# JOHN ROGERS SEARLE AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO SPEECH ACT THEORY

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## ABSTRACT

*Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics which studies the meaning communicated through language. Pragmatics studies the process by which native users of a language use native language. Pragmatics studies the meaning in the context sentence is made. Pragmatics is the newer area of language study in linguists. The important development in the pragmatics is the origin of speech act theory. J. L. Austin is the originator of the Speech act theory. According to J. L. Austin all utterances are some type of speech act. People not only produce utterances to convey their feelings but also perform actions in between their speech. Even a simple utterance such as 'Violets are blue' might be regarded as a special type of act namely the act of making a statement. This overall approach to language study is known as 'speech act theory'.*

## INTRODUCTION

### John Rogers Searle

He is born on 31 July 1932. He is an American Philosopher. He is widely noted for his contribution to the philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, social philosophy. Searle began his early college education at the University of Wisconsin- Madison. He received all his university degrees, B.A., M.A., and D. Phil from Oxford University. He held first position in a faculty. He has five honorary doctorate degrees from four different countries and is an honorary visiting professor. In 2000, he received the Jean Nicod Prize, in 2004 the National Humanities Medal and in 2006, the Mind and Brain Prize. Searle was influenced by J.L. Austin and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

**Speech Act  Theory:**

Searle's early work was on speech act. He attempted to synthesize ideas from his colleagues including J.L. Austin, Ludwig Wittgenstein and G.C.J .Ridgley with his own theory. He also drew on the work of H.P. Grice.  Searle clarified his notion of illocutionary act in his book entitled speech act (1969)

Searle in his article 'a Classification of illocutionary act (1977) says, 'the primary purpose of this paper is to develop a reasoned classification of illocutionary act into certain basic categories or types. I) Constitutive II) Regulative

**1] Constitutive:** - Constitutive rules are those rules which create or define new activities or form of behavior.

**2] Regulative:** - Regulative are those rules which control or regulate existing activities or form of behavior and often have the form of imperatives.

For example

Students must wear school uniform.

Searle believes that all languages are rule governed. Searle finds faults with J.L Austin's original classification of speech act theory for various reasons and has given his classification of illocutionary act. His classification is an improvement on J.L. Austin's classification of speech act.

**Searle's classifications of speech acts are as follows.**

**1] Assertives Speech Act:**

Assertive speech act are the speech act which have a truth value which state what the speaker is speaking, statements of facts, assertions and descriptions. In using the assertive speech act speaker makes word fit in the world of belief.

 For example

*The car is red*

**2] Expres  sives Speech Act:**

Expressive are the speech act which tell about the felling of the speaker. They express the psychological state of the speaker in the statements of pleasure, pain, likes dislikes.

For example

*I am happy.*

### 3] Directives Speech Act:

Directive speech act are attempts to direct the hearer to do something. They express what the speaker wants. In this category includes commands, orders, and requests.

For example

*Give me your pen.*

### 4] Comissives Speech Act:

Commisives Speech acts are speech acts that commit the speaker to some future course of action. They express the intention of the speaker such as promise, threat, and refusal.

For example

*I will support him.*

### 5] Declarative Speech Act:

Declarative speech is speech act which change the world via their utterances they bring out correspondence between the propositional contents and the world. In order to perform declarative speech act appropriately the speaker must have special institutional role in a specific context.

For Example

*When Priest says, 'I now pronounce you a husband and wife. This is declarative speech act.*

**CONCLUSION**

The Speech Act Theory argues that when we use language we perform certain actions. Searle was influenced by J.L. Austin and Ludwig Wittgenstein. He attempted to synthesize ideas from his colleagues including J.L. Austin, Ludwig Wittgenstein and G.C.J .Ridgley with his own theory. He established two major conditions for the production of  institutionalized and ritual speech acts.

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