Pragma-Linguistic Analysis of Assertion in May's and Trump's Inaugural Addresses

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	British Prime Ministers and American Presidents are often observed to make use of assertive speech acts (realized in different syntactic forms with different rates) to attain various purposes associated with their future plans, such as clarifying, asserting and signifying the main critical points in their political speeches. Thus, this paper aims at investigating how the speech act of assertion is used in May's (2016) and Trump's (2017) Inaugural Addresses, focusing on the ways of realizing assertives pragmatically and linguistically, highlighting the purposes behind manipulating these asseretives by using a mixed method of descriptive- qualitative and quantitative processes. The paper concludes that both May and Trump exploits various syntactic forms to execute assertive speech acts which are utilized to confirm the main themes of their inaugural addresses and to assert the truthfulness of the messages they convey associated with their governmental agendas and programs.

Introduction

Assertions are found far and wide in social daily conversations, particularly when people offer instructions, response to questions, give opinions and make influences .A critical question may arise here is that what is meant by assertion and in what sense it differs from other types of speech acts, like commanding, advising promising, requesting, etc. Nowadays, philosophical effort on assertion tends to concentrate on the nature of assertion and the norms representing assertion, what epistemic factors influence and govern the existence of assertion, i.e. when it is allowable to make an assertion.

Assertives occupy a major part of political speeches, specifically inaugural addresses, whereby prime ministers and presidents confirm their attitudes or viewpoints in respect of the expressed opinions regarding certain matters. Assertives commit those politicians to the truth and the degree of acceptability of the particular expressed propositions and consequently provide whatever motivation or justification for these propositions. They are mostly performed to assist speakers to achieve the communicative goals behind delivering their speeches and to gain audiences' support and trust.

In their inaugural speeches, the newly elected prime ministers or presidents (May /Trump) officially announce that they will take up the responsibility as the highest executive of the country in the forthcoming years. Inaugurals are of great significance because of what they reveal about the fundamental political values, particular political principles, and enactment of a presidential persona. Inaugural addresses attempt to persuade the citizens of the nation that the newly elected president or prime minister is fit for the political role and that he is entitled to achieve his programmatic objectives. Therefore, politicians restore to the use of assertives as such speech acts help them to focus on persuading the audience to form a parallel belief concerning the truthfulness of the themes and principles of their governmental agendas. This paper endeavors to identify the use of

assertives as employed by May and Trump focusing on the pragmalinguistic characterization of these speech acts and eliciting their frequencies and functions behind these frequencies.

Pragmatics of Assertion

The notion of assertion plays a vital role in the philosophy of language over the last decades. Scholars generally agree that assertions are first and foremost treated as sources of information about the world. Crystal (2008:65) contends that *Assertion* is:

> "a term used in pragmatics and semantics in its ordinary sense of presenting information as true, but also more technically for that portion of the information encoded in a sentence which is presented by the speaker as true, as opposed to that portion which is merely presupposed. It is also used for sentences which present information as true, as opposed to those which ask questions, issue commands, etc".

Yet, there is no full agreement about the concept of assertion. For Austin (1962), assertion is "one of the many forms of speech acts known as an illocutionary act". Then, illocutionary acts are "what we do with utterances such as when we assert, command, request, question, promise, and so on". Focusing on the truth condition of assertion, Searle (1979:12) defines assertive speech acts as " those in which the speaker is committed in some degree to the truth of the proposition his utterance expresses".

Assertion can be investigated linguistically in terms of, semantic, pragmatic and syntactic perspectives. More precisely, *assertion* can be identified for that part of the facts determined in a sentence (typically declarative sentence) which is given by the speaker as factual , as opposed to that part which is only presumed. It is also employed "for sentences which present information as true, as opposed to those which ask questions, issue commands, etc" (Crystal, 2003:37).

Relevant to the basic tents of speech acts theory, certain features of speech acts can be divided into two groups: (1) linguistic features (or syntactic markers), and (2) pragmatic features, usually referred to as *felicity conditions* (Leech 1981:332). Precisely, Yule (1996: 50) describes *felicity conditions* as "certain expected or appropriate circumstances for the performance of speech act to be recognized as intended". In the example below:

- *"I sentence you to six months in prison",* the execution will be infelicitous (unsuitable) if "the speaker is not a specific person in a special context" (a judge in a courtroom).Then, for assertives to be executed felicitously, there must be certain conditions that this execution must satisfy. More elaborately, Searle (1969:64) expounds that assertion has the following structure:

Propositional Condition	What the speech act is about
Preparatory Condition	The hearer must have some basis for supposing the asserted proposition is true
Sincerity Condition	The speaker must believe it to be true
Essential Condition	The proposition is presented as representing an actual state of affairs

Syntax of Assertion

The speech act of assertion can be recognized in various syntactic forms as well as in different types of sentences such as declarative, interrogative, imperative…etc. Dummett (1973:311) introduces a specific analysis

of assertion by arguing that "assertion consists in the (deliberate) utterance of a sentence which, by its form and context, is recognized as being used according to a certain general convention". According to this view, assertion can be realized in the saying of assortoric sentences under conventionally specified conditions. If a "speaker utters a sentence in the *declarative* form, the default assumption is that in doing so" he/she is performing an assertion, as Barker (2004:8) contends that "in uttering a declarative sentence, the speaker advertises the intention to *assert*".

Further, assertion is typically realized "when a speaker utters a *declarative* sentence, which can be either true or false". Here, a speaker refers to a specific set of circumstances, or situation that is in the world. For instance, in saying *"Simon is in the kitchen"* , the speaker *asserts* to the hearer that "in the real world a situation exists in which a person named '*Simon*' is in a room" specified by the expressing referent '*the kitchen*'. Accordingly, a sentence of this type is taken to be an *assertion* as a typical linguistic act performed by uttering a declarative sentence (Hurford *et al.*, 2007: 261-270). Strikingly important, most cases of assertives are realized in declarative sentences which are used to assert propositional information.

More elaborately, various syntactic forms are used to realize *assertion* such as; lexical verbs, auxiliary verbs (modal/ non-modal), nouns, adjectives, adverbs..etc. In this manner, many lexical verbs are utilized to convey the meaning of *assertion* or *certainty* such as **affirm, allege, attest, aver, ascertain, assure, announce, boast, certify, confirm, , claim, contend, declare, maintain, proclaim, , state, say, swear,** and **inform**. They have the synonymous main verbs which carry the meaning of assertion since they occur in the declarative sentences to **assert** propositions (Clark, 1989: 24; Manser, 2005: 24-56). Put differently, *assertive verbs* are mostly utilized as main verbs (lexical verbs can give a literal and an adequate meaning of the verb class). To clarify this, a number of examples of the *assertive* verbs can be identified as follows:

- **Assert**: to say something clearly and firmly (Warn, 1999: 39).
- **Affirm**: to say clearly that you hold a particular belief (ibid: 13).
- **Assure**: to try to cause someone to believe or trust in something; to promise; to try to persuade (McArther, 1981: 324).
-Ascertain: to   find   out   the   true   or   correct   information   about   something   (Hornby,   2005:   74).
- **Know**: "to have information in your mind as a result of experience or because you have learned or been told it or to realize, understand or be aware of something" (ibid: 853).

Moreover, assertion can be realized through the utilization of auxiliary verbs. The verbs **be (am, is, are, was, were)** show their assertive force when they are used as main verbs (i.e. a copular or a linking verb) which is followed by a complement (noun phrase, subject complement, adverbials, etc). For example: consider the sentence pattern with the verb *Be* :

Status	Pattern
Affirmative sentence	S + BE + COMPLEMENT
(assertive sentence)	He is rich

By this construction, a *categorical* or *plain assertion* is made (Macmilian, 1964: 10; Jespersen, 1968: 321). Concerning the realization of assertion through the use of modality, the modal verbs (**will/would, can/ could, may/ might, shall/ should, ought to**, and **must** perform a variety of functions in discourse. A speaker can use modal verbs in their secondary functions to indicate how sure a person is that an action or a situation takes

place, will take place, or took place. *Sureness (assertability)* can be low (*possibility*), high (*probability*), or 100% (*certainty*) (Freigenbuam, 1985: 120).

Further, modals grade from the very low (uncertain) degree of certainty or assertion to the highest one (certain). In this context, Alexander (1993:269) claims that:" *certainty* and *uncertainty* are notions generally expressed by all *Modal Verbs* in their secondary use". For example:

- It *might* rain this evening. He could have done it. *(possible)*
- It *may* rain this evening He may have done it. *(probable)*
- It *will* rain this evening. He must have done it.(*certain*)
-

He (ibid) adds that: "*Modal verbs* can be arranged on a scale to express degree of certainty and the order between **might** and **must** is not fixed absolutely but varies according to situation". He arranges modal verbs in terms of *Certainty* or *Assertion* as shown in the table below:

You	**might** **may** **could** **can** **should** **ought to** **would** **will** **must**	**very certain** be right have been right **almost certain**	↓
you	**are**	right	**certain**

Along the same line, the modal verbs of assertion (*certainty*) **will** and **must** are clearly used to express a prediction and logical necessity. They are used for present and future statements (Downing and Locke, 2006 : 381-2). Relationally, Parrott (2000: 127) suggests that*" **will** and **must** are utilized to reveal logical deduction when we are 100% certain (based on evidence)" as in the following examples:

- There's *somebody* at the door…that *will* be the postman *(will* refers to certainty or confidence about present and future time) (Sawn, 2005: 194).
- We *will* still be here in twenty years. (future time prediction based on guesswork, analysis or judgement) (Foley and Hall, 2003: 72).
- There *must* be a mistake. (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 56)

Basically, the meaning of a modal verb differs according to the context. For example, though **must** habitually signifies compulsion or obligation (e.g. *he must go*), it has an entirely different meaning in a sentence such as (*he must be in love*), which expresses *certainty* or *assertion* on the part of the speaker. Similarly, **may** in a sentence such as (*You may go*), signifies permission, while (*You may do well on this test)* refers to possibility.

Moreover, various nouns are utilized to express the meaning of *assertion* or *certainty* such as: ***affirmation, allegation, assurance, claim, contention, declaration, statement,* pronouncement***,* and **sureness** (Manser(2005:

24-56). In addition, the notion of assertion is achieved via certain adjectives   such as: ***certain, apparent, sure, plain***.etc,.as in the coming example:

- John is *certain/ sure* to pass his exam (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 1225).

Besides, various adverbs such as : ***surely, certainly, clearly, obviously, apparently, basically, possibly,*** and ***plainly*** can be used to express assertion :

- They *certainly* work hard.   (Thomson and Martinet, 1986: 58)

Methodology
Method, Sample and Proposed Model are the three main pillars of methodology in this paper. They are postulated to signify the data collection and employed to attain data analysis through the adoption of the pragmalinguistic model.

Method
This study utilizes a mixed method of descriptive; qualitative and quantitative processes. It is qualitative since it places primary importance on studying a sample of purposely chosen individuals to understand things from the informant's point of view and to create a rich and in-depth picture of the selected data under investigation. It is typically conducted with "transcribed recordings analyzed by qualitative content analysis" (Dornyei, 2011:2). The analysis of the collected data often involves the observation of careful and detailed descriptions as the qualitative study is carried out to account "for description and themes using text analysis and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings" (Creswell,2012: 16). From another angle, it is quantitative as the researcher "relies on statistical analysis (mathematical analysis) of the data which in typically in a numeric form" (Creswell,2012: 13).In this sense, the descriptive- qualitative analysis is supported by designating frequencies, percentages, tables, and figures.

Sample
This paper is confined to the pragma-linguistic analysis of assertive speech acts in the British Inaugural Address of May (2016), and the American Inaugural Address of Trump (2017), found on the web
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/)
https://web.archive.org/web/20170119050203/https://www.usa.gov/inauguration-2017.

Proposed Modal
The model of analysis is based on the Searle's (1969,1979) felicity conditions and Quirk *et al.*,(1985) treatment of syntactic realization of the assertive speech acts.. The most workable modal is a pragmalinguistic one which operates on two levels: pragmatic identification and syntactic realization. For the former, Searle's four felicity conditions are employed to identify the assertive speech acts. The latter involves specifying the declarative sentence expressing assertion highlighted by word forms categories; verbs: lexical verbs, auxiliary verbs (Be and Modal), adjectives, adverbs, and nouns in the two selected inaugural addresses, as shown in the figure below:
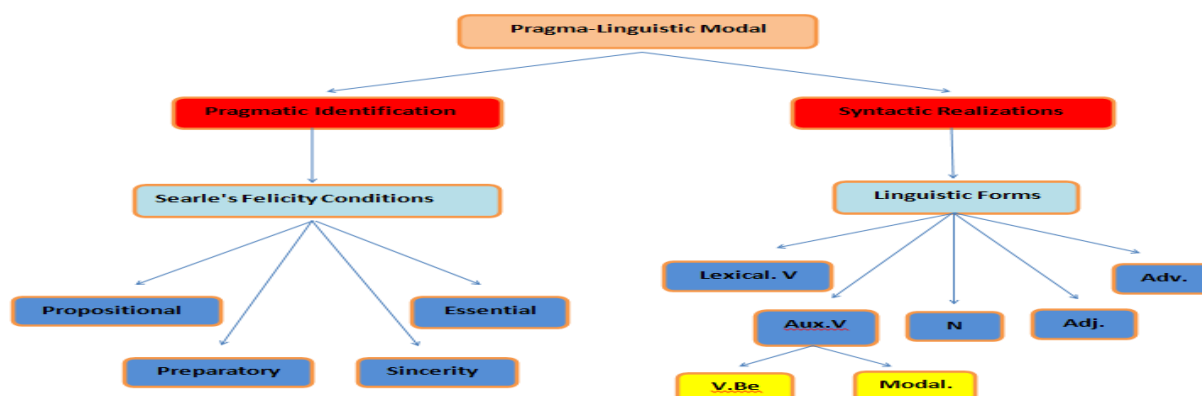
Assertion in May's Inaugural Address 2016

On 13 July 2016, Theresa May took office as being the UK's first female prime minister since Margaret Thatcher. This followed the resignation of May's predecessor as Prime Minister, David Cameron, who resigned in the aftermath of the European Union membership referendum. She legitimately resigned on 24 July 2019, succeeding the triumph of Boris Johnson at the Conservative Party leadership election on 23 July.

The new government of Theresa May should deal with a lot of serious and real challenges such as; terrorism, education policy, national health system, public services, economic problems, social reforms and last but not least the most critical issue which is Brexit. Inaugural speeches are of great significance to new prime ministers or presidents through which new fundamental policies, priorities and principles concerning the county's development for the upcoming period are revealed.

To achieve this task, the prime minister May, in her Inaugural Address which is addressed to the entire British population, uses various types of assertives such as, *asserting, claiming, explaining, stating, believing, affirming* and *knowing* in order to convey her intentions and purposes and commit herself to the truthfulness of the new governmental agenda. In spite of merely taking a few minutes, May's Address is organized to involve lots of ground. She makes a moderate plea for unity in the face of the separations that come to the forefront after "Britain's vote to leave the European Union".

May begins her speech by emphasizing the privileged relationship between her and David Cameron claiming that Cameron's true legacy is about social reforms and justice rather than his economic procedures, she asserts that:

" ***David's true legacy is not about the economy but about social justice***"

Moreover, May asserts her pledge that she will govern in the same *'one – nation'* spirit that Cameron's has led the previous government. The term *'one – nation'* is used by May to symbolize a continuation of Cameron's big society theme:
"***David Cameron has led a one-nation government, and it is in that spirit that I also plan to lead***".

Whatever the context, early decisions can make a big impact on a premiership. Therefore, in her first speech, May has asserted her vowing to unite the officially- titled "Conservative and Unionist Party" which is very central to her:

" ***the full title of my party is the Conservative and Unionist party and that word unionist is very important to me***".

Once again, she confirms her commitment to the unity of the UK emphasizing the precious, strong bond between the four nations that make up the UK. By repeating the word *"Union"*, she asserts her view that the *one –nation* spirit could be a solution to division between the literal nations constituting the UK and to emphasize her willpower to reserve the United Kingdom through the vicissitudes of the Brexit discussions:

" ***It means we believe in the union, the precious, precious bond between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland….. it means we believe in a union not just between the nations of the United Kingdom but between all of our citizens***".

Concerning her domestic agenda, May, in the first prime ministerial speech, asserts her commitment to social mobility highlighting the *"burning injustice"* of social inequality and affirming her determination to address and overcome these difficult issues. She repeats a section from the campaign speech she gave in Birmingham, presenting complex societal challenges, to which she had referred throughout the leadership race. Confirming that solving these *'life chances'* challenges will be central goals of her government's policy; she asserts that:

" fighting against the burning injustice that, if you're born poor, you __will__ die on average 9 years earlier than others… If you're a woman, you __will__ earn less than a man...   If you're black, you're treated more harshly by the criminal justice system than if you're white… If you suffer from mental health problems, there's not enough help to hand ".

Respectively, the assertive speech act of *knowing* is performed in May's first speech when she talks about the ordinary working class' struggle asserting that the decisions of her government will be motivated not by the interest of the advantaged few but those of electorates "struggling with the pressure of modern life", saying:

"I __know__ that sometimes life can be a struggle. The government I lead will be driven not by the interests of the privileged few, but by yours".

In her speech, May vows that people will be afforded more control over their lives and everyone should be able to become whatever they want to be - no matter their background, affirming that:
" we __will__ do everything we can to help anybody, whatever your background , to go as far as your talents will take you.."

In the final sentences of her Downing Street mission statement, May makes the confirmation about the ability of the *Great Britain* to face all sorts of the serious challenges by saying:
" I __know__ because we're Great Britain, that we will rise to the challenge".

Once more, she ends her first speech by reaffirming the antithesis that the governmental administration will not act in the benefit of the *privileged people* but *yours*, introducing "working class people" as the chief group her policies intend to assist, affirming the main aims of her social mobility or life chances agenda by saying :

"we will make Britain a country that works not for a privileged few, but for every one of us, that will be the mission of the government I lead ".

The final phrase of May's speech affirms that standing together is the best way of building a better Britain :
"together we will build a better Britain".
In brief, table (1) shows the distribution of the syntactic forms of assertive speech acts which are found in May's First Speech (2016):

Table (1): Syntactic Realizations of Assertives in May's Inaugural Address (2016)

Forms		Frequency	Total	Percentage
Lexical Verbs	know	4	6	% 28.57
	believe	2		
Verb to Be	is	7	8	% 38.09
	are	1		
Modal Verbs	will	7	7	% 33.33
Adj.	----	----		----
Adv.	----	----		----
N	----	----		----
			21	100%

Assertion in Trump's Inaugural Address 2017

Soon after taking his presidential oath to be the 45th president of the U.S, Donald Trump gives an inaugural speech on January 20, 2017. Right from the beginning, Trump wants to establish a new decree to be established all over the country. In his hopeful address, he points to certain problematic themes such as changes, justice, national security, healthcare, job loss and immigration and attempts to seek remedial solutions to them. For him, it is an era of American carnage. His governmental program is full of responsibilities, commitments and actions which should be implemented; therefore, various types of speech acts including *assertives* are executed. In other words, a number of communicative functions and purposes (speech acts) must be performed to accomplish his program. In his speech, he asserts a viewpoint, describes a state of affairs regarding a certain matter, commits himself to doing certain things and affirms his vows during the election campaign. Put simply, he is performing different types of assertive speech acts.

After expressing his appreciation to the voters and his forerunners, Trump begins his address with the phrase *"We, the citizens of America"* in order to reaffirm his agenda's themes of unity and shared responsibility. He ascertains that, together (people and Trump) they can rebuild America and restore its promise:

"We, the citizens of America, <u>are</u> now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and to restore its promise for all of our people."

At the very beginning of his speech, Trump asserts the importance of the "Union" among American citizens in facing different challenges and confronting hardships via the intentional use of modal verb (*will*) in the selected extract:

"Together, we <u>will</u> determine the course of America and the world for years to come. We <u>will</u> face challenges. We <u>will</u> confront hardships. But we <u>will</u> get the job done".

Likewise, *affirming,* as an assertive speech act is repeatedly manipulated by Trump in his inaugural address through which he commits himself to the truth of his propositions. Trump knocks into a sense among his electorates that the political scheme of the Washington formation was not serving them, that sense leads many electorates to throw away old-style politicians. Therefore, Trump's inaugural address powerfully confirms the subjects that are essential to his campaign: a "populist, anti-establishment message combined with asserting a promise to transfer power to the people" in an attempt to gain the public's acceptance and legitimize himself as a leader who is different from the traditional politicians, saying:

"Today's ceremony, however, has very special meaning. Because today we <u>are</u> not merely transferring power from one Administration to another, or from one party to another – but we <u>are</u> transferring power from Washington, D.C. and giving it back to you, the American People."

From another angle, modal verbs such as (*will, must*) are frequently used by Trump in his inaugural speech. They help him to express meanings on a continuum from doubt to absolute certainty or assertion. Throughout his campaign, Trump uses a relatively small vocabulary, and informal grammatical structures and shows little concern for self-censorship. In his inaugural speech, Trump asserts that he would place the American citizens above politics:

"What truly matters <u>is</u> not which party controls our government, but whether our government <u>is</u> controlled by the people. January 20th 2017, <u>will</u> be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again".

Respectively, Trump tends to persuade his addressees that the country is going through a period of decay (socially, economically, militarily) mostly caused by the political class. Trump uses negative expressions to appeal to people's negative emotions in order to affirm his intention to change this situation, affirming:

"the forgotten men and women of our country <u>will</u> be forgotten no longer. Everyone <u>is</u> listening to you now. You came by the tens of millions to become part of a historic movement the likes of which the world has never seen before".

Focusing on the idea that America should be seen as one nation, Trump continues with one of his election campaign themes about unity, in an optimistic manner he *affirms* that:

"we <u>are</u> one nation – and their pain is our pain. Their dreams <u>are</u> our dreams; and their success <u>will</u> be our success".

Once more, the assertive speech act of *affirming* is performed by Trump when he talks about his determination to lead *"America first"* administration to take power from do-nothing politicians and return it to *"forgotten Americans"* and affirming that his election's slogan *"America first"* will be the philosophy of his presidency:

" From this moment on, it <u>is</u> going to be America First."

Again, the notion of certainty or *assertion* is expressed repeatedly by Trump in his inaugural address through the use of the modal verb *'will'*. He reaffirms his agenda's pledges during the presidential election; bringing back jobs, securing the U S border with Mexico, and building roads, bridges across the nation. And he commits himself to achieving all American dreams raising the slogan *"American hands and American labor".* In the speech, Trump tries to construct an optimistic, genuine opinion of himself, as "the person who will change American politics and who will give Americans their prosperity back", *affirming*:

"I <u>will</u> fight for you with every breath in my body….. We <u>will</u> bring back our jobs. We <u>will</u> bring back our borders. We <u>will</u> bring back our wealth. And we <u>will</u> bring back our dreams. We <u>will</u> build new roads, and highways, and bridges, and airports, and tunnels, and railways all across our wonderful nation".

As noted previously, the modal verb *Must* expresses a strong degree of assertion about the commitment of the speaker to the truth of what being said. Talking about the serious challenges that America faces, Trump asserts that:

"we <u>must</u> protect our borders from the ravages of other countries…. we <u>must</u> speak our minds openly…. we <u>must</u> think big and dream even bigger."

In the final part of his inaugural address, Trump reaffirms, by resorting to the model verb *will*, the theme of uniting the country under the American flag in order to restore the glory of America as a strong, proud, wealthy, safe and great country, repeating several variations of his famous slogan :

"together, We <u>will</u> Make America Strong Again. We <u>will</u> Make America Wealthy Again. We <u>will</u> Make America Proud Again. We <u>will</u> Make America Safe Again. And, Yes, Together, We <u>will</u> Make America Great Again".

To account for the frequency of the syntactic forms of *assertives* in Trump's (2017) Inaugural Address, table (2) below offers the details of the frequency of these syntactic realizations with their percentages:

Table (2): Syntactic Realizations of Assertives in Trump's Inaugural Address(2017)

Forms		Frequency	Total	Percentage
Lexical Verbs	-----	-----	----	----
	-----	-----	----	----
Verb to Be	**is**	**11**	**14**	**% 36.84**
	are	3		
Modal Verbs	**will**	**21**	**24**	**%63.15**
	must	**3**		
Adj.	---	----	----	----
Adv.	----	----	----	----
N	----	----	----	----
			38	**100%**

Results

Inaugural Addresses of May (2016), and The pragma-linguistic analysis of the assertive speech acts in the Trump(2017) has led to the following results:

1- May and Trump employ different types of *assertives* to attain various purposes linked to their plans and programs. Therefore, they resort to several word forms such as lexical verbs and auxiliary verbs (verb to be, modal verbs), yet with different numbers and percentages.

2- As for the verbal constructions, it is obvious that lexical verbs are used by May in her inaugural address with total number of 6 and a percentage of % 28.57 to express the assertive speech acts while lexical verbs are not found in Trump's Inaugural Address.

3- The use of auxiliary verbs (*Verb Be , Modal Verbs*) is more common in the Trump's Inaugural Addresses than May's. The *Verb Be* comes in the frequency of 14 with a percentage of **%** 36.84 and the total number of occurrences of the *Modal Verbs* is 24 with a percentage of %63.15.In comparison, the *Verb Be* in the May's Inaugural Addresses occurs with the frequency of 8 and a rate of **%** 38.09, and the total number of occurrence of the *Modal Verbs* is 7 with a percentage of % 33.33.Table (3) below shows the total frequencies and percentages of the various syntactic forms of May's and Trump's Inaugural Addresses:

Table (3): Assertion in May's and Trump's Inaugural Addresses

May Inaugural Address			Trump Inaugural Address		
	Total	Percentage		Total	Percentage
Lexical verbs	6	% 28.57	Lexical verbs	--	--
Verb . Be	8	% 38.09	Verb . Be	14	% 36.84
Modal Verbs	7	% 33.33	Modal Verbs	24	%63.15
Adj.	--	--	Adj.	--	--
Adv.	--	--	Adv.	--	--
N.	--	--	N.	--	--
	21	100%		38	100%

Conclusion

The results of the pragma-linguistic analysis of May's and Trump's inaugural addresses reveals that both of them employ all types of assertive speech acts including (*stating, believing, knowing , and declaring*) in their addresses in order to assert, confirm and determine the truthfulness of the messages they convey in accordance with their governmental agendas and programs. In their inaugural addresses, assertives are usually realized by the declarative sentences which are typically manipulated to implicitly disclose the speakers' knowledge and belief of what is proposed, focusing on the truth value of the messages they want to convey. May and Trump exploit various syntactic forms with different rates to perform the assertive speech act. Auxiliary verbs (*Verb Be* and *Modal Verbs*) are the most common in these inaugural addresses.

Recommendations

1- It is recommended that EFL college teachers should give due consideration to pragmatic as well as grammatical topics as they both work together to help students produce suitable and acceptable utterances.

2- EFL students are recommended to pay attention to assertive speech acts as used in situations as these acts form a great part of everyday communications. They are required to practice language in authentic and real situations which enhance their communicative competencies.

3- Syllable designers are also recommended to include the topic of the assertive speech act in the curriculum designed for communicative teaching purposes.

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