Speech Act Patterns in Inaugural Speeches:
A Cross-Cultural Examination through Searle's Framework

Antonious S. Mounir

Vitebsk State University, Vitebsk, Belarus

ABSTRACT

In this paper, a collection of inaugural speeches from various countries — Belarus, Egypt, and the UK — was examined as a way to ascertain whether there are variations within this genre in various cultures. This study is an analysis of speech act patterns in different inaugural speeches, which is of great linguistic and cultural significance, and the author has conducted a thorough analysis based on an appropriate method. It identifies a research gap in the comprehensive cross-cultural analysis of inaugural speeches – previously overlooked within the framework of speech act theory. The study aims to analyse the occurrence and functions of speech acts in inaugural speeches across distinct cultural and political contexts, emphasising assertives and commissives as the predominant speech acts.

The paper is geared toward a detailed analysis, and to expand the limits of the generalisability of the findings, we selected speeches from various time periods and contexts to offer a more comprehensive view. The analysis of these speeches revealed that they differ from one another. Our findings show that commissives were predominant in Sunak's speech, whereas assertives were dominant in the other speeches. The findings contribute to political discourse analysis by revealing how leaders strategically use speech acts, such as Sunak's emphasis on commissives, to align their rhetoric with political goals. Future research should examine more inaugural addresses across diverse cultures.

KEYWORDS: speech act theory, inaugural speech, discourse, the illocutionary act, perlocutionary effect

1. INTRODUCTION

Austin (1962) identified three components of speech acts: *the illocutionary act* (the act of saying something); *the illocutionary force* (the performance of an act of saying something); and *the perlocutionary impact*, which is saying something that will often, even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, and actions of the audience. Since the illocutionary act is regarded as the actual action performed by the utterance, the impact of the speech on the audience is reflected by *the perlocutionary effect*. The term '*speech act*' is commonly used currently to refer to an illocutionary act or force expressing the intended effect. The core of Austin's theory was *the illocutionary act*. Despite its focus on pragmatics, this theory cannot be comprehended on its own. For successful communication, individuals should improve their language skills, including vocabulary and grammar, as well as their understanding of the world outside language. Furthermore, in both the creation and interpretation of some statements, *non-linguistic* knowledge is fundamental. Correspondingly, within the *pragmatics* discipline, these circumstances are all examined, including: (1) The ability of the speaker to communicate; (2) the interaction involving the speaker and the listeners; and (3) their choice of linguistic forms.

Further, the *speech act theory* (*SAT*) was adapted and put into practice by Searle (1969) in his significant work, *Speech Acts*. According to Searle, *speech acts* are the fundamental building blocks of linguistic communication. *Speech acts* can take the form of a word, phrase, sentence,

or sound, but they should effectively accomplish expressing the user's intention. Consequently, to fully understand a speech act, one must comprehend the user's intention. Later, Searle (1979), in his book *Expression and Meaning*, instead of concentrating on performative verbs, distinguishes twelve dimensions of variation that set *illocutionary acts* apart from one another. Nonetheless, he identified two main components upon which his *taxonomy* is based: (1) the *direction of fit* and (2) the *illocutionary point*. Searle argued that language is not just a tool for describing reality; it also serves to perform various acts. However, Searle's *illocutionary point* was part of Austin's *illocutionary act*.

The fundamental differences in perspective between Austin and Searle regarding language use and classification of *speech acts* lead to the major distinction in the *SAT*: Austin, known for his emphasis on *performative language*, studied how language is used to perform actions rather than convey information. Searle, importantly, introduced another dimension of *speech act* categorisations by differentiating between the use of *utterance* and *propositional acts*, highlighting the importance of *illocutionary intentions* in *speech acts* (Oishi, 2006; Mabaquiao, 2018). Austin initially introduced two categories of verbs: *performatives* and *constatives*, with *performatives* representing the actions intended by speakers. In contrast, Searle distinguished the *proposition act* as being divided into two separate forms: *Reference acts* and *acts of predication*; therefore, widening the scope of the *speech act* analysis beyond Austin's original theoretical framework. Also, Austin explores the dynamics between discourse manifestation and linguistic conventions necessary for effective *speech acts*, defining social conventions as key conditions that show how language mirrors social norms. Searle, on the other hand, stressed that the speaker's intention is crucial for performing different *speech acts*, suggesting that these acts vary based on the speaker's goals to alter the listener's mindset in multiple ways (Harris & McKinney, 2021).

The *SAT* is a subject of primary interest in philosophy, linguistics, social science, psychology, and political discourse. The foundations of the *SAT* in comparative linguistics involve (1) examining how *speech acts* are classified, (2) the philosophical and linguistic perspectives that underpin this theory, and (3) the linguistic principles that support it. Some scholars have attempted to broaden Searle's classification of *speech acts*. Bach and Harnish (1979, p. 40) further developed the *SAT* and adopted a model of synthesis in which a communicative *speech act* involves four sub-acts. Furthermore, Grice (1996, 1971) placed the *SAT* on a more abstract

level; the philosophical focus being on language use as not just a performative aspect of communication but of verbal action within social interactions. Linguistics has shown the significance of *speech acts* in structuring the parameters of argumentative interactions in science – influencing scientists' reflections on advocacy within this theoretical framework (Duke & Jones, 1985; Kauffeld, 2012; Henkemans, 2014). Tsohatzidis (2002) enhanced our understanding of the *SAT* by bridging philosophy and linguistics – emphasising its importance in understanding meaning, *semantics*, and *pragmatics*. In *comparative linguistics*, scholars examine how speech acts, such as requesting, promising, and thanking are performed in various languages – considering cultural nuances and *pragmatic* dimensions that influence communication (Bayat, 2013). The *SAT* becomes a revealing tool for the analysis of utterances that politicians use in political speeches – explaining how speakers strategically deploy different *speech acts* to convey their messages; influence voters; and impact public perception in the political sphere (Hashim, 2015; Dylgjeri, 2017; Aditiawarman & Agustriawan, 2022; Oder, 2023). From a *pragmatic* angle, Reiter and Placencia (2005) have contributed to the *SAT* by exploring language at the utterance level – emphasising the *pragmatic* aspects of *speech acts* and their relationship to actions performed through language. The current study is consistent to some extent with earlier work on speech act analysis carried out by numerous researchers in different countries (Sameer, 2017; Kyei et al., 2020; Demuyakor, 2021; Essel et al., 2021).

   Despite extensive research on political discourse, comparative cross-cultural studies on inaugural speeches using the *SAT* remain scarce. This gap is significant because inaugural speeches are a valuable genre for *speech act* analysis, given their performative nature, where leaders use language to establish authority, outline commitments, and appeal to public trust. Thus, the paper aims to address the gap in research on linguistic, cultural, and political contexts by employing the *SAT*, which is a promising basis for a scholarly study. To address this gap, we selected *inaugural speeches* across various *cultural* and *political contexts* that signify an orientation towards a broad and inclusive approach, aiming to bridge *academic theory* with practical analysis. By undertaking this research, it is assumed that a more comprehensive understanding of the role of *speech acts* in *political discourse*, as well as their cultural and contextual variations, will be achieved, contributing to the broader field of *pragmatics* and *discourse analysis*.

The paper seeks to achieve the following objectives: (1) To examine the *linguistic features* of the *inaugural speeches* used to achieve the speakers' long-standing political goals, considering the *contextual factors* that influence *speech acts*; (2) to contribute to the current body of literature on *political discourse* analysis and the *SAT* by providing a comprehensive analysis of the *inaugural speeches*.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

2.1. Methodological design

Our study employs a *descriptive-qualitative method* to explore and analyse in-depth *speech acts* that occur in specific contexts, namely '*Inaugural speeches.' Qualitative investigative design* is useful for several reasons: (i) To analyse various types of *speech acts* carefully, revealing a wide range of *speech acts* and thus unravelling their real meaning and distinctive significance; (ii) to explore the meaning and function of *speech acts* across various contexts to enhance our understanding of how language operates in different *contexts*; (iii) to effectively explain the variety of functions that language serves, including conveying meaning, supporting authority, building sentences to reflect what is being communicated, and expressing different emotions; (iv) to illustrate in detail the interplay between *language*, *communication*, and *socio-cultural context*, showing the significance of Searle's theory in understanding *linguistic* behaviours and their *pragmatic functions*. Moreover, we applied an inductive analysis to investigate *speech-act* patterns without preconceived biases. This approach provides a different perspective on the examination of different *speech act* types in *inaugural speeches*.

By employing a *mixed-methods approach*—combining *qualitative analysis* through *Searle's typology* with assessments informed by *Ferrara's sequential model* and insights from *Bach and Harnish's intention-inference framework*—the study aims to provide a holistic view reflecting both the structural and functional aspects of *speech acts*. Searle's taxonomy serves as the conceptual framework to identify *speech acts*; Bach and Harnish offer mutual contextual beliefs, which emphasise the pivotal role of cultural norms in the interpretation of these utterances. Moreover, Ferrara's model presents a framework that focuses on the chronological sequencing of communicative acts. This methodological synergy enhances the validity and depth of the

findings. The analysis shows that some *speech act* types are employed more often than others, and understanding this fact is facilitated by all three models. For example, recognising that *assertive speech acts* often serve as a basis for further *directives* or *expressives* demonstrates their connection.

This *qualitative method* provides a new perspective on examining various *speech act* types, facilitating a deeper understanding of how language parallels action and conveys meaning.

2.2. Corpus selection

We chose six samples; (1) they are divided into two speeches from each country, and (2) all the chosen samples are obtainable online, also (3) selected only those whose titles were '*inauguration speeches*' for analysis to keep the chosen sample distinctive. This study serves as an exploratory analysis aimed at identifying initial patterns in *speech act* usage across different contexts. A limited sample size was chosen to establish a foundation for future research with larger datasets. The selection of *inaugural speeches* is based on the following rigorous, comprehensive criteria:

1. *Diversity of Cultural and Political Contexts*: Each country represents distinct political systems and cultural backgrounds that are critical for analysing *speech act patterns*. Selecting *inaugural speeches* can help analyse *speech act patterns* in various *linguistic*, *political*, and *cultural contexts*. The analysis of the *inaugural speeches* will reveal how leaders communicate their visions in the context of their *socio-political landscapes*. This selection enables us to discover how various historical settings and political systems shape the formation of political subjectivity through language. This diversity allows for the comparison of how different *political contexts* influence *speech act patterns* and respond to *social political norms* and concerns.

2. *Variety in Linguistic Characteristics*: When *inaugural speeches* are spoken and written in the languages of Russian (Belarus), Arabic (Egypt), and English (the UK), coexisting within the frame of the *SAT*, a wide spectrum of *linguistic characteristics* is discovered. *Speech act analysis* in different languages articulates the manifestation of this phenomenon through *linguistic barriers*. This *linguistic diversity* enriches our analysis by showcasing how language shapes *cultural context* across different cultures. The ability to analyse *speech acts* within these different

linguistic frameworks enables one to understand how *rhetorical strategies* differ and what implications these variations hold for communication.

3. *Cultural, political, and historical significance*: *Inauguration speeches* serve as a reflection of the President's *linguistic, cultural, historical*, and *political elements*. Examining *inaugural speeches* will help to disclose how leaders employ their verbal skills to articulate their ideas from cognition to the consciousness of the audience. *Inaugural speeches* serve as reflections of a leader's linguistic choices and cultural narratives. They encapsulate historical contexts that influence public perception and *political legitimacy*. This significance provides valuable insights into how leaders use language to connect with their audiences on cognitive and emotional levels.

4. *Comparative Analysis*: *Comparative analysis* will be possible by opting for countries with different political systems, *linguistic backgrounds*, and *cultural landscapes* to examine how speech acts manifest in *inaugural speeches*. This is a valid approach supported by research in the fields of *pragmatics* and the *SAT* (Fetzer & Bull, 2012; Widiatmoko, 2017; Lodhi et al., 2018). It enables us to highlight the similarities and differences between how leaders express themselves, make promises, and assert their authority.

To sum up, the choice of these countries is rather strategic to explain the dynamics of language and political oratory in different contexts. Every country offers specific insights that help to achieve the study's objectives.

2.3. Selection criteria

The reasons for selecting *inaugural speeches* for analysis are that they are relevant, frequent, and authentic, as well as the fact that they are the subject of this study. Most Presidents and PMs use their *inaugural speeches* to present their vision and set forth their goals for the nation. Such an inauguration commonly occurs through a formal ceremony or special event. Therefore, one of the primary reasons the researcher selected those speech texts is that the speeches made by elected Presidents and PMs are educational and helpful to the audience. The speeches were chosen from the period spanning 2006 to 2022. Lukashenko delivered the first speech in 2020 and the fourth speech in 2005; El-Sisi delivered the second speech in 2018 and the fifth speech in 2014; Sunak delivered the third speech in 2022, and Cameron delivered the sixth speech in 2010. The author took into account the differences in the circumstances of each election. The author

downloaded the speeches' texts, and we later turned them into *MS Word documents*. On the website of the Republic's Presidency, the speeches in Russian and Arabic have already been translated into English, which serves as the primary language for research (Table 1 displays the overall number of words in each speech). On the official website, the author downloaded the *inauguration speeches* for analysis. First, we searched the website's archives for speeches within the specified time frame. Then, the author searched for speeches that corresponded to the research topic using the phrase *'inauguration speeches.'* We chose the texts of the *inaugural speeches* through selective sampling as purposive since they were relevant to our survey. To present a more comprehensive picture and to guarantee that the data in the study is accurate, we chose these speeches from various historical periods and contexts. As a result, we maintained the study's rigidity and the reliability of the data (Campbell et al., 2020). We took several steps to ensure the integrity and validity of the translations in the study. First, we took measures to ensure proper translation from Russian and Arabic to English; second, we recruited bilingual experts of translation from the Faculty of Humanities and Communications, Department of Germanic Philology, and the International Office in the Faculty of Foreign Citizens training who have huge experience in teaching translation in the given language and can tell if the translated speeches are linguistically accurate or not, as well as if any cultural nuances are lost during the process, to assure the trustworthiness of translations; lastly, we considered cultural diversity and contextual conditions, which, along with preserving interpretations of the relevant psychological content, should be free from distortions.

Table 1

The overall number of words in each speech

SPEECH No.	THE PRESIDENT OR THE PM	COUNTRY	THE YEAR	WORD COUNT IN THE ORIGIN LANGUAGE	WORD COUNT IN ENGLISH
IS 1	Lukashenko	Belarus	2020	883	1156
1S 2	El- Sisis	Egypt	2018	916	1202
IS 3	Sunak	The UK	2022	564	564

IS 4	Lukashenko	Belarus	2006	1124	1561
IS 5	El- Sisis	Egypt	2014	681	1076
IS 6	Cameron	The UK	2010	636	636
Total	6 speeches			4804	6195

2.4. Corpus selection bias

To address the potential biases introduced by the selection of sample materials, we took the following steps: (1) We focused on the diversity of *cultural backgrounds* and languages spoken in these contexts, working towards *neutralising language-related biases, culture*, and *political views* that may arise during this process; (2) it is absolutely clear as we explain the structure and mechanism for extracting relevant speeches and then analysing *speech act patterns*; (3) a *comparative approach* is paramount to ensuring that the findings are not biassed due to using generalisations within different contexts; (4) the author acknowledges and reflects on the fairness and objectivity of the researcher during the study.

2.5. Limitations

Despite the study's results, there are always some aspects that should be considered. Acknowledging such restrictions will be the key factor for better research results and for a developed science in this area. The *SAT* has been serving as the cornerstone from which the understanding of how language is used has been derived. Yet, the *conceptual model*, like other *theoretical frameworks*, is of paramount importance for its drawbacks, identification, and attention to other theories developing that *discourse*. According to the *SAT*, language utilisation contains not only information transmission but also action production, which includes the talk and the cognitive processes that are involved. It distinguishes these from the meaning, intending, and result of *speech acts*, respectively, which emphasises the complexity of speech-use mechanisms. Another limitation of the *SAT* is the question of the omission of social and political dimensions because of the focus on the use of language as language. The critique is usually focused on the standpoint of theory, which is under the condition of sympathy for the current debates and institutions in the field. Further, we admit that analysing only six inaugural speeches may limit the generalisability of our findings. However, since this study focuses specifically on

inaugural speeches, it is essential to evaluate them not only in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. This focus justifies the limited number of speeches analysed (Campbell & Huxman, 2003; Miles et al., 2014; Krippendorff, 2018; Lehrman & Schnure, 2019). The pursuit of such analysis does not stop there; *speech act* theorists may try to fill the critical gap resulting from the transition of societal systems.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

3.1. Evolution of John Austin's theory

Traditionally, it was believed that words, symbols, or sentences were the *fundamental building blocks of communication*. In contrast, the *SAT*, *which studies how language is employed to perform actions and transmit information*, argues that the creation or utterance of words serves as these fundamental units. Therefore, the *SAT* regards language primarily as a form of action rather than just a tool for communication, namely 'conveying information.' The *SAT* was founded by Austin, who first proposed it in his book, *How to Do Things with Words*. Austin determined that language is used not only to make assertions but also to take action. Austin (1962) developed the *SAT* in response to a range of *linguistic theories* that ignored language as an action or did not adequately account for the performative aspects of language. It was initially developed as a *thinking theory*: '*A theoretical framework for analysing language use,*' but he later referred to it simply as *speech act theory*. Austin offered a novel perspective on meaning analysis, describing it as a relationship between *linguistic conventions* associated with words and sentences, the actual communication between the speaker and the audience, and the speaker's underlying intentions. The concept of acts effectively illustrates the idea that meaning exists between these relations: when a speaker uses linguistic conventions to form a sentence, they are performing a *linguistic act* for the listener with a specific intention.

The three categories, according to Austin, include: (1) *Locutionary act* refers to the act of asserting or saying something. It has meaning and creates an understandable utterance to convey or express. (2) *Illocutionary act* specialises in employing attitudes or feelings; illocutionary speech always contains the speaker's or listener's intended meaning. (3) *Perlocutionary act* typically enables audiences to realise the potential consequences of their decisions. The results

could manifest as ideas, fantasies, emotions, or feelings. The primary characteristic of *perlocutionary utterances* is their effect on the addressee. To exemplify, a *Locutionary act* describes a hazardous situation; an *illocutionary act* issues a warning; and a *perlocutionary act* frightens the addressee. Austin (1962, pp. 149–163) categorises *speech acts* according to the characteristics of verbs and their *illocutionary forces*, including the following categorisation: (1) *Verdictives* are associated with rendering judgements or conclusions and include reckoning, characterising, appraisal, value, or fact. (2) *Exercises* are aimed at demonstrating the use of authority, rights, or power, including actions like voting, urging, and advising; for example, a judge might say, 'I found you guilty and sentenced you to five years in prison.' (3) *Commitments* serve to express a declaration, promise, or future intention. Relevant verbs include promise, swear, and plan; for example, 'I promise to give you a hand.' (4) *Behaviours* are connected to attitudes and social actions such as cursing, apologising, and congratulating; related verbs in this context include challenge, protect, and approve; for instance, 'one might apologise for being late.' (5) *Expositives* clarify how our utterances fit into a conversation; verbs such as affirm, recognise, and testify illustrate this concept; for example, when I say 'I assume,' I am affirming my understanding of the conversation.

3.2. Searle's theory

Searle (1969) developed the *SAT*, which clarifies that language is not merely a vehicle for conveying information, but also a means of performing actions. Although Austin identified many types of *illocutionary acts* in his 1962 model, Searle (1976) claimed that there are no specific principles that justify how these acts were classified into five groups. Efforts have been made to refine *Austin's theory*; however, only Searle's work is linked to a broader framework of *illocutionary acts*. Searle (1979) pointed out that Austin's classifications were flawed due to their overlapping criteria. Austin, according to Searle (1979), failed to distinguish between *speech act verbs* and *actual speech acts*. He also mentioned that some verbs can be found in multiple categories—specifically the verb 'to describe', which Austin (1962) included in the categories of *assertives* and *expositives*. Although some verbs fell under a particular category, they did not meet the requirements for that type. Consequently, Searle (1979) developed an alternative *taxonomy* based on suitable categorisation to replace Austin's (1962) classification. Searle (1979,

p. 5) looked carefully at Austin's division of *speech acts*. In his book *Expression and Meaning*, instead of concentrating on performative verbs, he differentiated twelve dimensions of alteration through which *illocutionary acts* vary from one another. Nevertheless, he decided to base his *taxonomy* primarily on two dimensions: the *direction of fit* and the *illocutionary point*. The *SAT* parameters were later elevated in Searle's (1979, p. 3) work. A description differs from a command; for example, a request and a command have the same *illocutionary point*: they both aim to persuade the listener to do something. Searle's concept of the *illocutionary point* builds upon Austin's framework of *illocutionary acts*. Illocutionary acts can also be distinguished by their *direction of fit*, which is another factor. According to Searle, *illocutionary acts* are distinct from one another. There are twelve significant dimensions of variation; however, for brevity, we will provide a brief overview of some of them here.

1. *The illocutionary point* is the term used to describe the purpose of a *speech act*. It is the speaker's intention or reason behind ensuring an individual utterance. The *illocutionary purpose* may involve various functions, such as providing information or making requests. The context and the speaker's intentions contribute to establishing this point.

2. *Direction of Fit*: Some illocutions aim to make the world and the words coincide, while others aim to change the world to align with the words. Promises and requests fall under the latter category, while *assertions* fall under the former. Searle illustrates the *direction of fit* by citing an example written by Anscombe (1957). Searle's (1979) categories of *speech acts* are *assertives*, *directives*, *commissives*, *expressives*, and *declaratives*. Table 2 contains additional clarification about *Searle's speech act categorisations*.

Bach and Harnish agree with Searle that a *classification scheme* ought to be based on clear principles. The categories must remain distinct, ensuring minimal overlap that is justifiable within the context, and each entry should fulfil the criteria set for its category. Furthermore, a systematic understanding of *illocutionary acts* must be connected to the foundational principles of the classification scheme to maintain theoretical relevance. Accordingly, Bach and Harnish (1979) characterise various kinds of *illocutionary acts*. Their work is more thorough and has a well-organised structure *'based on the speaker's psychological state or mindset.'* They differentiated between six general classes. *Verdicatives* and *effectives* are two of these classes, while the others are *communicative speech acts* like *orders*, *commissives*, *constatives*, and

acknowledgements. The final four classes are nearly identical to Searle's but barely match Austin's. Bach and Harnish (1979, p. 40) argued that their *taxonomy* is characterised by its comprehensiveness and explicitness.

Table 2

Searle categories of speech acts

CATEGORY	ASSERTIVE	DIRECTIVES	COMMISSIVES	EXPRESSIVES	DECLARATIVES
Meaning	These *speech acts*, like declaring an assertion or ensuring an argument, convey an opinion or state of issues.	These *speech acts*, like requests and commands, are meant to compel the listener to comply.	These are verbal actions, like announcing or frightening, that bind the person speaking to an upcoming planned action. The interlocutor convinces the audience to take actions.	These *are speech acts*, such as expressing regret or gratitude, that convey the speaker's emotions or mindsets.	These *speech acts*, like naming or marrying, result in an alteration in the external environment.
Verbs	State, conclude, assert, etc.	Order, pray, ask, etc.	Promise, pledge, contract, etc.	Congratulate, thank, congratulate, etc.	Fired, swear, beg, etc.

3.3. Clarification of model selection and its theoretical foundations

In this survey, we utilised three models to address the study's objectives. The first model implemented in the analysis was Searle's (1969) model, which provides a robust foundation for

understanding the five primary types of *speech acts*. This model is beneficial for clarifying the fundamental roles of *speech acts* within the framework of language usage.

Building on Searle's foundational work, the second model applied was Ferrara's (1980, pp. 234–235) model, which suggests that *speech acts* typically occur in sequences and are performed by speakers engaged in activities governed by rules, such as conversation and giving testimony at trials. Also, Ferrara extends Searle's theory by focussing on the temporal organisation of *speech acts* and their operation within *discourse*. Ferrara (1980, p. 243) argued that the propositional context of the *assertion act* can establish a justificatory relationship, illustrating a situation that may lead to a constructive attitude due to widely held cultural beliefs. In a broader sense, the additional condition of success required by a *subordinate speech act* must convey a state of the world that achieves a positive attitude toward related actions. Her model identifies connections between *speech acts* in a single sequence, distinguishing between three categories: justification, contrasting apposition, and amplification.

The third model proposed by Bach and Harnish (1979) emphasises the significance of mutual contextual beliefs in understanding *illocutionary acts*. Their framework illustrates how speakers' *psychological states and contextual relationships shape communication*, enabling listeners to infer meanings that extend beyond the literal interpretation of utterances.

Bach and Harnish (1979) characterise various kinds of *illocutionary acts*: The four main categories of *illocutionary acts* in communication are (1) *constatives* (expressing opinions); (2) *directives* (influencing listener actions); (3) *commitments* (obligating listeners); and (4) *acknowledgements* (fulfilling social expectations).

The integration of all three models offers a comprehensive view that considers the functions of *speech acts* as described by Searle, the relational aspects defined by Ferrara, and enhances the analysis by providing a robust framework for understanding the complexities of language in various contexts discussed by Bach and Harnish. Each sentence in the *inauguration speeches* is arranged to facilitate analysis and provide a coherent presentation. Accordingly, *speech acts* performed in succession are typically related while occupying different positions in the speaker's action flow. This triple approach enables a richer interpretation of the data by exploring how different types of the SAT can influence each other to enhance our understanding of their connections and dependencies in real-time communication contexts.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1. Review of related literature

The SAT has been applied in different contexts; researchers have used Searle's framework to examine not only the speech act patterns but also the political ideology of the speakers. Searle's Theory has contributed to the understanding of language and communication, offering a comprehensive *taxonomy of speech acts* and their functions. The SAT has been vital in presenting the action-driven aspect of verbal discourse and its profound connections to diverse disciplines, such as (1) logic; (2) sociology; (3) psychology; (4) ethnography; and (5) speech culture (Cooren, 2015). Further, Salzborn (2016) identifies various categories of speech acts, such as *assertives*, *directives*, *commissives*, *expressives*, and *declarations*, and explores their characteristics and conditions for success. In this regard, the study highlights the performative nature of language, demonstrating how utterances can have real-world effects and shape social reality. Salzborn's work, which stems from *Searle's theoretical constructs, has had a substantial impact on linguistics and has enriched our perspective on language as a tool for facilitating communication and social interactions*.

On the one hand, Hamad et al. (2022) focused on the *illocutionary acts* of fallacies in *political speeches*, emphasising the need to analyse a series of utterances to uncover the *illocutionary force*. On the other hand, Utami et al. (2022) used the SAT to analyse the use of *speech acts* in Barack Obama's speech '*A More Perfect* Union' with a focus on *directives*, *commissives*, etc. Similarly, Yusanti et al. (2022) examined Joe Biden's speech about COVID-19, showing that Biden effectively used three different types of *speech acts*, each type serving a strategic purpose in his communication during the pandemic. Another study by Jasim (2023) has significantly contributed to our comprehension of the performative nature of language and its implications for *legal communication*; a recent survey by Çakı (2022) has emphasised the importance of considering the audience's role in *speech acts*, challenging the traditional speaker-orientated approach.

From another lens, a recent survey by Çakı (2022) emphasises the importance of considering the audience's role in *speech acts*, and Feller's (2017) paper discusses the shift from a monologic to a dialogic study of *speech acts*, but Yeo's (2010) explores the connections between the *SAT*

and the conceptualisation of records as persistent representations: (1) paying attention to the role of representation in *speech acts*; (2) the impact of the *SAT* on perceptions of records; and (3) the importance of societal conventions in understanding the relationship between records and human action.

Previous studies provide a theoretical foundation; however, we can argue that several disputable issues arise, such as (1) Searle's taxonomy did not pay attention to cultural norms in interpreting *speech acts* across different political contexts, (2) besides, traditional *SAT* models are ineffective in analysing speech acts in digital contexts, and (3) these studies clearly ignore how the chronological sequencing of *speech acts* affects their persuasive power. To address this gap, the study applies the *SAT* to inaugural speeches to expand Searle's taxonomy. Additionally, the combination of Searle's taxonomy, Ferrara's model, and Bach and Harnish's framework reveals how chronological sequencing shapes rhetorical impact. By bridging these gaps, the study advances political linguistics by offering a nuanced application of the *SAT* that accounts for political discourse.

The current study utilises the *SAT* to analyse inaugural speeches and considers its possibilities for *cross-cultural analysis*. *Inaugural speeches* are contextualised in *linguistic*, *political*, *cultural*, and *historical contexts* that define their meaning and effects. The functions of *inaugural speeches* are to unite, to inform, and to persuade, and these functions demand a complex understanding of *the SAT*. This framework is important for evaluating how *inaugural speeches* conform to or deviate from these norms. In this context, Sbisà (2018) emphasises the need to take into account the rules of *speech acts*, constitutive rules, maxims, and objective requirements when studying communicative practices.

Similarly, Jacobs (1989) has pointed out that the lack of attention to context in *speech act a*nalysis masks the richness of the argumentative roles. Also, Lewiński et al. (2023) stress that the concept of *illocutionary forces* should not be viewed in a simplistic manner. Additionally, Marchal (2023) focusses on the relationship between argumentation theory and *speech acts* while emphasising the subject's speaker and listener. This distinction is important when studying how different groups receive the messages in *inaugural speeches*. Another current research (Labinaz & Sbisà, 2020) shows that traditional models can be ineffective in digital contexts. This adaptation is necessary for understanding how *inaugural speeches* are both delivered and received through media. Ultimately, the *SAT* helps to expand the knowledge of *discourse* in

social and political fields, as noted by Harris and McKinney (2021). This is particularly evident in *inaugural speeches*, which set the tone for *discourse* and shape societal norms. These surveys not only apply the *SAT* in a particular context but also enhance the theory by tackling current criticisms and challenges pertinent to contemporary communication practices. To sum up, the search results show that *the SAT has been used in the analysis of cross-cultural communication, political speeches, and cultural differences in communication that offers a systematic approach to decoding the hidden meanings and consequences of language use in the current study settings*.

4.2. Inaugural speeches

New Presidents cherish *inaugural speeches* as they signify the occasion when they address the entire nation to declare their fundamental political strategies and principles. The President's objectives, which entirely depend on these texts, are to use the language correctly to communicate their agendas to the public from the time they are elected: To persuade the populace, inspire people's confidence, and win their support. Consequently, they consider the words they use in their texts carefully and polish them using a variety of *linguistic techniques*. For this reason, linguists have become interested in studying the linguistic features that politicians used to communicate with their audiences (Fairclough, 2010). One of these *linguistic techniques* is the use of *metaphor*, which seems to be widely used. According to Crystal (1994), linguists assert that a *metaphor* entails a semantic mapping from one conceptual domain to another, frequently using atypical language. In addition, Sticht (1993) considered metaphors as 'tools for extending our capacities for analytical thought.' As a result, *metaphor* is regarded as the most efficient way to help addressees understand some abstract concepts much more easily and clearly than using words with concrete references. Another technique is the use of collocations, which appear to be widespread and productively used. Dörnyei (2007) defined collocations as some words that have a denotative meaning when combined with other words. Additionally, they make it easier for listeners to define the topic of the idea and follow the plot. Collocations obviously give stable expressions, particularly in *inauguration speeches*. According to Halliday et al. (2014), the textual aspect refers to how language is used to create a text, a speech, or how to make a message fit into its surroundings in a way that makes sense and is coherent. Another technique is the use of a clause relation, which is also a cognitive process in

which we choose our *grammar*, *lexis*, and *intonation* when composing a sentence or group of sentences, considering the preceding sentence or group of sentences (Hoey, 1983, p. 19).

4.3. Discourse

Van Dijk (1977) focusses on *discourse* as action and process, treating it as data that can be subjected to empirical analysis. As a result, *discourse* encompasses a broader concept than text. However, according to Stubbs (1983), *discourse* is the language that is organised at a level above individual clauses or sentences. The first approach focusses on the structural characteristics, such as organisation and coherence, while the second approach examines the social concepts that influence how people use and interpret language. In this perspective, according to Brown and Yule (1983), the analysis of discourse entails the analysis of language in use because it cannot be limited to the description of *language structures* without focussing on the functions or objectives that these structures are established to serve in human affairs. Consequently, *discourse* is the entire process of social interaction, in which a text is just one component of the broader process of *discourse* (FairClough, 2013). Richardson (2017) considered that discourse implies that language is used to convey meaning and perform actions, and that these meanings and actions are related to the context in which language is used. Hussein (2016) determined that it is evident that *discourse* describes verbal communication within its *social and situational context*. *Discourse* and text should be distinguished from one another. Any natural language that represents a complete *semantic* in a specific context is referred to as *discourse*. When using spoken, written, and multimodal forms of communication, it can be seen and observed. An effective speaker typically delivers politics and other spoken *discourse*. In spoken *discourse*, speakers need to be aware of what they just said and plan their next sentences. They should consider their interlocutors, adapt their language as required, and keep track of the feedback from their audience. Despite the different viewpoints and methodologies used in this field that focus on various facets of language use, all of them see language as social communication and are frequently interested in the social contexts wherein *discourse* is integrated.

4.4. Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

The language analysis method known as *critical discourse analysis (CDA)* focusses on the relationship between *language*, *power*, and *ideology*. According to Van Dijk (1993), CDA is

primarily a shared perspective on conducting *linguistics*, *semiotics*, or *discourse analysis*, in which practitioners—who are concerned with the analysis of the frequently ambiguous connections between *discourse practices* and larger *social* and *cultural structures*—adopt an explicit *socio-political* position. Additionally, Fairclough (2001) asserts that *CDA* is interested in analysing texts and interactions, and its main concern is the issues that people face in their social lives and those that are addressed by *sociology*, *political science*, and *cultural studies*. Fairclough (1993) argued that language use comprises three interconnected components 'not isolated but deeply intertwined with the context': Text, an interaction between people, and interpretation of the text, as well as a piece of *discursive practice*. We can conclude that understanding the context, impact, and nature of *discourse* is vital for comprehending its effects within organisational settings and diverse contexts, emphasising *discourse* as a *social practice* involving language use in speech and writing. Weissenrieder and Fairclough (1997) argued that *CDA's* objective is to illustrate how language operates within *social contexts*. Therefore, language users operate within a variety of *cultural*, *social*, and *psychological frameworks* rather than operating independently. In this context, *CDA* examines the relationships between *textual frameworks* and their *societal interactions*.

 CDA and the *SAT* are closely related in *linguistics* and communication research. On the one hand, *CDA* examines how language is influenced by *power dynamics*, *ideologies*, and *social situations*. On the other hand, the *SAT* explores how language is employed to perform actions and interact with reality through *speech acts*. While *CDA* highlights that context is crucial in understanding how language is used and organised in conversations—particularly as developed by Searle—it classifies speech actions based on their intended meanings and the speaker's underlying intentions when making statements. *CDA* reveals hidden meanings, values, and social structures that shape discourse, while the *SAT* provides a framework for interpreting not only the explicit intentions of speakers but also their underlying motives. By combining *CDA's* with the *SAT* analysis of specific speech actions, researchers can not only better understand how language reflects and influences *power dynamics* and *social norms* but also use these approaches together to analyse how language is used to communicate and enact, as well as reveal the power relationships that underlie speech. At its essence, the evolution of the *SAT* has significantly influenced *CDA* by emphasising that language, rooted in the *SAT*, serves not only to describe but also possesses the ability to enact change. *Speech acts* can shape *societal dynamics* and *power*

structures. Inspired by the *SAT's understanding of language's performative nature*, *CDA explores how discourse creates and mirrors power relationships in society*. *CDA* considers *context* and *social influences* on language use, which complements the *SAT's* focus on *context*. This allows for a more in-depth understanding of how language operates within specific *social* and *political environments*.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Investigating inaugural speeches: Exploring the linguistic roles and contextual meanings of speech acts within political and cultural contexts

Inaugural speeches are important themes in the *cultural, political, and linguistic landscape communication*. So, the language used during this occasion serves multiple functions, including (1) instilling national pride and (2) unity while establishing the challenges faced by leadership. Statements, in general, made during the inauguration often include *'assertive acts'* that draw attention to the present problems and '*directive acts*' that encourage citizens to act collectively. Also, the promises made by the speaker (1) create binding obligations for future conduct, significantly (2) contributing to accountability in governance. This dynamic accordingly underscores how '*commitments*' can shape leadership integrity as well as public trust. So, this strategy allows the speaker, to some extent, to promote a sense of common goals among the audience. We suppose that language is not just a way of conveying information but a tool for creating attitudes and directing people's actions. Table 3 presents a summary of segments of speech acts, highlighting their significance in understanding communication dynamics.

Table 3

An Analysis of Inaugural Speech: Improving Interpretative Depth and Contextual Understanding

SPEECH ACT	SEGMENT	ANALYSIS	INAUGURAL SPEECH - TIME

ASSERTIVE	The day of taking office of the President, the day of inauguration is the day of our victory, convincing and fateful.	This statement in fact expresses a clear attitude towards the importance of the Inauguration Day, presenting it not only as a regular event but as a victory and conviction. It expresses the speaker's point of view on the significance of this day in the light of nationalism and achievement.	Lukashenko, in 2020
	Right now, our country is facing a profound economic crisis.	This statement presents a fact about the current economic situation of the country. It transmits information that can be evaluated as true or false, which makes it qualify as an *assertive speech act*. The speaker is expressing their opinion about the economic condition, which is the primary function of assertives.	Sunak, in 2022
	Leading a country the size of Egypt is a great matter, as you know.	This statement is a fact that presents the difficulties of managing a large country. It expresses the speaker's attitude towards the importance of the responsibility, which makes it *an assertive speech act* because it expresses the speaker's opinion on the magnitude of leadership in Egypt.	El-Sisi, in 2018
DIRECTIVES	I call on all the healthy forces of	This statement is a clear *directive act* in which the speaker is urging the	Lukashenko, in 2006

	society: we must unite our efforts for the sake of the future of our Motherland.	audience to take action by uniting for a specific cause. It aims to mobilise support from the listeners, compelling them to engage in the improvement of their country.	
	Let us work together to disseminate the values of peace and just and to guarantee for our countries and peoples a better future.	This statement is a *directive call to action* for the audience to work together in the promotion of peace and cooperation, compelling them work on it together.	El-Sisi, in 2014
	One of the tasks that we clearly have is to rebuild trust in our political system.	This statement is considered a *directive* statement, as it provides a particular task that the government and its members are required to perform, urging them to focus on rebuilding trust.	Cameron, in 2010
COMMIS SIVES	I will do everything to ensure that you never regret that I was the first President of our Belarus.	Here, the speaker gives a clear assurance to the audience, pledging to act in order to deserve the allegiance and confidence offered to him. In addition, this statement is not only an intention but also a *commitment to a future course of action intended to achieve this promise*.	Lukashe nko, in 2020

	I promise God and I promise you that I will remain faithful in my work, fighting for you and for you, so that our dear and precious Egypt will remain at the forefront of nations.	The speaker makes a powerful appeal to the audience, *committing to work hard for the nation's welfare*. This links the speaker to a future action plan centred on national progress.	El-Sisi, in 2018
	I promise you this: I will bring that same compassion to the challenges we face today.	The speaker takes an *individual pledge to bring compassion to the current difficulties*, binding himself to a future course of action that emphasises empathy in governance.	Sunak, in 2022
EXPRESS IVES	Thanks to them, all these months the regions lived a normal life – people cultivated and harvested crops from the fields.	In this act, the speaker *expresses gratitude* to the citizens for their efforts and perseverance during this difficult period, emphasising the importance of their contributions to society.	Lukashe nko, in 2020
	Allow me in the beginning to extend all thanks	This statement is a *positive sentiment towards the audience*, reflecting the speaker's emotions regarding their presence and support.	El-Sisi, in 2014

	and appreciation to you for attending this ceremony and participating with the Egyptian people.		
	I'd like to pay tribute to the outgoing prime minister for his long record of dedicated public service.	This is a polite way of *showing respect* to the former PM and *acknowledging the efforts and work done* for the country.	Cameron, in 2010
DECLARATIVES	The day of taking office of the President, the day of inauguration is the day of our victory, convincing and fateful.	The statement is a *declarative act* since it formally establishes the inauguration day as the meaningful, recontextualising its importance in the context of Belarusian history.	Lukashenko, in 2020
	I stand today speaking to you at the beginning of a new presidential term.	This statement is considered a *declarative act* because it officially introduces the new President of Egypt, signifying a change in leadership and governance.	El-Sisi, in 2018

	I have just been to Buckingham Palace and accepted His Majesty The King's invitation to form a government in his name.	The speaker *declares* a new position of the PM, which alters the political and power relations in the country.	Sunak, in 2022

5.2. Lukashenko's inaugural speech

The *illocutionary point* in the first *speech act* 'Благодаря им все эти месяцы регионы жили обычной жизнью - люди возделывали и убирали урожай с полей' (Thanks to them, all these months the regions lived a normal life—people cultivated and harvested crops from the fields) reflects an *expressive* speech. In this context, the elected President expresses gratitude to the village workers for their service and dedication to the nation. The evaluation of Lukashenko's *inaugural speech*, in which he emphasised the importance of the agricultural processes in the country for the stability and sustainability of society, was influenced by the cultural, historical, and geopolitical factors. This emphasis captures a traditional Belarusian culture in which agricultural work is valued, productive, and performed with diligence. From a political standpoint, the inaugural speech demonstrates an action-orientated government that is dedicated to advancing agriculture in the country for the maximum welfare and durability of society and the protection of economic stability. This wide-ranging approach integrates *cultural heritage*, *historical experiences*, and *political needs* to support the leadership role in agriculture that guarantees stability and sustainability for Belarus. Characterised by a *words-to-world direction of fit*, this implies that the language reveals the elected President's gratitude to the village workers for their steadfast loyalty. It conveys a sincere emotional response to this situation, as evidenced by the propositional content '*thanks to them*.'

The second *speech act* is an *assertive speech act*: 'Государственная политика в области науки, творчества и спорта неизбежно породит новых героев' (State policy in the fields of science, creativity and sports will inevitably give rise to new heroes). In this act, Lukashenko wants the Belarusian people to believe in the state policy that will unavoidably produce new

heroes in science. He emphasises that state policy plays a crucial role in shaping new heroes in creativity, science, and sports. This influence largely results from state mentality, *historical context*, and *political elements*. Belarus highlights specific aspects of its cultural etiquette that prioritise excellence and recognition of achievements, alongside *historical narratives* of resilience during difficult times and *political approaches* that foster talent and innovation for social elevation. An upcoming policy focusing on the nation's orientation towards forming new heroes and leading experts in various domains underscores the country's efforts to enhance its *scientific*, *cultural*, and *athletic achievements* while following a broader strategy of state promotion. Lukashenko hopes that the Belarusian people will share his opinion (for a detailed analysis, see Table 4).

Table 4

Analysing Speech Acts in Lukashenko's speech

SPEECH ACTS	FREQUENCIES LUKASHENKO	PERCENTAGE LUKASHENKO
Assertive	36	63.15 %
Commissive	12	21.05 %
Directive	4	7.17%
Expressive	5	8.77 %
Declarative	0	0 %
Total number of acts	57	100 %

5.3. El- Sisi's inaugural speech

The purpose of the first *illocutionary point* 'بأن وقّعناه سوياً دولةً وشعباً الذي الاجتماعي بعقدنا متمسكين ونواجه المشكلات نقتحم وأن الوطن هذا لصالح متجرّدين العمل هو الأعظم ومبدأنا والشفافية المصارحة هو دستورنا يكون حية الوطنية كتلتنا تماسك على محافظون مصطفون ونحن التحديات' (Adhering to our social contract that we signed together as a state and people, our constitution shall be one of honesty and transparency, and our greatest principle is to work selflessly for the benefit of this homeland, we shall tackle problems and face challenges while remaining united, preserving our national cohesion as a living and active force)— is to inform Egyptians about the situation, in which the President asserts that he and the Egyptian people have signed a *social contract*, emphasising transparency

and unity in the constitution as well as addressing current challenges. It is noteworthy that El-Sisi underscores the importance of this *social contract* by endorsing transparency, impartiality, and collective citizen action to uphold national unity. These elements shape the fundamental aspects of the *cultural*, *political*, and *historical framework*. Egyptians are known for their honesty, unity, and cooperation, which are focused on enforcing trust and balance among one another. Egypt's enduring history and the unity that has always held the country together establish the main constituents of its national identity, inspiring calls for fair work and national unity. Although political strategies may vary, El-Sisi's *political vision* emphasises unity and progressive values, aligning with the orderly nature of Egyptian governance and stability. Thus, his speech blends *cultural* and *political elements* to present a vision that upholds the social contract while addressing Egypt's future social problems. El-Sisi wants Egyptians to share his belief in this expressed proposition. As a result, this *speech act* can be classified as *assertive*.

The *illocutionary point* in the second *speech act* is assertive: 'لا نسعى سوى لصالح مصرنا العزيزة الأبية وتحقيق التنمية والاستقرار لها وبناء مستقبل يليق بتاريخنا وبتضحيات أبنائها.' (We seek nothing but the welfare of our beloved Egypt, achieving development and stability for it and building a future worthy of our history and the sacrifices of its children) The second *speech act* enhances the first one. The elected President asserts that implementing a just constitution is crucial for attaining stability and prosperity in Egypt while addressing current issues to establish a new chapter in the nation's history—ultimately altering circumstances for the better. El-Sisi expresses the country's ambitions for benefit and stability while rewarding citizens for their past sacrifices. This reflects the interconnectedness of *political* and *cultural elements*. Since he recognises that Egypt has a long history of sacrifice, his message takes into consideration a deep commitment to progress while acknowledging Egypt's previous hardships and triumphs. In essence, El-Sisi's politics are centred on economic development and security, which promote national unity. Likewise, his vision connects Egypt's historical context with its future, emphasising that the benefits gained over the years are valuable to its people. In this respect, El-Sisi emphasises the broader context of progress, resilience, and sacrifice within Egypt's historical background and political objectives. These themes are crucial for understanding his vision for the nation (refer to Table 5 for a comprehensive overview).

Table 5

El-Sisi speech acts frequency

SPEECH ACTS	FREQUENCIES EL-SISI	PERCENTAGE EL-SISI
Assertive	19	54.28%
Commissive	8	22.85 %
Expressive	5	14.28 %
Directive	3	8.57 %
Declarative	0	0 %
Total number of acts	35	100 %

5.4. Sunak's inaugural speech

The *illocutionary point* in the first *speech act*, 'I will place economic stability and confidence at the heart of this government's agenda,' represents a *commissive speech act* in which the new PM vows to the British people to improve their lives by instilling stability and confidence into the British economy and forging a bright future for this country. In addition, the *historical* and *political factors* that formed the background of Sunak's speech, which materialised in his decision to prioritise the economy via stability and confidence, are highly interconnected. Throughout history, the stability of the state has been closely linked to a legacy of financial stability and the capacity to endure shocks from various crises. Regarding the *political context*, Sunak's strategic shift is intended to respond to political mandates associated with handling the deepest economic challenges facing the UK and a lack of trust in the government concerning economic management. Sunak's statements indicate that he is aware of his obligations and the pressing issues facing the UK. He expresses a commitment to improving these circumstances in the future.

The second *speech act* conveys an assertive *illocutionary point*: 'This will mean difficult decisions to come.' Sunak has assured that he will prioritise making pivotal decisions to strengthen the stability of the British economy. Additionally, he hopes that the British people believe in the proposition being made in the same way that he does. Sunak points out the nuanced interplay of *cultural*, *historical*, and *political influences* that inform his message. Viewed through a cultural lens, acknowledging the upcoming challenges undoubtedly resonates with the British people's longstanding tradition of facing difficulties head-on and responding

pragmatically. Historically, making difficult decisions exemplifies true leadership during times of crisis, highlighting the necessity for wisdom to serve the best interests of everyone. Politically, Sunak's admission of brave decisions still to come fits with his stance on transparency and accountability in governance (Table 6 contains further details).

Table 6

Analysis of Speech Acts in Sunak's speech

SPEECH ACTS	FREQUENCIES SUNAK	PERCENTAGE SUNAK
Commissive	20	46.51 %
Assertive	19	44.18 %
Expressive	3	6.97 %
Directive	1	2.32 %
Declarative	0	0 %
Total number of acts	43	100%

5.5. Lukashenko inaugural speech in 2006

The purpose of the first *illocutionary point*, 'Мы должны быть впереди в освоении современных знаний, технологий и воплощении перспективных идей' (We must be ahead in the development of modern knowledge, technologies and the implementation of promising ideas), is to describe a necessity. The President urges citizens to actively contribute to the development of modern technologies and the implementation of innovative ideas for the betterment of society. The relevant *speech act* is therefore a *directive speech act* because it accomplishes the directive conditions. In this context, the emphasis on progress in Belarusian culture shows a commitment to modern advancements. This drive for cultural evolution illustrates how adaptable Belarus has been, shaping, of course, its identity over the years. At the same time, Lukashenko is working to position Belarus as a competitive player in the global arena, promoting innovation and economic growth through modern knowledge and technology.

The *illocutionary point* in the second *speech act* reflects a *commissive speech act*: 'Государство будет всемерно поддерживать инициативу людей' (The state will support the people's initiative in every possible way). In this speech act, which is an enhancement of the

first, the speaker confirms that the state works hard to achieve the goal of supporting people's initiatives. Politically, Lukashenko's pledge to support the people's initiatives designates a conscious and strategic governance approach that emphasises citizens' participation and empowerment, thereby establishing the state as a formal agent of citizens' success and endeavours. Further, he highlights the importance of local initiatives to inspire grassroots creativity and assure the public of the administration's commitment to fostering a culture of initiative among Belarusian citizens, which is essential for driving change. Its *direction of fit is words-to-world*: The words inform us that the elected President is aware of his responsibilities and duties, and he will make the current circumstances better in the long run (Table 7 provides more details).

Table 7

The frequency of speech acts in Lukashenko's Speech

SPEECH ACTS	FREQUENCIES LUKASHENKO	PERCENTAGE LUKASHENKO
Assertive	43	46.73 %
Commissive	23	25 %
Directive	10	10.86%
Expressive	15	16.30%
Declarative	1	1.86 %
Total number of acts	92	100 %

5.6. El-Sisi's inaugural speech in 2014

The *illocutionary point* in the first *speech act*: ' مصر الإفريقية الجذور والوجود والحياة.. رائدة تحرر واستقلال القارة السمراء.' (Egypt has African roots that embody existence and life; it leads the liberation and independence movements across the continent) is to assure, as a matter of fact, that Egypt is a part of Africa. By doing so, the president asserts the role Egypt played in helping other African countries acquire their independence. While Egypt's success in its liberation efforts embodies its historical battles for independence and significant contributions to the freedom movement and self-determination across Africa, El-Sisi's assertion positions Egypt as a key actor in advancing freedom and liberation on the continent. This grants Egypt significant power and

influence over the future *political* and *economic landscape* of Africa. El-Sisi presents the nation as a pioneer of liberation movements, recognising its past while affirming current commitments to uphold freedom and advance emancipation throughout Africa. El-Sisi wants the Egyptians to share his belief in the expressed proposition. In this context, we encounter an *assertive speech act*.

The second *speech act* is an *assertive act*, 'وثغر المتوسط.. فخر الحضارة.. وسجل أمجاد التاريخ' (Egypt: the Mediterranean gateway, the pride of civilisation, and a record of historical glories), which confirms the first *speech act* by informing citizens of Egypt's central location and significance as well as clarifying the role Egypt plays in its surroundings. Accordingly, El-Sisi asserts the fact that Egypt is a country overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, which has a rich heritage and civilisation. The depiction of Egypt as a beacon of civilisation represents the height of national pride, celebrating its glorious past and rich history while serving as an inspiring model for other nations. El-Sisi's main intent is to showcase how Egypt's storied past is a record of the nation's precious accomplishments. Therefore, he asserts the need to maximise the benefits of this legacy by not only celebrating Egypt's past glory but also underscoring its enduring significance as a symbol of *cultural heritage* and *historical preservation*. The speech act is classified as *assertive* because it fulfils the conditions associated with this category, which involve conveying information or beliefs about reality (more information is given in Table 8).

Table 8

Speech act analysis in El-Sisi's speech

SPEECH ACTS	FREQUENCIES EL-SISI 2014	PERCENTAGE EL-SISI 2014
Assertive	17	50 %
Commissive	7	20.60 %
Expressive	8	23.52 %
Directive	2	5.88%
Declarative	0	0 %
Total number of acts	34	100%

5.7. Cameron's inaugural speech 2010

The first *illocutionary point* (I believe that is the best way to get the strong government that we need—the decisive government that we need today) reflects Cameron's *assertion* that a government is important for leading the country, especially in hard times, such as social challenges. Showing his ability to make tough decisions swiftly and govern effectively, emphasising the necessity of competent decision-making and strong leadership in addressing pressing challenges. His inaugural address aimed to highlight the importance of a responsive government, reflecting the challenges and expectations facing society during that period. Also, the PM hopes that the British people will embrace his belief in the proposed vision for the country. The relevant *speech act* is therefore an *assertive speech act* because it accomplishes the *assertive* conditions.

The *illocutionary point* in the second *speech act* reflects the *assertive speech act* (I came into politics because I love this country), in which the speaker first asserts that his love for the country is the driving force behind his decision to serve in government. He also emphasises the idea that he will form a new and strong government. The cultural significance of Cameron's statement features a sense of *patriotism* and *national pride* that connects with the British recognition of loyalty and commitment to its people. As well, Cameron's approach is appropriate because UK leaders often express their commitment to their country when advocating for its interests, inspiring the public to contribute positively to the nation. From *a political perspective*, Cameron's reference to national pride serves as a *rhetorical device* that helps establish him as a leader guided by passion for public service and national affairs. He advocates for this proposition and seeks to inspire the British people to embrace it as well (Table 9 indicates the various speech acts present in Cameron's speech).

Table 9

Investigation of speech acts in Cameron's speech

SPEECH ACTS	FREQUENCIES D. CAMERON'S 2010	PERCENTAGE D. CAMERON'S 2010
Assertive	12	42.85 %
Commissive	4	14.28 %
Expressive	2	7.1 %

Directive	10	35.71 %
Declarative	0	0 %
Total number of acts	28	100

6. DISCUSSION

When analysing inaugural speeches, it is pivotal to understand the reasons for the dominance of *assertive speeches* in these contexts. *Assertives*, which are defined as statements that convey information or beliefs, play an important role in establishing authority and credibility for political leaders. For instance, in El-Sisi's inaugural speeches, *assertives* are dominant; the reason for this is to affirm core values as well as unify diverse audiences during a pivotal moment. This notably illustrates that Presidents and PM strategically utilise *assertives* to meet audience expectations during significant inaugurational addresses. It is apparent that assertive speech acts in those inaugural speeches are mainly tailored to descriptions of past events and their possible recurrences in the future. The predominance of *assertives* in most inaugural speeches aligns with other scientific findings that point to the fact that *assertives* are used predominantly in political discourse as they serve in a truth value, which commits the speaker to the truth of the expressed propositions (Sameer, 2017; Demuyakor, 2021; Oder, 2023). Sunak's inaugural speech took place within socio-economic instability; thereby, he made comments such as, '*I will place economic stability and confidence at the heart of this* government' to shape his need to form immediate solutions to threats. This linguistic dichotomy between Sunak's *commissives* and Cameron's *assertives* underscores the role of political context and audience needs in shaping the English political discourse.

It is quite important to acknowledge certain methodological limitations that may affect the generalisability of the findings despite the study providing valuable insights into the use of speech acts in inaugural speeches across distinct cultural and political settings. The limited number of conducted inaugural speeches may not fully reflect the diversity of political contexts across different cultures. Another point to be acknowledged is translation bias that could lead to potential misinterpretations of the speech acts. In other words, assertive speech acts, in particular, may lose their intended significance when translated. That can lead to shifts in meaning and impact that affect audience perception and the overall communicative intent.

We can also argue that Belarusian and Egyptian cultures use *assertive speech acts* over *commissives* with the aim of convincing their audience of their viewpoints and ideologies, which is crucial in political discourse. Nevertheless, different patterns in British political discourse are seen; Sunak's emphasis on *commissives* aligns with his leadership during a period of socio-economic instability, while Cameron employs *assertive speech acts* to persuade and influence public support effectively.

It is seen that politicians use speech act patterns as linguistic tools to communicate their discourse and influence the audience. Moreover, assertive speech acts help politicians leverage their authority by evoking emotions and shaping issues effectively. This clearly indicates how assertive language can be utilised to convince citizens and establish a positive perspective in political discourse. These factors made speech act patterns in political discourse for creating support and shaping policy directions. The findings emphasised theoretical understanding by highlighting the strategic use of speech acts in political discourse and policy shaping.

7. CONCLUSION

Our study shows that *inaugural speeches* are critical in determining whether leaders commit to laying a strong *political foundation* and communicating their objectives effectively to the citizens through using *assertives*. In addition, an *inaugural speech's structure*, ranging from simple to complex sentences, determines the nature of the *speech act*. Moreover, *metaphors* strengthen the importance and significance of *political speeches* and make them more effective and persuasive. Since the combination of *critical discourse analysis* and *speech act theories* shows that language is not only about sentence structures, all communicative acts have a multidimensional character, including speech forms such as *commissives*, which can assume different forms. The *SAT* emphasises the practical meaning of language, which is closely connected to the meaning we convey to others by using language—in particular, through the specific contexts in which we use it. As far as we have articulated, the *SAT* is no longer just a theoretical concept but a practical tool that can help us grasp the mechanisms of language used to express our intentions, promises, and orders in our daily conversations. So, sentences—besides just being statements—can do things like criticise, admonish, warn, promise, offer, or command. The examination of *inaugural speeches* across different cultures exemplifies the diversity in the application of *speech acts* by

leaders, which reveals the special circumstances of their election and the *cultural context* in which they work. Although most speeches have *assertives* as a dominant speech act, Sunak's speech was an exception, with *commissives* being the predominant one. The employment of *assertives* normally demonstrates a leader's commitment to transparency and accountability, which serve as a means to establish loyalty, fidelity, and devotion with the electorate. We can argue that Sunak's focus on *commissives* can be interpreted as a response to tackle not only the economic instability issues but the political division problems as well. This shift in speech act dominance, in fact, shows that leaders adapt their communication strategies to reflect the current issues of the target audience.

By utilising *CDA* and the *SAT*, we show that language is not just about the *syntactic structures* of sentences; it is about *complex social practices* that reflect *power relations* and *cultural nuances*. In *inaugural speeches*, leaders employ *assertives* to state facts or to state their plans and goals. Actually, when leaders state, '*We will rebuild our economy*,' it signifies not only a promise but also encourages action. The occurrence of *assertives* expresses the leader's aim to communicate clearly – vital for winning the electorate's confidence. In political and cultural contexts, these statements can wield considerable influence. So, when leaders commit to specific actions (e.g., '*I will ensure economic recovery*'), they inspire public support and also demonstrate their accountability. This pattern indicates that in times of crisis, leaders often emphasise commitments over general statements to reassure their followers.

. In *political discourse*, *directives* often manifest as calls to action – such as '*Join me in this fight for change*' – which serve to mobilise support. The effectiveness of *directives* often depends on their delivery style and *cultural context*; for instance, in collectivist cultures, where community values are paramount, such messages may resonate more profoundly than in individualistic cultures that emphasise personal achievement. *Expressives* reveal the speaker's feelings such as apologies or congratulations, while *declaratives* can change situations simply by being spoken (e.g., '*I declare this meeting open*'). Thus, these *speech acts* can enhance emotional engagement and create a sense of urgency and authority.

It is important to note that people from different cultures have different expectations when it comes to communication. For instance, *assertive speech acts* may be used more frequently in cultures that are *high context* and *low politeness*, while low *assertive speech acts* may be used in cultures that are *low context* and *high politeness*.

It is apparent that the *socio-political context* in which an inaugural speech is delivered plays a crucial role in determining the choices of *speech acts*. Crisis-situated leaders may opt for *commissives* to assure the citizens of future actions, such as during an economic recession.

The findings reveal that *rhetorical strategies* are influenced by *historical contexts*. For example, after important national events such as elections or referendums, leaders may use *assertives* to restore order and maintain the status quo.

It is evident that the demographic characteristics of an audience can determine which *speech acts* are used. It is also important to note that leaders may use different language depending on whether they are speaking to the supporters, the opponents, or neutral parties.

This evidence is consistent with Ferrara's theory, which suggests that *commissives* are employed to legitimise orders and *directives* while accentuating the importance of *speech acts* in politics. This comprehensive understanding of language enables us to recognise how various *speech acts* operate within their unique contexts, providing valuable insights into the priorities, and strategies of leaders. Besides that, a multitude of *speech act* types within the speeches being analysed, with *assertives* and *directives* occupying different positions, guarantee that leaders employ a variety of *speech acts* in different *cultural* and *political contextual circumstances*. The scarcity of *declaratives* in *inaugural speeches* implies that there is a preference for the *speech acts* that make *statements*, *commitments*, and *directives* rather than mere *declarations*. Consequently, it is essential to consciously choose *speech acts* that are action-orientated, intentional, and encouraging to effectively engage and motivate the audience. The uniqueness of the analysed speeches stems from the diverse *cultural backgrounds* of the leaders. This highlights how culture significantly impacts communication style and audience reception. The different ways in which each leader addresses their audience in their speeches are a clear sign of their leadership styles and the *cultural* and *political situations* that shape their speeches.

Our findings are not limited to theoretical discussions; (1) they provide practical suggestions for *political communication* as well as *intercultural research*; (2) improve our understanding of the strategic use of speech acts in training political leaders to be more effective in their communication; (3) open up the discussion on how cultural contexts influence communication patterns and audience perceptions in various cultural contexts; (4) assure the ways in which various speech acts operate in certain contexts can help leaders improve their communication

with diverse audiences; (5) reveal how different cultures perceive different *speech acts* in *intercultural communication*.

In conclusion, the study advances our understanding of how *speech acts* strategically shape political discourse, which correspondingly underscores their relevance to both political communication and language training. It highlights the crucial role of assertive *speech acts* in establishing authority and persuasion, providing valuable insights for political communication training programs.

These insights can be practically applied in political communication training by focusing on *assertive speech acts*; political leaders can enhance their persuasive abilities in the public discourse field. Additionally, in language training, *speech act theory* helps learners develop pragmatic competence, which is crucial for effective communication. By understanding different types of speech acts (e.g., directives, commissives, expressives), learners can better convey their intentions and manage interactions in real-life situations.

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Acknowledgments

Antonious S. Mounir

Lecturer at the Department of Germanic Philology, The Faculty of Humanities and Communications, Vitebsk state university, Vitebsk, Belarus

tonyolga2019@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0001-6080-3372