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A Socio-Pragmatic Analysis of Global Leaders' Directive Speech Acts Requesting Compliance During the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020–2025)

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Abstract

The study revealed felicity conditions of Requesting speech acts in COVID-19 speeches of leaders globally, emphasizing social and cultural factors of nations that impact conditions with variant uprise. The requesting speech acts in leaders' speeches changed social and cultural factors of language use globally through COVID-19 effects, directly impacting public health communication and policy adherence. The aims to identify social and cultural factors affecting language use in outbreaks up to 2025 or continued. Data was gathered from speeches of leaders from South Africa, Pakistan, New Zealand, United Kingdom during COVID-19's 2nd Wave to investigate social and cultural meanings globally generating new meaning until 2025 through analysis of two felicity conditions - Propositional and Essential conditions of Requesting speech acts as Global speech acts. Thematic analysis of converted speech audios was conducted on NVivo 12 Pro and Microsoft Excel 365 to uncover similarities and differences in requesting speech acts patterns. The highest percentages of requesting speech acts were Imran Khan's 58.03% and Jacinda Arden's 52.45%, where each global speech act has its counterpart carrying another participant's verbal act cooperating in worldwide speech act effectiveness. It is predicted that COVID-19 variants will lead to similar patterns in global speech acts as requests, regardless of language, social, or cultural factors.

Keywords: Public health, Macro-Pragmatics, Social and Cultural Factors, Global Speech Acts, Global Leaders.

Introduction

The Pragmatics approach focuses on the success of communication between interlocutors, aiming to identify the preconditions for effective interaction (Kortmann, 2020). Within this realm, Speech act theory highlights that utterances can create significant, lasting impacts on listeners. When shared within similar contexts, these utterances generate consistent language patterns. Remarkably, during the COVID-19 pandemic, requesting speech acts were utilized by global leaders, demonstrating their widespread relevance and effectiveness in communication. In the context of ongoing global communication strategies aimed at preventing the resurgence of pandemics, the document discusses the use of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) disseminated through public notices. These strategies resemble those employed during previous pandemics, including the Spanish Flu (1918), H1N1 (2009), and Swine Flu (2019). The requesting speech acts are disseminated in these speeches when hear the different leaders communicate to their populace through their media or news channels. Because a request is the directive speech act in which the speaker expects from the hearer to accomplish something in the context in which it does not appear that the hearer will perform the action in normal speech events (J. Searle, 1969). Moreover, the speaker expects that the hearer will be able to perform the action.

The research examines how global leaders' speeches during the COVID-19 pandemic have influenced language and communication. It notes the disease's origin in Wuhan in December 2019 and its respiratory effects. The changing terminology related to COVID-19 is reshaping communication norms, with increased prevalence of speech acts focused on prevention and clear standard operating procedures (SOPs) displayed in public areas. The pandemic has also significantly impacted global living standards and various social, cultural, and economic dimensions. This study enhances speech act theory by exploring the pragmatic meanings conveyed through communication in the context of the pandemic. As of 2025, ongoing COVID-19 variants like Eris (EG.5) and Omicron BA.2.86 present symptoms similar to earlier strains, necessitating continued use of common mitigation strategies (Jackson et al. 2021). Countries are employing similar standard operating procedures (SOPs) and terminology in response to significant economic, social, and cultural challenges arising from the pandemic. Declared a global health crisis by the World Health Organisation in January 2020, COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the global economy, estimated at \$90 trillion (Jackson et al., 2021). Nations are now focusing on stabilising their economies and encouraging adherence to SOPs to curb virus transmission. Imran et al. (2025) explored the genetic variation in multiple key genes; ACE2, TMPRSS2, IL-6, ABO blood group, HLA and ORF. These are associated with transformations in Covid-19 severity. Those people who carry these variants presumably experience severe illness. More diverse studies are required to authenticate these results and help with personalized treatment methods.

Global SARS-CoV-2 activity increased markedly in mid-February 2025, reaching an 11% positivity rate, the highest since July 2024. Significant surges were observed in the Western Pacific, South-East Asia, and Eastern Mediterranean regions. While Africa, Europe, and the Americas reported lower rates of 2-3%, the Eastern Mediterranean saw a rise to 17%, especially in Egypt, Pakistan and neighbouring countries. South-East Asia's positivity increased from 0.5% to 5%, with notable cases in the Maldives, Thailand, and India. The

Western Pacific also rose from 5% to 11%, particularly in Cambodia and China. The WHO's mid-2024 report indicates a reduced impact of COVID-19 due to better care and increased immunity since 2020-2023, COVID-19 - Global Situation (Home,2026). Seasonal influenza activity globally has increased since October 2025, mainly driven by Influenza A(H3N2), with certain regions in Europe and Asia reporting above-average levels. The A(H3N2) subclade K (J.2.4.1) is now prevalent in over 34 countries, especially in the Western Pacific, Australia, and New Zealand, although without heightened severity. An early peak was seen in South Africa, while the Eastern Mediterranean exhibits mixed activity. The Americas are witnessing rising A(H3N2) cases, particularly in the US, Canada, Chile, and Brazil, with A(H1N1) pdm09 more common in the southern hemisphere. South-East Asia, notably Nepal, India, and Thailand, also reports the K subclade of A(H3N2). Mixed activity is noted in the Arabian Peninsula, with significant A(H3N2) presence in South Africa and Europe, Seasonal influenza - Global situation (Home,2026). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased similarities in social, cultural, and language factors across sequences and patterns in every discipline of life.

The study aims to explore the sequences of requesting speech acts that evolve into global speech acts during the pandemic. It seeks to understand the felicity conditions of these requests as used in speeches from selected countries during the COVID-19 outbreak. Additionally, the research intends to identify social and cultural factors influencing language use during outbreaks leading up to 2025. The research answered questions such as: What are the Requesting speech acts used in speeches delivered, are still changing the social and cultural factors of language use around the globe as Global speech acts? What factors engage in the sequences of speech acts that transform them into the global speech acts because of the similar social and cultural changes? The literature on the pragmatic analysis of leader speeches centers on speech act theory from Austin (1962) and Searle (1969; 1976).

Although current studies use various methodologies, they frequently lack a purely pragmatic lens. Analyses employ qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, addressing topics like political discourse and critical discourse analysis, focusing on speech acts such as Commissives, Directives, Assertives, and Expressives. A discourse analysis by (Akinwotu, 2013) emphasizes the role of illocutionary acts in political persuasion, focusing on assertive, expressive, and commissive acts from 1979 to 1993. Safwat and Hashim (2015) applies speech Act theory to evaluate language functions in political speeches, noting that Kerry's speeches feature commissive acts for future promises, while Bush leans towards assertive acts for persuasion. Although both studies highlight similar speech acts, their distributions differ. Fahrurrozi (2015) investigates indirect requesting speech acts in movies, identifying seven strategies such as hints and questioning abilities, often framing requests as indirect questions without clear expectations.

Umar (2016) analyses President Joko Widodo's APEC forum speech, outlining nine assertive acts (stating), two expressives (thinking), and various commissives (offering and promising), with no use of directives or declaratives, and noting significant perlocutionary effects in sectors such as electricity and transportation. Widodo's assertive and commissive acts effectively engaged the Beijing audience. Lastly, Anyanwu and Abana (2020) explore speech acts of three African Presidents during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on performatives and constatives like commands and requests, highlighting the pandemic's impact and the implementation of safety measures, particularly the sincerity conditions of performative acts in public speeches.

Sari and Utomo (2020) analysed Joko Widodo's COVID-19 speech and identified various directive speech acts, mainly commands, requests, and prohibitions. They categorised his strategies into direct and polite forms, concluding that these were aimed at prompting rapid action against the pandemic. Meanwhile, Anaekperechi (2020) studied the global rise of hate speech during the pandemic, focusing on its adverse effects in Nigeria, such as violence and social discord, and highlighting how toxic language undermines social cohesion. Additionally, Wilson (2020) examined Jacinda Arden's communications regarding COVID-19, where she employed commissive and representative speech acts as outlined in Fairclough's discourse theory. Arden's approach was marked by clarity, factual communication, and a focus on future implications, utilising positive language to alleviate public anxiety and clarify government measures against the pandemic. The strategic use of language in public discourse can shape social perceptions, influence behavior, and even mediate conflict. Some previous research has shown how advertising discourse manipulates vulnerable populations, such as Pakistani women through skin-whitening advertisements (Ahmed, Ahmed, et al., 2019) and Pakistani youth through night-packages advertising (Ahmed, Su, & Ahmed, 2017). Extending this line of inquiry into crisis and conflict contexts, Akmal et al. (2026) demonstrate how language preservation efforts contribute to conflict resolution in Aceh and Patani.

The literature review reveals a gap in research on higher-level speech act sequences, known as 'Global Speech Acts', which show how individual speech acts form macrostructure discourse patterns. Moreover, there is a lack of studies using qualitative analysis software in this area. The present study employs NVivo software 12 Pro 2020 for audio analysis of speeches, creating Thematic Nodes to analyse Requesting speech acts. It investigates changes in language use influenced by COVID-19, with Microsoft Excel 365 used to compute coding line percentages to better understand global speech acts' patterns and sequences.

1.1. Significance of Study

As the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted the global community, it influenced language use across diverse cultures similarly. People, regardless of their native languages, converged on a common discourse focused on the pandemic, ensuring that communication around COVID-19 conveyed similar meanings. Leaders worldwide utilized requesting speech acts in their addresses to effectively mobilize their populations, mitigating the potential for catastrophic outcomes. The implementation of these speech acts was crucial, as their absence could have led to widespread fatalities. Additionally, this situational dependency in communication helped safeguard against extensive social, cultural, and economic upheaval during the pandemic. The integral relationship between situation dependency, alongside relative and functional aspects, emphasizes how requesting speech acts have been employed collectively to avert the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. It posits that these speech acts, categorized as essential, preparatory, subservient, and auxiliary, functioned as a unified global act amidst the crisis. The research highlights how patterns and sequences of these requests represent a shift in language utilization, displaying the collaboration of global leaders in enhancing the effectiveness of these speech acts. By amplifying these sequences and patterns, countries implemented safety measures, transforming these requests into a form of global communication aimed at public health safety.

2. Materials and Methods

The theoretical framework of this research is based on van Dijk's macrospeech acts. He examines speech behaviors using his own regarded as global speech acts or macrospeech acts. The upper-level semantics or intangible structures known as macrostructures are what arrange the contained microstructures of conversation, interaction, and their mental operations (van Dijk, 1980) cited in Ito, 2015). These tiny structures indicate precise local knowledge, such as the definitions of word and phrase, phrases, and basic acts and all those structures (van Dijk, 1980). Things are characterized or processed locally or briefly, in other words, the actual and direct expression of microstructures discourse structures (van Dijk, 1980). He established that every single macrostructure is required by its inherent microstructure after providing definitions for these words. When exploring global meaning in communication, it is essential to understand that this meaning emerges from the integration of lower-level meanings rather than from the separate characteristics of individual components. The concept of speech act sequences encompasses the action patterns that correlate with speech acts, indicating that multiple speech acts, performed by language users under similar conditions, can be grouped together based on their relational context. It is significant to differentiate these grouped speech actions from others that are either not part of the same sequence or occur at different times. A critical factor in forming these connections between speech acts is conditional reliance, which serves as the primary mechanism linking the sequential nature of these speech activities (van Dijk, 1980 cited in Ito, 2015).

Two significant functional relationships between speech activities are indicated by conditional dependence:

a) Relative: Conditions that are appropriate "may be relative: A speaking act could not suitable when used alone but could work in a series of speaking actions (Van Dijk 1980:182) (For instance, a reason behind a request such the speaking act that follows.)

b) Functional

i. Explanation: Claims concerning circumstances of any type that are framed following subsequent speech activities naturally perform as a description (van Dijk, 1980).

ii. Conclusion: Certain verbal exchanges contain effects that perhaps ordered or declared as inferences with first so (van Dijk, 1980).

iii. Correction, Contrast, or Protest: These relationships demonstrate that the (ensuing) speech acts that adhere to the speech acts that came before serve as an amendment, dissimilarity, protest, respectively (Ito, 2015).

In the context of speech act theory, relations among speech acts can be viewed as goal-directed sequences. These sequences connect the fulfilment or success of each subsequent speech act to the overarching intent of achieving a specific objective. As highlighted by van Dijk (1980), it is possible to define an anticipated outcome in a series of speech acts where the collective acts function as a singular global act in particular scenarios. This may occur when certain acts serve roles such as subservient, auxiliary, explanatory, or preparatory relative to the main act. Macrospeech acts, or **global speech acts**, refer to the overarching structures within specific speech-act discourse systems. van Dijk (1980) highlighted that during discourse, a speaker can perform multiple macrospeech acts due to the presence of successive rounds or phases of global speech acts, resulting from various speech-act sequences.

Speech interactions involve multiple speech acts, indicating that it is insufficient to assert there is a singular global speech act by one speaker, as participants contribute to the effectiveness of these acts, suggesting each global act in a discussion may have respective

global counterparts reflecting others' contributions (Ito, 2015). Macro-speech acts or speech act sequences are determined by situational dependencies, which dictate whether these sequences or patterns align or possess similar structures for delivering requests. This dependency is a key factor in speech act sequences and is highlighted as a distinctive element linking them (van Dijk, 1980 cited in Ito, 2015).

2.1. Requesting Speech Acts

The requesting speech acts are classified in two strategies direct and indirect. In direct strategy there is consistency in utterance 's propositional content and speaker's intent whereas in indirect strategy in which propositional content and speaker's intent are not identical in utterance. This is the reason that the direct strategy has one meaning, but indirect strategy has more than one meaning (Alzebaree & Yavuz, 2017).

The requesting speech acts according to Searle (1969) uttered by the speaker to hearer via propositional conditions using essential conditions (S to H via P using E).

a) The propositional conditions depend upon the future act of the hearer (by S 's P using E).

b) The preparatory conditions work on the two further steps such as

- H can do A. S believes H is able to do A.
- This is not apparent for that hearer will do A in the regular sequence of events of his own accounts.

c) Sincerity conditions: are based only on speaker who wants hearer to do action.

d) Essential Conditions: the utterance of speaker as requesting act considers as an endeavour to get hearer to perform the action (E of P (request)).

The research paper analyses three conditions of requesting speech acts: propositional content, preparatory conditions, and essential conditions. The study focuses on speech acts delivered by presidents and prime ministers from four countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasising that propositional content is influenced by these conditions. Additionally, the sincerity conditions are related to indirect directives and are acknowledged without directly questioning their existence (Searle, 1976). Importantly, the involvement of hearers in sincerity conditions is minimal, as the effectiveness of these conditions relies on the speaker's will and attitude.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The research is grounded in the Socio-Pragmatic Theory of Leech (1999), focusing on the transition from Micro-Pragmatics, which addresses meaning in conversational contexts, to Macro-Pragmatics that emphasizes the influence of social and cultural factors on language use (Kortmann, 2020). It also incorporates Speech Act Theory from J.L. Austin (1962) and Van Dijk's (1980) macrostructures, which provide a framework for understanding global speech acts and the relationship between micro and macro structures, highlighting their context-dependent aspects of relativity and functionality. Furthermore, the analysis utilizes Searle's (1969) speech act theory, particularly concerning direct speech acts of requesting and their felicity conditions, including Propositional, Preparatory, and Essential conditions. The study involved the collection of secondary data from speeches by the presidents of four countries: South Africa, Pakistan, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, sourced from YouTube. These videos were converted into audio files for further analysis. NVivo software was utilized to analyse these audio files, which were uploaded into a project titled 'Global Speech Acts.' Each audio from the speeches was transcribed one by one during

the analysis, and the transcripts were coded alongside a timespan corresponding to the coded audio selected for the analysis.

The audio files of speeches were transcribed and systematically coded using NVivo software, which allowed for the generation of thematic categories based on the content. The analysis focused on coding the sections of the transcripts that contained requesting speech acts along with their corresponding felicity conditions. Two sub-nodes were identified within each thematic category related to requesting speech: the Preparatory Condition and the Essential Condition. Each speech delivered by the president of each respective country was examined for these coded elements. The results included a detailed summary that linked each coded audio file to its respective transcript, providing insights into the speech acts and their strategic implications. The analysis utilized 2-D line area charts and tables to present results derived from the thematic examination of speeches given by various presidents and prime ministers. A global perspective on speech acts was taken to identify patterns and sequences across the analyzed speeches. Specifically, the results of global requesting speech acts were depicted through 2-D line area charts and organized into tables. Additionally, the thematic nodes illustrating the felicity conditions associated with these requesting speech acts were collectively visualized in another 2-D line area chart, accompanied by a summary table for each felicity condition.

2.3 Sample

The Secondary data is collected from the speeches of the leaders of four different countries South Africa, Pakistan, New Zealand, United Kingdom presidents from YouTube as samples relevant to Covid-19. The videos were converted into audio files for analysis. The videos of speeches of all four presidents of selected countries converted into Audio files initially. The researchers also consider the videos to be analyzed since this is an enhanced feature of the NVivo 12 Plus but preferred to work on Audio analysis because the paralinguistic features such as bodily gestures, head and hand movement, facial expressions were not under consideration to analyze the Global Speech acts.

The rationale behind the selection of sample of the speeches of Pakistan, New Zealand, England, and South Africa was that these countries were dealing with the Pandemic strategically by implementing SOPs effectively. These countries not only save their economies but also balance the social and cultural events and ceremonies by implementing strict constraint numbers of people around their countries. They planned the hours to when to open the shopping malls, how to supply food and most importantly the voluntary workers were hired and encouraged to work for their countries to help people to fight this pandemic in any situation. Another rationale behind the selection of these countries presidents or prime ministers was that they are popular leaders who worked for their nations diligently to save their lives from the dangers of the spreading of this pandemic Covid- 19. Other countries who were failed to deal with this pandemic pushed the death trolls because of not implementing the SOPs effectively.

3. Results

The data analysis is conducted on the NVivo Software 12 Pro (2020). The Audios are transcribed after importing them into the files of NVivo. The Audios are transcribed by the researcher using the play, pause and forward or rewind features of Audio analysis. There are some keys that can also be used for playing and pausing videos. The researcher has created the transcription of all the audios of speeches. With the help of play, pause, forward

and rewind the media the researchers tracked the exact location in the timeline to code the audio. The thematic analysis is conducted by producing nodes for each speech. Each speech contained the requesting speech acts preparatory conditions and essential conditions selected of each prime minister or president of four selected countries. The results are shown in the 2-D Line area charts along with the percentages of all the requesting speech acts and their felicity conditions. The 2-D Line area charts represented the visual representation of the data in Microsoft Excel, and the table has a summary of the results.

3.1 Subsection

The coding of audios with content is shared in results along with 2-D Line Area charts and summaries of each speech of each president and Prime minister. In Line charts, the increasing and decreasing trends were being visualized with the percentages of requesting speech and their felicity conditions. The codes were charted to show the results. Finally, the last analysis section was based on the representations of 2-D Line area charts of Global speech acts along with their felicity conditions as accumulated results. The Global speech acts were gathered from the felicity conditions of the requesting speech acts of four speeches, such as preparatory conditions results gathered from all four speeches as collective percentages, and essential conditions of all four speeches in one 2-D Line area charts and summaries separately in tables as follows.

3.1.1. Imran Khan's Requesting Speech Act Result

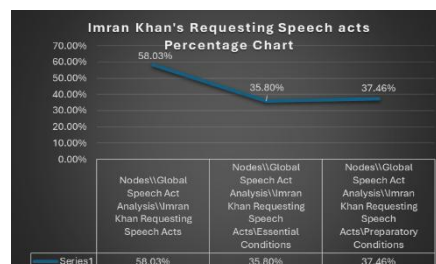


Figure 1. Imran Khan's Requesting Speech Acts Results

Table 1. Imran Khan's Speech Results

Thematic nodes	Percentage
Requesting speech acts	58.03 %
Preparatory Conditions	37.46%
Essential Conditions	35.80 %

Result

The Imran khan's speech results contain requesting speech acts **58.03%** because the sequences of requests are based on **6** references of time span in the speech on SOPs. Where he delivers the similar patterns as Jacinda Arden has delivered on requesting speech acts in her speech. The preparatory conditions also contain **6** references of time span and essential conditions have **4** references of time span. The utterances in preparatory conditions such as

Aisi cheez jis se rozgar logon ko nahin milta jis se karobar mutasir nahin hta woh her woh chheze hum ne band krr diye hain (The things that does not affect the business and employment opportunities, are closed by our government.)

The prime minister believed that the populace will not object to such shut down until it affects their jobs and business. The sequences and patterns of requesting speech acts in

essential conditions is an endeavor to get his populace to perform the action of following the SOPs to prevent COVID-19 2nd wave, e.g.,

“Yeh jo ab waqt a raha hai sardiyan a rahi hain. Jis trha hum ne pehly aik qoum ne mil kr ihtyat ki thi SOPs k oper chalay thay agar hum phir kr gaye tu InshaALLah hum apny logon ki janain bhi bacha lain gay aur apny karobar ur maeeshat ko bhi bacha lain gay take berozgari bhi na badhy pakistan main Shukriya”.

(The winter season is coming ahead. The way we work together as a nation, we take precautions by following the SOPs. If we follow the same pattern Insha’Allah, we will save the lives of our people and our economy as well so that the unemployment does not increase in Pakistan.)

There is relevance, explanation, conclusion at the same time. The situation dependency framed the subsequent speech activities, verbal exchanges contained effects in inferences naturally perform the description of the pandemic.

3.1.2. Prime Minister Jacinda Arden’s Requesting Speech Act Results

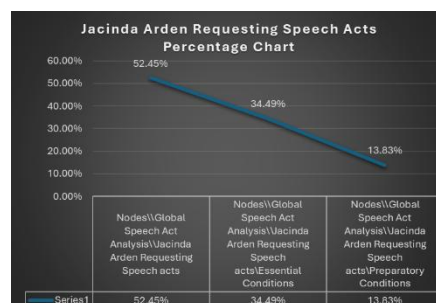


Figure 2. Jacinda Arden’s Requesting Speech Acts Result

Table 2. Jacinda Arden’s Speech Results

Thematic nodes	Percentage
Requesting speech acts	52.45 %
Preparatory Conditions	13.83 %
Essential Conditions	34.49 %

Results

The Jacinda Arden’s speech on requesting speech acts in COVID-19 contained **5** references, preparatory conditions **2** references and essential conditions 4 references of time span on NVIVO audio analysis in Table 2. These references are less than Imran Kahn’s speech of COVID-19 before 2nd wave. There are similarities in the utterance’s sequences and patterns where both the Prime Ministers used the same requesting speech acts with similar speech events by using the vocabulary under speech dependency with scarce difference of percentage (see below in discussion section). The requesting speech acts have **52.45%** results delivered in Jacinda’s speech, requesting populace to take precautionary measures and follow the SOPs e.g.

“We are asking people in Auckland to stay home to stop the spread. This means doing the simple things that you are already familiar with to prevent picking up the virus and passing them to others. First act is if you have Covid and if the people around have Covid. At level three you are asked to stay at your home in your bubble, Other than for essential movements such as going to the supermarket or local recreation”.

The preparatory conditions have low percentage **13.83%** because the speaker did not believe the hearer will do A. because there is an increase of COVID-19 cases for which the government does not have any information, so they are take further actions but in next sequence of preparatory condition they defined the area and placed level three restrictions to inform the populace to not to go there.

‘These three days will give us time to assess the situation and gather information to make sure we have widespread contact tracing. We can find out more about this case and make decisions on how to respond to it. Once we have further information’.

‘We are defining the area covered and covered by level three restrictions as a geographical boundary of the Auckland super city which extends from Wellsford in the north to pukakoi and the south’.

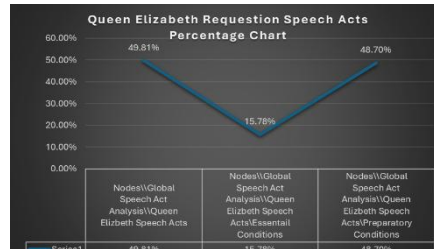
The percentage of essential conditions is **34.49%** because Jacinda Arden is putting efforts into encouraging people to perform the action which is essential for their lives. Such patterns and sequences are.

“In line with our precautionary approach, we will be asking Aucklanders to take swift action with us. As of 12 noon tomorrow Wednesday August 12th we will be moving Aukland to level 3 restrictions for a period of three days until midnight on Friday”.

3.1.3. Queen Elizabeth’s Requesting Speech Act Results

Figure 3. Queen Elizabeth’s Requesting Speech Acts Result

Table 3. Queen



Elizabeths’ Speech Results

Thematic nodes	Percentage
Requesting speech acts	49.81 %
Preparatory Conditions	48.70 %
Essential Conditions	15.78 %

Results

The Table 3 of Queen Elizabeth’s speech contains **4** references of requesting speech acts, 4 references of preparatory speech acts and **2** references of Essential conditions in the time span of audio analysis. The requesting speech acts demonstrated the highest percentage of **49.81%** in comparison to preparatory **48.70%** and essential conditions **15.78%**. The Queen has requested the populace to join once again to fight and tackle the pandemic with her during the 2nd wave.

“I am speaking to you at what I know is an increasingly challenging time. A time of disruption in the life of our country. (“Queen Elizabeth Palm Sunday Coronavirus Speech to the Kingdom (text-video)”) A disruption which has brought grief to some, financial difficulty to many and enormous changes to daily life of us all. I want to thank everyone on the NHS frontline as well as care workers and they are carrying out essential roles. who selflessly

continue their day-to-day duties outside the home in support of us all. (“Queen Elizabeth II Coronavirus Speech Transcript - Rev”)

“I am sure the nation will join me and assure you that what you do is appreciated and every hour of your hard work brings us closer to returning to more normal time. I also want to thank those of you who are staying at home. (“Queen Elizabeth's TV Broadcast About the Coronavirus Pandemic”) thereby helping to protect the vulnerable and sparing many families the pain already felt by those who have lost loved ones together we are tackling this disease and I want to reassure you that if we remain united and resolute, we will overcome it”. (“Queen Elizabeth Palm Sunday Coronavirus Speech to the Kingdom (text-video)”)

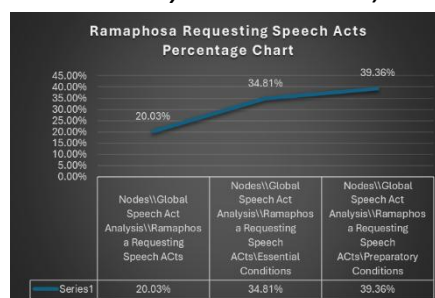
The preparatory conditions have **48.70%** results in audio analysis where the Queen believed that the hearers will adhere to her message as she appreciated the whole nation who honestly responded to the challenge of COVID-19. She is preparing the nation by giving them the references of their previous generations. This sequence of global speech acts has a global equivalent carrying the other participant’s verbal act.

“I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge and those who come after us will say the Briton of this generation were as strong as any that the attributes of self-discipline of quite good- humored resolve and a fellow- feeling still characterized this country”. (“Coronavirus: Take pride, Queen tells Britons in appeal to stay united”)

Finally, the essential conditions resulted in a low percentage **15.78%** making these speech acts effective to encourage the people of England to perform the action. When the audio analysis is considered only two references were found of the time span. The sequences of requesting speech acts in essential conditions did not make it effective to get hearer to perform the action. The essential conditions of Queen Elizebath have low percentage in comparison to Imran Khan **35.80%** and Jacinda Arden **34.49%**.

“This time we join with all nations across the globe in a common endeavor using the great advances of science and our instinctive compassion to heal”. (“The speech that became one of the greatest moments of the reign of ...”)

we will be with our friends again, we will be with our families again, we will meet again but for now I send my thanks and warmest good wishes to you all” (“Queen Elizabeth: “We should take comfort that while we may have more ...”).



3.1.4. Ramaphosa’s Requesting Speech Act Results

Figure 4. Ramaphosa’s Requesting Speech Acts Result

Table 4. Ramaphosa’s Speech Results

Thematic nodes	Percentage
Requesting speech acts	20.03 %
Preparatory Conditions	39.36 %

Results

The speech delivered by Ramaphosa in Table 4 contains the lowest percentages because of its less time duration and less content. The reference of requesting speech act is 1, preparatory conditions 3, and essential conditions are 2 in its thematic analysis of audio. The requesting speech acts have low coverage of **20.03%** of content in the results. Here once again we have the global equivalent of previously delivered utterance sequence and pattern as were delivered by Imran Khan, Jacinda Arden and Queen Elizabeth by mentioning the closure of different recreational places and areas on specific dates as their verbal acts as participants in a situation dependency relevant to COVID-19.

"In the areas with the highest rate of infection, beaches and public parks will be closed for the duration of the festive season from the 16th of December to the 3rd of January." ("Baleka Mbete Foundation - TO: ALL MEDIA ATTENTION - Facebook")

The preparatory conditions of this speech demonstrated the coverage of **39.36%** of the propositional content delivered by Ramaphosa in which he is expecting the people will follow these safety measures about different places over the festive season. The spread of pandemic has high chances if the hearer will not perform action in a regular sequence of events on his own account, so the speaker believes that while delivering the propositional content.

This will apply specifically to all the eastern cape as well as the Garden route district in western cape. And these days are the 16th of December 25th, 26th, 31st of December. As well as the 1st and the 2nd and the 3rd of January 2021. The beaches and public park of northern cape and western cape with the exception of the Garden route will remain open to the public over the festive season. ("[READ]President Cyril Ramaphosa's full speech on festive season Covid ...")

The essential conditions have 2 references of time span of audio analysis result where the propositional content is repeated because of the less time duration of delivered speech. The percentage is **34.81%** is putting the efforts to get the hearer to follow the SOPs and safety measures.

"In the areas with the highest rate of infection, beaches and public parks will be closed for the duration of the festive season from the 16th of December to the 3rd of January." ("Baleka Mbete Foundation - TO: ALL MEDIA ATTENTION - Facebook") *This will apply specifically to all of the eastern cape as well as the Garden route district in western cape.*

3.1.5. Global Speech Acts Requesting Speech Acts

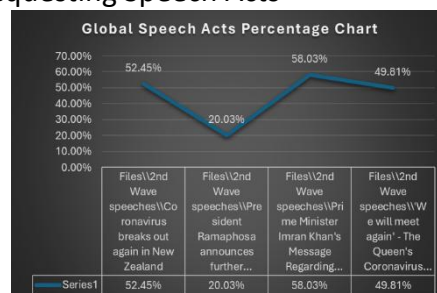
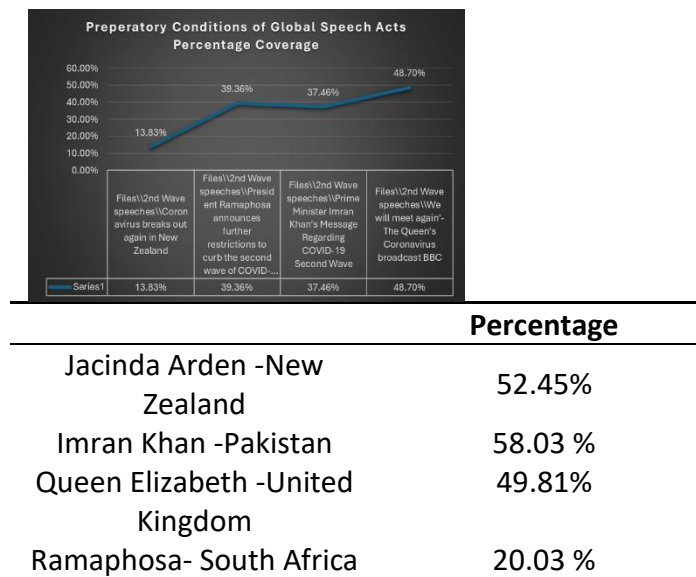


Figure 5. Global Speech Acts (Requesting)

Table 5. Global Speech Acts (Requesting) Results

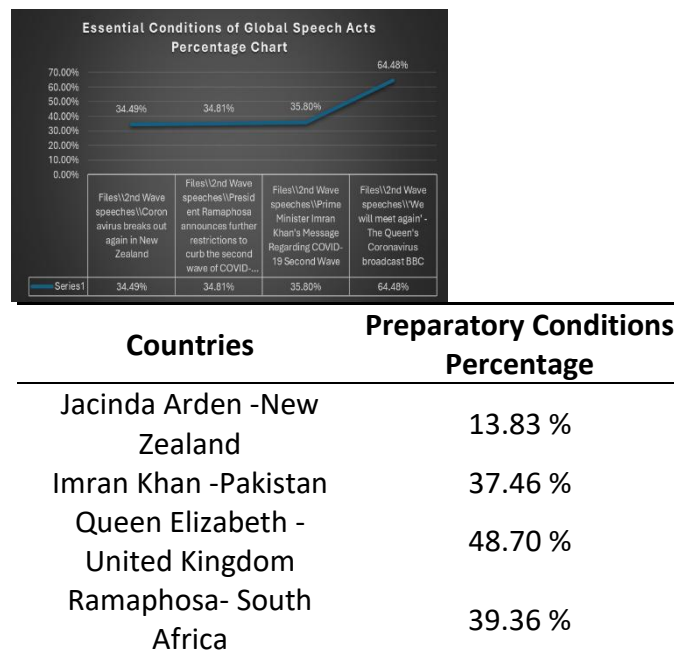
Countries	Requesting Speech Acts
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3.1.6. Preparatory Conditions of Global Speech Acts

Figure 6. Preparatory Conditions of Global Speech Acts

Table 6. Preparatory Conditions of Global Speech Acts Results



3.1.7. Essential Conditions of Global Speech Acts

Figure 7. Essential Conditions of Global Speech Acts

Table 7. Essential Conditions of Global Speech Acts

Countries	Essential Conditions Percentage
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Jacinda Arden -New Zealand	34.49 %
Imran Khan -Pakistan	35.80 %
Queen Elizabeth -United Kingdom	64.48 %
Ramaphosa- South Africa	34.81 %

Results

The results revealed that there are some similar patterns and sequences found in requesting speech acts in the speeches of presidents while asking their populace to strictly follow the SOPs. The researchers have found out some similar requests and felicity conditions of requesting speech acts that took the hearers to their propositional conditions while delivering essential conditions of requesting speech acts. In Global speech acts Prime minister Imran Khan has highest percentage of requesting speech **58.03%**, in Preparatory conditions and essential conditions, Queen Elizabeth has highest percentage of **48.70%**. Some examples are to be discussed for more effective discoveries.

Imran Khan's Requesting Speech Acts

"Aik yeh kehty hain k yeh jo Virus hai ye mutata kr gai hai yani yeh aur thodi si change hui aur yeh zyada tezi se phail rahi hai. main apni sari qoam se kehta hn k yeh hai time ehtiyat ka. SOPs, SOPs jo yeh hai k yeh jo mask hai yeh sub se asan cheeze hai. Public main jidhar bhi log jama hn agar yeh mask pehan lain jis rate pr yeh pjailti hai wama woh bada slow down ho jati hai".

[One thing they say is that this virus has mutated, meaning it has changed a little and is spreading faster. I tell my whole nation that this is the time of caution. SOPs no one SOPs which is that this mask is the easiest thing. Wherever people gather in public, if they wear this mask, the rate at which it spreads slows down a lot.]

"Lehaza factories, duikanain bilkul hum ne band nahin krni. laikin in factories, ur in Dikanon aur in karobar main ap ne SOPs follow krny hain. Hum government pori tarha ap ko daikh rahi ho gi. Main apni jo Volentery force hai, Tiger force main chahta hn k woh hemin apny mobile pr bataty rahain k kon SOPS pr follow kr raha hai aur kon nahin. bulke main awam ko kahn ga kion k asal main tu nuqsan sari qoum ko ho ga. sub ne is k oper amal krna hai".

[Therefore, we are not closing factories and shops at all. But you have to follow SOPs in these factories, shops, and businesses. The government will be watching you fully. I want my voluntary force, the Tiger Force, to keep telling us on their mobiles who is following SOPs and who is not. In fact, I will tell the people because the whole nation will suffer in reality. Everyone has to act on it.]

"Jo bhi gathering ho gi 300 se zyad log us gathering main nahin hn gay sub mask pehny gain un gatherings pe. Aur apna social distance rakhain gy. Resturants k andar is waqt hum band nahin kr rahy resturants. Bahir resturants main chal skty hain aur humary yeh jo truck resturants yah jo am dhaby jo hty hain us mai tu sub bahar baithty woh tu theek hai laikin jub band ho tu is waqt hum fasly cha rhay k sub krain aur qareeb na ain aur wahan se returants se waba na phaily (2020)". <https://youtu.be/G57Lrv8cUUw>

[There will be no gathering of more than three hundred people in any gathering, and everyone will wear masks at those gatherings and keep their social distance. We are not closing restaurants inside right now. Restaurants can run outside, and our truck restaurants

or roadside eateries are fine because everyone sits outside but when they are closed, we are asking everyone to keep their distance and not spread the epidemic from restaurants.]

Jacinda Arden's Requesting Speech

"We are asking people in Auckland to stay home to stop the spread." ("PM comments on Auckland COVID-19 case | Beehive.govt.nz") This means doing the simple things that you are already familiar with to prevent picking up the virus and or passing up to others. First act is if you have Covid and if the people around you have Covid. At level three you are asked to stay at your home in your bubble, Other than for essential movements such as going to the supermarket or local recreation.

All public facilities, bars, restaurants and businesses must close by midday tomorrow. Gatherings of more than 10 people in Auckland again will be restricted again for funerals tangihanga and wedding services only and the rest of the country gatherings of course though outline in further detail momentarily.

Please do not rush to the supermarket tonight you will recall as when we were in level three on a last occasion supermarket will be open there will be ample stock on the shelves. There is no reason that you go out and make any purchases this evening (2020). [https://youtu.be/FrPUvoM7_S0_\(2019\)](https://youtu.be/FrPUvoM7_S0_(2019)) <https://www.govt.nz/>

The comparison of both the speeches of Imran Khan and Jacinda Arden has evidence of many similar patterns and sequences of requesting speech acts that have changed the social and cultural use of language in same dependency conditions. Both the presidents have delivered the same Covid-19 precautions in the same way by requesting the populace. Furthermore, the requesting speech acts belong together in the Covid-19 situation. The requesting speech acts such as asking the populace to stay home so that the Pandemic does not spread. Second similar patterns are the supermarkets and factories are closed till tomorrow, and third similar pattern is about gathering of people as Jacinda Arden restricted gathering of 10 people, but Imran Khan mentioned 300 people, but the people must wear masks that Jacinda did not request to her populace. The condition dependency shows the relativity of speaking acts that are not suitable when used alone but could function in a series of speaking actions such as requests where there is a reason behind of that speaking action.

The findings demonstrated that the percentages of requesting speech acts are in same percentages except President Ramaphosa's speech of South Africa the speech only consists of the preparatory and essential conditions but not on requesting speech acts. The percentage of Ramaphosa's requesting Speech acts was 20.03%. According to results, Queen Elizabeth's requesting Speech Acts comprised of the percentage of 49.81%. The highest percentages of requesting speech acts were of Imran Khan 58.03% and Jacinda Arden 52.45%. The cumulative analysis of Global Speech Acts and its felicity conditions was evident that the condition dependency of Covid- 19 situation changed the social and cultural use of language.

4. Discussion

Conclusively, the literature examined multiple studies grounded in Austin and Searle's theory of speech acts, notably focusing on qualitative and quantitative analyses of various speech categories including Commissives, Directives, Assertives, and Expressives within the context of political speeches and critical discourse analysis of films. Akinwotu (2013) specifically investigated political speeches by analysing the function of language in communication and interpretation, identifying locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary forces within these speech acts. Umar (2016) further explored the speech of

President Joko Widodo at the APEC forum, emphasizing the communicative functions associated with illocutionary force and perlocutionary impacts of speech acts utilized. The results indicated the presence of nine assertive statements (stating), two expressive acts (thinking), and various commissive acts (offering and promising), while no directive or declarative speech acts were noted. The study reflected similarities with the analyses conducted by Akinwotu (2013) and (Safwat & Hashim, 2015), particularly in the prevalence of commissive, directive, and assertive speech acts; however, the percentage distributions among these findings varied significantly across the studies.

Sari and Utomo (2020) examined the types, forms, and intents of speech acts in presidential speeches regarding Covid-19 treatment. Their analysis revealed that President Joko Widodo predominantly utilized directive speech acts, characterized by multiple instances of commanding (numerous times), requesting (three times), ordering (four times), and prohibiting (once). Additionally, the speech act strategies included speaking without pleasantries (twice), engaging in positive politeness (once), and incorporating negative politeness (once). Anaekperechi (2020) analyzed the global spread of hate speech, noting the derogatory language that has tainted various platforms, particularly on social media. Wilson (2020) researched COVID-19 discourse, focusing on Jacinda Ardern's speeches, which demonstrated the use of commissive and representative illocutionary acts in line with Fairclough's discourse analysis theory.

The literature review indicates that no previous studies have focused on requesting speech acts as part of Global speech. This research aims to explore the global counterparts of Global speech acts within the verbal exchanges of another participant's speech. This analyses the sequences and structures from micro to macro, grounded in higher-level discourse. The findings suggest that when there is a situational dependency of relevance and functionality, every individual speech act corresponds to Global speech acts. The study highlights both similarities and differences in the patterns and sequences of requesting speech acts as Global speech acts in the speeches of four global leaders during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic's second wave. A comparative discussion of Imran Khan and Jacinda Ardern's speeches illustrates that each global speech function as requests possesses multiple counterparts in their rhetoric.

The research findings indicate that similar social and cultural factors influence language use during Requesting Speech acts across different countries. In the struggle against the pandemic, all nations are focusing on preserving their economies by keeping businesses, markets, and factories operational to prevent starvation. Cultural norms have also been affected, notably in contexts such as weddings and funerals, where leaders are urging smaller gatherings to adhere to health guidelines. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) including mask-wearing, social distancing, and staying at home are emphasized. The research suggests that without the high-level discourse from presidents and leaders making these requests, the potential for widespread destruction would have been significant.

Moreover, the requesting speech acts presented by the four presidents demonstrate a structured pattern and sequence due to their condition dependency. The transformation of these requesting speech acts into Global Speech Acts is influenced by factors including the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and the essential preparatory conditions inherent in speech acts. The presidents emphasized the public's successful response to the first wave of Covid-19, highlighting strict adherence to SOPs. They expressed appreciation and encouragement for essential service workers and the Tiger force in Pakistan, acknowledging their selfless contributions during both the first and second waves

of the pandemic, which continued as these duties were reengaged in response to ongoing challenges faced by the populace

The implications of this research are that the future investigations will continue to analyse the effects of the 3rd wave speeches related to Covid-19, reflecting on the implications of global speech acts aimed at implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The significance of this wave is underscored by its rapid spread, which poses a greater danger compared to the previous waves, notably the 2nd wave. There is a high probability of generating similar speech act patterns, which may influence social and cultural dynamics worldwide even to the present day. The new variant of the virus, SARS-CoV-2, identified as BA.2.86, has been circulating since August 2023. Particularly, the SOPs introduced remain consistent with those established during earlier waves of Covid-19.

5. Conclusions

Therefore, it is anticipated that as long as Covid-19 variants remain prevalent, global speech acts as requests will follow consistent patterns across all languages, regardless of social or cultural factors. In mid-February 2025, global SARS-CoV-2 activity experienced a significant rise, with an 11% positivity rate, the highest since July 2024. This surge was particularly notable in the Western Pacific, South-East Asia, and Eastern Mediterranean regions. Additionally, global seasonal influenza activity increased from October 2025, mainly attributed to Influenza A(H3N2), with certain areas in Europe and Asia reporting above-average levels of activity. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased similarities in social, cultural, and linguistic elements, observable in various sequences and patterns across many aspects of life.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

COVID-19	Coronavirus disease of 2019
NVivo	Non-versioned Information, Versatile Outcomes
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
ACE2	Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme 2
TMPRSS2	Transmembrane Serine Protease 2
IL-6	Interleukin 6
ABO	ABO blood group system (A, B, AB, O types)
HLA	Human Leukocyte Antigen
ORF	Open Reading Frame
SARS-CoV-2	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2
WHO	World Health Organization
A(H3N2)	Influenza A virus subtype H3N2
A(H1N1)pdm09	Influenza A virus subtype H1N1 (pandemic 2009 strain)
US	United States
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Ethical approval was not required for this study, as it involved exclusively the analysis of publicly available secondary data—specifically, official speeches of global leaders sourced from YouTube and converted into audio files for analysis. No human participants, recruitment, surveys, interventions, or private/identifiable data were involved in any phase of the research. Consequently, written informed consent was not applicable. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. No student images, video recordings, biometric data, personal identifiers, or AI-based monitoring data were collected, stored, or analysed at any point.

Competing interests

The author declares that they have no competing financial or non-financial interests.

Authors' Contribution

MAH contributed to conceptualization, research design, data curation, formal analysis, methodology, project administration, supervision, validation, visualization, and writing – original draft and review & editing. GD contributed to data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, software, validation, visualization, and writing – original draft and review & editing. MNC contributed to conceptualization, investigation, methodology, resources, supervision, validation, and writing – review & editing. TDS contributed to data curation, formal analysis, investigation, software, validation, visualization, and writing – original draft. KA contributed to conceptualization, methodology, project administration, resources, supervision, validation, and writing – original draft and review & editing. RSA contributed to data curation, formal analysis, investigation, validation, visualization, and writing – original draft. NKJ contributed to formal analysis, investigation, software, validation, visualization, and writing – review & editing. ZZ contributed to formal analysis, investigation, software, validation, visualization, and writing – review & editing. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Consent for publication

Not applicable. This manuscript contains no personally identifiable information, images, video recordings, or any private data of individuals. All data analysed in this study were derived from publicly available secondary sources (official speeches of global leaders from YouTube). No quotations from private individuals, school-level information, or any identifiable personal data are included in this manuscript.

Data availability

The datasets generated and/or analysed during the current study are not publicly available due to the nature of the data (audio files converted from YouTube speeches of global leaders), but are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The raw audio files and NVivo 12 Pro analysis files are stored securely by the corresponding author and can be shared subject to institutional guidelines and copyright restrictions. All YouTube video sources used for data collection are publicly accessible.

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