Speech Acts Sequences in Bush’s and Osama’s first Inaugural Speeches

Dr. Ishraga Bashir  
Faculty of Arts  
English Department  
Al-Neelain University  
Email: ishragabashir@gmail.com

Imad Hayif Sameer  
College of Education  
English Department  
University of Anbar  
Email: emadhaf6@gmail.com

Abstract:

This study presents the extension of a theory proposed by Searle. Its aim is to show that the illocutionary forces of speech acts within one sequence affect each other. Two speeches are chosen from the American culture. The first one is that of Bush while the second is delivered by Obama. The policy of these two presidents is very different. This difference provides good environment to analyze the sample contrastively in order to show which speech act occupies the first rank in the two speeches depending on the relationships presented by Ferrara (1980) which are: Justification, amplification and a relation of contrastive apposition.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Discourse, Critical Discourse Analysis and Speech Act Theory

1. Introduction:

The pioneer of the theory of speech act is Austin who presents it depending on analyzing separate sentences without looking to them in sequences. Searle comes to criticize him and modify his theory but analyzing separate sentences. Ferrara presents the theory in different view when he says that the analysis of the speech acts has a different form when they come in sequences because each one of them affects the other within one sequence. He says that there are three types of relationships between the speech acts within one sequence which serve to justify, amplify and contrast one speech act with another. He also shows that the assertive speech act always work as a justification for the directive or commissive speech act. This reason give priority to this speech act making it occupies the first rank in the speech. The theory of speech act cannot be studied without giving a general idea about its cover which is the pragmatic science. The data under consideration need getting an idea about what is meant by discourse and critical discourse analysis. This paper studies four items which are pragmatics, discourse and critical discourse analysis followed by data analysis.

2. Pragmatics:

According to Yule (1996:3-4), pragmatics studies the meaning communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener. It analyzes what people mean by their utterances. The speaker meaning is the focus of this science. It interprets what people mean in particular context which has a huge effect on what is said. It takes in consideration the way by which the speakers organize what they want to say in accordance with who they are talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances.

Griffiths (2006: 5) states that pragmatics focuses on the difference between the meaning of a linguistic unit and that of utterance. He argues that linguistically a sentence is an abstract entity which consists of words divorced from non-linguistic context while the utterance is a concrete instantiation of a speech in a specific situational context.
Cruse (2006: 6) argues that the central topic of linguistic pragmatics is the aspects of meaning which depend on context. Two aspects have a particular importance. The first aspect is called conversational implicature. It refers to meanings which a speaker intends to convey implicitly. The second one is reference and its achievement is done by deictic mechanism. This means that pragmatics deals with what people are actually doing with language when they speak, whether they are informing, criticizing, warning and so on.

3. Discourse:

According to Gee (2001: 13), discourse refers to the different ways by which humans integrate language with non-language "stuff", such as different ways of acting, thinking, interacting, and using symbols, tools and objects in the right places and at the right times so as to enact and recognize different identities and activities in order to give the material world certain meanings. Make certain sorts of meaningful connections in our experience, and privilege certain symbol systems and ways of knowing over other.

According to Cameron (2001:11-13), It is necessary to make clear that discourse analysis is not exclusively concerned with spoken discourse but it can deal with socially situated language use in any channel or medium.

Discourse analysis also includes written data or data from sign languages of the deaf. It also deals with textual graphics and image as well. The most straightforward definition of discourse is found in textbooks: "Language above sentence". To understand this definition, we must know that linguists treat language a 'system of systems', with each system having its own characteristic forms of structure or organization. This means that the sound system of a language differs from the grammatical one in which words is larger than sounds and sentences are larger than words. Metaphorically, the users of language can move up from one level of organization to the next. If discourse analysis deals with' Language above the sentence': this means it looks for patterns in units which are larger than one sentence.

He (ibid) rejects this definition saying that it is not applicable on announcements which has no structure. This means that we need knowledge about the world which provides acceptability to any definition. The interpretation of any text relies on real-world knowledge that is not contained in the text itself. A distinctive feature of discourse analysis, as opposite to the study of syntax, is its overt concern with what and how language communicates when it is used purposefully in particular contexts, and how the phenomena we find in 'real language' can be explained with reference to the communicative purposes of the text or interaction. These reasons motivate him to replace the definition of 'Language above the sentence' by 'Language in use ': language used to do something and mean something, language produced and interpreted in real world context.

4. Critical Discourse Analysis:

Wooffitt (2005: 138) states that critical discourse analysis emerged as a critical movement primarily. It is concerned to analyze how social and political inequalities are manifest in and reproduced through discourse. All the critical discourse analysts try to explore the role of discourse in the production and reproduction of power relations within social structures. They focus on the ways in which discourse sustains and legitimates social inequalities. For this reason, the beginning of CDA is a political agenda.

Wodak and Meyer (2001:2) argue that the term Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used in many situations interchangeably with Critical Linguistics (CL). Nowadays, linguists prefer to use CDA to denote a theory which regards language as a social practice. It takes in its consideration the context of language use as a crucial element in the interpretation of any discourse. The relationship between language and power forms another factor that this theory focuses on. The linguistic approach of this theory is a critical one studying institutional, political, gender, and media discourse which testify to more or less overt relations of struggle and conflict.
According to Blommaert (2005:24-7) CDA emerged historically out of Hallidayan linguistics but this needs to be contextualized. The emergence of sociolinguistics in the early 1960s was a reaction to Chomsky and programme of linguistics which focuses on the exclusion of social and cultural dimensions. Hallidayan linguistics is distinguished by a desire to incorporate social semiotic functions into a theory of grammar. CDA was founded on the premises that linguistic analysis can provide a valuable additional perspective for existing approaches to social critique. In this aspect, Fairclough's language and power (1989) is considered to be the landmark publication for the start of CDA. But the boundaries of CDA movement are still fuzzy. In short, it can be said that the main concern of CDA is power and especially institutionally reproduced power. Its purpose is to analyze opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, power, and discrimination and control as manifested in language.

5. Speech Acts:

J.L. Austin (1962) and, later, Searle (1969) developed the theory of speech acts which clarifies what people do when they speak. Austin in his lectures, which were collected and presented in the title: "How to do Things with Words" tries to say that it is not individual words or sentences that form the basic elements of human communication, but rather particular speech acts that are performed in uttering words (Bussmann:2006:1108).

Austin as quoted in Trask (2005:189) states that speech act is the attempt at doing something purely by speaking. Many things can be done by speaking. Anyone can make a promise, order or request somebody to do something, ask a question, make a threat, pronounce somebody husband and wife, and so on. Each one of these reflects a particular speech act. In the majority of cases, many utterances cannot constitute a speech act without the presence of appropriate conditions (felicitous). An utterance like "clean up your room" is infelicitous if the speaker does not have the authority over the addressee. No one can pronounce somebody husband and wife without required felicity. This procedure will fail unless a number of obvious conditions are met.

Yule (1996a:47) states that this sentence "you are fired" must be uttered by a powerful speaker because it is the act of ending an employment of the addressee. Both the speaker and hearer are involved in this action that is surrounded by certain circumstances which are called the speech event. The following sentence "This tea is really cold" can be interpreted in two ways either it is complaint or a praise. What determine the meanings of the above sentences are the states of the weather? If it is uttered in a really hot summer day; its meaning is praise but if it is uttered in a wintry day, its meaning will contrast the first interpretation (complaint).

Austin as quoted in Coulthard (1985:15) claims that a performative act needs four conditions to not be misfired:

1. An accepted conventional procedure must be found, in another sense, certain persons should utter certain words in certain circumstances.

2. The procedure must be done by a particular person and appropriate circumstances.

3. The procedure must be executed by all participants correctly.

4. It must be done in a complete way.

Searle's modification of the theory is modified on two levels, the taxonomy and the understanding. Four basic categories are identified by him who are: a-utterances, b-propositional utterances c-illocutionary utterances, and d-perlocutionary utterances.
a- An utterance represents the first level of speech act. Spoken words are reflected in this level without the intention to communicate meaning.

b- The propositional utterance is a more meaningful utterance and it specifies some act. He (ibid: 29) states that "a propositional act involves the expression of a proposition which occurs usually when performing an illocutionary act. The prepositional act is divided by Searle into reference act and prediction act. The former is clarified by him as follows:" Any expression which serve to identify anything, process, event, action, or any other kind of 'individual' or 'particular' I shall call referring expression."

c- Illocutionary utterances are sentences that contain propositional utterances referring to thing in certain context with the intention to achieve an act or to make some change in reality. He divides illocutionary utterances into propositional components and illocutionary force (the speaker's communicative intention).

d- Perlocutionary utterance is the same of that of Austin.

Saeed (1997:204) argues that the successful performance of specific speech act is determined by two factors or conditions: interactivity and context dependence. The first may be optional as in the case of greeting, requesting and promising but the second one refers to the social conventions utilized to support the issuance of speech acts. He mentions these two sentences to express his point of view:

1- I bet you five pounds he does not get elected.

The speech act of betting cannot be done or taken seriously unless the addressee responds saying (This kind of speech act needs interactivity which is not a condition in some cases as in greeting, requesting and promising):

You're on

2- I sentence you to hang by neck until dead.

In the above sentence, the context dependence gives meaning to it. This sentence must be uttered by a judge in the court addressing a criminal in the cage.

Adams (1985:46) states that the interpretation and understanding of a speech act requires the intention of the speaker to achieve a certain effect on the hearer by utilizing the social conventions. He (ibid) makes a distinction between intentional and conventional speech acts. He affirms that most speech acts are intentional in the sense that they are communicative. When the speaker makes a promise, he intends to obligate himself to future act. What motivates him to utter his utterance is his intention but not the conventions which are greatly influenced by the circumstances in which speech act occurs.

To support his point of view and differentiate between the two cases, he mentions the following two samples:

You will be fired.

You are fired.

The first sentence can be considered an intentional speech act in which the angry boss has the intention to fire the addressee as a kind of punishment if he does the same mistake again (it is a kind of warning). In the second, the situation is different because the speech act performed in the sentence is a conventional. It is uttered under the appropriate circumstances. To summarize the ongoing discussion, we can say that a theory
of speech act is a communicative activity whose interpretation depends on the speaker's intention, the interpretation of the addressee under certain social conventions.

5.1. Searle's Classification:

Searle (1969:57), saying that Austin's felicity conditions account for only ritual and ceremonial speech acts, such as pronouncing somebody husband and wife, presents four kinds of conditions which govern the happy execution of an illocutionary act:

1. Proposition content conditions:

These conditions draw limits and restrictions of the content of the speaker's utterance expressed in a sentence (declarative, imperative, interrogative etc). For example, in the speech of promise, I promise to stand beside you, the propositional content condition requires a future act on the behalf of the addressee.

2-Preparatory Conditions:

These conditions specify the real world prerequisites to each illocutionary act. They draw the status of the speaker performing the act, they make matching between the appropriate utterance and the related illocutionary act. For example, preparatory conditions for the speech act of execrative (exercise of power) require that the speaker must have authority and the addressee committed a crime or mistake.

3-Sincerity Conditions:

They indicate the intentions, feelings and beliefs of the speaker, being appropriate to the type of illocutionary act in question. If the speaker does not have the appropriate desired or belief, the act will be misfired. When the speaker promises to do thing without real intention, the act will be considered as abuse.

4-Essential Conditions:

They consider constitutive rules because they govern the issuance of a certain illocutionary act. They represent the syntactic and semantic rules required for designing an utterance relating to a given speech act. Doing the act must be implied in uttering a request.

Searle (1979:5) criticizes Austin's classification because it is based on overlapping criteria. Searle states that Austin does not clarify the difference between speech act verbs and speech acts. He also notes that some verbs can be found in more than one class. Mentioning the verb 'describe' which is put or classified by Austin in two classes “verdicatives” and "expositive". Besides, some verbs are classified under certain type but they do not satisfy the definition of that type. For example, the verb "appoint", "nominating" and "excommunication" do not designate the "giving of a decision in favour of or against a certain course of action.

As a result, Searle (1979:12-7) replaces that of Austin by an alternative taxonomy based on felicity condition. It is important to say that Searle depends on twelve significant dimensions of variation in which illocutionary acts differ one from another but the focus will be on three dimensions around which Searle builds most of his taxonomy. They are illocutionary point, direction of fit, and sincerity condition.

Illocutionary Point:

The point or purpose of a type of illocution that Searle calls illocutionary point is part of but not the same of illocutionary force. In the sense, we can say that the illocutionary point of requests in the same as that of commands (both of them attempt to get hearers to do something, but the illocutionary forces are different.
One can say that several elements participate to form illocutionary force and illocutionary point is one of them.

**Dimension of Fit:**

Differences in the direction of fit between words and the world. Some illocutions have as part of their illocutionary point to match the world words, others to get the world to match the words. He illustrates that by mentioning this situation. Supposes a man goes to the supermarket with a shopping list given him by his wife on which the words “beans, butter, bread and bacon”. Suppose he goes around with his shopping cart. Selecting these items, he is followed by a detective who writes down everything he takes. It is clear from this situation that both shopper and detective will have identical lists. But the function of the two lists will be quite different. In the case of the shopper's list, the purpose of the list is to get the world to match the words; the man is supposed to make his actions fit the list. The reverse is true concerning the detective, the purpose of the list is to make the words match the world; the man is supposed to make the list fit the actions of the shopper.

**Propositional Content:**

The differences in propositional content that are determined by illocutionary force indicating devices. This dimension draws the differences between a report and a prediction. A prediction must be about the future whereas a report talks about the past or present.

The British John Searle, being interested in the philosophy of language, published his famous book (Speech Acts) (1969) as an analytical modification and systematization of Austin theory. In this book, he studied the verb "promise" in details to be a practical step in the way that setting a pattern for analyzing other kinds of speech acts in general (Searle, 1971:40).

He (ibid :17) tries to prove the idea that speaking a language requires an engagement in a rule governed form of behavior, in the sense that when the speaker performs illocutionary acts such as making promises, he does that according to the rules of language. Thus, understanding speech acts require studying language rather than parole.

Pragmasemantically, Searle presents the notion of expressibility which implies that "whatever can be meant can be said". He emphasizes, that the meaning of the sentence employed cannot determine the type of speech act performed in a certain utterance. For example when the interviewer asks Bush (the interviewee)"Did you make the right decision about Iraq?" The interviewer's sentence can be blame or accusation rather than a question with (yes /no answer).Searle divides speech acts into five types which will be discussed in details in the next chapter because they form the model of this study:

5.1. A. Assertive (Representative):

Searle (1979:12) states that the aim of this class is committing the speaker (in varying degrees) to something being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition. The verbs belong to this class are, assert, complain, report, state, conclude, etc.

5.1. B. Directives:

They are attempts (in varying degree) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. They may be very modest "attempts" as when I invite you to do it ,or suggest that you do it ,or they may be very fierce attempts as when I insist that you do it .Verbs belong to this class are ask ,order command, request ,plead, beg, pray, entreat, advise, invite and permit.
5.1. C. Commissives:
Searle (1979:14) starts that Austin's definition of Commissives seems to him unexceptional therefore he appropriates it as it stands with the cavil that several of the verbs he listed as commissive verbs do not belong to this class at all, such as "favor", "intend", "shall" and others.

5.1. D. Expressives:
The illocutionary point included in this class is to reflect the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in propositional content. The paradigms of the verbs belong to this class are "congratulate", "apologize", "condole", "deplore" and "welcome".

5.1. E. Declaratives:
This successful performance of one of its member requires the correspondence between the propositional content and reality. If someone successfully performs the act of appointing someone else chairman, then he becomes chairman; if I successfully perform the act of nominating somebody as a candidate then he is a candidate. If the president successfully performs the act of declaring a state of war, then war is on; if the judge successfully performs the act of marrying you, then you are married.

6. Data Analysis:
Two inaugural speeches are chosen to be analyzed. These speeches are not chosen randomly but the differences between the policies of the two presidents are the criteria whereby the researcher chose the samples. Ferrara who recognizes that the classification of speech acts has a different form when it comes in sequences. The relationships between speech act and another can be justification, amplification and contrastive apposition. Two paragraphs will be analyzed to clarify the relationships of speech acts within one sequence.

6.1. Bush first inaugural speech:
First Paragraph
Through much of the last century, America’s faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging seal// assertive //. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations // assertive //. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country// assertive //, it is the inborn hope of our humanity// assertive //, an ideal we carry // commissive // but do not own// commissive //, a trust we bear and pass along // commissive //. And even after nearly 225 years, we have a long way yet to travel // commissive //.

In this paragraph, there are eight speech acts; the first one is assertive one where the speaker asserts that America's faith in freedom is stable. Its direction of fit is words to world: the words tell us that freedom is something scarlet. The expressed psychological state of speech act is belief (that p): the speaker believes the expressed proposition and also wants the hearer to believe it too. In this connection, we are presented with an assertive speech act.

The second, third and fourth speech acts come to amplify the first one emphasizing that the seed of freedom will prevail everywhere. Their direction of fit is words to world: The words tell us that the situation will differ in the future especially in the Middle East. The expressed psychological state of these speech acts is
belief (that p): the speaker believes the expressed propositions and also wants the hearer to believe them too. In this regard, we are faced with assertive speech acts.

The fifth speech act which is the main speech act emphasizes that America will carry the responsibility and take the root of freedom to all the countries that are suffering from despotism. Its direction of fit is world to words. The expressed psychological state is commitment. The speaker commits himself to carry the responsibility during the period of his presidency. The conditions of this speech satisfy the requirements of commissive speech act. The sixth speech act join with the preceded one by a relation of contrastive apposition. According to Ferrara, it must be a commissive one. It amplifies the fifth one clarifying that the seeds of freedom done possessed by America alone but by all the countries. The seventh and eighth speech acts combine to present amplification to the main speech act. For this reason, they are commissive speech acts. Finally, it can be said that the four assertive speech acts work as justification to the last four commissive ones.

Second Paragraph

America has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests and teach us what it means to be citizens. Every child must be taught these principles. Every citizen must uphold them. And every immigrant, by embracing these ideals, makes our country more, not less, American.

This paragraph contains five speech acts in all. The illocutionary point in the first speech act (i.e. America has never been united by blood or birth or soil) is to assert, as it were, the present reality of life in America. Its direction of fit is words to world: the words tell us what it was the case that Americans were going through hard times but these hard times unified Americans. The expressed psychological state of speech act is belief (that p): the speaker believes the expressed proposition and also wants the hearer to believe it too. In this regard, we are faced with an assertive speech act.

The illocutionary point in the second speech act (i.e., Americans are bound by ideals that move them beyond our backgrounds) is to reassure Americans and rekindle their faith in the future by reminding them that what united Americans cannot broken easily because they are united by something spiritual not material. Its direction of fit is words to world: The words tell us that what unified America is stronger than anything else. The expressed psychological state of the speech act is belief (that p): the speaker believes the expressed proposition and also wants the hearer to believe it too. In this regard, we are faced with an assertive speech act.

The illocutionary point in the third speech act exhorts the people to teach their children the principles that united them. Its direction of fit is world to words: The speaker tries to get the hearers to do their best to make their children work for the public good. The expressed psychological state of the speech act is wish: The speaker wishes the hearers to be citizens. This speech act, therefore, fulfills conditions that identify directives. It is thus a directive speech act.

The illocutionary point in the fourth speech act is to enjoin Americans to support and activate their children to apply these principles. Its direction of fit is world to words: The speaker tries to get Americans to conform to his words. The expressed psychological state is desire: The speaker desires that Americans become aware that the best way by which their country remains unified is by the application of these principles. In this regard, we are presented with a directive speech act.

The illocutionary point in the fifth speech act exhorts immigrants to get an idea about these principles and apply them in their lives because they are part of America. Its direction of fit is also world to words: The speaker tries to get immigrants to conform to his words. The expressed psychological state is desire: The
speaker desires that immigrants regard themselves real citizens and follow then Americans’ principles and traditions. We are, therefore, faced with another directive speech act.

In this paragraph, there are five speech acts. The first and the second one are assertive which present justification for the main speech act which is manifested in the third one. The third speech act carries the main message in this paragraph. It upholds the American children to teach the principles that change the situation in America. They make America the most powerful force in the world. The fourth and fifth speech acts come to be as amplification to the third one in which the president upholds the citizens and immigrants to adopt these principles because they are the force that enables America to remain the first force in the world.

6.2. Obama’s First Inaugural Speech:

First Paragraph

This generation of Americans has been tested by crises that steeled our resolve and proved our resilience // assertive //. A decade of war is now ending// assertive //. An economic recovery has begun// assertive //. America’s possibilities are limitless, for we possess all the qualities that this world without boundaries demands: youth and drive; diversity and openness; an endless capacity for risk and a gift for reinvention // assertive //. My fellow Americans, we are made for this moment, and we will seize it so long as we seize it together //directive //.

The illocutionary point in the first speech act (i.e., this generation of Americans has been tested by crises that steeled our resolve and proved our resilience.) is to assert that Americans were suffering a lot in the past but this suffering provides them with strength and the steel will to build a rosy future. The direction of fit of this speech act is words to world: The words express the status quo. The expressed psychological state is belief (that p): The speaker believes the expressed proposition and also wants the hearer to believe it as well. We are, therefore, faced with an assertive speech act.

The illocutionary force of the second, third and fourth speech acts amplify the first one stating that the civil war is ended and the economic recovery has begun. They assert these facts presenting a justification and motivation to the last speech act. Their direction of fit is words to world. The words express what happens in America. The expressed psychological state is belief (that p): The speaker believes what he has said and wants the hearer to believe it too. They are assertive speech acts.

The illocutionary point in the fifth speech act (i.e., ‘as we seize it together’) exhorts Americans to forget the past with its problems especially the civil war. Its direction of fit is world to words: The speaker tries to get the hearers to give up negative behavior pattern and start a new phase whose title is the united America. The expressed psychological state of the speech act is desire: that America eschews the disasters that happened in the past. This speech act, therefore, fulfills conditions that identify directives. Thus, it is a directive speech act which carries the main message of this paragraph.

Second Paragraph

We understand that outworn programs are inadequate to the needs of our time// assertive //. So we must harness new ideas and technology to remake our government, revamp our tax code, reform our schools, and empower our citizens with the skills they need to work harder, learn more, reach higher// commissive //. But while the means will change, our purpose endures: a nation that rewards the effort and determination of
every single American// commissive//. That is what this moment requires// assertive//. That is what will give real meaning to our creed // assertive //.

This paragraph contains five message units which constitute five speech acts. The illocutionary point in the first speech act (i.e., ‘outworn programs are inadequate to the needs of our time’) is to assert that the old procedures do not satisfy the requirement of the new period; therefore the new president will renew them. The direction of fit of this speech act is word to world: The words express the status quo. The expressed psychological state is belief (that p): The speaker believes the expressed proposition and also wants the hearer to believe it as well. We are, therefore, faced with an assertive speech act.

The illocutionary point in the second speech act (i.e., we empower our citizens with the skills they need to work harder’) exhorts Americans to work harder and the government will provides the people by the motivations to do that. Its direction of fit is world to words: The speaker commits himself to do something in the future. The expressed psychological state of the speech act is a pledge. This speech act, therefore, fulfils conditions that identify commissive. Thus, it is a commissive speech act. This speech carries the main message of the paragraph.

The illocutionary point in the third speech act is joined with the preceded one by the conjunction 'but' which makes it a commissive speech act that amplifies the second one. Its direction of fit is world to words: The speaker implicitly promises that he will enact new procedures that serve all the Americans. Its expressed psychological state is a pledge: that the president should enact the right procedures on behalf of Americans. We have, therefore, a directive speech act.

The illocutionary point in the fourth and fifth speech acts is assertive one. They work together with the first speech act to present a justification for the main speech act. The first one is pre-justification while the fourth and the fifth are post modifier the main speech act.

Conclusion:

The presidential inaugural speech is a genre that has specific requirements. One of these requirements is the dependency on the speech acts by which the speaker can achieve many objectives. The use of these speech acts must follow the logic which says that the first three types of speech acts in this genre are assertive, commissive and directive respectively with some exceptions in some cases. Assertive come in the first rank because they present justification to the commissive and directive ones. This order is applicable in many of inaugural speeches but the case is different with Obama who depends on commissive speech act to convince the audience. This dependency is logical because Obama belongs to the black race. He must depend on the commissive speech act implicitly or explicitly to achieve what he wants.

First Inaugural Address

George W. Bush
Saturday, January 20, 2001

President Clinton, distinguished guests and my fellow citizens, the peaceful transfer of authority is rare in history// assertive //, yet common in our country // assertive //. With a simple oath, we affirm old traditions and make new beginnings // commissive //.

As I begin, I thank President Clinton for his service to our nation // expressive //. And I thank Vice President Gore for a contest conducted with spirit and ended with grace // expressive //.
I am honored and humbled to stand here, where so many of America’s leaders have come before me, and so many will follow // expressive //. We have a place, all of us, in a long story// assertive //a story we continue// assertive //, but whose end we will not see // assertive //. It is the story of a new world that became a friend and liberator of the old// assertive //, a story of a slave-holding society that became a servant of freedom// assertive //, the story of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to defend// assertive // but not to conquer // assertive //.

It is the American story a story of flawed and fallible people, united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals // assertive //. The grandest of these ideals is an unfolding American promise that everyone belongs, that everyone deserves a chance, that no insignificant person was ever born// commissive //.

Americans are called to enact this promise in our lives and in our laws //comissive //. And though our nation has sometimes halted, and sometimes delayed, we must follow no other course // commissive //.

Through much of the last century, America’s faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea // assertive //. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations // assertive //. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country// assertive //, it is the inborn hope of our humanity// assertive //, an ideal we carry // commissive // but do not own// commissive //, a trust we bear and pass along // commissive //. And even after nearly 225 years, we have a long way yet to travel // commissive //.

While many of our citizens prosper, others doubt the promise, even the justice, of our own country // assertive //. The ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of their birth // assertive //. And sometimes our differences run so deep, it seems we share a continent// assertive/, but not a country // assertive //. We do not accept this, and we will not allow it // commissive //.

Our unity, our union, is the serious work of leaders and citizens in every generation // assertive//. And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity // commissive //. I know this is in our reach because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves who creates us equal in His image // assertive //. And we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward // expressive //.

America has never been united by blood or birth or soil // assertive //. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests and teach us what it means to be citizens // assertive //. Every child must be taught these principles // directive //. Every citizen must uphold them // directive //. And every immigrant, by embracing these ideals, makes our country more, not less, American // directive //.

Today, we affirm a new commitment to live out our nation’s promise through civility, courage, compassion and character // commissive //. America, at its best, matches a commitment to principle with a concern for civility // commissive //. A civil society demands from each of us good will and respect, fair dealing and forgiveness // commissive //.

Some seem to believe that our politics can afford to be petty because, in a time of peace, the stakes of our debates appear small // assertive //. But the stakes for America are never small // assertive //. If our country does not lead the cause of freedom, it will not be led // commissive //. If we do not turn the hearts of children toward knowledge and character, we will lose their gifts and undermine their idealism // commissive //. If we permit our economy to drift and decline, the vulnerable will suffer most // commissive //.
We must live up to the calling we share. Civility is not a tactic or a sentiment. It is the determined choice of trust over cynicism, of community over chaos. And this commitment, if we keep it, is a way to shared accomplishment.

America, at its best, is also courageous. Our national courage has been clear in times of depression and war, when defending common dangers defined our common good. Now we must choose if the example of our fathers and mothers will inspire us or condemn us. We must show courage in a time of blessing by confronting problems instead of passing them on to future generations.

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 we have the power to prevent. And we will reduce taxes, to recover the momentum of our economy and reward the effort and enterprise of working Americans.

We will build our defences beyond challenge, lest weakness invite challenge. We will confront weapons of mass destruction, so that a new century is spared new horrors. The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake: America remains engaged in the world by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom.

We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our nation birth.

America, at its best, is compassionate. In the quiet of American conscience, we know that deep, persistent poverty is unworthy of our nation’s promise. And whatever our views of its cause, we can agree that children at risk are not at fault.

Abandonment and abuse are not acts of God, they are failures of love. And the proliferation of prisons, however necessary, is no substitute for hope and order in our souls. Where there is suffering, there is duty. Americans in need are not strangers, they are citizens, not problems. But priorities. And all of us are diminished when any are hopeless.

Government has great responsibilities for public safety and public health, for civil rights and common schools. Yet compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. And some needs and hurts are so deep they will only respond to a mentor’s touch or a pastor’s prayer. Church and charity, synagogue and mosque lend our communities their humanity, and they will have an honored place in our plans and in our laws.

Many in our country do not know the pain of poverty, but we can listen to those who do. And I can pledge our nation to a goal: When we see that wounded traveler on the road to Jericho, we will not pass to the other side.

America, at its best, is a place where personal responsibility is valued and expected. Encouraging responsibility is not a search for scapegoats, it is a call to conscience. And though it requires sacrifice, it brings a deeper fulfilment. We find the fullness of life not only in options, but in commitments. And we find that children and community are the commitments that set us free.
Our public interest depends on private character, on civic duty and family bonds and basic fairness, on uncounted, unhonored acts of decency which give direction to our freedom // assertive //.

Sometimes in life we are called to do great things // commissive //. But as a saint of our times has said, every day we are called to do small things with great love//commissive //. The most important tasks of a democracy are done by everyone // directive //.

I will live and lead by these principles: to advance my convictions with civility, to pursue the public interest with courage, to speak for greater justice and compassion, to call for responsibility and try to live it as well // commissive //. In all these ways, I will bring the values of our history to the care of our times //commissive //.

What you do is as important as anything government does // directive //. I ask you to seek a common good beyond your comfort; to defend needed reforms against easy attacks; to serve your nation, beginning with your neighbour// directive //. I ask you to be citizens: citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens, building communities of service and a nation of character // directive //.

**International Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Science**

Americans are generous and strong and decent, not because we believe in ourselves //assertive //, but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves // assertive //. When this spirit of citizenship is missing, no government program can replace it // assertive //. When this spirit is present, no wrong can stand against it // assertive //.

After the Declaration of Independence was signed, Virginia statesman John Page wrote to Thomas Jefferson: “We know the race is neither to the swift nor the battle to the strong. Do you not think an angel rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm?” // assertive //

Much time has passed since Jefferson arrived for his inauguration // assertive //. The years and changes accumulate // assertive //. But the themes of this day he would know: our nation’s grand story of courage and its simple dream of dignity // assertive //.

We are not this story’s author, who fills time and eternity with his purpose // assertive //. Yet his purpose is achieved in our duty, and our duty is fulfilled in service to one another // assertive //. Never tiring, never yielding, never finishing, we renew that purpose today, to make our country more just and generous, to affirm the dignity of our lives and every life // commissive //. This work continues // commissive //. This story goes on // commissive //. And an angel still rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm // commissive //. God bless you all, and God bless America.

**Bush speech:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech Acts</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissive</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No of Acts</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inaugural Address by President Barack Obama

THE PRESIDENT: Vice President Biden, Mr. Chief Justice, members of the United States Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens:

Each time we gather to inaugurate a President we bear witness to the enduring strength of our Constitution // assertive //. We affirm the promise of our democracy // commissive //. We recall that what binds this nation together is not the colors of our skin or the tenets of our faith or the origins of our names // assertive //.

What makes us exceptional what makes us American is our allegiance to an idea articulated in a declaration made more than two centuries ago // assertive //:
“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

Today we continue a never ending journey to bridge the meaning of those words with the realities of our time. For history tells us that while these truths may be self-evident, they’ve never been self-executing; that while freedom is a gift from God, it must be secured by His people here on Earth. The patriots of 1776 did not fight to replace the tyranny of a king with the privileges of a few or the rule of a mob. They gave to us a republic, a government of, and by, and for the people, entrusting each generation to keep safe our founding creed.

And for more than two hundred years, we have.

Through blood drawn by lash and blood drawn by sword, we learned that no union founded on the principles of liberty and equality could survive half-slave and half free. We made ourselves anew, and vowed to move forward together.

Together, we determined that a modern economy requires railroads and highways to speed travel and commerce, schools and colleges to train our workers.

Together, we discovered that a free market only thrives when there are rules to ensure competition and fair play.

Together, we resolved that a great nation must care for the vulnerable, and protect its people from life’s worst hazards and misfortune.

Through it all, we have never relinquished our skepticism of central authority, nor have we succumbed to the fiction that all society’s ills can be cured through government alone. Our celebration of initiative and enterprise, our insistence on hard work and personal responsibility, these are constants in our character.

But we have always understood that when times change, so must we; that fidelity to our founding principles requires new responses to new challenges; that preserving our individual freedoms ultimately requires collective action. For the American people can no more meet the demands of today’s world by acting alone than American soldiers could have met the forces of fascism or communism with muskets and militias. No single person can train all the math and science teachers we’ll need to equip our children for the future, or build the roads and networks and research labs that will bring new jobs and businesses to our shores. Now, more than ever, we must do these things together, as one nation and one people.

This generation of Americans has been tested by crises that steeled our resolve and proved our resilience. A decade of war is now ending. An economic recovery has begun. America’s possibilities are limitless, for we possess all the qualities that this world without boundaries demands: youth and drive; diversity and openness; an endless capacity for risk and a gift for reinvention.

But for us, the people, understand that our country cannot succeed when a shrinking few do very well and a growing many barely make it. We believe that America’s prosperity must rest upon the broad shoulders of a rising middle class. We know that America thrives when every person can find independence and pride in their work; when the wages of honest labor liberate families from the brink of hardship. We are true to our creed when a little girl born into the bleakest poverty knows...
that she has the same chance to succeed as anybody else, because she is an American; she is free, and she is equal, not just in the eyes of God but also in our own // commissive //.

We understand that outworn programs are inadequate to the needs of our time // assertive //. So we must harness new ideas and technology to remake our government, revamp our tax code, reform our schools, and empower our citizens with the skills they need to work harder, learn more, reach higher // commissive //. But while the means will change, our purpose endures: a nation that rewards the effort and determination of every single American // commissive //. That is what this moment requires // assertive //. That is what will give real meaning to our creed // assertive //.

We, the people, still believe that every citizen deserves a basic measure of security and dignity // commissive //. We must make the hard choices to reduce the cost of health care and the size of our deficit // commissive //. But we reject the belief that America must choose between caring for the generation that built this country and investing in the generation that will build its future // commissive //. For we remember the lessons of our past, when twilight years were spent in poverty and parents of a child with a disability had nowhere to turn // assertive //.

We do not believe that in this country freedom is reserved for the lucky, or happiness for the few // commissive //. We recognize that no matter how responsibly we live our lives, any one of us at any time may face a job loss, or a sudden illness, or a home swept away in a terrible storm // commissive //. The commitments we make to each other through Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security, these things do not sap our initiative, they strengthen us // assertive //. They do not make us a nation of takers; they free us to take the risks that make this country great // commissive //.

The path towards sustainable energy sources will be long and sometimes difficult // assertive //. But America cannot resist this transition, we must lead it // commissive //. We cannot cede to other nations the technology that will power new jobs and new industries, we must claim its promise // commissive //. That’s how we will maintain our economic vitality and our national treasure our forests and waterways, our crop lands and snow capped peaks // commissive //. That is how we will preserve our planet, commanded to our care by God // commissive //. That’s what will lend meaning to the creed our fathers once declared // assertive //.

We, the people, still believe that enduring security and lasting peace do not require perpetual war//assertive //. Our brave men and women in uniform, tempered by the flames of battle, are unmatched in skill and courage // assertive //. Our citizens, seared by the memory of those we have lost, know too well the price that is paid for liberty // directive //. The knowledge of their sacrifice will keep us forever vigilant against those who would do us harm // assertive //. But we are also heirs to those who won the peace and not just the war; who turned sworn enemies into the surest of friends // assertive //and we must carry those lessons into this time as well // commissive //.

We will defend our people and uphold our values through strength of arms and rule of law // commissive //. We will show the courage to try and resolve our differences with other nations peacefully// commissive // not because we are naïve about the dangers we face// assertive //but because engagement can more durably lift suspicion and fear // assertive //.

America will remain the anchor of strong alliances in every corner of the globe // commissive //. And we will renew those institutions that extend our capacity to manage crisis abroad // commissive //, for no one has a greater stake in a peaceful world than its most powerful nation // assertive //. We will support
democracy from Asia to Africa, from the Americas to the Middle East, because our interests and our conscience compel us to act on behalf of those who long for freedom // commissive //. And we must be a source of hope to the poor, the sick, the marginalized, the victims of prejudice not out of mere charity // commissive //, but because peace in our time requires the constant advance of those principles that our common creed describes: tolerance and opportunity, human dignity and justice // commissive //.

We, the people, declare today that the most evident of truths that all of us are created equal is the star that guides us still; just as it guided our forebears through Seneca Falls, and Selma, and Stonewall; just as it guided all those men and women, sung and unsung, who left footprints along this great Mall, to hear a preacher say that we cannot walk alone; to hear a King proclaim that our individual freedom is inextricably bound to the freedom of every soul on Earth // assertive //.

It is now our generation’s task to carry on what those pioneers began // commissive //. For our journey is not complete until our wives, our mothers and daughters can earn a living equal to their efforts // commissive //. Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well // commissive //. Our journey is not complete until no citizen is forced to wait for hours to exercise the right to vote // commissive //. Our journey is not complete until we find a better way to welcome the striving, hopeful immigrants who still see America as a land of opportunity (applause) until bright young students and engineers are enlisted in our workforce rather than expelled from our country // commissive //. Our journey is not complete until all our children, from the streets of Detroit to the hills of Appalachia, to the quiet lanes of Newtown, know that they are cared for and cherished and always safe from harm// commissive //.


That is our generation’s task to make these words, these rights, these values of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness real for every American // commissive //. Being true to our founding documents does not require us to agree on every contour of life // assertive //. It does not mean we all define liberty in exactly the same way or follow the same precise path to happiness // assertive //. Progress does not compel us to settle centuries long debates about the role of government for all time//commissive //, but it does require us to act in our time // commissive //.

For now decisions are upon us and we cannot afford delay // commissive //. We cannot mistake absolutism for principle, or substitute spectacle for politics, or treat name-calling as reasoned debate // commissive //. We must act, knowing that our work will be imperfect // commissive //. We must act, knowing that today’s victories will be only partial and that it will be up to those who stand here in four years and 40 years and 400 years hence to advance the timeless spirit once conferred to us in a spare Philadelphia hall // commissive //.

My fellow Americans, the oath I have sworn before you today, like the one recited by others who serve in this Capitol, was an oath to God and country, not party or faction // assertive //. And we must faithfully execute that pledge during the duration of our service // commissive //. But the words I spoke today are not so different from the oath that is taken each time a soldier signs up for duty or an immigrant realizes her dream // commissive //. My oath is not so different from the pledge we all make to the flag that waves above and that fills our hearts with pride // commissive //.

They are the words of citizens and they represent our greatest hope // assertive //. You and I, as citizens, have the power to set this country’s course // commissive //. You and I, as citizens, have the obligation to shape the debates of our time not only with the votes we cast commissive //, but with the voices we lift in defence of our most ancient values and enduring ideals //commissive //.

Let us, each of us, now embrace with solemn duty and awesome joy what is our lasting birthright //commissive //. With common effort and common purpose, with passion and dedication, let us answer the call of history and carry into an uncertain future that precious light of freedom // commissive //.
Thank you. God bless you, and may He forever bless these United States of America // expressive //.

Obama

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech Acts</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissive</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No of Acts</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


References:


