo seeks to balance personal authority with collective inclusivity, create warm quasi-relations, and affirm his political image as a national leader who is firm, inclusive, close to the people, and has a national vision.

| KEYWORDS

deixis; politics; Prabowo

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1. Introduction

Politicians use language not only to make speeches but also to act. Politics means power and authority and words are the actual participants who embody those ideas. According to Van Dijk, political discourse is a discourse with an institutional form. In other words, political discourse is a discourse in which a person gives his or her opinion in the status of a politician in an institutional environment (Kirvalidze, 2009). One of the language tools used to show his political identity is the use of persona pronouns in the form of persona deixis.

There are two main characteristics that define pronouns: (1) pronouns are always political in the sense that pronouns always imply a power relationship; and (2) pronouns are always involved in the struggle for representation (Pennycook, 1994: 175). This is the reason why pronouns represent one of the main rhetorical tools used by politicians. As Wilson (1990) and Zupnick (1994) explain, the scope of pronoun references can vary depending on the speaker's purpose, and this turns out to be one of the main persuasion tools used by politicians. Zupnick (1994: 340) states that there are several potential references to indexes that politicians use to show their solidarity-inclusion within and, at the same time, their opposition-exclusion from a particular ideological group or political party

Deixis refers to the way language uses contextual information to find something or someone in time, space, and discourse. The word "deixis" comes from the Greek word "deixis," which means "to point." According to Halliday (2014), deixis involves three components: the speaker, the receiver, and the context. The speaker uses deixis to indicate the location and time of the speech act, as well as the participants involved. The recipient uses deixis to understand the speaker's intended meaning by interpreting the contextual information provided.

The pioneering study of Brown and Gilman (1960) showed that pronoun choice is influenced by the relationship between the speaker and the listener. Greeting someone in the same way they greet you shows solidarity and equality. Addressing someone with a 'higher status' in a different way than the way the person greets you shows disharmony and social distancing.

According to Karapetjana (2011:43), the way politicians speak and present themselves is part of their personality and a way to show themselves as individuals. The same can be said about their preference in choosing pronouns of people. The use of pronouns can create both negative and positive images of a politician. His research also shows that the pronoun I implies a personal level and allows the speaker to demonstrate personal authority and responsibility as well as commitment and involvement. Politicians use the first-person pronoun to present themselves as individuals and speak from their own point of view, preferably by highlighting good qualities and achievements (Bramley 2001:259). Irimiea (2010:2) states that throughout history, in political speeches, deixis has always played a very important role. While Allen (2007:2) argues that the main purpose of using deixis expressions is to create a positive self-image and a negative representation of the interlocutor.

Therefore, deixis persona can be an important part of speech and can have a persuasive as well as strategic political function. Politicians manipulate the use of deixis personas or pronoun choices based on the context and topic of their speeches, as well as the intent or goals they want to achieve through their speeches. Van Dijk (2006) states that persona deixis can also be used to assign any positive aspects to oneself and negative aspects to others that result in "positive self-presentation and negative presentation of others" or "polarization of us versus them."

In this regard, the study of deixis used by political figures, namely Prabowo, is important to be researched. Prabowo is not only the chairman of the Gerindra party, but he is also the elected president through the 2024 election. All presidential speeches, without exception, including Prabowo's are characterized by several individual characteristics inherent in each speaker, distinguishing them from other politicians and manifested in the syntactic structure of statements, stable choice of allusions, lexical originality, and emotional resonance. His political perspective and perspective in building power relations can be seen from the use of persona pronouns that are functioned in a dictated manner. There are two things that need to be researched related to Prabowo's use of persona deixis, namely (1) The type of personal deixis used by Prabowo, (2) Quasi-relationships built using persona deixis, and (3) The construction of Prabowo's political identity using deixis.

2. Literature review

2.1 Deixis

Levinson (1983) states that deixis is concerned with the ways in which language interprets or creates grammatical features from the context of speech or speech events. This is also related to the ways in which speech interpretation depends on the analysis of the context of speech. Yule (1996) also said that deixis is the way in which the relationship between language and context is built. Deixis is also a technical term for one of the most basic things we do with speech. Deixis means "to point" to the entire language. Any form of linguistics used to achieve this "cue" is called a "deixis expression"

Yule (2006) identifies deixis in three types. The first is the deixis persona: deixis persona is used to designate objects like this, that, this, and that (demonstrative) and people (he, he, they, me (pronouns)). The second is spatial deixis, which is used to designate a location (here, or there). The third is temporal deixis, which is used to designate time (present, then, next week, last month). Dylgjeri and Kazazi (2013) also argue that to interpret all these expressions of deixis, we must know which people, times, and places are in the speaker's mind.

In particular, the reference of a deixis expression cannot be identified without an understanding of the actual context in which the expression is pronounced. Thus, it has been suggested that the plural first-person pronoun deixis can serve a powerful persuasive function because it has the potential to encode group membership and identification: speakers can index different groups as belonging to the scope of the pronoun 'we' while excluding others (Seidel, 1975; Connor-Linton, 1988; Fairclough, 1989; Wilson, 1990).

2.1 The Role of Deixis Persona in Political Communication

In linguistics, deixis is defined as the use of common words and phrases to indicate a specific place, time, or person in context, for example the words: I, us, tomorrow, them, there. In other words, deixis is a word and phrase that requires a full understanding of contextual information. It should be noted that pronouns act as a means of personal deixis according to their semantic characteristics. The speaker itself is the semantic basis of all words deixis, because the vocabulary of deixis is essentially egocentric, and it is the speaker who gives it a special meaning and determines the referent of his speech (Denys, 2024; Milo, 2024). In addition, pronouns can be an effective political tool, playing an important role in building social relationships, and the use of personal deixis makes speech socially oriented and reflects the ideology of politicians.

In the context of political discourse, politicians use various linguistic and artistic means, which make language an important tool to achieve various goals and control voters (Abidi, 2021; Darginavičienė, 2023). With the help of linguistic and artistic means, political leaders can convey the desired message more effectively to the audience, the meaning of a message, have the desired emotional impact on society, and convince that their intentions and actions will benefit the country and its citizens. Such means include, for example, parallelism, metaphor, anaphora, deixis (Baidildayeva & Akhatova, 2023; Akhatova, 2023; Shynkaruk, 2024).

Analysis of the scientific literature shows that deixis plays an important role in political discourse, has many facets, and its study has only just begun. It should be emphasized that many modern scientists involved in the study of deixis, particularly linguists, consider it from a variety of angles, approaches, and viewpoints. For example, Al-Ameedi and Mukhef (2017) argue that when pronouns are used in political speech, they can serve a wide range of communicative needs of politicians, such as showing their attitudes towards topics and society, social status, gender, motivation, ideology. The type of pronouns used, according to the researchers, is determined by their pragmatic-semantic function. Thus, the pronoun person functions not only as a personal, but also as a social deictic function in political discourse. Indeed, pronouns are widespread in political discourse; They are often used by leaders in communicating with audiences and performing important functions.

Agbo and Ijem (2022) believe that political actors seek to identify themselves with the people and ensure solidarity in their speeches, so they use personal deixis. Pronouns are very effective in achieving the goal of political communication, political communication that is very closely related to the issue of power. These experts believe that when a politician uses the pronoun "we", its derivative will be in the possessive form "we".

Meanwhile, Alkhaldeh (2022) put forward the idea that personal deixis concerns the identity of the interlocutor in communication situations, serves to encode the role of the participant in the context in which the speech is made and is a means to violate the boundaries of other people's identities and indirect manipulation of the speaker.

In applying a more specific analysis of the distribution of pronouns that refers to three main areas: self-reference (an indication of how the speaker wants to describe himself or herself in relation to the topic and the recipient); contrasting relationships (the use of pronouns to distinguish groupings on a positive/negative scale in the text), and other references (referring to individuals and groups outside of the role of speaker and receiver).

3. Methodology

This research is descriptive qualitative research. The source of data for this research is Prabowo's communication with the public or state officials on various topics. This communication can be in the form of speech and dialogue. The data source is obtained through YouTube. The data collection technique is carried out in three stages, the first is transcribing all Prabowo's speeches in various forms of communication. Second, it records all forms of persona deixis used in various contexts. Third, classify the data according to its type. Data collection instruments in the form of human instruments are supported by criteria or parameters of deixis persona, including the form of persona pronouns that are indecisive, which is used to refer to communication participants. The data analysis method used is a pragmatic matching method. The validity of the data used is the triangulation of theories, data, and researchers

4. Results/Findings

4.1 Types of Deixis Used in Prabowo's Speech

Based on data from 26 articles analyzed, various persona pronouns were found that reflected the use of deixis in Prabowo's speech. The total number shows the dominance of the pronoun "I (saya)" 794 times and "we (kita)" 776 times. After that, it is followed by "you (saudara)" 464 times, "we (kami)" 76 times, "you (kamu)" 58 times, and a smaller number of "me (aku)" 6 times, "you (Anda)" 8 times, and "you (kalian)" 28 times. This distribution shows that Prabowo has a pattern of using strategic deixis to build political relations with his opponents.

Table 1. Frequency of Pronoun Type

No.	Types of Pronouns	Frequency
1	I (<i>saya</i>)	794
2	We (<i>kita</i>)	776
3	We (<i>kami</i>)	76
4	You (<i>saudara</i>)	464
5	You (<i>kamu</i>)	58
6	You (<i>kalian</i>)	28
7	You (<i>Anda</i>)	8
8	Me (<i>aku</i>)	6

The pronoun "I (saya)" is the most frequently used form, with a frequency of 794 times, "I" serves to affirm Prabowo's personal identity as the main actor in the speech. The choice of the word "I" over "I" shows a more formal, polite, and distanced communication style in accordance with the context of formal political speech. This is in line with the image of a leader who puts himself seriously in front of the community.

In addition, the pronoun "We (kita)" also appears with almost the same frequency, namely 776 times, so it occupies the second highest position. The use of "we" has inclusive implications because it involves the community in the political narrative that is

constructed. When Prabowo says " We (kita)", Prabowo is not only speaking as an individual, but also inviting the public to feel part of the collective struggle. This creates emotional closeness and strengthens solidarity.

In contrast to " We (kami)", the pronoun " We (kami)" only appears 76 times. This shows that Prabowo often uses an inclusive form rather than an exclusive one. This strategy is important because " We (kami)" signifies the speaker does not involve the listener, thus tending to create distance. The dominance of " We (kami)" in Prabowo's speech shows that Prabowo wants to embrace society as a whole and emphasize togetherness in his political vision.

The second-person pronoun " You (saudara)" appears 464 times, making it one of the most prominent forms in the data. The use of this greeting shows a typical communication style in Indonesian political rhetoric, Prabowo greets opponents directly with a title that contains familiarity and respect. When Prabowo says " You (saudara)", Prabowo is affirming a quasi-relationship, that is, a seemingly personal relationship with each listener of his speech.

Other second-person pronouns such as " You (kalian)" which appear 58 times and " You (kalian)" 28 times are relatively rarely used. Both forms tend to be more informal and less appropriate to the context of official speech. However, when used, this form serves to create an atmosphere of closeness and an egalitarian impression, as if Prabowo is speaking to individuals or small groups directly. This gives a variety of nuances in the rhetoric he builds.

The pronoun " You (Anda)" is only found 8 times. This number is quite low, even though " You (Anda)" is usually used in formal situations. It is likely that Prabowo deliberately avoided using " You (Anda)" because it is too neutral and does not reflect emotional closeness. Compared to " You (Anda)", the form of " You (saudara)" or " We (kita)" is more effective in binding society within the framework of national solidarity that it wants to build.

The pronoun " Me (aku)" is only found 6 times, a very small number compared to " Me (aku)". This data shows that Prabowo prefers a formal communication style to a familiar-informal one. Political speech demands an impression of authority, so the more personal and intimate " Me (aku)" is rarely used. However, the existence of " Me (aku)" in some contexts can be interpreted as a strategy to occasionally present an emotional or personal side.

Overall, the distribution of persona deixis in Prabowo's speech shows a balanced communication strategy between personal and collective identities. On the one hand, "I (saya)" emphasizes his role as the main subject who bears responsibility. On the other hand, "we" involve the community in a common vision, while " You (saudara)" present warm interpersonal relationships. This combination makes deixis a rhetorical instrument that strengthens Prabowo's political position.

So, the analysis of pronoun data in Prabowo's speech shows that the use of deixis is not a neutral choice, but a strategy lane. The dominance of " I (saya)" and " We (kita)" shows an attempt to maintain a balance between personal authority and collective inclusivity. The use of " You (saudara)" strengthens quasi-relations with society, while other forms such as " We (kami)", " You (Anda)", " Me (aku)", " You (kamu)", and " You (kalian)" are used in a limited way according to the needs of the rhetoric. This pattern forms the linguistic foundation in the construction of Prabowo's political identity.

4.2 Quasi-Relationships Through the Use of Deixis Personae

Quasi-relationships are pseudo-communication relationships, where the speaker seems to interact directly with each listener, even though the actual communication situation takes place in one direction. In Prabowo's political speeches, quasi-relationships function to create emotional closeness between Prabowo and his opponent. The pronoun " I (saya)" with the highest frequency, which is 794 times, shows Prabowo appearing as the main figure who speaks directly to the public. The repetition of the pronoun " I (saya)" confirms that Prabowo is responsible, earnest, and directly involved in the political struggle. The use of the pronoun " I (saya)" fosters the impression that Prabowo is personally present in front of the audience.

In addition, the pronoun " We (kita)" which appears 776 times is the most effective instrument in building quasi-relationships. Through the pronoun " We (kita)", Prabowo not only conveys a message, but also involves the public in the construction of his political narrative. Prabowo puts himself on a par with the community, so that a sense of togetherness is created. The quasi-relationship built through " We (kita)" makes the community feel involved in the collective vision that is conveyed.

In contrast, the use of the pronoun " We (kami)" which appears only 76 times shows a different strategy. " We (kami)" is exclusive because it signifies a separation between Prabowo and the public. Therefore, Prabowo rarely uses this form because it has the potential to weaken quasi-relations. However, in certain contexts, "we" can function to affirm the position of the political group or position represented, namely the government.

Second person pronouns such as " You (saudara)" which appear 464 times also have a major contribution to building quasi-relationships. When Prabowo greets the public with " You (saudara)", Prabowo presents the impression of a personal relationship and full of respect. This greeting blurs the distance between the orator and the listener, so that the public feels as if they are being addressed individually. This is what makes the quasi-relationship even stronger in Prabowo's political speech.

The pronouns "You (kamu)" and "You (kalian)" are fewer in number with a total of 86 appearances, both of which function to create an impression of informal closeness, as if Prabowo is speaking directly to a small group or a certain individual. The quasi-relations built through these pronouns are more egalitarian, although they are used in a limited way to keep up with the formal nuances of speech.

The use of "You (anda)" only eight times shows that this form is less effective in building quasi-relationships. Although formal, "You (anda)" is neutral and does not have a strong emotional closeness. Therefore, Prabowo prefers to use "You (saudara)" who

have familiar and respectful nuances to create an emotional bond with the community. Interestingly, the pronoun "Me (*aku*)" that appears six times can be understood as a strategy that presents an intimate atmosphere in the speech. Although rarely used, its existence shows Prabowo's personal side beyond the dominant formal style. When "Me (*aku*)" is used, the quasi-relationship created is more emotional, as if Prabowo is speaking privately and openly.

So, the use of persona deixis in Prabowo's speech is not just a grammatical designation, but a communication strategy that builds a quasi-relationship with the community. The presence of "I (*saya*)" reinforces authority, "We (*kita*)" creates inclusivity, and "You (*saudara*)" binds emotionally. Through this quasi-relationship, Prabowo succeeded in affirming his political identity as a leader who is close to the people while being committed to a common struggle. In detail, the quasi-relationship built by Prabowo using deixis persona in his political speeches can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Prabowo's Quasi-Relations and Political Identity

No.	Types of Pronouns	Frequency	Main Functions	Quasi-Relations and Political Identity
1	I (<i>saya</i>)	794	Demonstrate personal identity, responsibility, and authority	Affirming Prabowo's presence as a serious and committed leader
2	We (<i>kita</i>)	776	Demonstrate inclusivity and collective solidarity	Building a sense of community, making the community feel directly involved
3	We (<i>kami</i>)	76	Indicates exclusive groups (do not involve the community)	Occasionally used to affirm the government's position, but minimally in quasi-relations
4	You (<i>saudara</i>)	464	Formal, familiar, respectful greetings	Strengthen quasi-relationships with the community, create emotional closeness and a sense of appreciation
5	You (<i>kamu</i>)	58	Informal and personal greetings	Gives the impression of egalitarianism, but limited to keep it in the official context
6	You (<i>kalian</i>)	28	Greetings to small groups directly	Presents a familiar feel, but is rarely used so as not to reduce the authority of speech
7	You (<i>Anda</i>)	8	Formal and neutral greetings	Less effective at building emotional closeness, so it is rarely used
8	Me (<i>aku</i>)	6	Shows intimacy and a personal side	Occasionally used to create a more personal emotional atmosphere

4.3 Prabowo's Political Identity Construction Through Deixis

Prabowo's political identity is not only built through ideas, programs, or policies, but also through the choice of language used in public communication. Prabowo as a political orator uses his deixis persona to construct his identity in society. The distribution of pronouns in his speeches shows that Prabowo positions himself as an authoritative leader who is close to the people.

The use of the pronoun "I (*saya*)" 794 times indicates a strong personal identity construction. When Prabowo repeats "I (*saya*)", Prabowo presents himself as the central figure responsible for the political narrative conveyed. This identity confirms that Prabowo is a figure who has authority and leadership, not just part of the collective. The pronoun "I (*saya*)" serves to reinforce a firm and committed personal image.

The pronoun "we (*kita*)" that appears 776 times serves to construct Prabowo's identity as an inclusive leader. When Prabowo repeats "we (*kita*)", Prabowo is not only talking about himself, but also uniting himself with the people. The identity that is built is a leader who does not stand alone but is together with the people in political struggle and national ideals. Through the pronoun "we (*kita*)", Prabowo asserts himself as a collective representation.

The pronoun "you (*saudara*)" which is used 464 times shows the construction of political identity based on interpersonal closeness, greeting the public as "you (*saudara*)", Prabowo places himself not only as a leader, but also as part of the nation's big family. The constructed identity is one that respects the people, upholds brotherhood, and emphasizes warm emotional connections.

In addition, although the number is small, the 76 times use of "we (kami)" also has an identity function. "We (kami)" affirm Prabowo's existence as part of a government that has responsibility. The identity built through "we" is a leader who rules well. This shows the formality of his leadership.

The use of the pronoun "Me (aku)", although only 6 times, is also important in the construction of identity. " Me (aku)" showcased Prabowo's personal and intimate side, which showed emotional closeness. The identity that is formed is a leader who is not only formal and authoritative, but also human, has feelings, and is able to speak more personally to the community.

Second-person pronouns such as "you (kamu)" (58 times) and "you (kalian)" (28 times) construct egalitarian identity. Although the number is not large, this use gives the impression that Prabowo is able to reduce social distance with the community and speak familiarly. The identity that is built is a leader who not only speaks from above but can also be on par with the people. This strategy strengthens the image of popular leadership. On the other hand, the "you (Anda)" that only appears 8 times shows that Prabowo does not want to build a political identity that is too formal and neutral. "You (Anda)" tends to be less emotional, so Prabowo prefers another greeting that has more nuances of familiarity. Prabowo avoids the use of "you (Anda)" so that the identity built prioritizes emotional closeness rather than just communication formalities.

Thus, the pattern of using deixis used by Prabowo shows a multi-layered strategy of political identity construction. "I (saya)" builds personal authority, "we (kita)" affirms collective togetherness, "you (saudara)" strengthens emotional relationships, while other pronouns such as "we (kami)", "me (aku)", "you (kamu)", and "you (kalian)" provide nuanced variations that enrich self-image. The political identity that is formed is a leader who is firm, inclusive, close to the people, but still authoritative.

So, the use of deixis in Prabowo's speech is to construct his political identity as a responsible national leader, embraces the community, and upholds brotherhood. This strategy shows that language is an important tool in shaping political image and influencing public perception of a leader.

Table 3. The Construction of Prabowo's Political Identity

No.	Types of Pronouns	Frequency	The Function of Political Identity	Constructed Image
1	I (<i>saya</i>)	794	Demonstrate personal responsibility and authority	A strong, committed, and authoritative leader
2	We (<i>kita</i>)	776	Demonstrate inclusivity and solidarity	Leaders who embrace the people, collective representation
3	We (<i>kami</i>)	464	A friendly and respectful greeting	Leaders who value the people, emphasize brotherhood
4	You (<i>saudara</i>)	76	Show exclusive groups	Leaders with teams/circles, collaborative but keeping distance
5	You (<i>kamu</i>)	6	Showing a personal and intimate side	Human, emotional, personally close leader
6	You (<i>kalian</i>)	58	Egalitarian and familiar greetings	Leaders who are in line with the people, the people
7	You (<i>Anda</i>)	28	Greetings to small groups	A leader who is able to speak directly to the people personally
8	Me (<i>aku</i>)	8	Formal and neutral greetings	Formal leaders, but lack emphasis on emotional closeness

5. Conclusion

Analysis of Prabowo's speeches shows that the use of deixis persona plays an important role in political communication strategies. The most dominant types of deixis used by Prabowo were "I (saya)" (794 times) and "we (kita)" (776 times), followed by "you (saudara)" (464 times), while other pronouns such as "we (kami)", "you (kamu)", "you (kalian)", "you (Anda)", and "me (aku)" were used in a more limited number. The quasi-relationship between Prabowo and the community is built mainly through the pronouns "I (saya)", "we (kita)", and "you (saudara)". "I (saya)" emphasizes the personal presence of responsible leaders, "we (kita)" involve the community in an inclusive way in a shared vision, while "you (saudara)" present a familiar and respectful greeting. Other variations of pronouns serve to enrich the nuances of closeness in the form of egalitarian ("you (kamu)", "you (kalian)") and personal ("me (aku)"). Quasi-relationships are created effectively so that people feel invited to speak directly.

Prabowo constructed his political identity as a credible leader as well as a people. "I (saya)" builds the image of a firm and committed leader, "we (kita)" affirms inclusivity and collective solidarity, "you (saudara)" prioritize brotherhood and respect, while "me (aku)" and "you (kamu)" present a human side and an egalitarian impression. Prabowo avoids the dominance of overly formal and neutral pronouns such as "you (Anda)", Prabowo chooses to emphasize emotional closeness to society.

So, this overall pattern shows that the deixis in Prabowo's speech is not just a linguistic tool, but a rhetorical device that is full of ideological meaning. Prabowo seeks to balance personal authority with collective inclusivity, create warm quasi-relations, and affirm his political image as a national leader who is firm, inclusive, close to the people, and has a national vision.

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