

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies how context influences the meaning of speech. Speech act theory is a branch of pragmatics that examines language use by focusing on how spoken and written expressions are interpreted and how their meanings are shaped by verbal and non-verbal contexts (Kone, 2020). Pragmatic is important because meaning is understood through context. Pragmatic aspect is essential because it concerns how meaning and message are interpreted based on the context (Fitria, 2025). It can help reveal the hidden meaning. It focuses on understanding what speakers intend to communicate through their utterances rather than merely examining the literal meanings of the linguistic forms they employ (Arshanti & Swarniti, 2023). Through a pragmatic approach, particularly speech act theory, researchers can analyze how prohibitions in Australian migration law not only convey information but also control behavior or assert state power. Thus, a pragmatic analysis of prohibitive utterances in legal texts provides a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, power, and legal intent.

Speech acts are an important topic in pragmatics. One of the main areas studied in pragmatics is speech acts (Sam & Hasbi, 2025). Speech acts are linguistic tools that help people express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Speech acts are used to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings through language

(Uctuvia & Nurhayati, 2021). In legal contexts, speech acts are especially relevant because legal texts do not merely describe facts, they perform actions, such as ordering, prohibiting, permitting, and declaring. According to Hussain & Khan (2024), Speech Act Theory is a linguistic theory that studies how language is used to perform actions, showing that utterances do not only convey information but also serve to accomplish certain actions. Prohibitions are important legal measures. Therefore, understanding the language used in law is very important for interpreting the power and intent behind legal provisions. The study of language has become increasingly important in the field of law and jurisprudence (Glogar, 2023).

A prohibition is a command not to perform a certain action. Prohibitives are directive expressions that guide the listener to take a certain action while disallowing another action (Sanjaya et al., 2025). Prohibitive speech acts fall into several categories. According to Al-saaidi et al., (2013) Prohibition has been categorized in various ways by different scholars. Prohibitive speech acts involve an attempt by a speaker to prevent the listener performing a certain action. These speech acts can take several pragmatic forms, such as forbidding and, threatening. Prohibition is an essential part of every language. Prohibition plays an important role in every language (Omar, 2020). The syntactic structure of prohibitions is often marked by several modal verbs to reflect varying degrees of assertiveness and formality in legal texts. Each form has a different illocutionary force depending on the level of authority, urgency, or implied consequences. Such prohibitions are enforced in many countries with the aim

of maintaining law and order, protecting national interests, controlling the behavior of individuals or groups, and ensuring compliance with norms and policies that apply in specific social and institutional contexts.

Australia also implements various forms of prohibition due to a variety of situational settings, such as increasing international migration flows, the need for foreign labor, national security protection, and control of immigration law violations. Australia is one of the countries chosen by foreign nationals to work in. From 2008 to 2016, Australia was the largest recipient of migrant workers compared to other countries (Dewi & Setiawati, 2020). Australian migration law contains many legal measures, particularly in regulating prohibited actions. These prohibitions are expressed through formal legal language, often in complex sentences, and the syntax and word choice in these laws are not arbitrary. According to Gajšt (2025), Legal language has specific characteristics, one of which is the use of complex sentence and clause structures. The choice of words is deliberately designed to ensure clarity. Therefore, analyzing the prohibitions in Australian migration law helps us understand how legal language is used to assert authority, demand compliance, and convey legal intent.

Through a pragmatic approach, particularly by using the theory of prohibitive speech acts, legal texts convey information such as commands or prohibitions. Speech act theory focuses on the pragmatic function of language, with language being used to perform actions (Ekoro & Gunn, 2021). Therefore, it is important to understand how the law makes people comply, not only

through the content of the message, but also through the way it is conveyed. Legal language must function as a tool to explain and systematically present the laws that are valid in a particular society and at a particular time according to normative principles (Heliaantoro, 2023).

Some of previous researchers examining prohibitive language have mostly focused on texts in sacred scriptures or local languages. Al-saaidi et al., (2013) conducted a comparative study of prohibitions in English and Arabic, analyzing selected verses from the Bible and the Quran. Their findings highlight the syntactic and pragmatic strategies used in sacred texts to express prohibitions. Widya & Agustina (2024) studied prohibitive language actions in the Minangkabau language, focusing on local cultural norms. Although these studies provide valuable insights into how prohibitions are used in various languages and contexts, studies specifically examining legal texts remain limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the syntactic structure and illocutionary force of prohibitions in selected Australian migration law documents. Through further analysis, this study is expected to contribute to a better understanding of how legal language uses speech acts to regulate behavior.

This study aims to examine the syntactic structures and illocutionary forces of prohibition speech acts in Australian migration law. By applying the framework of speech act theory, particularly the classification of forbidding of directive speech act and threatening of commissive acts, this research seeks to identify how language is used to regulate and restrict behavior within the legal

context of migration, and to what extent these prohibitions carry specific pragmatic functions such as forbidding and threatening.

B. Research Questions

1. What types of syntactic structures are used to realize prohibition speech acts in the Australian Migration Law?
2. What illocutionary forces are realized in prohibition speech acts in the Australian Migration Law?

C. Purpose of the Study

1. To identify and classify the Syntactic structure of prohibition speech acts in the Australian Migration Law.
2. To analyze illocutionary forces of prohibition in Australian migration law

D. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to provide a better understanding of how prohibition speech acts are used in Australian Migration Law, particularly in terms of their syntactic structures and illocutionary forces. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to both researchers and readers. For researchers, this study may serve as a useful reference for future studies related to pragmatics, speech act theory, legal language, and prohibition speech acts in legal or institutional texts. It may also provide a basis for further investigations into other aspects of legal language using different legal documents as data

sources. For readers, this study is expected to enhance their understanding of how prohibition speech acts are expressed in Australian Migration Law and how they function to regulate behavior and convey legal authority. In addition, this study may help students and general readers deepen their knowledge of pragmatics, speech act theory, and the use of language in legal contexts.

E. Definition of Key Terms

1. Speech act

A subject of study in pragmatics that examines how language is used to perform actions.

2. Prohibition

Type of speech act that aims to stopping or not allowing something certain actions or behavior.

3. Syntactic structure

The way elements in a sentence are organized and connected to one another.

4. illocutionary forces

The intention or purpose that the speaker wants to achieve when uttering a sentence.

5. Australian Migration Law

This is a collection of laws and regulations created by the Australian government that govern who can enter, stay, or leave the country.