

# Persuasive Strategies in Joe Biden's Speeches on Covid19 : A Pragmatic study

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## **Abstract:**

The current study is a pragmatic study of Biden's speeches on covid19. Searle's model is applied to inspect five categories of speech act as strategies of persuasion throughout three selected speeches. Specifically, this work is meant to investigate persuasion as an influential concept and to analyze the various strategies of persuasion that are used by Biden to persuade the people of the importance of the vaccine. The study includes qualitative and quantitative analyses to fulfil its aims and to verify its key hypotheses that Searle's model of speech act is applicable as a general theoretical framework for the whole study and Joe Biden's speeches under analysis are representative crude material for Searle's speech act theory which could be analyzed. The findings show that the utilization of Searle's five persuasive strategies- assertive, directive commissive, expressive and declarative- are closely related to the context of the speeches under investigation.

**Key words: pragmatic analysis, Persuasion, speech acts.**

الاستراتيجيات الإقناعية في بعض خطابات بايدن بما يخص كوفيد ١٩

دراسة تداولية

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## **ملخص البحث:**

تعد الدراسة الحالية هي دراسة عملية لخطابات بايدن حول كوفيد ١٩. تم تطبيق نموذج سيرل لفحص خمس فئات من الكلام كاستراتيجيات للإقناع خلال ثلاث خطابات مختارة. على وجه التحديد، تعنى هذه الدراسة باستكشاف الإقناع كمفهوم مؤثر وتحليل استراتيجيات الإقناع المختلفة التي يستخدمها بايدن لإقناع الناس بأهمية اللقاح. تتضمن الدراسة التحليلات النوعية والكمية لتحقيق أهدافها وللتحقق من فرضياتها الرئيسية القائلة بأن نموذج سيرل لأفعال الكلام قابل للتطبيق كإطار نظري عام للدراسة بأكملها وخطابات جو بايدن قيد التحليل هي مادة خام تمثيلية لنظرية أفعال الكلام لسيرل والتي يمكن تحليلها. تظهر نتائج التحليل أن استخدام استراتيجيات Searle الخمس - الحازمة، والتوجيهية التعليمية، والتعبيرية، والتصريحية - ترتبط ارتباطاً وثيقاً بسياق الخطب قيد التحليل..

**الكلمات المفتاحية: التحليل التداولي، الإقناع، أفعال الكلام.**

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## **1.Introduction**

The word "persuasion" first appeared in the writings of Aristotle, who also draws attention to the fact that persuasive communication is a part of everyday life. As stated by Charteries-Black (2011:13), persuasion "refers generally to the use of language by one party to encourage another to accept a point of view". Additionally, it illustrates the effects of altering peoples' beliefs and ways of thinking. As a result, persuasive techniques play a significant part in this world. They are produced by combining beliefs about rhetorical situations, language, and culture. Halmari and Virtanen (2005:3-4) see that "the persuasive process is affected by the situational and socio-cultural context in which it takes place, and at the same time it helps construct that very context in important ways."

Politics is a power struggle to apply a particular set of political, economic, and social beliefs. Every political action is planned, accompanied, affected by, and played by language; therefore, words are crucial to this process. Political speeches, which aim primarily to persuade the audience, can be regarded as a determining interaction between the speaker and the audience in which the speaker's communicative goal is to persuade the audience to accept the speaker's points of view and support his or her suggestions. The speaker uses discourse techniques and a range of related linguistic resources to accomplish his or her communicative goal; presenting a convincing image of himself or herself; associating himself or herself with others' points of view; claiming solidarity with the audience; modifying power relations and legitimizing the proposed ideology and course of action. There is no power embedded in language itself., but "language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and long term. Language provides articulated means for differences in power in social hierarchical structures" (Wodak, 2001, p. 11). Also, "The language we use both reflects and shapes the kind of world we create around us" (Strauss & Feiz, 2014, p. 1). This indicates that most of the public discourse is highly influenced by ideologies that represent the speaker's or writer's worldview.

## **2. Persuasion**

Persuasion is a technique that we use all the time in our daily lives to persuade others to change their minds. Perloff (2003:4) describes persuasion as "the study of attitudes and how to change them". He (2003:7) claims that persuasion is dependent on "the persuader's awareness to influence someone else and change the persuader's mind about something on conscious or unconscious decision". Being persuaded thus includes cases in which "behavior has been modified by symbolic transactions (messages) that are sometimes, but not always, linked with coercive force (indirectly coercive) and that appeal to the reason and emotions of the person(s) being persuaded" (Miller, 2013, p. 73).

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Perloff (2003:8) summarizes persuasion as “a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behavior regarding an issue through the transmission of a message, in an atmosphere of free choice”. People persuade themselves to change their attitudes after speakers present them with arguments, and the persuadee still has the option of doing something other than what the persuader proposes. On the other hand, it is urged that we should differentiate between persuading and convincing. As Miller (2013:72) states that persuasion “relies primarily on symbolic strategies that trigger the emotions of intended persuadees, while conviction is accomplished primarily by using strategies rooted in logical proof and that appeal to persuadees' reason and intellect.”

### **2.1 The Language of Persuasion**

Aristotle illustrates that, in addition to the basic method of persuasion, the style or language choices, as well as the proper organization of the many elements of speech, must be given equal consideration. Simultaneously, the writer must conceal his or her talent and give the sense of speaking naturally rather than artificially (Smith, 2009: 57). Ostman (1987:91) claims that there is no such thing as a language of persuasion and that persuasive language is a register or style of speech in itself, depending on the circumstances. According to Levine (2003:2), having good content is insufficient in the persuasive process because how one says it, when, where, and who says it all have a role in the conversation. Only the persuasion artist understands how to take advantage of these implicit and subtle characteristics. Ionica (2005:19) adds that “what is pleasing is more easily accepted, therefore, how something is said has a persuasive dimension”. The application of stylistic techniques makes the content more interesting, innovative, and pleasant to the readers, making it easier to accept and persuade them. Because of language's thematic component, particular words or groups of words can be identified by their texture or feel. Words can be distinguished by their persuasive aspect, or their ability to set a mood, feeling, or theme for the goal of persuading, in addition to their syntactic and semantic roles. Abraham Lincoln set the standard with these words in his "Gettysburg Address": "Fourscore and seven years ago our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are equal" (Larson, 2010, P. 56). If this speech was delivered in the following manner, it would appear less effective:

"Eight-seven years ago the signers of the declaration of Independence started a new country designed to assure us of freedom and equality" (Larson, 2010, P. 56).

Although the two speeches are conceptually equal, the first is more moving than the second due to the differences in their textures. Furthermore, it should be noted that alliteration (the repetition of consonants) and assonance (the repetition of vowels) have given the first speech a greater thematic depth than the second speech (Larson, 2010, p. 56).

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**3. Searle's Classification of Illocutionary Acts**

**Searle** (1979: 12-20) suggests five major categories of illocutionary acts as classification items. They are the following:

**3.1 Assertives:** According to Searle (1979: 12), the purpose of using these speech acts, "is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition". It is possible to determine if the utterances in this category are true or false. This category of speech acts comprises acts like assertions, claims, and descriptions (Kristiawan, 2015: 20). Examples of verbs in this category include the list below: assert, claim, affirm, state, deny, disclaim, assure, argue, inform, notify, remind, object, predict, report, suggest, insist, hypothesize, guess, swear, testify, and admit (Abdullah, 1997: 29).

**3.2 Directives:** According to Searle (1979: 13), the speaker is attempting to drive the listener to take action by performing this type of speech act. These efforts might be modest, as when you extend an invitation, or ferocious, like when you demand action from someone. Order, command, request, invite, and begging are a few examples of verbs that could be used in such utterances given by Abood (1999: 22).

**3.3 Commissives:** According to Austin (1962: 156), "the whole point of a commissive is to commit the speaker to a certain course of action". Searle states that the commissives' function is to commit the speaker to take action. Promises, threats, and offers are examples of commissive. According to Abdullah (1997: 29), some verbs that fit this category of utterances are committing, promise, vow, swear and threaten.

**3.4 Expressives:** These acts convey "the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition of a state of affairs specified in the propositional content" (Searle, 1979: 15).

In these speech acts, the speaker expresses his feelings and attitudes toward something rather than making assertions or making assumptions (Abood, 1999: 22). Some verbs that might be used in these statements include: apologize, thank, complain, protest, and greet (Abdullah, 1997: 29).

**3.5 Declaratives:** According to Searle (1979: 16–17), the taxonomy has to include this category to be complete. He explains that this group is unique in that "the successful performance of one of its members brings about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality, successful performance guarantees that the propositional content corresponds to the world".

According to Searle (1979: 18), the speaker and the hearer must have distinct positions within an extra-linguistic institution for this illocutionary act to be successful. The speaker must be in a position where he can utter actions like appointing, marrying or even declaring war, and there must be an institution like the church, the law, or the state. According to Abdullah (1997: 29), some of the verbs that could be used in this kind of speech act include: declare, appoint, nominate, approve, and bless.

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## 4. Analysis and Findings

### 4.1 Biden's Speech: Introduction

President Joe Biden on August 23, 2021, in South Court Auditorium Eisenhower Executive Office Building, once again urged more Americans to get vaccinated. He said that most deaths and hospitalizations in the U.S. due to Covid19 are among the unvaccinated. The president advised Americans to go and get their shot right now if they've been waiting for full approval from the food and drug administration.

The president states that the U.S. agency evaluated "mountains" of clinical trial data and concluded, "without question," that the Covid shot was safe and highly effective. Biden's latest plea comes as coronavirus cases continue to surge nationwide, filled by the highly contagious delta variant. The president said that U.S. health officials are starting to see early signs that new cases may be declining in a few regions of the nation. Still, he said, cases are rising overall, particularly among the unvaccinated. U.S. officials maintain that vaccination is the best tool to fight off rising cases.

U.S. approval is expected to spur a new wave of vaccine mandates from American corporations and schools. Major companies have already told some or all their employees that they must get fully vaccinated against Covid this fall. Still, some private businesses and other institutions may have felt hesitant about requiring the shots before full approval, even though they had the legal authority to do so, health experts say.

During his speech, Biden called on other schools and businesses to mandate the vaccine. He states that all around the world People want these vaccinations, in America, these vaccinations are waiting for Americans, free, and convenient. Therefore, the president advises them to leave right away to get the vaccine for the sake of their country, their loved ones, and themselves.

### 4.2 Biden's speech: Analysis

The analysis shows that there are 115 utterances spoken by President Joe Biden. All the types of speech acts are found in these utterances, and they vary in their number of occurrences in the utterances as the following table shows:

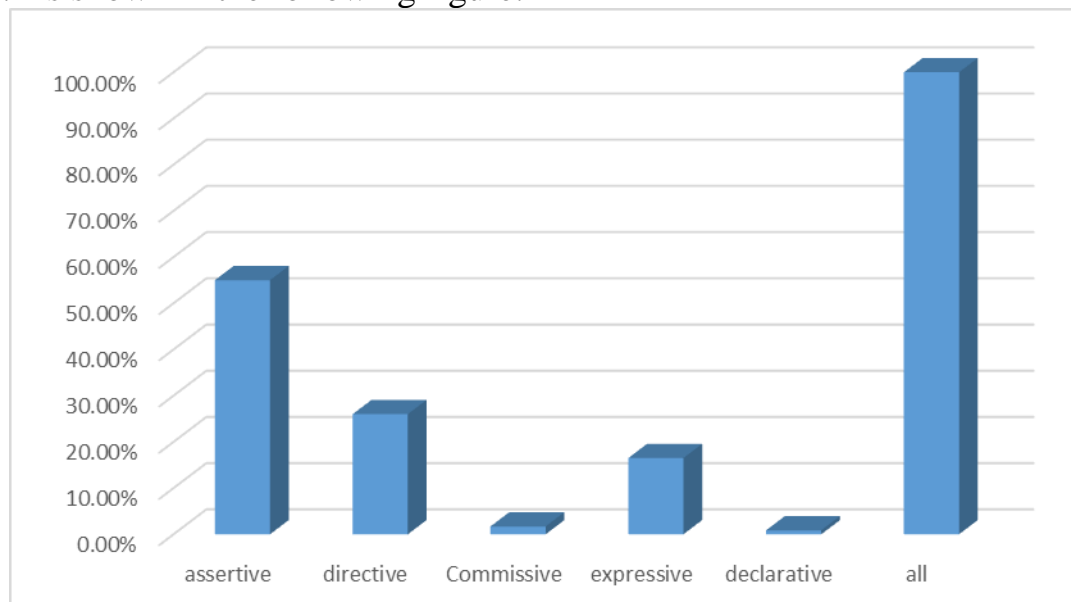
Table (1) Types of speech acts, their number, and percentages

Type	assertive	directive	Commissive	expressive	declarative	all
No.	63	30	2	19	1	115
Pct.	55. %	26%	1.7%	16.5%	0.87%	100%



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From these data, it is concluded that the percentage of illocutionary acts used are assertive 55%, Directive 26%, Commissive 1.7%, Expressive 16.5%, and Declarative 0.87%. As shown in the following figure:



Figure

(1) Frequency of discursive devices

#### 4.2.1 Assertives

The most recurrent type of speech acts in this speech is the assertive type, since out of the 115 utterances uttered in this speech, 63 of them are assertive, which is about 55% of the utterances. Since assertive speech acts are the most frequently used type; they are employed to establish the context and act as means of passing to other speech acts. For this reason, political discourses are sometimes represented by considerable use of marked multiple speech acts, assertive accompanying other types, in the same statement. In the analyzed speech, the president made use of assertive speech act to narrate events and make intertextual allusions to the importance of vaccination. To have a better understanding, the following extracts are examples of assertive speech acts taken from Biden's Speech two:

***The FDA has reaffirmed its findings that the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective***

Using assertive speech act is one of the strategies to influence hearers to act. Biden tries to persuade the audience to listen to the message that FDA 'The Food and Drug Administration' has declared the coronavirus vaccine to be safe and effective. Here, the president relied on medical scientific facts to convey his idea and to convince people to take the vaccine to protect themselves from the danger of the virus.

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***If you're one of the millions of Americans who said that they will not get the shot when it's — until it has full and final approval of the FDA, it has now happened.***

The president addresses those who were waiting for FDA's agreement at this point and want to reassure them that FDA's approval had been granted so that they could now safely receive their vaccines. The basis of all persuasion comes from trust. Therefore, the president here is trying to build trust between himself and the public and to work accordingly to organize strategies based on what the medical institutions decide.

***For 90 percent of Americans, there's a vaccination site less than five miles from your home***

To facilitate the task of vaccinating against the virus, the president stressed that most American people could receive the vaccine within miles of their homes. The President affirms here that the US government has done what it should be to facilitate the task for the people. People are expected to play their role as well to receive the vaccine and to eliminate the virus. The president uses the assertive speech acts here to share information obtained from other sources with his people asserting that they can go to vaccination centers a few miles away from their places because the American authority has provided many vaccination centers to facilitate the task.

***There are cases where vaccinated people do get COVID-19, but they are far less common than unvaccinated people getting COVID-19.***

President Biden here did not deny the fact that vaccinated people can receive the virus, but these cases are less common when compared to infections of those who are not vaccinated. The president here conveys the facts as they are so that people know everything, how the virus is dealt with, and how vaccination can be used to prevent the virus. The president uses this type of speech act to make statements about new cases related to Covid19 stressing the cases that are vaccinated and then infected with the virus. Its symptoms will be lesser than those who were not vaccinated.

***The overwhelming majority of people in the hospital have COVID-19 are — almost all of those dying from COVID-19 are not vaccinated.***

The president is trying to explain to people the consequences of not receiving the vaccine when he confirms that most hospitalized patients and those who die because of their infection are not vaccinated. The president here used assertive speech act in his speech to warn people, here he tries to explain to them that the situation is dangerous and may lead to death to reach his goal, which is to persuade them of the importance of the vaccination program.

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***According to the experts from the Yale School of Public Health, the pace of our vaccination effort has saved over 100,000 lives and have prevented more than 450,000 hospitalizations.***

Once again, the president's assertion is based on what was confirmed by official state institutions. he stressed that the efforts made by the health system in the country resulted in the protection of more than one hundred thousand people, and the president do his best to influence an individual's behaviour and making him/her believe what he is saying, and this is the core of persuasion.

***Vaccination requirements have been around for decades.***

The president needs an example to give to people to influence others' decisions, attitudes, and mindsets. The president presents a knowledge of the vaccination requirement that he wants to discuss with others, he never forces anyone to agree with what he says. He gives them time to think about the fact that vaccines have been around for a long time before Covid19.

***The reason most people in America don't worry about polio, smallpox, measles, mumps, and rubella today is because of vaccines.***

Assertiveness plays an important role in persuading people around. Here, he gives them clear examples of some diseases and viruses that nobody pays attention to because people were vaccinated with a vaccine to prevent them. Here, the president is trying to reach a certain point, which is to convince people that the vaccine is an urgent thing for every virus to reduce its risks and that there is no justification for them to refrain from vaccination because it is natural. It should not be feared.

***Here in America, they're free, convenient, and waiting for you.***

In the example above, Biden asserts his vision for a new America with a new spirit that appreciates the efforts of the health system to reach the goal of progress for the nation to make the vaccine free and available to everyone. He has also used persuasive tactics of assertive to assert his belief that the vaccine in the United States of America is waiting for the public. All they need to go to the vaccination centers and there they will be vaccinated. By this, he is motivating people and especially the new generation to be part of success in the great challenge of the new era.

***We're in the midst of a wartime effort to beat this pandemic.***

To be more effective and persuasive, the president enhanced his speech with informative acts to remind the audience of major issues and hence intentionally make them apprehend what needed to be accomplished. The president likened the situation to a war to prevent the spread of the virus through vaccination.



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***It's a vaccination program that's getting us back to our loved ones and a way of life we were used to.***

Biden employed his language tactics to make the audience agree with his perspectives concerning the vaccination program and how to face the danger of covid19. Here, the president uses assertive speech acts for refreshing the memory of the audience of the past life and of what will happen in the following years ahead. Biden intended to be more persuasive in motivating and urging the Americans to respond to his requests, and requirements and to take his advice into consideration to reach the desired goal of change that is to return to the previous life before the outbreak of the virus.

#### **4.2.2 Directives**

A directive speech act is the second most frequent type among other types in the text under analysis. It occurs in 30 utterances (26%). President Biden planned in his speech to encourage the American people to take their role in the war against covid19 using certain requests, commands, and advice. The following extracts are examples of directive speech acts taken from Biden's second Speech:

***There's no time to waste.***

The US President provides a set of directive speech act to convince the American public and the other world of the importance of the vaccine in fighting the virus. Some of the warnings mentioned that the President warned the American people of the danger of the virus outbreak and that there is no time to waste, and it is necessary to vaccinate to face its dangers.

***The Delta variant is dangerous and spreading.***

Whatever procedure is adopted by the president for communicating his ideas, the success of persuasion lies in simplicity and to what extent the people communicated got the idea. People all over the world are affected by different types of epidemic diseases. To overcome the spread of covid19, the president likes to conduct coronavirus awareness and immunization campaigns in American states. In his speech, Biden makes his explanation of the situation easy and understandable in plain language, understandable to the public.

***The sooner you get fully vaccinated, the sooner you'll be protected.***

The president wants to convey his idea to the people that their health is their wealth, and it is necessary to live a happy life. It is the government's responsibility to keep people safe. So, preventive measures like vaccination programs will be made available for distribution among the members of the country. The president urges people to obtain their full cooperation with him to overcome the virus crisis. It may start with a government vaccination program which will be conducted in all areas.

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The president made use of the advice in his directive speech to persuade people to get vaccinated against the virus as early as possible. He emphasized that the earlier and more complete the vaccine, the higher the protection from the risk of the virus.

***Please go today — for yourself, for your loved ones, for your neighbors, for your country.***

The president advises them that their life is important, and they should be saved by keeping and developing healthy mankind. He clarifies how to overcome the epidemic diseases like coronavirus. That is the major problem faced by human beings nowadays. If they keep their surroundings healthy by going to get the vaccine, they are able to keep themselves, their loved people, and their country free from this pandemic.

***So, please, please, if you haven't gotten your vaccination — if you haven't gotten vaccinated, do it now.***

The president uses the directive speech act to advise them that prevention is better than cure. The vaccine is the most important Preventive measure that should be made compulsory to overcome the situation. He advises them to keep themselves safe from epidemic diseases by adopting preventive mechanisms. To persuade them that being vaccinated is crucial and essential, the President has repeatedly stressed the importance of the vaccine to protect the people.

***please get vaccinated now.***

Through this kind of speech act, the president asked his people to go to vaccination, and he said 'now' to clarify the necessity of the matter and 'please' to make his request of them more polite and persuade them to do as he requested. Once a person is affected by an epidemic disease, proper treatment must be made available to him. Correct diagnosis should be done, and better treatment should be provided, otherwise, the problem may become more complicated. The program must be associated with an awareness campaign, keeping the surroundings healthy, taking preventive measures, and taking appropriate treatment. Therefore, the president begs his people to go immediately and vaccinate as he seems as aware of what is happening and is aware of the seriousness of the situation.

***We just have to finish the job with science, facts, and confidence, together — together as a United States of America.***

The result of a persuasive speech depends upon the attitude, values, beliefs, and perceptions of the people to whom it is communicated. It will depend on human psychology. The correspondent should be able to generate a 'we are feeling' in the audience, so that the audience may be able to act in the way the president wishes. If a feeling of belongingness is created in the mind of the audience, communication

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becomes effective. Therefore, the president urged his people to finish the job, to rely on science, and to go for vaccinations to protect the United States of America from the spread of the virus.

### **4.2.3 Commissives**

A commissive speech act is featured in 2 utterances weighing 1.7% only in the speech under analysis. Biden uses commissive speech act as a persuasive strategy to convince the audience of his perseverance to work hand in hand with people for a better life. This shows a very interesting change in the persuasive style that Biden uses in his speech for the sake of raising sympathy in the heart of Americans and showing his willingness to do something. The following extracts are examples of commissives speech acts taken from Biden's second Speech:

***We can put this Delta variant behind us in the weeks ahead.***

The use of commissive act indicates that President Biden promises his people in his speech to achieve the goal and put the virus down. The use of 'we' is for expressing social unity and common ideas to protect the country from the danger of the virus.

***I'll be addressing this soon with Secretary Cardona to discuss how to get our kids back to school safely.***

The President addressed a very important topic in his speech, which is how to get children back to school safely. Through this, Biden tries to make his audience connect with his intended goal and engage them in his speech. The persuasive effects of commissive speech act here seen very clearly in presenting an evaluative opinion, in predictions, or expectations.

### **4.2.4 Expressives**

This type of speech acts helps reflect the psychological state of the speaker. In such a speech act, the speaker expresses his feelings and attitudes toward something rather than making assertions or making assumptions. An expressive speech act is used in 19 utterances presenting a percentage of (16.5%) of the utterances in this speech. There are quite many expressive speech acts found respectively in Biden's speeches under analysis.

By using the expressive speech act, the president expresses his feelings toward hearers. In the expressive speech act here, the president's feelings were influenced by situations and contexts. The change in the way of thinking, psychology, and behaviour takes place not only through behaviour but also through the words used as an emotional reaction. The emotions can be reflected in the words used by the president. The effects of emotional expressions will influence social interaction and relationships with other people. The following extracts are examples of expressive speech acts taken from Biden's second Speech:

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***Thank you.***

In response to a person's effort, the expressive speech act of thanking usually occurs. Thanking also takes place when the speaker would like to express praise or kindness to a certain subject. Besides, thanking has been considered a part of social culture showing respect and gratitude. By giving thanks and appreciation, Biden aimed at building a good relationship between himself and the public.

***Dr. Woodcock is a true professional.***

One of the expressive speech acts used by President Biden is the speech act of complimenting. Complimenting means showing the speaker's feelings or attitude and showing approval or commendation to someone. Biden tends to express his compliment toward the Acting Commissioner Janet Woodcock of the FDA. In an illocutionary act of complimenting, the president uses forms of praising which is '*a true professional*'. Biden shows appreciation toward a member of the FDA, Acting Commissioner Janet Woodcock, who had an enormous contribution to protecting American states and cities with her great effort.

***The FDA approval is the gold standard.***

Biden shows his appreciation towards the Food and Drug Administration approval which actualized his ultimate accomplishment, pressing the unity and collaboration of the whole team in fulfilling the approval. By using the positive expression "*gold standard*", Biden was trying to give a hint to describe the impressive outcome that the overall team had reached with their cooperation and excellence. To add more attributes to the team, the positive adjective "*gold*" was added to highlight the outstanding quality or even perfection to explicate the team's enormous devotion and dedication toward their task. Biden's satisfaction and admiration were very clear.

***Together, we've made significant progress in just seven months.***

One of the strategies Biden uses is to persuade his audience through the act of expressive speech when the president expresses his satisfaction with what happened in the United States during the past seven months. He argues that success has been made in their fight against the virus because of the government and the people working together, and this is encouraging. In any case, it shows that for the desired results to be achieved, people need to work with their government. Biden attempts to make an indirect connection with his public. He skillfully executed power, spread care to the audience, and aroused positive feelings among them.

***The good news is that people are getting vaccinated.***

The expressive speech act used by President Biden here to express his attitudes towards the situation and how he feels towards the vaccination program all around the country. The President expressed his happiness that people have started to

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vaccinate, and that the desired goal has begun. He is trying here to encourage people to follow the example of the people who are vaccinated.

***God bless you all.***

Through the expressive speech act, the President wished God to bless all the American people. By expressing this, Biden shows that they are a group of people who care about each other as a single entity. The president is asking for God favor and protection. He wishes for his public blessings to come their way and bless them. He seeks God blessings, and he wishes for them the blessing that gives them the power to pursue their purpose and help them succeed in their professional and personal life since a blessed person has a positive environment around him which helps him achieve his goals.

#### **4.2.5 Declaratives**

Declarative Speech acts create a new situation in the world through language and it requires a certain level of authority. Declaration speech act occurs in 1 utterance only representing (1.25%). It requires a certain level of authority. The following extract is an example of declarative speech act taken from Biden's second Speech:

***I've imposed vaccination requirements that will reach millions of Americans.***

With the purpose of capturing the attention of his audience, Biden announced that he would impose vaccinations on millions of Americans. Biden uses this type of speech act to Raise the public's responsibility towards the health situation in the country and develop their awareness of the true job of the members which is vaccination.

#### **4.3 Discussion of Results**

Political discourse is a primarily persuasive discourse that mainly involves practical argumentation for or against lines of action in response to political problems. Persuasion and practical reasoning are not mere arbitrary ways. They provide strategies of thought and a way of arguing and deliberating which can identify, explain, critique, and open the way to changing the terms of the discourses.

As the present study has shown, it was obvious that the focus of analyzing political discourse is better captured through the pragmatic analysis using Searle's speech act theory. The study argues that Searle's speech act theory lead to better analysis and evaluation of persuasive strategies in Biden's speeches.

The analysis of the chosen speech of President Biden leads to certain results. The pragmatic analysis using Searle's speech act shows that most of the utterances in the speech belong to the assertive type of speech acts with 63 utterances and with a percentage (55%). The second most frequent type of utterances in this speech is the directive one, with 30 utterances (17.7%), while 19 utterances (16.5%) of the



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utterances are expressive speech acts and 2 utterances (1.7%) are commissives. The declarative speech acts, which make up 0.87% of the utterances, are rare to find in this speech.

The president makes use of certain strategies like assertive to show the negative attitude of what will happen if the Americans refuse to get the vaccine. There will be a real threat, and everyone is a potential target for such a virus. On the other hand, he uses the directive strategy in what ought to be done in response to such a crisis is the vaccine and removing the virus is the only and the best choice put in front of the USA. In commissive strategy, he used the modal verb 'will' to persuade the audience of his future states of affairs that he has a comprehensive plan to get rid of the virus. He uses the expression strategy for several purposes, including his expression of the seriousness of the situation, and once he expressed his thanks and gratitude for the response of the American public to him and his receipt of the vaccine. He uses the declarative speech act to declare that he will impose vaccination requirements.

Thus, in this sense, analysis and evaluation of Searle's speech act theory can contribute to understanding persuasion and therefore investigating the persuasive strategies that were used in Biden's speech. As the study shows, Speech act theory provides a sounder basis for the analysis of persuasion in discourse. Biden's speech can be regarded as persuasive since it is geared toward supporting certain political interests, the president argues Americans to get the vaccine to protect the country from the threat of the virus. Biden tries to persuade the national community that covid19 represents a real threat and the vaccine is the right thing to do.

## **5. Conclusions**

Based on the hypotheses and the analysis of the study, it is concluded that firstly, Searle's speech act theory is applicable to analyze some political speeches about persuasion to highlight and reveals the strategies of persuasion Secondly, speech under analysis is representative crude material for Searle's speech act theory.

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