

Performatives and Constatives  
in Arabic:  
A Pragmalinguistic Analysis

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# Abstract

The aim of this paper is twofold. First, it pragmatically describes constatives and performatives in Arabic. Second, it tries to survey the linguistic expressions that Arabic makes use of to express illocutionary meanings.

## Introduction

Contrary to Chomsky's attempt to establish with his distinction between competence and performance, and Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole*, the nature of the primary speech acts that are performed in the use of a natural language is determined by the semantic nature of that language (Vanderveken(1990) as cited in Al- Sulaimaan,2001:3). In this respect, الخليفة(2007) has confirmed that Arabic has a very large number of linguistic expressions and speech act verbs whose meanings can determine the possible illocutionary forces of the utterances.

The present paper will shed some light on Arabic pragmatics which has been treated under different names and it will proceed to the pragmatic analysis of Arabic constatives and performatives which involve an illocutionary point as part of their meaning.

In addition ,the linguistic realization of speech acts in Arabic will be described and a pragmatic analysis of these acts will be stressed. The actual components of the illocutionary forces which they name will be specified. The paper will make use of some theoretical distinctions in the analysis of constatives and performatives proposed by

Austin(1962),Searle(1969;1979),Bach and Harnish(1979),Leech (1983),and Levinson(1983).

## 1.2. Performatives vs Constatives

Austin (ibid.:10) distinguishes between performatives and constatives . He argues that constatives are propositions which can be stated positively or negatively , i.e. , they are statements of facts which could be right or wrong , e.g.

( 5. ) She is my sister .

One can assess the truth or falsity of this sentence in reference to the information in the world . Unlike constatives , performatives are formulated , under appropriate conditions not to describe something but to achieve something . For example , by saying :

( 6. ) I bequeath my car to my brother ,

the speaker is not stating a fact about the world , rather he is performing the act of bequeathing .

### 1. 2. 1 Structure of Performatives

Performatives may have two grammatical forms . The first form comprises the first person singular ' I ' plus a verb in the simple present indicative active , with or without an indirect object ' you'. Levinson (ibid.:244) reduces this grammatical form to the following structure in English :I (hereby) V per you (that) S'

where V per is a performative verb and S' is a complement sentence . The second form uses verb in the passive voice as in the following example (Austin ,ibid.:57) :

( 7. ) Passengers are warned to cross the track by the bridge only .

To distinguish performative utterances from non - performative ones , Austin suggests that we insert the word ' hereby'. The hereby -insertion fits only the performative utterances . Compare :

( 8. ) I ( hereby ) advise you to change your plan .

( 9. ) John ( hereby ) describes his plan to his friend .

Thus , (9) is ungrammatical because " hereby " is inserted to introduce a non - performative verb .

Austin (ibid:15) believes that if the two above mentioned English grammatical structures are violated , the utterance will no longer be a performative one . Compare:

( 10. ) I promise you .

( 11. ) He promised her .

In (10) we are performing the act of promising , whereas in (11) we are merely describing the act of promising or reporting that a promise has been made .

## 1 . 2. 2. Types of Performatives

Most pragmaticists such as Austin (ibid.) , searle , (1969) , Leech (ibid.), Levinson (ibid.) have specified two types of performatives : explicit performatives and implicit (primary) performatives . Explicit performatives occur “when a speaker needs to define his act as belonging to a particular category” (Leech ,ibid:181) . However , speakers might appeal to various means to identify their speech acts as belonging to this or that category . One of these means is the use of performative verbs (e.g. order , request , etc.) These explicit performative verbs name the illocutionary force the utterance . Implicit (primary) performatives , on the other hand , are those cases in which performativity is achieved through utterances that have no performative expressions ; they do contain an explicit performative verb naming the illocutionary force of the utterance . To clarify this distinction , consider the following : the act of promising in English , for example , can be shown in two ways :

( 12. ) I'll be there at two o'clock . ( primary performative )

( 13. ) I promise to be there at two o'clock . ( Explicit performative ) .

(12) is a primary performative as it is commonly exploited to indicate a speech act of promise and that no other interpretation be accepted , whereas (13) is clearly seen as an explicit performative as it contains the performative verb promise in the simple present indicative with the first person subject . Although both sentences (12) and (13) are used to perform the same speech act (of promising) , (13) seems to be more specific in meaning than (12) (Lyons ,1977 : 728) .

## 1.3 Pragmatic Analysis of Speech Acts

Bach and Harnish (ibid:3) believe that speech acts should be studied in terms of communicative purposes . They think that a speaker conveying something to a

hearer has a certain intention and that an act of communication cannot be said felicitously or successfully unless this intention is identified by the hearer . They stress the fact that the successful issuance of an illocutionary act requires that this intention be recognized by the hearer . Indeed , Bach and Harnish have adopted an elaborate model (of both Austin's (1962) and searle's (1969;1979)in which a communicative speech act is seen as composed of four further acts :

#### 1. Utterance Act

Speaker utters expression from language to hearer in context of utterance .

#### 2. Locutionary Act

Speaker says to hearer in context of utterance so – and – so.

#### 3. Illocutionary Act

Speaker does such – and – such in context of utterance .

#### 4. Perlocutionary Act

Speaker affects hearer in a certain way .

Before preceding , it is important to emphasize an essential distinction to a clear discussion of speech acts . To account for the distinction between locutionary , illocutionary and perlocutionary acts , let's study the following example .

(14 .) Shoot her !

The locutionary act of this utterance represents the uttering of shoot her ; illocutionary act , in appropriate circumstances , is that of , variously , ordering , urging , advising the hearer to shoot her; but the perlocutionary act is the effect of persuading , forcing or frightening the hearer into shooting her (Levinson,ibid.:236 – 37) . (For more on this distinction , see Van Dijk , 1976 : 29 and Leech , ibid. : 199f ) .

#### 1. 3.1 Classification of Speech Acts

Bach and Harnish (ibid:44 - 55) have adopted a comprehensive detailed scheme in their taxonomy of speech acts in which a great many types of illocutionary acts are described . They have recognized six general classes on the basis of the speaker's psychological state which they call speaker's " attitude " . Two of these classes are conventional : " effectives " and "verdictives"<sup>(1)</sup> . The other four

types are communicative speech acts : constatives , directives , commissives and acknowledgements<sup>(2)</sup>. The six classes are the following :

### 1. Constatives

Constatives express the speaker's belief and his intention or desire that the hearer have or form a like belief . They include assertives<sup>(3)</sup> , perdictives , , informatives , confirmatives , disputatives , suggestives , suppositives, etc .

### 2. Directives

Directives express the speaker's attitude and intention towards some prospective action by the hearer that his utterance or the attitude it expresses , be taken as reason for the hearer's action , e.g. request , ask , demand , etc.

### 3. Commissives

Commissives<sup>(4)</sup> are speech acts in which the speaker is committed to some future course of action . The promiser attempts to make the world fit his words . The issuer of a promise intends to do something by uttering his words , e.g. promise , swear , plan

### 4. Acknowledgements

This class had its origin in Austin's behabitives . Acknowledgements express a certain feeling towards the hearer , especially in cases where the utterance is obviously perfunctory or formal., e.g. welcome , congratulate , , apologize , greet , accept, etc.

### 5. Effectives

These conventional speech acts affect some change in institutional states of affairs . For example :

( 15 ) A student is graduated .

( 16 ) A bill is voted .

Verbs denoting effective acts are : resign ,vote ,bequeath ,etc.

### 6. Verdictives

This class of verbs is used to give verdicts , findings or judgements, e.g. estimate , value , appreciate , assess , etc.

#### 1.4. Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Speech acts that are obtained via the straightforward relationship between a form (structure) and a function ( communicative function ) are described as “ direct speech acts ” , e.g.

	<u>Forms</u>	<u>Functions</u>
( 17. ) Did you eat the food ?	Interrogative	Question .
( 18. ) Eat the food ( please ) .	Imperative	Command .

An indirect speech act , on the other hand , is often indirectly obtained through different sentence types or as Leech (ibid.:195) puts it : “an indirect illocution is a case of sentence ‘ masquerading ’ as a sentence of different type” . Consider the following example quoted from Ackmajian et al. (1995 : 350):

( 19. ) My car has a flat tire .

This utterance recognized through declarative structure is not to be taken as a statement when said by “ Smith ” to a gas station attendant , rather , it is a request for the attendant to do something (repairing the tire) .

By and large , in utterances of indirect speech acts , three basic ingredients can be distinguished , the literal force of the utterance (i.e. , the direct act) , the non literal force of the utterance (i.e. , the indirect act) and the relation between them . The direct speech act is here of a secondary importance for the speaker because it is not the one that is intended by the speaker .

Consequently , these instances are considered as “conventionally indirect ”. The direct illocutionary force here is only incidental and the speaker does not mean it . Note the following example which is similar to example ( 19 ) above .

( 20. ) Tom : I would like the salt . (As uttered at a dinner table by Tom to Alice who is close to the salt) .

The issuer of this utterance ( Tom) does not intend to inform Alice about his wish while taking his dinner , rather , he wants her to interpret it merely as a request to do something (passing the salt) .

Mey (1993:145) , Yule (1996:55) and Crystal (1997:12) argue that in English people prefer to use indirect commands and requests since they are often seen

gentler and more polite than direct ones . That's why we find speakers start their requests with expressions such as will you.....?, would you.....?, can you....?, etc . Compare .

( 21.a ) Close the door .

( 21.b ) Would you mind closing the door , please ?

In (21.a) the imperative construction might be rude ; therefore , it is usually replaced by an interrogative construction in (21.b) , and this is a matter of politeness .

## 2. Performatives and Constatives in Arabic

Arab linguists and rhetoricians such as أبو بن فارس (1964) and السكاكي (1980) have fully investigated the pragmatic meaning as an integral part of the meaning of the utterance , in addition to the semantic meaning .However, they have accommodated pragmatics under rhetoric. They have built their speech theory on the pragmatic meaning of an utterance as the product of the speaker's intention , hearer's comprehension , the context of situation and the speaker – hearer relation. They have distinguished utterance meaning as either constative (الخير) or performative (الإنشاء) ( الاوسي , 1982: 33 ; عباس , 1989:145 ) .In the following section some of the prominent principles of Arabic rhetoric theory will be reviewed.

### 2.1 Arabic Rhetoric Theory

Unlike English, pragmatics in Arabic is not a recent development.It has been treated by Arab scholars within rhetoric.Arabic rhetoric accounts for certain linguistic issues through the employment of the concept of choice to demonstrate the impingement of pragmatic constraints upon syntax;and as we know pragmatics affects the relationship between different ways of expressing things,and between these different ways and factors conditioning the text producer's choices.

Rhetorical analysis of linguistic issues are also approached from the standpoint of the receiver taking into consideration his verbal and non-verbal interaction which



is classified in a typological model from a presuppositional and ideological point of view.

الجرجاني, a distinguished Arab rhetorician, in his book **دلالة الالفاظ** (1983:181) discussed the choice of one structure or lexical item over another one, which is similar from a lexical and truth-conditional point of view but different from a morphological point of view. Not only the primary illocutionary act, i.e., the implicature is expressed but also the precise true attitudinal implication of the text producer towards the proposition of his constative discourse as well as the receiver.

Arabic Pragmatic rhetoric studies the literal encoding of a given semantic configuration. It deals with the pragmatic and contextual analysis of the features of utterance's structures in Arabic at the inter-clausal and intra-clausal levels in terms of informativity, contextual conformity, persuasiveness and intelligibility. This entails a wide range of speech acts and syntactic features and how they are used in situational contexts. Thus, Arabic rhetoric theory centers on the linkage between linguistic forms (syntactic features) and contextual constraints (pragmatics). It also proves how speech acts, and contexts can influence structure.

To conclude, Arab rhetoricians have contributed a lot to the evolution and development pragmatics. It is noteworthy in this regard to say that a number of western linguists have admitted this fact. Kennedy (1980:194), for example, recalls the above fact and attests: " One of the medieval rhetorical traditions, which should not pass unnoticed, is Arabic rhetoric."

## 2 . 2 Classification of Speech Acts in Arabic

According to Arab rhetoricians such as الجرجاني ( 1977 ) , العسكري ( 1964 ) , and السكاكي ( ibid. ) , ' constative ' الخبر , ' performative ' ( الطلب ) الإنشاء . on the other hand , is that kind of meaning in which the speaker asks his addressee to do something , e.g.

- ( 22. ) ( constative ) . لاستسهلن المصاعب أو أحقق هدفي ( 22. )  
 ( I'll consider all difficulties until I achieve my aim )  
 ( 23. ) ( performative : command ) وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ( 23. )  
 (النور : ٦٥).

“ So establish regular prayer and give regular charity ”  
 ( The Glorious Qur'an 24 : 56 ) .

In this respect , مطلوب والبصير ( 1999 : 103 ) confirm that الخبر utterance can be true or false in respect to the speaker's judgment and the reality in the world . This view , which distinguishes الخبر utterance form الإنشاء utterance , might be accredited to an Islamic group known as ( المعتزلة ) . They have come to this conclusion depending on the belief that the Glorious Qur'an is composed of three main speech acts : exercitives ( الأمر ) , prohibitives ( النهي ) and constatives ( الخبر ) ( ibid. ) .

#### 2.1.1 The Structure of Performative ( الإنشاء )

Semantically , an utterance not likely to be true or false in itself is often referred to as الإنشاء . ( 121 : ibid. , مطلوب والبصير cited in القرويني : 13 as cited in الطلب أو الإنشاء ) utterance is usually divided into two main classes :

- ( a ) ' Directive ' الإنشاء الطلبي which involves the fulfillment of action not at the time of enunciating an utterance .  
 ( b ) ' Non - directive ' الإنشاء غير الطلبي which does not involve the fulfillment of an action .

Arabic performatives are syntactically characterized by the following markers :

1. The subject is in the first person singular . It has the marker /أُ، أ/ .
2. The verb is in the simple present indicative active .
3. The verb has an indirect object /كُ / .
4. It is sometimes possible to insert the word “ بهذا<sup>(5)</sup> ” which can be considered as an equivalent to the English word “ hereby ” . Consider the following examples :

- ( 24. ) أعدك أن احضر غدا ( I promise you to come tomorrow ) .  
 ( 24.a ) أعدك ( بهذا ) أن أحظر غداً ( I ( hereby ) promise you to come tomorrow ) .  
 ( 25. ) أراهنك على أنه سينجح ( I bet you he will pass ).

From looking at the above examples, one may notice that the difference between English and Arabic performatives lies in the syntactic form of each, but semantically speaking no difference can be observed. Significantly, the performative utterance in Arabic can be achieved by using the past tense form, e.g.

( 26. ) وهبتك هذا الدار ( I gave you this house free as a gift ).

## 2.2. Directive Utterances

Arab linguists and rhetoricians such as سيبويه (born in 130 A.H.) and ابن فارس (ibid.) have classified speech acts into a small number of types. However, the classification adopted in this paper is that of الجرجاني (1977) and السكاكي (ibid.) as they proved to be more detailed and refined. Arabic directives are classified into five communicative speech acts: "command", "prohibition", "optative", "question" and "vocative". The five classes are the following:

### 1. الأمر Command

This speech act may be realized through the following linguistic forms:

a. فعل الأمر The verb of command, e.g.

( 27. ) " أقم الصلاة لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ "  
( الإسراء : ٧٨ )

" Establish regular prayers at the sun's decline "

( The Glorious Qur'an 17 : 78 )

b. The imperfect form beginning with لام الأمر

" the particle لـ / li / of command" which is usually prefixed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> pers. sing. of the jussive to give it an imperative sense ( Wright, 1974 : 291 , e.g. )

( 28. ) ليطب قلبك

( Let their heart be at ease )

c. The form of أسم فعل

" nomina verbi " of the imperative verb, e.g. صه which has the meaning of " hush " أسكت , مه which means أكفف " stop ; give up". However, these forms are rarely used nowadays. For more on these forms, see مطلوب والبصير ( ibid. : 124 ).

### 2. النهي Prohibition

It is realized in the imperfect form beginning with the particle لا /laa/ of prohibition ' لا الناهية ' as لا يفعل ، لا تفعل ، e.g.

لاتنه عن خلق وتأتي مثله ( 29. )

( Don't preach against what you yourself practice . )

### 3. التمني Optative

This speech act is realized via the following particles : ليت " would that " , هل " wish " , لعل " perhaps " and لو " if " which may be used with or without the verb وَدَّ " to love " , e.g.

" وَدَّوْا لَوْ تَذُهِنَ فَيَذْهَبُونَ " ( 30. )

( القلم : ٩ )

" Their desire is that thou shouldst be pliant : So would they be pliant . "

( The Glorious Qur'an , 68 : 9 )

" يا ليت شعري ، ولم نعتب أعدايكم هل نال حظاً من العتبي أعادينا؟ " ( 31. )

( ابن زيدون : أضحى التتائي )

O would that I knew , seeing that  
we have not satisfied your enemies ,  
whether our enemies have obtained  
any measure of satisfaction [ from you ] .

( Ibn Zaidun's poem : أضحى التتائي )

( Translated by : James T. Monroe )

Arab rhetoricians distinguish between two types of optative utterances : the first type is where the speaker wishes that something wanted should happen though he knows that it would never happen for it is impossible , e.g.

" يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزاً عَظِيماً " ( 32. )

( النساء : ٧٣ )

" Oh ! I wish I had been with them ; a fine thing should I then have made of it "

( The Glorious Qur'an , 4: 73 )

Whereas in the second type , the speaker wishes that something wanted should happen for he knows that it is possible , at least to some extent ( السكاكي , ibid. : 420 )

:

ليت هذه السيارة لنا ( 33. )

( O would that this car were ours ! )

#### 4. الاستفهام Question

This speech act is achieved through the particles “هل” , “أ” and some question words such as “من” “ who ” , “أي” “ which ” , ‘ كيف ’ , how , ‘ أين ’ “ where ” , ‘ متى ’ “ when ” , ‘ ما ’ “ what ” , ‘ كم ’ , “how many” ( Wright , ibid. : 14 ) . e.g.

( 34. ) هل تحسن الأداء ؟

( Did the performance improve ? )

#### 5. النداء Vocative

Vocative in Arabic may be realized by the particles:( يا ، وا ، هيا ، أيا ، آ ، أ ) , “ O ” , e.g.

( 35. ) " أفاطم مهلا بعض هذا التدلل وأن كنت قد أزمعت صرحي فاجلمي "

( ND : 19 , الزوازاني )

( O Fatim , easy with your coquetry . If you had decided to desert me , do it kindly ) .

The most common particle is يا “ O ” , e.g.

( 36. ) " يا آدمُ اسْكُنْ أنتَ وَرَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ "

( البقرة : ٣٥ )

" O Adam ! dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden . "

( The Glorious Qur'an , 2 : 35 )

However , the particle ( يا ) may sometimes be deleted as in :

( 37. ) " يُوسُفَ أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَذَا "

( يوسف : ٢٩ )

" O Joseph , pass this over ! "

( The Glorious Qur'an 12 : 29 )

#### 2.3 Non- directive Utterances

Non-directive utterances can be subclassified into the following speech acts :

##### 1. المدح والذم Praise and Vilification

This speech act is expressed via special group of verbs called أفعال المدح والذم , “ the verbs of praise and vilification ( blame ) ” ( Wright , ibid. : 97 ) . These include ِ نَعَمْ “ to be good ” , بئس , “ to be bad ” ساء “ to be bad or evil ” . In addition , we sometimes use the verb form فَعَّلَ to express praise , e.g.

( 38 ) نعم الصاحب أنت

( You are an excellent companion )

( 39 ) وحسن أولئك رفيقاً

( النساء : ٦٩ )

“Ah ! what a beautiful fellowship! ”

( The Glorious Qur’an 4: 69)

## 2. التعجب Exclamation

Exclamation is expressed in Arabic by employing two regular forms of expressions called أفعال التعجب “verbs of surprise or wonder” . The first is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular masculine perfect preceded by ما ( ما التعجبية , the ma` expressive of surprise ) , and followed by the accusative of the object that causes surprise :

( 39. ) ما أعذب شعاع القمر راقداً على هذا الشاطئ !

( How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank ! )

The second is the 2<sup>nd</sup> pers . sing. masc. imperfect followed by the preposition , بِـ with the genitive , with the same signification as before .

( 40. ) أشدُّ بأبيه !

( How strong his father is ! )

## 3. القسم Oath

Oath in Arabic may be expressed in two ways :

A : The use of particles such as وَ ، تَدْ ، بَدْ ، e.g.

( 41. ) والله لا يهلك المؤمن

( By God , the believer shall not perish ) .

B : The use of the expressions “ أقسم ” “ I swear ” and “ لعمر ”

( 42. ) أقسم أنه بريء

( I swear he is innocent ( not guilty ) ) .

## 4. الرجاء Invocation

This speech act is realized through the particle لعل “ perhaps ” and the verbs of invocation عسى , “perhaps”, حري , “likely”, and أخلوق “likely”( Wright , ibid. : 108 ) e.g.

( 43. ) عسى ربكم أن يرحمكم

( Perhaps your Lord may have mercy on you . )

( 44. ) أخلو لقت السماء أن تمطر

( It is likely to rain ) .

#### 5. صيغ العقود Contract Forms

These are achieved by using the past tense form as in : قبلت ، وهبت ، اشتريت ، بعث ، etc.

( 45. ) زوجتك نفسي

( I married myself to you )

#### Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

As is the case in English , there is an easily recognized correlation between the three common speech acts of statement , question and command ( request ) and their normal structural realization ( by means of sentence – type) : declarative , interrogative and imperative structures , respectively :

( 46. ) Statement : يتألف الكتاب من جزئين

( The book is in two parts . )

( 47. ) Question : من هو مؤلف " سوق الأضاليل " ؟

( Who wrote " Vanity Fair" ? )

( 48. ) Command : تعال مبكراً

( Come early . )

However , there are a lot of examples which express indirect relationship between a given speech act and its syntactic form. Let's study the following examples :

( 49. ) " إذا لم تستحي فافعل ما شئت "

( If you are shameless , do whatever you like .)

Linguistically speaking , this utterance , which is extracted from the Prophetic Traditions (Hadiths) of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) , is an example of imperative sentence , but pragmatically , it has the illocutionary force of warning العسقلاني (2000:642) . In the following example , we have an imperative construction expressing the illocutionary force of الدعاء prayer :

( 50. ) ربنا اغفر لنا

( O our Lord ! Forgive us . )

In certain contexts a declarative construction may be exploited to achieve an indirect speech act in certain appropriate conditions . Let's have a look at (51) and (52) below and see how Arabic makes use of declarative constructions .

( 51. ) أمرني المعلم أن أخرج من الصف

( The teacher ordered me to leave the class . )

( 52. ) " سيذكروني قومي إذا جد جددهم وفي الليلة الظلماء يفقد البدر "

(My tribe (or my people) will remember me when they face hard times : (in the same way as) the full moon is missed in a dark night) .

(51) has the illocutionary force of command , whereas (52) expresses praise (self praise).

consider the following example which illustrate the illocutionary forces which are not represented in the words and forms but are implied from the text as a whole .

( 53. ) " الهی وَرَبِّي مَنْ لِي غَيْرِكَ أَسْئَلُهُ كَشْفُ ضُرِّي وَالنَّظَرُ فِي أَمْرِي (6) " ..... )

( My God and my Lord ! Have I any but Thee from whom to ask removal of my affection and regard for my affairs ? )

In the same supplication we read :

( 54. ) " لا أجد مفرأ مني ولا مفرأ عما أتوجه إليه في أمري غير قبولك عذري وأدخالك إياي في سعة من رحمتك. اللهم فاقبل عذري "

(I find no place to free form what occurred through me . Nor any place of escape to which I may turn in my affairs other than the acceptance of my excuse and Thy entering me into the compass of Thy mercy. Oh God, so accept my excuse  
!)

The final sentence , namely **فاقبل عذري** (accept my excuse) determines that the initial sentence **من لي غيرك أسئله** (Have I any but Thee from whom to ask...) is a question form in the format but the illocutionary force is to state , " I (i.e. , the repentee) have no one but Thee " .....

Quranic aayas (verses) are full of pragmatic utterances in which messages are expressed in forms not usually used for those purposes , i.e. , in some cases , question – type utterances are used not to ask for information but to warn people of their misbehavior and what consequences they might expect otherwise . Note the



following aaya where a rhetorical question is used as a linguistic form expressing the speech act of prohibition:

" أَفَأَنْتَ تَكْرَهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يُكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ " ( 55. )  
( يونس : ٩٩ )

" Wilt thou then compel mankind against their will , to believe ! ”  
(The Glorious Qur’an , 10 : 99) .

Moreover, we can find examples showing the speech act of “command” realized by the declarative clause, as in the following aaya (حمودة,1983:67) .

" وَالْمَطَّلَقَاتُ يَتَّبِعْنَ أَنْفُسَهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ " ( 56. )  
( البقرة : ٢٢٨ )

“Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three monthly periods ” .

( The Glorious Qur’an , 2 : 228 )

So , we should pay special attention to such intended meanings . For more on examples of direct and indirect speech acts in Arabic, see (لاشين,1987:166–91 and السامرائي, 2000:20–27)

## Conclusions

In the light of the previous analysis, the following conclusions have been arrived at :

1.The Arabs realized the concept of performatives and constatives within the theory of speech acts hundreds of years ago in the course of their investigation of the pragmatic meaning as an essential part of the general meaning.However, they have incorporated such linguistic issues within the general theory of rhetoric.

2.As a notion , speech acts theory characterizes utterances in terms of what they do – their illocution rather than what they literally say – their locution .

3.Semantically , no difference can be seen between English and Arabic as far as performatives are concerned .Yet, the difference between the two languages lies in the syntactic form of each.

4. In terms of realization , English and Arabic differ considerably in the expression of speech acts . Speech acts in English are essentially grammaticalized , whereas in Arabic they are basically lexicalized . This puts upon learners of both languages the requirement of specifying what particular illocutionary force is intended by the use of a particular structure so that they could avoid pragmalinguistic failure in translation .

5. In Arabic , the use of indirect speech acts is more favored in speech than direct speech acts , particularly those acts that are associated with politeness .

6. In terms of tendency towards expressing performative utterances , Arabic is explicit performative – oriented .

## Notes

1. Both of these classes belong to Seale's " declaratives " .
2. These four classes roughly correspond to Austin's expositives , exercitives , commissives , and behabitives , respectively , and are close to Searle's representatives , commissives and expressives .
3. This terminology is also used by Searle in his 1979 revision of the 1975 article " A taxonomy of illocutionary acts " .
4. This class had its origin in Austin's taxonomy .
5. However , this is generally peculiar to legal language.
6. Examples (53) and (54) are taken form supplication (Dua`a Kumayl) translated by William C.Chittick ( cited in Miremadi , 2001 : 187 ) .

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