

The Power of Performatives in the Speech of English-Speaking Presidents

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31918/twejer.2473.54>

Published: 23/12/2024

Abstract

The origin of performative speech acts dates back to a series of lectures delivered by John Austin at Harvard University in 1955. The lectures had been collected into a book called "How to do things with words?". This study aims to search for the power behind performative utterances in the speech of English-speaking presidents. The data have been collected from eight selected YouTube videos of English-speaking presidents (Barack Obama, Donald Trump, John F. Kennedy, George W. Bush, Clinton, and Reagan). The videos are transcribed and read by the researcher to find the performative utterances. After that, qualitative content analysis has been used to analyze the speech of the selected videos. It concludes that presidents use performative utterances because of the kind of power that is associated with performative verbs; the power of persuasion and connection with the audience. Referring to performatives as a tool for persuading people makes this study important because it connects the power of language to Austin's performatives.

Keywords: *power of speech, performative speech, English-speaking presidents, power of persuasion*

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1. Introduction

Performative utterances have been introduced by Austin; after him, many linguists discussed performatives, and they became controversial. Austin wanted to make it clear that words are more than just sounds that come out of the mouth; they also carry out functions that give them strength. In his book, "How to do things with words?" Austin systematically explained that language's "performative" capacity is what gives it its "communal" power. Austin's title is a great way to sum up his idea. We use words for more than just communicating. We also use them in action. Austin used the term "performative" to describe language that was primarily used to do something, and "constative" to describe language that was primarily used to say something (Petrey, 2016). Given that performatives are commonly observed in the orations delivered by individuals occupying positions of authority or in formal public addresses, the researcher chooses to analyze the speeches delivered by presidents. In general, the main problem with performative utterances is that there is no clear line between performatives and constatives. It's not easy to detect performatives, because in some sentences they are very similar to constatives. The main purpose of this research is to analyze the speeches of English-speaking presidents, as political discourse has lots of performative verbs. Presidents employ performatives to demonstrate their power because they are in positions of authority and therefore need to convey that authority in their speeches.

This study examines performative utterances in an effort to demonstrate the power of language. As it looks for the meaning of performative speech acts in context and the kind of power that is connected with the individuals who employ them, it makes a connection between pragmatics and sociolinguistics. People can influence or persuade others by paying attention to how they speak. When they add some performative utterances to their speech, it dramatically changes how they come across and the amount of influence they have. Because there is still so much controversy around implicit performatives, the researcher is primarily focused on explicit performatives. Austin's performative speech acts have been the subject of studies in a variety of settings, but this study focuses on

the power of performatives and how they relate to political speech. The research gap is the lack of specific research on the use of performative utterances in the speeches of English-speaking presidents. While there is existing literature on performative speech acts and their theoretical foundations, there seems to be a gap in exploring how English-speaking presidents use performative utterances as a tool for persuasion and connection with their audience. Further empirical research analyzing the speeches of different presidents and examining the impact of performative utterances could provide valuable insights into the power and effectiveness of these linguistic strategies in political discourse.

Álvarez (2005) provides a landscape of J.L. Austin's linguistic philosophy, focusing on performative speech act verbs in present-day English. The researcher draws from Austin's theories to explore the conditions under which certain speeches can constitute a speech act. The theory of speech acts, as detailed in Austin's work "How to Do Things with Words," is discussed, emphasizing the importance of felicity and the potential failures that may occur, such as misfires or abuses. Blok (2013) reflects on the nature of ethical oaths for bankers, economists, and managers, considering them as successful instruments to ensure responsible behaviour. The article introduces a performative concept of ethical oaths based on John Austin's speech act theory. It emphasizes the existential self-performative aspect demanded by the public context, as well as the potential threats to the felicity of ethical oaths. Mayes et al. (2016) explore conflicts of interest (COI) in academic research and medical practice, considering the descriptive and normative questions surrounding their declaration and evaluation. The article proposes understanding COI declarations and accusations as performatives, using J.L. Austin's performative speech-act theory. Mabaquiao (2018) traces the development of speech act theory from J.L. Austin's initial formulation to John Searle's further improvements. The essay situates the theory in the broader context of the philosophy of language and explains its main features. It highlights Searle's contributions, including the distinction between utterance and propositional acts, the differentiation between the effects of illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, a consistent set of criteria for classifying speech acts, and the grounding of speech acts in rules and facts.

The literature review highlights the existing research gap surrounding the use of performative utterances in the speeches of English-speaking presidents. Although the theoretical foundations of performative speech acts have been studied in previous research, there is a lack of specific research on how presidents use these linguistic techniques to persuade and connect with their audience. The mentioned articles provide insights into related areas such as the conditions and failures of speech acts, the use of ethical oaths as performative instruments, and the understanding of conflicts of interest as performatives.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory appeared as a result of Austin's dissatisfaction with the fallacy of description. He believed that language is not only a tool for description as scholars placed too much importance on it. There are things that can be done with language without being aware of them. Austin thought that talking about language only as a tool for description underestimates human language. Austin in "How to do Things with Words?" develops new ideas and talks about speech acting as something that confuses linguists (Chapman, 2011). It seems that Austin insists on the importance of researching language and the ambiguous things about language like performative speech acts.

Speech acts consist of three acts that are related together: the first act is locutionary; producing a meaningful linguistic expression is regarded as a locutionary act. A second act is an illocutionary act; it is the main reason or aim that pushes the speaker to produce the utterance. The third one is the perlocutionary act; it is the effect of the utterance on the listener. The illocutionary act which is the force that leads to the production of an utterance has been discussed by many scholars or linguists. Even the term speech act is generally interpreted quite narrowly to mean only the illocutionary force of an utterance. The most obvious device for indicating the illocutionary force (Illocutionary Force Indicating Device, IFID) is a performative verb. Performative verbs are very clear IFIDs because they draw attention to the illocutionary forces of utterances (Yule, 1996). Searle (1976) believes that the illocutionary act is the fundamental building block of human linguistic communication. The speaker's intention drives the production of an utterance that has an impact on the listener, making the illocutionary force the primary act.

2.2 Language and Power Relationship

It is not easy to define power as power is related to different aspects of human life. The power of language is not only related to the linguistic structure or communicative style; it is related to social identity, and social features like role relationships and interpersonal significance (Ball, 2005). Power is often understood to be the capacity to direct or influence others to behave in a certain way. It is important to look at specific codes, norms of interaction, rules for decision-making, turn-taking, making contributions, and interventions in order to comprehend power in discourse, which deals with conflicts over various meaning interpretations. Power is not something that comes from language, but it may be subverted, managed, and dispersed in numerous ways. Power is expressed through language while also being concealed by it. Finding the variations in power or the power relationships between people can be done with the use of language analysis (Susilowati & Ulkhasanah, 2021). If two politicians with the same status speak for people, the one who speaks carefully and

confidently will gain the acceptance of the people. Not only in politics but in most careers language plays an important role in being accepted by others. Power is in everything, especially language. The meticulous search for power in every field of linguistics is one of the requirements for linguists.

The relationship between language and power is a topic of intense discussion, particularly in the fields of sociolinguistics, critical linguistics, and critical discourse analysis. Who dominates or controls conversations, the relationships between social groups in terms of power, and the power of language itself are just a few examples of how power is theorized and analyzed (Swann et al., 2004). It can be said that one person always has the upper hand in a conversation, whether it be because of the person's social identity or the language they employ. According to Hudson (1996), the words that speakers choose reveal the status of listeners (superior, inferior, or equal). If language makes humans gain social acceptance, they need to do much research and investigations about language. It is to their advantage to learn about the proper techniques in language to have power and confidence in every aspect of life.

2.3 Political Speech

Politicians are the people who know more about the power of language than others. Politicians represent political groups, governments, and sometimes nations, so they care about their language. They can't say what they want because the words that come out of their mouth might affect a whole nation and affect their position within their society (Irimiea 2010). The main aim of politicians' speeches is to persuade people to support them. They can't force people, but they try their best to persuade them by choosing appropriate words and sentences or persuasion techniques. One of the techniques is the use of the pronoun 'I'; although the pronoun 'I' makes the speech more subjective, it can show the power and authority of the speaker. At the same time the pronoun 'I' creates a connection between the speaker and the audience. Another use of the pronoun 'I' is the commitment and involvement of the speaker to the audience. The pronoun 'We' is usually used to express a sense of collective responsibility (Håkansson, 2012). Another technique is the use of 'present tense' instead of past or future. Politicians use the present tense because they want to appear confident; using past or future tenses inserts a distance between the speaker and the audiences which make them seem less confident (Stelzner, 2023). The use of performative verbs or explicit performatives by politicians or more specifically presidents is because of the kind of power that is associated with them.

Leading politicians communicate with the public through speeches, and computers and television have undoubtedly made it simpler for people around the world to access those speeches. Even though the audience is an important component of political speeches these days, the actual audience consists of the millions of people who read the speeches in the newspapers, hear them on the radio, and watch them on television or YouTube videos. Professional speechwriters typically write the speeches in advance for the speakers. Political speeches are rarely broadcast in their entirety. Instead, only selected portions of the speeches—often referred to as soundbites—are broadcast. The soundbites are always pre-selected by experts (Beard, 2000). Politicians give the impression that they can relate to the audience's needs, wants, and interests. They present themselves in this manner in an effort to be viewed as capable national leaders, or good politicians. Politicians can successfully persuade the audience to agree with them by using the language they use to address themselves, their audience, and their opposition in their speeches. Using particular personal pronouns to refer to oneself or others on purpose is one way to do this (Allen, 2007). Performatives that Austin suggests are great language tools for showing self-confidence and certainty. But what are performatives? Let's move to performatives and know some information about them.

2.4 Performatives

Performatives are utterances and actions at the same time (Corredor, 2009; Chapman, 2011; Bublitz & Norrick, 2011). Austin in his book "How to Do Things with Words?" differentiates between two types of utterances which he calls constatives and performatives. The statements that describe or talk about the world are constative utterances; constative utterances are either true or false, so they need to go under truth conditional verification. On the other hand, performative utterances don't need to go under truth-conditional verification because they don't describe anything. Performatives can't be true or false but they can be happy or unhappy. Constatives are only utterances that are either true or false, while performatives are utterances and actions at the same time. So, producing performative utterances might make the speaker happy as they are actions as well. The distinction between performatives and constatives is the doing and saying distinction (Álvarez, 2005; Mabaquiao, 2018). Chapman (2011) further explains that performative utterances need felicity conditions in order to be successful. Felicity conditions mean the appropriate participants, words, and intentions of the speaker. These utterances are not common in

everyday speech but in very formal situations like swearing, promising, declarations, legal things, et al.

Let's give an example of the distinction between performatives and constatives, the answer to a question like "What are you doing?" will be "I am writing - I am working - I am eating". These answers will be either true or false depending on the facts of the situation at hand. When we compare those verbs with these other sets of verbs, like "To invite - To promise - To swear - To apologize - To guarantee" We will discover that these later sets of verbs are non-descriptive when they are used in the present tense (Onwuegbusi, 2019). Performative utterances perform the action when they are uttered by the speaker, and this is opposite to constatives in which the action may need some time in order to happen after the production of the utterance.

Explicit and implicit are two types of performative utterances (Cerqueiro, 2017). This study deals with the explicit performatives or the performatives that undergo the performative hypothesis and have all the requirements of clear performative utterances. The explicit performative hypothesis is that there must be a performative verb and the verb must be in the present tense, the subject must be first person singular 'I', an indirect object in the second person singular ('you'), and finally the insertion of the adverb 'hereby' without changing the meaning. Sometimes there is an adverb between the subject and the verb, but it is still considered as an explicit performative. For example, "I hereby admit to you that I'm wrong.", "I honestly admit to you that I'm wrong." (Yule, 1996; Álvarez, 2005). Performatives make the listener's task easier because they don't require much work on their part because they are illocutionary acts in and of themselves and don't require decoding on the part of the listener. The explicit performatives are actions as well because they openly convey the speaker's intention. The performative verb makes everything very plain to the listener.



FIGURE 1: EXPLICIT PERFORMATIVE HYPOTHESIS (PH) BY ROSS IN 1970

The Explicit Performative Hypothesis (PH), which facilitates the identification of explicit performatives, is depicted in the figure above. Ross first proposed this idea in 1970, and it was extensively discussed by Yule (1996) and Alvarez (2005). Therefore, the researcher created the figure in accordance with what Yule and Alvarez claimed about the Explicit Performative Hypothesis.

2.5 Classification of Performative Speech Acts

Depending on the actions they carry out, Austin and Searle classified performatives. Their classifications resemble one another in some way. For each type of performative speech act, they have different terms. When referring to the speaker's commitment to future actions, Austin and Searle both use the term 'commissive'. They use different terms for the other performative speech acts; Austin uses 'Exercitives', while Searle uses 'Directives', Austin uses 'Behabitives', on the other hand, Searle uses 'Expressives', Austin uses 'Verdictives', but Searle uses 'Declaration', Austin uses 'Expositives', while Searle uses 'Representatives'.

Austin (1962) gives the following classification in his book "How to Do Things with Words?":

1. Commissives are used to bind a speaker to a specific course of action. Such words as 'promise', 'undertake', 'covenant', 'bind me', 'contract', and 'give my word' come to mind.

2. Explosives are used to reveal the speaker's intent. Using phrases like 'I turn next to', 'I quote', 'I cite', 'I recapitulate', 'I repeat that', and 'I mention that', for instance.
3. Exercitives are used to exercise power or exert influence. E.g.: 'appoint', 'dismiss', 'degrade', 'excommunicate', 'demote', and 'name'.
4. Behabitives are used to express the speakers' feelings. E.g.: apologize, thank, deplore, criticize, commiserate, compliment, condole, congratulate, and sympathize.
5. Verdictives are employed in the practice of judgment. For instance, 'acquit', 'convict', 'reckon', 'place', 'grade', 'assess', and 'estimate'.

On the other hand, Searle (1976) presented the following taxonomy of performatives because he believed that Austin's taxonomy needs more development. Searle presented his classification after Austin, and he believed that although Austin's classification has some weak points, it's a great opportunity for more research.

1. Representative acts represent or show the ideas or beliefs of the speaker about a particular topic. The speaker asserts his opinion clearly (asserting, concluding, etc.).
2. Directives are attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something (requesting, questioning, etc.).
3. Commissive speech acts commit the speaker to some future actions (promising, threatening, and offering).
4. Expressive acts express the psychological state of the speaker (thanking, apologizing, welcoming, and congratulating).
5. Declaration speech acts are used on purpose by the speaker to bring about immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs (declaring war, christening, firing from employment, and naming).



FIGURE 2: AUSTIN'S CLASSIFICATION OF PERFORMATIVES

The taxonomy of performative speech acts by Austin (1962) is depicted in the above figure. Each Speech act is well demonstrated with examples. Since visuals are often important for learning, the researcher made the graphic to make it simpler to understand the classification of performative speech acts.

3. Methodology

This study aimed to uncover the significance of performative speech acts used by presidents of English-speaking nations. The study seeks answers to the following questions: Why do presidents use performatives in their speeches? And how do performatives and power relate to one another? To answer the questions, the researcher looked for YouTube videos about presidential speeches. Eight YouTube videos have been selected and carefully transcribed. The videos were of six English-speaking presidents (Barack Obama, Donald Trump, John F. Kennedy, George W. Bush, Clinton, and Reagan). The specific YouTube videos of US presidential speeches were chosen in this study because they provide relevant and representative examples of performative utterances used by English-speaking presidents. The selection of these videos allows for a comprehensive analysis of different presidents across different time periods. The choice of Barack Obama, Donald Trump, John F. Kennedy, George W. Bush, Clinton, and Reagan as the presidents whose speeches were included is based on their significance and influence as presidents of the United States. These presidents have all held positions of power and have delivered numerous speeches, making them well-suited for the study's focus on the use of

performatives by those in positions of power. By analyzing speeches from multiple presidents, the study aims to capture a range of styles, rhetoric, and contexts in which performative utterances are employed. This approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of how performatives function in political discourse and how they relate to the exercise of power.

The researcher has read through the transcriptions numerous times in an effort to identify performative utterances. Qualitative content analysis is used to record and examine the performative-containing parts. Mayring (2000) clarifies that content analysis is used for discourses, interviews, videotapes, observations, documents, movies, and others. It can be used as a valid and reliable method for making inferences from texts. Zhang and Wildemuth (2005) see content analysis as the most widely used tool for analysis in different fields. Through content analysis, the researcher can uncover the hidden meanings of written and spoken sounds, words, and sentences. Qualitative content analysis is an effective method for approaching texts, videos, audio, and other forms of spoken and written discourse. It allows the researcher to search for the deep meaning or the meaning beyond words that need a lot of thinking and mental energy. The researcher has chosen this method in order to present deep insights about the speeches of presidents and present the hidden meanings of performative utterances. Each performative has been selected and documented in context as a quotation. There are eight videos about presidential speeches that have been analyzed.

3.1 Data Analysis

Data 1

Barack Obama's speech:

Barack Obama in a celebration of the past and future of the security alliance between the United States and Australia, on November 17, 2011, uses some performative verbs in his speech. He used verbs like 'thank' and 'pledge'. It is necessary to test the performative hypothesis PH on the verbs. Depending on the performative hypothesis, 'we pledge' is not an explicit performative utterance. It starts with the first person plural pronoun 'we', the verb is not in the present tense, and we can't insert 'hereby' between the verb and the subject. 'thank' is an explicit performative verb that successfully undergoes all the requirements of being an explicit performative. According to Austin's classification, 'I thank' is a behabitive performative.

"I **thank** the people of Darwin for the incredibly warm welcome, and I am proud to be the first U.S president ever to visit the Northern Territory". "We pledged our collective defence for the preservation of peace and security, and that's a promise we have kept ever since."

Data 2

Barack Obama's Speech

Barack Obama in his inaugural address on the 20th of January, 2009 used verbs like 'thank', 'proclaim', and 'understand'. Depending on the performative hypothesis, proclaim and understand are not explicit performatives, but 'thank' is an explicit performative. It has the first person singular subject 'I', and the utterance is in the present simple tense. If we insert 'hereby', it gives the same meaning "I hereby thank President Bush." According to Austin's classification of performatives, 'thank' is a behabitive performative verb.

“My fellow citizens, I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed mindful. Now the sacrifice is borne by our ancestors. I **thank** President Bush for his service toward our nation, as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.” “On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict in this score on this day. We come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises.” “In reaffirming the greatness of our nations, we understand that greatness is never given, it must be earned. Our journey has never been one of shortcuts or settling for less.”

Data 3

Donald Trump's speech

Donald Trump in his Inauguration speech uses verbs like 'take an oath' and 'understand'. Depending on the performative hypothesis, 'understand' is not an explicit performative, but 'take an oath' is an explicit performative. It has the first person singular subject 'I', and the utterance is in the present simple tense. If we insert 'hereby', it gives the same meaning as 'I hereby take an oath.' On the other hand, 'we understand' is not an explicit performative because it starts with the subject 'we'. According to Austin's classification of performative speech acts, 'take an oath' is a commissive performative verb because it's related to future commitments.

“The **oath** of office I **take** today is an oath of allegiance to all Americans. For many decades we've enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry subsidising the armies of other countries while allowing for the very sad depletion of our military.” “Finally we must think big and dream even bigger in America. We understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving. We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action constantly complaining, but never doing anything about it.”

Data 4

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

President John F. Kennedy in his Inaugural Address used verbs like 'swear', 'pledge', and 'hope'. Depending on the performative hypothesis, 'pledge' and 'hope' are not explicit performatives because they start with the pronoun 'we', but 'swear' is an explicit performative. It has the first person singular subject 'I', and the utterance is in the present simple tense. If we insert 'hereby', it gives the same meaning "I hereby solemnly swear." Although there is an adverb (solemnly) between the subject and the verb, as Yule (1995) and Alvarez (2005) say sometimes there is an adverb between the subject and the verb without affecting the explicitness of the performative utterance. According to Austin's classification of performative speech acts, 'swear' is a commissive performative speech act.

"I John Fitzgerald Kennedy do solemnly **swear** that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States." "We share, we pledge, the loyalty of faithful friends United. There is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures divided there is little." "We shall always **hope** to find them strongly supporting their own freedom and to remember that in the past those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside those people in the huts and villages."

Data 5

President George W. Bush

President George W. Bush in his Inaugural Address 2001 uses verbs like 'thank', 'know', 'ask', and 'reclaim'. Depending on the performative hypothesis, 'reclaim' is not explicit performative because it starts with the subject pronoun 'we', but 'thank', 'know', and 'ask' are explicit performatives. They start with the first person singular subject 'I', and they are in the present simple tense. If we insert 'hereby', nothing changes in their performative acts "I hereby thank Vice President", "I hereby know", "I hereby ask you". According to Austin's classification of performative speech acts, 'thank' and 'know' are behabitive performative speech acts as they state the speaker's intention, and 'ask' is an exercitive performative verb.

"I **thank** Vice President Gore for a contest conducted with spirit and ended with grace." "This is my solemn pledge. I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity. I **know** this was within our reach, because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves who creates us equal in His image, and we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward." "Together, we will reclaim America's schools before ignorance and apathy claim more young lives."

We will reform Social Security and Medicare sparing our children from struggles.” “I **ask** you to be citizens, not spectators, citizens not subjects. Responsible citizens building communities of service and a nation of character. Americans are generous and strong and decent not because we believe in ourselves, but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves.”

Data 6

President Clinton

President Clinton in his Inaugural Address in 1993 used verbs like 'salute', 'thank', and 'challenge'. Depending on the performative hypothesis, 'salute', 'thank', and 'challenge' are explicit performatives because they start with the singular pronoun 'I', and they are in the present simple tense. If we insert 'hereby', nothing changes in their performative acts "I hereby thank the millions of men and women", and "I hereby challenge a new generation". According to Austin's classification of performative speech acts, 'thank' is a behabitive performative speech act, 'salute' is a behabitive performative speech act, and 'challenge' is a commissive performative speech act.

“I **salute** my predecessor President Bush for his half-century of service to America, and I **thank** the millions of men and women whose steadfastness and sacrifice triumphed over depression fascism and communism.” “I **challenge** a new generation of young Americans to a season of service, to act on your idealism by helping troubled children keeping company with those in need, reconnecting our torn communities.”

Data 7

President George H. W. Bush

President George H. W. Bush in his Inaugural Address 1989 uses verbs like 'thank', and 'ask'. Depending on the performative hypothesis 'thank', and 'ask' are explicit performatives because they start with the singular pronoun 'I', they are in the present simple tense. If we insert 'hereby', nothing changes in their performative acts "I hereby thank you", and "I hereby ask you to bow". According to Austin's classification of performative speech acts, 'thank' is a behabitive speech act and 'ask' is an exercitive performative verb.

“There is a man here who has earned a lasting place in our hearts and in our history. President Reagan on behalf of our nation, I **thank** you for the wonderful things that you have done for America.” “I **ask** you to bow your heads. Heavenly Father we bow our heads and thank you for your love. Accept our thanks for the peace that yields this day and the shared faith that makes its

continuance likely make us strong to do your work willing to heed and hear your will and write on our hearts.”

Data 8

President Reagan

PRESIDENT REAGAN IN THE STATE OF THE UNION SPEECH IN 1986 USED 'HOPE', 'KNOW', 'ASK', AND 'BELIEVE'. DEPENDING ON THE PERFORMATIVE HYPOTHESIS 'HOPE', 'KNOW', 'ASK', AND 'BELIEVE' ARE EXPLICIT PERFORMATIVES BECAUSE THEY START WITH THE SINGULAR PRONOUN 'I', THEY ARE IN THE PRESENT SIMPLE TENSE. IF WE INSERT 'HEREBY', NOTHING CHANGES IN THEIR PERFORMATIVE ACTS “I HEREBY HOPE THAT”, “I HEREBY KNOW”, “I HEREBY ASK YOU”, AND “I HEREBY BELIEVE”. ACCORDING TO AUSTIN'S CLASSIFICATION OF PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACTS, 'HOPE' IS A COMMISSIVE PERFORMATIVE, 'KNOW' AND 'BELIEVE' ARE BEHAVITIVE PERFORMATIVES, AND 'ASK' IS AN EXERCITIVE PERFORMATIVE.

“We pause together to mourn and honour the valour of our seven challenger heroes, and I **hope** that we're now ready to do what they would want us to do. Go forward America and reach for the stars.” “Mr. Speaker you know, I **know**, and the American people know the federal budget system is broken.” “Tonight, I **ask** you to give me what 43 governors already have given me a line-item veto this year. Give me the authority to veto waste, and I'll take the responsibility.” “I **believe** our tax rate cuts for the people have done more to spur a spirit of risk-taking and help America's economy break free than any program since John Kennedy's tax cut almost a quarter century ago.”

4. Results and Discussion

The main aim of the study was to search for the power behind performative utterances in the speech of English-speaking presidents. In the data analysis, many performative utterances have been detected by the researcher but only a few of them were explicit performatives. The following performative verbs have been used by the presidents in their speeches to people: 'thank', 'salute', 'know', and 'believe' are behabitive performative speech acts, 'take an oath' and 'swear', 'challenge', and 'hope' are commissive performative speech acts, and 'ask' is an exercitive performative speech act. These performative verbs show that the speeches of presidents are not only for exercising power over their nation, but they speak to people to express their feelings or intentions, and sometimes they speak to people in order to give them promise and hope. In all the videos, the presidents start by thanking their people, so as to make a strong

connection with their audience. After that, they give hope to their audience by promising them their commitment to future actions. The analyzed data also highlights instances where performatives are not explicit, such as verbs like 'understand', 'pledge', 'know', and 'hope', as they start with pronouns other than the first person singular. These verbs can still be regarded as performative speech acts but do not fulfil the requirements of explicit performatives. Instead, they convey commitments, intentions, or expressions of attitudes.

Austin was the first one who talked about felicitous and infelicitous conditions. All the explicit performative speech acts that have been selected in the speeches of presidents are felicitous or appropriate because they have been uttered in very formal situations, by appropriate speakers (presidents), to appropriate audiences, and in appropriate contexts. The presidents seem to use performative speech acts as a technique for persuading their people to support them and vote for them. The use of the first person pronoun 'I' shows the power of the speaker and his connection with the audience. Using present tense instead of past or future is another technique that shows the confidence of the speaker and his close relationship with the audience. As Austin believes performative utterances are not easy to understand because they need a lot of thinking to differentiate them from constatives. The Performative Hypothesis PH was extremely useful for the researcher to find out many explicit performative speech acts. The findings suggest that English-speaking presidents employ performative utterances in their speeches as a means to connect with their audience and exert the power associated with performatives. These performatives serve persuasive purposes by creating a sense of unity, expressing gratitude, making pledges or promises, and setting forth future commitments.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of performative utterances in the speeches of presidents who spoke English. Performative utterances are used in formal settings by specified individuals in proper roles; they cannot be utilized in every circumstance, but there are circumstances under which speakers may use them. Presidents are able to use performative utterances in their speeches because they have the ability to make them felicitous and appropriate. Performatives are important for them to appear self-assured and powerful without resorting to force. They employ performative speech acts to influence their audience. They are aware of the influence that performatives have. Therefore, one way to demonstrate what people can do with words is through performative speech acts. Performatives tell us how powerful language is if it is used with correct intentions. Performatives were

first discussed by Austin, and as a result, other researchers have been able to pursue their studies in this area. It is recommended to learn more about performative speech acts because there may be a lot of undiscovered information about them.

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ملخص

يعود أصل الأفعال الكلامية الأدائية إلى سلسلة من المحاضرات التي ألقاها جون أوستن في جامعة هارفارد عام ١٩٥٥. وقد تم جمع المحاضرات في كتاب بعنوان "كيف نفعل الأشياء بالكلمات؟". تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى البحث عن القوة وراء العبارات الأدائية في خطاب الرؤساء الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية. تم جمع البيانات من ثمانية مقاطع فيديو مختارة على موقع يوتيوب لرؤساء ناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية (باراك أوباما، ودونالد ترامب، وجون ف. كينيدي، وجورج دبليو بوش، وكلينتون، وريغان). قام الباحث بنسخ مقاطع الفيديو وقراءتها للعثور على العبارات الأدائية. بعد ذلك، تم استخدام تحليل المحتوى النوعي لتحليل خطاب مقاطع الفيديو المختارة. وخلصت إلى أن الرؤساء يستخدمون العبارات الأدائية بسبب نوع القوة المرتبطة بالأفعال الأدائية؛ قوة الإقناع والاتصال بالجمهور. إن الإشارة إلى العبارات الأدائية كأداة لإقناع الناس يجعل هذه الدراسة مهمة لأنها تربط قوة اللغة بالعبارات الأدائية لأوستن. الكلمات المفتاحية: قوة الكلام، الكلام الأدائي، الرؤساء الناطقون باللغة الإنجليزية، قوة الإقناع

پوخته

سەرچاوهی کردموهی قسهکردنی ئەنجامدەر دهگهرینهوه بۆ زنجیرهیهک وتار که له لایهن جۆن ئۆستینهوه له زانکۆی هارفارد له سالێ ١٩٥٥ پێشکەشکرا بوو. وتارمکان کۆکرا بوونهوه بۆ کتێبیک به ناوی "چۆن شتهکان به وشهکان بکهین؟". ئەم توێژینهوهیه ئامانجی گهڕانه بهدوای هێزی پشت قسهکردنی ئەدای له قسهی سەرۆکه ئینگلیزی زمانهکاندا. داتاكان له ههشت قیدیوی ههلبژێردراوی یوتیوبی سەرۆکه ئینگلیزی زمانهکان (باراک ئوباما، دونالد ترمپ، جۆن ئیف کینیدي، جورج دبليو بوش، کلینتون و ریگان) کۆکرا و نهتهوه. قیدیوكان له لایهن توێژمرهوه دهووسرینهوه و دهخویندرینهوه بۆ دۆزینهوهی گوتاره نمایشیهکان. دواى ئەوه شیکاری ناوهرۆکی چۆنایهتی بهکارهێنراوه بۆ شیکردنهوهی قسهی قیدیو ههلبژێردراوهکان. بهو ئەنجامه دهگا که سەرۆکهکان گوتاری ئەدای بهکاردههێنن بههۆی ئەو جۆره دهسهلاتهیه که پهيوهسته به کرداره ئەنجامدەر مکهانهوه؛ هێزی پرازیکردن و پهيوهندی لهگهڵ بینهدا. ئاماژەکردن به ئەنجامدەر مکان وەک ئامرازیک بۆ پرازیکردنی خهڵک، ئەم لایکۆلینهوهیه گرنهگ دهکات، چونکه هێزی زمان به نمایشکار مکهانی ئۆستینهوه دهپهستینهوه. وشهیه سهرمهکی: هێزی قسهکردن، قسهکردنی ئەنجامدەر، سەرۆکه ئینگلیزی زمانهکان، هێزی پرازیکردن.