

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

How to Create Things with Words: Identifying the Performative Speech Acts of
God's Spoken Words in the Genesis 1 Creation Account

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Theology & Apologetics

by

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LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN THEOLOGY & APOLOGETICS

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Doctoral Degree Committee of the Liberty University School of Divinity for acceptance, a Dissertation entitled *How to Create Things with Words: Identifying the Performative Speech Acts of God's Spoken Words in the Genesis 1 Creation Account*, presented by Ivan C. Yu in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Theology & Apologetics.

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Abstract

Speech Act Theory is a branch of linguistics that explores not only how language is used to convey meaning, but also how it is used to perform actions or functions. In recent decades, it has been applied as a viable hermeneutical tool to aid biblical interpretation and defend the inerrancy of Scripture. Identifying the speech acts of the biblical author or speakers in the biblical narratives can be useful to understand the meaning and intention of the utterances, phrases, and words spoken. In the Genesis 1 creation narrative, God spoke words to create the universe. While adopting a canonical approach to interpretation and a trinitarian reading, this research applied Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 to identify the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts God performed with His speech on each day of creation. In doing so, it showed how the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis 1 creation narrative can be a viable hermeneutical tool to understand that the narrative intended to communicate how God created a universe of material origins instantaneously in a way that is consistent with His character as the Trinitarian God. This research also used Speech Act Theory to critique John H. Walton's functional view of creation in Genesis 1 and reveal the challenges of his speech act methodology with Ancient Near East comparative studies.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

One of the most contested debates among Christians concerns how to interpret and understand the Genesis creation narrative. Depending on one's worldview, presuppositions, and interpretive approach, there are various conflicting conclusions of what the Genesis creation narrative communicates about the origin of the universe and the necessary implications about the identity of God. Should Genesis be interpreted as history, fiction, or neither?¹ Is Genesis mythic like the creation stories of its Ancient Near East contemporaries?² Does Genesis 1 communicate how God created or just simply the fact that He did create? Does Genesis 1 describe a creation or material origins or functional origins?³ Does Genesis indicate the timing of creation and imply an Old Earth view or a Young Earth view? Many contemporary theories of creation propose different answers to these questions.⁴ While this dissertation does not seek to review and critique these views of interpretative approaches and creation theories, it will propose the use of Speech Act Theory as a viable interpretive tool to examine the contents in the text of the Genesis creation narrative and discover the intended communication about the origin of the universe and the nature of the creator God.

Speech Act Theory is a branch of linguistics that explores not only how language is used to convey meaning, but also how it is used to perform actions or functions. This theory was first

¹ For a comprehensive discussion about these three views of Genesis, see James K. Hoffmeier, Gordon John Wenham, and Kenton Sparks, *Genesis: History, Fiction, or Neither?: Three Views on the Bible's Earliest Chapters*, ed. Charles Halton (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2015).

² Oswalt argues against the Bible being categorized as mythic in John N. Oswalt, *The Bible among the Myths: Unique Revelation or Just Ancient Literature?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2009).

³ Walton advocated for a Functional View of creation over a material one in Genesis. John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009).

⁴ Some common contemporary theories of creation include the Gap Theory, Day/Age Theory, Framework Hypothesis, and Progressive Creation.

expounded by John Langshaw Austin in his 1962 book, *How to Do Things with Words*. Austin believed speech is more than the utterance of sounds, words, or statements. He said, “When we say something we are generally doing a number of things, including uttering an intelligible sentence which conveys a particular intention and effects a particular response.”⁵ In other words, speech is not just informative, but performative. People do things with speech as it employs particular actions. In Speech Act Theory, Austin saw three types of speech acts people can perform in any utterance: 1) locutionary act, 2) illocutionary act, and 3) perlocutionary act.⁶ Put simply, the locutionary act is the act of speaking: the intelligible production of a sentence using a combination of words. The illocutionary act is the action performed by the speaker in uttering words. The perlocutionary act is the intended effect of an utterance on the hearer.

Since its inception, Speech Act Theory has expanded beyond spoken words and been applied to Biblical interpretation as a tool to understand the meaning and intentions of the written words of Scripture. This application serves as a defense of the inerrancy of Scripture and authorial intent. In response to the postmodern literary crisis of textual meaning, Kevin J. Vanhoozer advocated for a Trinitarian hermeneutic since he saw God as a communicative agent who speaks in Scripture.⁷ In 1998, he developed Austin’s Speech Act Theory by associating the three types of speech acts performed with the three persons of the Holy Trinity. God the Father corresponds with the locutionary act of speaking in Scripture while God the Son corresponds with the illocutionary act and God the Spirit corresponds with the perlocutionary act as He

⁵ J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1962), 108.

⁶ Ibid, 94-107. Further details about J.L. Austin’s Speech Act Theory will be presented in Chapter 2.

⁷ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1998), 456.

convicts the hearts of readers to respond. This is known as Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory.⁸

The Genesis creation narrative depicts God speaking words on each day of creation. By speaking as a communicative agent, God is also performing particular actions, as He is a God who acts. These actions can be identified through the application of Speech Act Theory and give insight into what the Genesis creation narrative intended to communicate concerning the origin of the universe and the ontology of God as Creator. Reading Genesis in canonical context, one can adopt the doctrine of the Trinity and the view of the three persons of the Holy Trinity pre-existing before creation.⁹ Just as how God the Father has the role of speaking words in the creative act, the Son and the Holy Spirit also have a role in creation.¹⁰ According to Irenaeus, God acts by His two hands: the Son and the Spirit.¹¹ Applying Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative can help identify the roles each Person of the Holy Trinity has in creation and their relationship with one another. This dissertation seeks to tread on the new grounds of applying Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative to discover what its words intended to communicate about the origin of the universe and the nature of the Trinitarian God.

⁸ Further details about the history of Speech Act Theory and Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model will be presented in Chapter 2.

⁹ John 1:1 indicates the pre-existence of Jesus Christ as the Word in the beginning who was with God and was God. Colossians 1:17 also indicates the pre-existence of Jesus Christ as being before all things. Furthermore, Genesis 1:2 also indicates the pre-existence of the Holy Spirit in the beginning.

¹⁰ The Son has a role in creation as Scripture revealed that all of creation was made by Christ, through Christ, and not without Christ (cf. Jn 1:1-3, 10; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:1-2; 1 Cor. 8:6). The Holy Spirit (רוּחַ) also has a role in creation as implied by the breathing of God in the creation of man in Genesis 2:7. His role in creation of enlivening is also suggested in Ps. 33:6 and 104:29-30. Read more about the Holy Spirit's role in David T. Williams, "The Spirit in Creation," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 67, no. 1 (2014), 2-4.

¹¹ Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers: Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), 4.11.2.

Proposed Title

The proposed title for this dissertation is “How to Create Things with Words: Identifying the Performative Speech Acts of God’s Spoken Words in the Genesis 1 Creation Account.” The first part of this title is a reference to J. L. Austin’s *How to Do Things with Words* to indicate the involvement of Speech Act Theory. While Austin’s title communicates the general possibilities of “things” or actions that can be done or performed with words, the title of this dissertation focuses on the particular performative actions around God creating with His words. The second part of this title clarifies the examination of God’s words in the Genesis 1 creation narrative and implies the need to identify the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary performative actions of God’s words to understand this narrative.

Research Problem

This dissertation will address the following six research questions concerning an approach to understanding the Genesis 1 creation narrative. These research questions are grouped into two different categories. The first category involves questions concerning the application of Speech Act Theory. The second category involves questions concerning John H. Walton’s understanding and application of Speech Act Theory.

Category 1 Questions: The Application of Speech Act Theory

1. What performative acts are accomplished by God the Father when He speaks in the Genesis creation narrative?

According to Speech Act Theory, God the Father performed the locutionary act of speaking on each day of creation. As He did so, He also accomplished particular actions to create. Identifying the possible illocutionary and perlocutionary acts in speaking on each day of creation will give insight into how He created.

2. What do these performative acts reveal about the relationship between the persons of the Holy Trinity, the character of God, and His intention in creation?

As the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts in speaking on each day of creation are identified, one can also discover the identity and intention of the Creator God. There are not only implications about the roles each Person of the Holy Trinity has in creation, but also about their relationship with one another. These acts will also give insight into the character of God as His actions, including speaking, reflect who He is. Furthermore, God is intentional in His acts. Fretheim described God's intentionality in the following way:

God's actions are an activation of the divine will. God's actions are intentional, not idle or accidental. Every divine act is an act of will. God's acts always serve God's purposes in the world. God's speaking, for example, represents a decision by God to accomplish God's will in a given situation. God's word does not simply add something to a situation but renders a divine decision concerning it.¹²

As God spoke and acted in creation, His intention and will in creating are also revealed. Speech Act Theory is a tool to help understand God's identity and intention.

¹² Terence E. Fretheim, "The God Who Acts: An Old Testament Perspective," *Theology Today* 54, no. 1 (April 1997), 9.

3. Does the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative imply the necessity of an instantaneous and miraculous creation?

One aspect of Genesis 1 that scholars debate concerns the timing of God's creation. Did God create instantaneously within literal six 24-hour days or did He create throughout billions of years according to the evolutionary model of progressive creationism or another similar view? The application of Speech Act Theory may provide evidence for the timing of God's creation.

4. Does the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative imply the necessity of a material creation over a functional creation?

Another aspect of Genesis 1 highly debated among scholars is whether it describes an origin of matter or an ordering of function. In his book, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate*, John H. Walton made eighteen propositions and defended the idea that Genesis 1 "was never intended to be an account of material origins. Rather it was intended as an account of functional origins..."¹³ In other words, the purpose of Genesis 1 was not to explain the creation or the beginning existence of matter, but the initiation of the function or operation of creation. Walton heavily relies on the Ancient Near Eastern worldview to come to this interpretation. With Speech Act Theory, does the identification of illocutionary and perlocutionary acts in speaking on each day of creation provide any evidence for Walton's functional view or does it show evidence for a material view?

¹³ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 125. Further details about Walton's functional view and will be presented in Chapter 4.

Category 2 Questions: Walton's Understanding of Speech Act Theory

5. How does John H. Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative support his view of a functional creation?

In proposition 3 of *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority*, Walton attempted to defend the inerrancy and authority of Scripture by using Speech Act Theory.¹⁴ Since he holds a functional view of creation, it is important to discover how his understanding and application of Speech Act Theory would support that. It is also important to see how Walton's Speech Act Theory may differ from that of Austin, Searle, and Vanhoozer's.

6. What are the challenges associated with Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory?

Dissenters against Walton's functional view of creation find fault with Walton's methodology, especially with his consideration of the Ancient Near Eastern worldview in applying Speech Act Theory. Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory will be critiqued along with the presuppositions behind his Ancient Near East Form Criticism methodology.

Research Purpose / Thesis Statement

The purpose of this dissertation is to show how the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis 1 creation narrative can be a viable hermeneutical tool to understand that the

¹⁴ John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 39-48.

narrative intended to communicate how God created a universe of material origins instantaneously in a way that is consistent with His character as the Trinitarian God.

Methodology

To answer the research questions and understand what the words of the Genesis creation narrative intended to communicate about the origin of the universe and the nature of the Trinitarian God, the methodology of this research will need to be explained. As stated before, Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory will be applied to the creation narrative in Genesis 1 in which the locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts of the Speaker (God) will be identified. Furthermore, Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory along with the presuppositions behind his Ancient Near East Form Criticism will be examined and critiqued. This section will present the framework and steps by which this will be accomplished.

Speech Conversation Planes

Speech Act Theory involves examining the verbal interaction between communicating parties. These parties include the speaker who utters speech, and the audience who hears and is influenced. While describing the perlocutionary act, Austin said, "Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons."¹⁵ However, when it comes to written words, especially in the Bible, there are different ways to apply Speech Act Theory by choosing

¹⁵ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 101.

to examine utterances from the different perspectives of the identity of the speaker and the audience.

According to Botha, there are two common ways of applying Speech Act Theory to biblical interpretation. The first way is “a close [Speech Act Theory] reading of each and every utterance in the text, classifying its illocution and looking at the perlocution.”¹⁶ The second way is to “apply it to the communication of the text in more broad brush strokes, and to focus on the interaction of the author and readers and the text itself as speech act.”¹⁷ The author of this dissertation expanded and reframed Botha’s two ways of applying Speech Act Theory into five perspectives of doing so. These five perspectives are categorized as “speech conversation planes”, a phrase coined by the author of this dissertation.

The first speech conversation plane involves dialogue between any of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Examples of this first speech conversation plane are found in the creation narrative of Genesis 1 as it is implied that God the Father speaks on each day of creation to the Son and the Holy Spirit for them to respond in creative action.¹⁸ Other examples include Jesus’ speech and prayers directed to God the Father.¹⁹ Among the other speech conversation planes, this kind of speech occurs the least frequently in Scripture.

The second speech conversation plane involves speech between God and creation within the narrative of Scripture. There are examples of God speaking to individual humans, such as

¹⁶ J. Eugene Botha, “Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation,” *Neotestamentica* 41, no. 2 (2007), 282.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 282-283.

¹⁸ Gen. 1:3a, 6a, 9a, 11a, 14, 15a, 20, 24, 26.

¹⁹ Matt. 6:9-13; 11:25-25; 26:39, 42; 27:46; Mk. 14:36; 15:34; Lk. 10:21-22; 11:2-4; 22:42; 23:34, 36; Jn. 11:41-42; 12:27-28; 17:1-26.

prophets or kings,²⁰ or a whole group of people.²¹ In the context of Genesis 1, aside from speaking to humans (Gen. 1:28-30), God also spoke to creatures (Gen. 1:20b, 1:22), and possibly inanimate creations like the expanse, the waters, and the earth (Gen. 1:6, 9, 11). The third speech conversation plane is speech between human beings documented in Scripture. The fourth speech conversation plane is speech from human authors to all readers of Scripture. Finally, the fifth speech conversation plane is speech from God (the Divine Author) to all readers of Scripture. This is represented as the largest of the five speech conversation planes since all of Scripture is God's Word and is considered as speech directed to every human reader past, present, and future. The five speech conversation planes form a model proposed by the author of this dissertation to consider as one uses Speech Act Theory as a hermeneutical tool to interpret Scripture.

The Application of Speech Act Theory

As Speech Act Theory is applied to the creation narrative in Genesis 1, God's speech will be mainly examined according to the first speech conversation plane as dialogue between the Persons of the Holy Trinity. The locutionary utterances of God the Father will have their unique illocutions classified and perlocutions identified. The second speech conversation plane with speech from God potentially to creation will be considered to understand the speech acts according to the first speech conversation plane. Finally, the conclusions of applying Speech Act Theory according to the first speech conversation plane will be used to determine what the

²⁰ God spoke to Moses (Ex. 3:1-4:17), Samuel (1 Sam. 3:1-14), King Solomon (1 Kgs. 3:5-14), Elijah (1 Kgs. 19:9-18) and Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4-10).

²¹ God spoke to groups of people during Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:17; Mk. 1:11; Lk. 3:22) and the transfiguration (Matt. 17:5; Mk. 9:7; Lk. 9:35).

human author and Divine Author may be communicating to readers according to the fourth and fifth speech conversation planes respectively. The steps taken to apply Speech Act Theory in this way will be featured in Chapter 3. Since there is no dialogue between human beings featured in this creation narrative, the third speech conversation plane is not applicable. As each speech conversation plane involves different speech actors, there will be different illocutions and perlocutions. Special attention to the Hebrew text and Septuagint will be given to support the illocutions classified and perlocutions identified.

First Speech Conversation Plane

First, Speech Act Theory will be applied to Genesis 1 from the perspective of the first conversation plane (dialogue between any of the three persons of the Holy Trinity).²² The locutionary acts of God's speech will be identified in each of the six days of creation. According to Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory, God the Son corresponds with the illocutionary act.²³ Since God is speaking to the Son, the illocutionary acts will be classified in this context. Illocutionary acts will be identified according to John Searle's taxonomy. Searle classified illocutionary acts into five different types: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.²⁴ After classifying the illocutionary acts in each of the six days of creation, the perlocutionary acts are then identified to conclude the identity of the Trinitarian

²² While applying Speech Act Theory to day 6 of creation, details from the context of Genesis 2:5-7, 18-25 will be considered for the creation of man.

²³ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 456.

²⁴ John R. Searle, *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 10-16. Further details about Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts will be presented in Chapter 2.

God and the nature of how He created. This step seeks to address the Category 1 research questions.

Second Speech Conversation Plane

Second, Speech Act Theory will be applied to Genesis 1 from the perspective of the second conversation plane (dialogue between God and creation) in two ways. First, it will be applied to relevant passages including Genesis 1:22 when God spoke to creatures, and Genesis 1:28-30 when God spoke to humans. Just like with the first speech conversation plane, the locutionary acts of these verses will first be identified. This will be followed by the classification of the illocutionary acts according to Searle's taxonomy and the identification of the perlocutionary acts. However, the main interest and purpose for applying Speech Act Theory to these passages according to the second speech conversation plane would be to find contextual evidence to support and understand the illocutions of God's creative speech featured on days 5 and 6 of creation according to the first speech conversation plane.²⁵

The second way Speech Act Theory will be applied according to the second speech conversation plane is to test whether God's speech was directed to certain created entities to involve them in the creative process of other entities. The speech in question includes those possibly directed to the expanse (Gen. 1:6), the waters (Gen. 1:9), and the earth (Gen. 1:11). Through the process of applying Speech Act Theory, it will be shown in Chapter 3 that God the Father likely did not direct His speech to these created entities to involve them in the creative process of others, but mainly spoke to the other Persons of the Holy Trinity according to the first

²⁵ Since identifying the performative actions of God according to the second speech conversation plane in Genesis 1:22 and 1:28-30 is not the main focus of this dissertation, it will be briefly addressed in the footnotes of Chapter 3.

speech conversation plane. This step involving the second speech conversation plane also seeks to address the Category 1 research questions.

Fourth and Fifth Speech Conversation Planes

As the third speech conversation plane between human beings is not applicable in Genesis 1 and 2, Speech Act Theory will be applied from the perspective of the fourth speech conversation plane (speech from the human author to all readers of Scripture) and fifth conversation plane (speech from God to all readers of Scripture). Since the human author and Divine Author employed the use of the narrative in the text, the conclusions drawn from the application of Speech Act Theory to the creative speech of God (as an Actor within the narrative) according to the first and second speech conversation plane are contextually considered to determine what is communicated to the readers. In other words, what are the human author and Divine Author saying to readers through the text of Genesis 1 (locutionary act), according to the speech between the Persons of the Holy Trinity (first speech conversation plane) and between God and creation (second speech conversation plane)? What are the human author and Divine Author intending to communicate to readers in these texts (illocutionary act)?

Emphasis on Complex Relationships

Vern Poythress warned about the limitations of Speech Act Theory by making aware the “misuses and oversimplifications... that enter into the formation of the theory.”²⁶ As Speech Act Theory focuses on the particular words of the speech in a narrative, one limitation Poythress

²⁶ Vern S. Poythress, “Canon and Speech Act: Limitations in Speech-Act Theory, with Implications for a Putative Theory of Canonical Speech Acts,” *The Westminster Theological Journal* 70, no. 2 (2008), 338.

warned about is the leaving aside of context. Botha would agree as he said, “To understand the illocution and perlocution of an utterance it is crucial to pay attention to the context within which it is performed.”²⁷ Other than the literary and historical-cultural contexts, Poythress emphasized not forgetting the context of complexity among the relationships of speakers and their environment. He said:

Speech-act theory, if used simplistically, tends to make people think that each sentence-level act makes a single, simple speech commitment, defined as its “illocutionary force”: it either asserts, promises, commands, wishes, or the like. But a sentence in the Bible may often have, in addition to one more obvious and direct commitment, multiple, interlocking purposes, related in multiple ways to its literary context and its addressees.²⁸

As this dissertation examines the speech acts within the Genesis creation narrative, the complexity of relationships among the persons of the Holy Trinity and the covenant relationship between God and humans will be extensively considered to accurately identify speech acts without leaving aside the context of these relationships.

The Application and Critique of Walton’s Speech Act Theory

The next step in the methodology of this research is to know how Walton understands and applies Speech Act Theory with the use of the Ancient Near East worldview to support his functional view of creation. This will be featured in Chapter 4 along with a critique of his understanding of Speech Act Theory. In Chapter 5, the weaknesses and presuppositions behind Walton’s comparative studies or Ancient Near East Form Criticism used in his Speech Act

²⁷ Botha, “Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation”, 278.

²⁸ Poythress, “Canon and Speech Act”, 339.

Theory will be critiqued and evaluated as well. This step in the research methodology seeks to address the Category 2 research questions.

Delimitations of Research

A Canonical Approach

To define the scope of research, certain delimitations must be given. As already noted, Speech Act Theory will only be applied to the creation narrative in Genesis 1 as a focus. Although there are many other important creation passages in Scripture that this dissertation will not apply Speech Act Theory to, a select few passages will still be considered in the interpretation and understanding of Genesis 1, as a canonical approach to interpreting the Bible will be employed. These passages include those about the presence and role of God the Son in creation (Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17; 1 Cor. 8:6; Heb. 1:2), the presence and role of God the Holy Spirit in creation (Gen. 2:7; Ps. 33:6; 104:30), actions of speaking to create (Ps. 33:6, 9), and other relevant actions of creation (Day 3: Ps. 33:7; Day 4: Ps. 136:7-9; Ps. 104:19; Day 6: Gen. 2:7, 21-22).

The canonical approach to interpreting the Bible considers not only the intention of the original human author of a particular text but also the intention of the Divine Author of a particular text in the context of the rest of Scripture, seen as a literary and theological unified text.²⁹ It is a complimentary approach to Speech Act Theory as it is parallel to determining the illocutionary acts on the fourth and fifth speech conversation planes. Vanhoozer described that

²⁹ For an overview and strong case for the canonical approach to Scripture, see Mark S. Gignilliat, *Reading Scripture Canonically: Theological Instincts for Old Testament Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019). Gignilliat shows how Scripture is conscious of a canon “for the sake of an enduring witness to divine self-revelation”, 46.

God could be performing certain illocutions that only come to light when seen with other biblical texts gathered in the canon. These illocutions may include “instructing the believing community; testifying to Christ; and perhaps most obviously *covenanting*.”³⁰ Although the human author of Genesis 1 may perform certain illocutions, God as the Divine Author of the biblical canon may perform other illocutions as communication to readers. To rightly determine these illocutions, the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of the Trinity, as formed by all relevant biblical passages, will be considered in the interpretation of Genesis 1.

The Pre-existence of the Holy Trinity

With this canonical approach to Scripture, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and His pre-existence will be assumed in the interpretation of Genesis 1. Most of God’s utterances in Genesis 1 will be examined with Speech Act Theory according to the first conversation plane among the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Is there any biblical evidence in Genesis 1 that would support the pre-existence of the three persons of the Holy Trinity before creation? Some scholars would advocate that the use of *Elohim* (God) in plural form coupled consistently with singular verbs or predicators indicates a reference to the unity of the God of Israel while allowing for a plurality of persons, and thus an early Trinitarian revelation.³¹ Murphy does not believe the use of *Elohim* is best classified as the plural of majesty that “shows a heightened level of respect for the individual being referred to or addressed in the context.”³² Instead, he advocates

³⁰ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts: The Covenant of Discourse and the Discourse of the Covenant,” in *After Pentecost: Language and Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 37.

³¹ Bryan Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation,” *The Masters Seminary Journal* 24, no. 2 (2013), 169.

³² *Ibid*, 171.

that the use of the first person plural pronoun in Genesis 1:26 is a “clear reference to a plurality of persons within the Godhead that later revelation [in Scripture] will both confirm and define as a Trinity.”³³ For the purpose of the research in this dissertation, this position is assumed over others including the mythical view of polytheism, the heavenly court view, the plural of majesty view, and the plural of deliberation view.³⁴

Despite the differing views on whether there are references to the Trinity in Genesis 1, this dissertation will not focus on reviewing and critiquing these views. With a canonical approach to Scripture, the doctrine of the Trinity is revealed and assumed. Such revelation includes John 1:1 which indicates the pre-existence of Jesus Christ as the Word in the beginning who was with God and was God, as well as Colossians 1:17 which indicates Jesus Christ as being before all things. Genesis 1:2 also indicates the pre-existence of the Holy Spirit in the beginning. The three persons of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are assumed to be pre-existent and present in the beginning before creation.

Precedent Literature

Although there are a multitude of literature and resources that are foundational for the research in this dissertation, a few important ones have been selected to be featured. These particular literature and resources focus on one of the following areas: 1) the theology of God acting, 2) the background and understanding of Speech Act Theory, 3) the application of Speech

³³ Ibid, 176.

³⁴ See Appendix 1 entitled, “The Pre-Existence of the Trinity in Genesis 1” for a more detailed discussion about the use of the plural *elohim* and the different views of the first person plural pronoun in Genesis 1:26.

Act Theory to biblical interpretation, 4) examples of how Speech Act Theory has been applied to Scripture (including Genesis 1), and 5) Walton's methodology and views.

Austin, J. L. *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1962.

John Langshaw Austin was a British philosopher of language. He was the White's Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Oxford and received his doctorate from the same university. Austin is credited as the initial proponent of the Speech Act Theory in this book, which was published posthumously in 1962. The contents of this book were based on the 1955 William James lectures he gave at Harvard University. Austin believed speech is performative as people do things with words. He divided speech acts into three categories: 1) locutionary act, 2) illocutionary act, and 3) perlocutionary act.³⁵ The possible illocutionary acts one can perform by speaking may be categorized as 1) verdictives, 2) exercitives, 3) commissives, 4) behabitives, and 5) expositives.³⁶ If the intended perlocutionary effect on a hearer is accomplished successfully, Austin described it as happy or felicitous.³⁷ Speech Act Theory has since been applied to biblical texts which this dissertation seeks to accomplish with the Genesis creation narrative.

³⁵ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 94-107.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 150-163.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 14-15, 25-52.

Botha, J. Eugene. "Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation." *Neotestamentica* 41, no. 2 (2007): 274–94.

J. Eugene Botha is a professor in the Department of New Testament at the University of South Africa. In this article, Botha examines how Speech Act Theory has been used in the past 25 years (as of writing in 2007). He noted how Speech Act Theory became a field of interest to biblical interpreters due to the renewed focus on the text as a literary unit and as a unified whole.³⁸ In the first part of the article, Botha briefly explained Austin's, Searle's, and Grice's contributions to Speech Act Theory. He also emphasized that Speech Act Theory cannot be used in isolation to understand a particular biblical text. Since the focus on particular utterances of speech is so narrow, he believes that Speech Act Theory can be used to supplement other exegetical tools to better understand what the text is communicating.³⁹ Furthermore, he also advocated that one must pay attention to the context of the utterance that is performed to understand its illocution and perlocution.⁴⁰ In the second part of the article, Botha explained two common ways of applying Speech Act Theory to biblical interpretation. The first way is to examine utterances as they apply to the actors within the text. The second way is to apply it on the level of the author's speech to the reader.⁴¹ The concepts presented in this article will be considered during the research for this dissertation.

³⁸ Botha, "Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation", 275.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 276.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 278.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 282-283.

Evans, Donald D. *The Logic of Self-Involvement: A Philosophical Study of Everyday Language with Special Reference to the Christian Use of Language about God as Creator*. London, UK: SCM Press, 1963.

Donald D. Evans was a professor in philosophy of religion who taught at McGill University and Victoria College at the University of Toronto. He was also an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. *The Logic of Self-Involvement* is one of his earliest works that explored the meaning of religion through language. It is a significant book because in it, Evans was the first person to apply Speech Act Theory to biblical interpretation.⁴² Part one of his book focused on the self-involvement of everyday language and religious language. In part two, Evans applied the tools from part 1 to biblical language, particularly about God as Creator to show the self-involving quality of this concept.

Evans sees that God's use of speech in creation and humans' use of speech about God as Creator are performative.⁴³ Although he applied concepts of Speech Act Theory, Evans did not exegetically examine every one of God's speech in Genesis 1. Rather, he used the conception of Israel's creation as a parallel to the world's creation⁴⁴ to show that God's speech in creation can establish the subordinate status and role of the creature (exercitive force), determine the value of the creature (verdictive force), and commit Himself to maintain the order of creation (commissive force).⁴⁵ Furthermore, Evans did not apply a Trinitarian approach to Genesis 1 as

⁴² Richard Briggs, *Words in Action: Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation* (T & T Clark, 2001), 4.

⁴³ Donald D. Evans, *The Logic of Self-Involvement: A Philosophical Study of Everyday Language with Special Reference to the Christian Use of Language about God as Creator* (London, UK: SCM Press, 1963), 27.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 145-151

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 157. Evans used Austin's classification of illocutionary acts as Searle's taxonomy had not been developed until 1962. This dissertation will identify illocutionary acts according to Searle's taxonomy as it overcomes the defects of Austin's classification which will be explained in Chapter 2.

he focused on the self-involving nature of Yahweh, or God the Father, and what His speech accomplished in creation. As a result, there is not much addressed about how God created with His speech and relationship to the other Persons of the Holy Trinity. This dissertation can build upon the foundation of what Evans established.

Fretheim, Terence E. “The God Who Acts: An Old Testament Perspective.” *Theology Today* 54, no. 1 (April 1997): 6–18.

Terrence E. Fretheim was an Old Testament scholar and the Elva B. Lovell professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary. He received an M.Div. from Luther Seminary in 1960 and a Th.D. degree from Princeton Seminary in 1967. In this article, Fretheim discusses the theology of how God acts, especially from the perspective of the Old Testament. He based this discussion on examining G. Ernest Wright’s *God Who Acts* (1964)⁴⁶ and Gerhard von Rad’s *Old Testament Theology* (1962).⁴⁷ Fretheim first describes how the many active verbs in Scripture of Israel’s God show that He is an active God, including in the way He speaks.⁴⁸ He explains that God’s actions occur within relationships that He established with the world, including the committed covenantal ones He made with humans.⁴⁹ Furthermore, when God acts, He does so intentionally and according to His divine will.⁵⁰ This relates to the illocutionary act of Speech Act Theory as there is intention when one speaks. Finally, Fretheim described how God’s actions in word and

⁴⁶ G. Ernest Wright, *God Who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital* (London, UK: SCM Press, 1964).

⁴⁷ Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology: Volume 1*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1962).

⁴⁸ Fretheim, “The God Who Acts”, 8.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 9.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 10.

deed are effective in the world, but may not always be successful because those who receive God's word may misuse it, misunderstand it, or disobey it.⁵¹ This relates to the perlocutionary act of Speech Act Theory as the hearer or reader may not always respond in the speaker's intended way.

Grey, Jacqueline. "Acts of the Spirit: Ezekiel 37 in the Light of Contemporary Speech-Act Theory." *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 1 (2009): 69–82.

Jacqueline Grey is a Professor of Biblical Studies, specializing in hermeneutics, Old Testament/Hebrew Bible, and Pentecostal theology. She received her doctorate from Charles Sturt University in 2006. In this article, Grey gave an example of how Speech Act Theory can contribute to biblical studies. After giving a brief overview of Speech Act Theory, she applied it to Ezekiel 37:1-14 which is a narrative report of the Prophet Ezekiel's visionary experience. In this text, the speech from the locutionary acts of both Yahweh and the Prophet Ezekiel are nearly identical. Grey associates this with Wolterstorff's "double-agency discourse".⁵² Despite the similar locutionary acts, the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of Yahweh and the Prophet Ezekiel are different. Yahweh's speech was directed at the Prophet Ezekiel and the illocutionary act was to command the prophet to speak. As the prophet completed this task, the perlocutionary act was fulfilled.⁵³ On the other hand, the Prophet Ezekiel's speech was directed to the dry bones. Even though he spoke the same speech, his illocutionary act was to obey Yahweh and proclaim His word. The perlocutionary act resulted in the recreation of the dry bones into a vast

⁵¹ Ibid, 11-12.

⁵² Jacqueline Grey, "Acts of the Spirit: Ezekiel 37 in the Light of Contemporary Speech-Act Theory," *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 1 (2009), 77.

⁵³ Ibid, 78.

army by the agent of the *ruach* (Spirit).⁵⁴ This article shows not only how Speech Act Theory can be used to understand Scripture, but also gives insight into the role of the Spirit who is involved with restoration (new creation) and responds to the speech and illocutionary intentions of others.⁵⁵

Poythress, Vern S. "Canon and Speech Act: Limitations in Speech-Act Theory, with Implications for a Putative Theory of Canonical Speech Acts." *The Westminster Theological Journal* 70, no. 2 (2008): 337–54.

Vern S. Poythress is an American philosopher, theologian, New Testament scholar, and mathematician. He is also the Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Westminster Theological Seminary and received a Th.D. in New Testament from the University of Stellenbosch. In this article, Poythress presents the limitations of Speech Act Theory and how people may misuse or oversimplify it.⁵⁶ As one applies Speech Act Theory to a biblical text, there is the danger of leaving aside context. Aside from the context of the biblical canon where a text resides, Poythress emphasized the context of the complexity of human beings in terms of their relationships (social context: with each other and God), environment (locational context), and world (historical context).⁵⁷ It is important to consider these contexts in interpretation. This approach is complementary to the Historical-Critical/Grammatical method of interpretation. One may also oversimplify Speech Act Theory by assuming a single illocutionary force for each

⁵⁴ Ibid, 79-80.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 80-82.

⁵⁶ Poythress, "Canon and Speech Act", 337-338.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 339.

sentence when in Scripture, speech may accomplish multiple purposes.⁵⁸ Searle also indicated that it is possible to do more than one illocutionary act in the same utterance.⁵⁹ As Speech Act Theory is applied in the research of this dissertation, these warnings about its limitation and oversimplification will be adhered to.

Searle, John R. *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

John Rogers Searle is an American philosopher most well-known in the field of the philosophy of language. He obtained his B.A., M.A., and DPhil. from the University of Oxford and was the Professor Emeritus of the Philosophy of Mind and Language at the University of California in Berkeley until 2019. Searle was a student of J.L. Austin and continued to develop and expand on his Speech Act Theory after Austin's death. This book compiles seven of his articles, originally published elsewhere, as seven chapters in the same volume. In the first chapter, Searle reviews the taxonomy of illocutionary acts by J.L. Austin and shows why they are defective. He proposed his five classifications of illocutionary acts: 1) assertives, 2) directives, 3) commissives, 4) expressives, and 5) declaration, and explained why it is a better taxonomy based on the particular dimensions of illocutionary acts such as illocutionary point, direction of fit, and expressed psychological state as well as the paradigm performative verbs.⁶⁰ This dissertation will adopt Searle's taxonomy. The other chapters in his book address nonliteral

⁵⁸ Ibid, 344.

⁵⁹ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 10-16.

uses of languages (indirect speech, fiction, metaphor), literal use of contrast, and a concluding defense of his Speech Act Theory.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1998.

Kevin J. Vanhoozer is an American theologian and current Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He received his M. Div. from Westminster Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. In this book, Vanhoozer sought to accomplish two purposes. The first purpose found in part one of the book is to critique aspects of postmodernity which result in a reader response interpretation of texts and other relativistic practices, including deconstructionist hermeneutics. In particular, he is interested in the effects these practices have on the Christian reading of Scripture. He accomplished this first purpose by combatting the beliefs of scholars such as Jacques Derrida, Richard Rorty, Stanley Fish, and Michael Foucault, as well as other deconstructionists and neo-pragmatists by responding to their views on hermeneutics.⁶¹ While doing so, he described the deaths of the author, text, and reader in postmodern deconstruction hermeneutics.

The second purpose found in part two of the book is to critique the evangelical perspective on traditional hermeneutical practices and reconstruct them for a more faithful Christian reading of Scripture. Vanhoozer accomplished this by presenting a positive response of reconstructing or resurrecting the author, text, and reader. In particular, he addressed the importance of authorial intention, proper hermeneutical principles to examine the meaning of the biblical text, and overcoming personal biases as the reader. All of this is based on the foundation

⁶¹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 49.

of God and His transcendence. That is why Vanhoozer proposed the Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory as the triune God is a communicative agent, action, and result.⁶² This is the method that will be applied to the research in this dissertation to critique any postmodern deconstruction interpretations of Genesis 1 and 2.

Walton, John H. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.

John H. Walton is a Professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College and taught at Moody Bible Institute for twenty years before teaching at Wheaton. He received an M.A. in Biblical Studies: Old Testament from Wheaton and a Ph.D. from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. In this volume, Walton provided a great overview and survey of the Ancient Near Eastern landscape that the Israelites found themselves situated in as they practiced their faith and sought to provide readers with a cognitive environment. Walton argues that there is a homogenous worldview in the Ancient Near East that the ancient Israelites are a part of as well.⁶³ There are five main sections of the book: 1. Comparative Studies, 2. Literature of the Ancient Near East, 3. Religion, 4. Cosmos, and 5. People. In each of these sections, Walton mainly provided the Egyptian and Mesopotamian views on these topics. However, the appendix surveyed other Ancient Near East views including Canaan and Sumerian. This book is meant to be a resource for those who do background studies and hold to a similar Ancient Near East Form Criticism as Walton. However, those who do not agree with Walton also benefit from this volume to learn about his views and how to argue against his method of interpretation.

⁶² Ibid, 199, 456.

⁶³ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 27.

Walton, John H. *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009.

In this book, Walton presented eighteen propositions to argue that Genesis was not an account of material origins, but of functional origins.⁶⁴ This means that it was not the author of Genesis' intention to describe cosmology in modern scientific terms or address modern questions concerning material origins.⁶⁵ Rather, the intention was to show how God established purpose or function in creation. This interpretation stems from reading Genesis while considering its contemporary Ancient Near Eastern texts that promote a similar functional perspective in their cosmological worldviews.

Walton's idea of a functional creation culminated in the conclusion of what he terms the Cosmic Temple Inauguration View. As functions are set during each of the seven literal days of creation, they are seen as an inauguration and building of God's cosmic temple where He would reign. For example, days 1 to 3 establish the functions of time, weather, and food⁶⁶ while days 4-6 install the functionaries such as celestial lights, creatures of the air and sea, and humans to operate within the cosmos.⁶⁷ Part of this dissertation will seek to understand Walton's Speech Act Theory, know how he would use it to support a functional view of creation, and critique his methodology.

⁶⁴ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 125.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 16.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 54-62.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 63-71.

Chapter 2: Background and Concepts of Speech Act Theory

In this chapter, the background and important concepts of Speech Act Theory relevant to the research of this dissertation will be featured. First, a brief history of Speech Act Theory will show the origin and developments of the theory with particular interest in its use as a tool for biblical interpretation. Second, some contributions of Speech Act Theory made in biblical interpretation will be presented. Finally, the important concepts of Speech Act Theory developed by scholars including J.L. Austin, John Searle, Donald D. Evans, and Kevin J. Vanhoozer will be explored. These concepts will be revisited and applied during the research of this dissertation in the subsequent chapters.

A Brief History of Speech Act Theory

Origin and Early Developments

Speech Act Theory was first proposed and developed by John Langshaw Austin (1911-1960). It was first expounded in Austin's 1955 William James lectures at Harvard University. Unfortunately, Austin passed away in 1960 without publishing his Speech Act Theory in written form. However, his approach and outlines of Speech Act Theory featured in various lectures, articles, and reviews, were eventually collected and published posthumously in two notable works: *Philosophical Papers* (1961)⁶⁸ and *How to Do Things with Words* (1962).⁶⁹ The latter work is directly based on Austin's 1955 William James lectures at Harvard University. After Austin, two philosophers, Paul Grice (1913-1988) and John Searle (1932-) developed more

⁶⁸ J. L. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, ed. J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1961).

⁶⁹ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*.

comprehensive models of Speech Act Theory and refined some of his concepts.⁷⁰ Grice introduced what he called the co-operative principle which states that in any conversation, the speaker must contribute “such as required, at the state at which it occurs by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which he is engaged.”⁷¹ The contributions are described in four maxims that regulate verbal interaction.⁷²

John Searle was a student of Austin’s who played an important role in systematizing and structuralizing Speech Act Theory in his works *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*⁷³ and *Expression and Meaning*.⁷⁴ According to Kim, “If Austin is the Luther of speech act theory John Searle may be considered its Melanchthon, i.e. its systematic theologian.”⁷⁵ Searle systematized Speech Act Theory in multiple ways. For example, he proposed a taxonomy of illocutionary acts that overcomes the weaknesses of Austin’s.⁷⁶ Searle also systematized speech acts by representing them as having the form **F(p)** in which (**F**) is the

⁷⁰ J. Eugene Botha, “Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation,” *Neotestamentica* 41, no. 2 (2007), 275.

⁷¹ Paul Grice, “Logic and Conversation,” in *Syntax and Semantics: Speech Acts*, ed. Peter Cole and Jerry L. Morgan, vol. 3 (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1975), 45.

⁷² *Ibid*, 45-58. Read more about the Cooperative Principle on these pages. The four maxims that regulate verbal interaction are the maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner. See also Botha, “Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation”, 279.

⁷³ John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

⁷⁴ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*.

⁷⁵ Duck-Hyun Kim, “Reframing the Hermeneutical Question as Part of Its Homiletical Responsibility: Making Extensive Use of the Speech Act Theory,” *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 16, no. 1 (2016), 30.

⁷⁶ See the sections in this chapter entitled “Weaknesses of Austin’s Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts” and “Searle’s Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts”.

illocutionary force and (**p**) is the propositional content.⁷⁷ Furthermore, he “developed the concept of doing-as-saying in suggesting that, when pressed to the how-do-you-know question, one may only answer in a linguistically constricted form, thus language is the foundation on which knowledge rests.”⁷⁸ Following the footsteps of Austin who laid the foundation, Searle systematized Speech Act Theory and influenced others to continue to develop and apply it to other areas, including religious discourse and biblical interpretation.⁷⁹

The Application of Speech Act Theory to Biblical Interpretation

Speech Act Theory can be an important tool and vehicle for biblical interpretation. This is because examining and identifying the illocutionary acts of the biblical author or speakers in the biblical narratives can be useful to understand the meaning and intention of the utterances, phrases, and words spoken. Recognizing this importance, many scholars have contributed to this field of study. Donald Evans (1927-2018), another student of Austin, was the first person to apply Speech Act Theory to biblical interpretation in his 1963 book, *The Logic of Self-Involvement*.⁸⁰ Evans developed Austin’s Speech Act Theory and believed it could be applied to

⁷⁷ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 1.

⁷⁸ Joshua C. Stone, “Triadic to Trinitarian: Kevin J. Vanhoozer’s Application of J.L. Austin’s Speech Act Theory,” *Eleutheria* 1, no. 1 (2010), 61.

⁷⁹ In 1958, another one of Austin’s student, Ninian Smart (1927-2001), wrote his doctoral dissertation entitled *Reasons and Faiths* which focused on using Speech Act Theory to investigate religious discourse (Christian and non-Christian) and describe the nature of religious doctrines and concepts, including Buddhism and Hinduism. Ninian Smart, *Reasons and Faiths: An Investigation of Religious Discourse, Christian and Non-Christian* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958); While this application does not only focus on Christianity nor contribute in biblical interpretation, Smart’s work is notable for being the first to use Speech Act Theory in the context of religious language. Hugh C. White, “The Value of Speech Act Theory for Old Testament Hermeneutics,” in *Semeia 41: Speech Act Theory and Biblical Criticism* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1988), 54.

⁸⁰ Richard S. Briggs, *Words in Action: Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation* (T & T Clark, 2001), 4.

written texts such as the Bible because he did not see a distinction between spoken and written utterances.⁸¹ He argued that when someone, including God, speaks religious language, he or she is involving the self in commitments, attitudes, and feelings.⁸² This is in line with Austin's mantra that all speech is performative.⁸³ Evans's groundbreaking work influenced many to apply Speech Act Theory as a tool to assist in biblical hermeneutics and exegesis.

Evans passed the mantle and influenced his student, Anthony C. Thiselton (1937-2023), who heavily contributed to the study of Speech Act Theory in the Bible since 1970 when he first referenced Austin in his article "The Parables as Language Event".⁸⁴ Thiselton was one of the scholars who thought that "speech-act analysis is most helpful in understanding particular parts of the Bible – for instance, Jesus' parables, or Paul's preaching."⁸⁵ This is evident in many of his writings.⁸⁶ Thiselton also described the concept of 'behind', 'within', and 'in front' of the text as

⁸¹ Evans, *The Logic of Self-Involvement*.

⁸² *Ibid*, 11.

⁸³ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

⁸⁴ Anthony C. Thiselton, "Parables as Language-Event: Some Comments on Fuchs's Hermeneutics in the Light of Linguistic Philosophy," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 23, no. 4 (1970): 437–68.

⁸⁵ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts: The Covenant of Discourse and the Discourse of the Covenant," in *After Pentecost: Language and Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 7.

⁸⁶ Notable works include: Anthony C. Thiselton, "The Use of Philosophical Categories in New Testament Hermeneutics," *The Churchman* 87, no. 2 (1973): 87–100; Anthony C. Thiselton, "The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 25, no. 2 (1974): 283–99; Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1992); Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Hermeneutics of Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007); Anthony C. Thiselton, "Changing the World - Illocutions, Christology and 'Directions of Fit': 'Christological Texts in Paul,'" in *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1992), 283–312; Anthony C. Thiselton, "Christology in Luke, Speech-Act Theory, and the Problem of Dualism in Christology after Kant," in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994).

a distinction in hermeneutic theory which coincides with this dissertation's introduction of speech conversation planes.⁸⁷

Thiselton supervised his student, Richard S. Briggs, in his doctoral thesis, which interacted with the works of Thiselton and Evans and re-examined the use of Speech Act Theory in biblical interpretation.⁸⁸ Briggs' thesis was eventually published as the book *Words in Action* in 2001.⁸⁹ One can see the developments of Speech Act Theory and its influence on biblical interpretation through the teacher/student relationships from Austin, to Evans, to Thiselton, and Briggs.

Not every important scholar of Speech Act Theory in biblical interpretation has a direct or indirect teacher/student relationship with Austin. In 1995, Nicholas Wolterstorff (1932-) wrote a book entitled *Divine Discourse* and showed how God can utilize various modes of human discourse as illocutionary acts for divine discourse without ascribing to the infallibility of human words of Scripture.⁹⁰ In this way, Speech Act Theory was used to recover the notion of

⁸⁷ Anthony C. Thiselton, "'Behind' and 'In Front Of' the Text: Language Reference and Indeterminacy," in *After Pentecost: Language and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Craig Bartholomew, Colin Greene, and Karl Moller, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2001), 97–120. "Behind", "in front", and "within" are terms first used by Paul Ricoeur and others to offer "a new understanding of valid hermeneutical distinctions", 107. "Behind" the text refers to identifying the motives and intentions behind communications of participants in the text based on the historical, cultural, social, and linguistic contexts. This correlates to the first, second, and third speech conversation planes. "In front" of the text refers to identifying the motives and intentions of the author of the text in communicating to the reader. This correlates to the fourth and fifth speech conversation planes. "Within" the text refers to accomplishing the task of identifying motives and intentions of participants and authors within the canon of Scripture.

⁸⁸ Brigg's dissertation was entitled "Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation: Toward a Hermeneutic of Self-Involvement" (Nottingham, England, University of Nottingham, 1999).

⁸⁹ Briggs, *Words in Action*.

⁹⁰ Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 37-57. The modes of discourse Wolterstorff explained include authorization, deputization, and appropriation. The latter two are known as modes of double agency.

authorial discourse and reading the whole Bible as divine discourse.⁹¹ Seeing the whole Bible as divine discourse is consistent with this dissertation's methodology of applying Speech Act Theory while adopting a canonical approach to interpreting the Bible.

Another important recent scholar without any teacher/student connection to Austin is Kevin J. Vanhoozer (1957-). In his 2009 book, *Is there a Meaning in this Text?*, Vanhoozer proposed a Trinitarian Model of the Speech Act Theory. As a systematic theologian, Vanhoozer defended the authorial intent of Scripture by using Speech Act Theory against the skepticism of postmodern and deconstructionist literary epistemology. By implementing a Trinitarian account of Speech Act Theory, he correlated God the Father with the locutionary act, God the Son with the illocutionary act, and God the Holy Spirit with the perlocutionary act.⁹²

The Contribution of Speech Act Theory to Biblical Interpretation

As shown from the brief history of Speech Act Theory in the previous section, there was a rise in interest during recent decades in using Speech Act Theory as a tool for Biblical interpretation. This is because examining and identifying the illocutionary acts of the biblical author or speakers in biblical narratives can be an important tool and vehicle to understand the meaning and intention of the utterances, phrases, and words spoken. As a result, Speech Act Theory provides a solution to two areas: 1) the general hermeneutical problem and 2) the danger of a postmodern or deconstructionist perspective of linguistic epistemology.

⁹¹ Vanhoozer, "From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts", 7.

⁹² Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1998), 457.

White describes the general hermeneutical problem as a dilemma between historical criticism and theology. The former distinguishes the past from the present “to prevent the distinctive, unique, and even alien features of previous historical periods from being ignored or distorted by the passion to make the past relevant to present circumstances.”⁹³ On the other hand, the latter seeks the application of eternal truths as significance for the present at the expense of the historical uniqueness of the past.⁹⁴ Within this dichotomy spur the issues between the role of the author and the reader; the intended meaning of the text and the relevance to the contemporary situation; and the reconciliation of competing interpretations amidst the social, cultural, and political contexts of the text.

White asks, “What contribution can speech act theory then make to the resolution of these problems of Biblical Hermeneutics?”⁹⁵ He responds by saying, “Austin’s concepts of illocutionary force and felicity... provide the starting points for a nonmetaphysical theory of language, and a view of truth which escapes the limits of the correspondence theory.”⁹⁶ White continued to describe the contribution of Austin’s Speech Act Theory to biblical interpretation:

The results of Austin's investigation seem particularly suited to Biblical, and especially Hebrew narrative hermeneutics since the most prominent linguistic features of the Hebrew narrative are the central word events which have the form of Austin's classic examples, i.e., promises, commands, warnings, verdicts, and the like. But perhaps more important, because of the importance of felicity conditions, a speech act theory of literature would have to place Biblical literature in its social and even historical context, thereby bringing together the literary and historical perspectives. By treating language

⁹³ White, “The Value of Speech Act Theory for Old Testament Hermeneutics”, 45, 50.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 45, 50.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 53.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 53. The correspondence theory of truth is a philosophical theory of truth that hold that the truth or falsehood of a statement is determined by its correspondence to objective reality or the actual state of affairs in the world. In other words, a statement is considered true if it accurately describes or corresponds to the facts or the way things are in reality.

itself as an act, the dichotomy between literary word and historical fact is eliminated at the theoretical level. The meaning of language is understood neither in terms of a logical (or existential) system, nor its correspondence to empirical fact, but in terms of the conditions which govern its use. The division between word and event, between the theoretical and factual, is thus overcome in principle.⁹⁷

Speech Act Theory provides a solution to the general hermeneutical problem between historical criticism and theology.

The second issue Speech Act Theory solves is overcoming the danger of postmodern or deconstructionist hermeneutics. Using Speech Act Theory to identify the illocutionary acts of biblical authors or speakers in biblical narratives and understand the meaning of their words is in line with the hermeneutic of authorial intention. From a postmodern perspective of linguistic epistemology, philosophers such as Jacques Derrida and Richard Rorty have advocated for the deconstruction or death of the author, authorial intention, and objective meaning.⁹⁸ In the next sections of this chapter, the important concepts and developments of Speech Act Theory from J.L. Austin, John Searle, Donald D. Evans, and Kevin J. Vanhoozer will be presented.

John Langshaw Austin

An Overview of Speech Act Theory

J.L. Austin believed speech is more than the utterance of sounds, words, or statements. He said, “When we say something we are generally doing a number of things, including uttering an intelligible sentence which conveys a particular intention and effects a particular response.”⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibid, 54.

⁹⁸ Stone, “Triadic to Trinitarian”, 61; Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*.

⁹⁹ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

In other words, speech is not just informative, but performative. People do things with speech as it employs particular actions. In Speech Act Theory, Austin saw three types of speech acts people can perform in any utterance: 1) locutionary act, 2) illocutionary act, and 3) perlocutionary act.

The locutionary act is the intelligible production of a sentence using a combination of words. It is “roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference which again is roughly equivalent to ‘meaning’ in the traditional sense.”¹⁰⁰ For example, a wife can say to her husband, “I feel cold.” The illocutionary act is the action performed by the speaker in uttering words. The action may include “informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, &c., i.e. utterances which have a certain (conventional) force.”¹⁰¹ In saying, “I feel cold”, the wife may be performing the illocutionary act of asking her husband to hug her. The perlocutionary act is the intended effect of an utterance on the hearer. It is “what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say, surprising or misleading.”¹⁰² However, it is important to note that the intended effect of an utterance on the hearer may differ from the actual effect on the hearer. While the wife may have the intended perlocutionary effect of persuading her husband to hug her, in actuality, her utterance may result in unintentionally and undesirably persuading her husband to turn up the temperature setting on the thermostat instead. In the following sections, each of the three types of speech acts will be presented in more detail.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 108.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 108.

¹⁰² Ibid, 108.

Locutionary Act

The first type of speech act Austin identified is the locutionary act. The locutionary act is simply the act of uttering or “saying something”. However, “to say something is in the full normal sense to do something.”¹⁰³ In his study of utterances, Austin presented three kinds of acts performed which either make up a part of an utterance or are different types of utterances. These are known as 1) the phonetic act, 2) the phatic act, and 3) the rhetic act. The phonetic act is “the act of uttering certain noises.”¹⁰⁴ The phatic act is “the utterance of certain words in a certain construction.”¹⁰⁵ The rhetic act is “the performance of an act of using those vocables with a certain more-or-less definite sense and reference.”¹⁰⁶ Any combination of these acts can make an utterance when saying something. As a result, when one utters a sentence in the “normal sense”, a locutionary act is performed.

Illocutionary Act

The second type of speech act Austin identified is the illocutionary act. The illocutionary act differs from a locutionary act as the former is the “performance of an act *in* saying something” whereas the latter is the “performance of an act *of* saying something.”¹⁰⁷ In other words, illocutionary acts are what is being accomplished using the locution. Austin describes them as “utterances which have a certain (conventional) force.”¹⁰⁸ Illocutionary acts differ from

¹⁰³ Ibid, 94.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 95, 94.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 94, 95.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 95, 94.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 99.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 108.

illocutionary forces. Rather than focus on what the speaker is doing by saying something, illocutionary forces focus on the intention or function behind the act. For example, at the dinner table, a guest may perform the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Please pass the salt” to the host. The illocutionary act of the guest is to get the host to give him the saltshaker. However, the illocutionary force is the intention or function of a request. Another locutionary utterance may have the same force as a request, such as, “Please submit your application now.” But the illocutionary act in this example is different, as the speaker is getting the hearer to make the application deadline.

With this understanding of illocutionary acts and illocutionary forces, one can see that there is no such thing as a pure locutionary act. No one can merely perform a locutionary act of uttering words without performing an illocutionary act. Austin said, “To perform a locutionary act is in general, we may say, also and *eo ipso* to perform an *illocutionary* act, as I propose to call it.”¹⁰⁹ He continued by saying how it is the use of the locution that determines what kind of illocutionary act is performed. Seeing a need for a classification of illocutionary acts, Austin proposed a taxonomy.

Austin’s Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts

Austin classified illocutionary acts into five categories: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabatives, and expositives.¹¹⁰ In the following sections, each of these kinds of illocutionary acts will be briefly explained. Examples of utterances and performative verbs that fit into each category will also be presented.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 98.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 150-163.

Verdictives

According to Austin, “Verdictives consist in the delivering of a finding, official or unofficial, upon evidence or reasons as to value or fact, so far as they are distinguishable.”¹¹¹ They are capable of truth values such as truthfulness/falsity, soundness/unsoundness, or fairness/unfairness and are associated with expressions of belief, evaluation, or assessment. As the name suggests, verdictives can be seen as the giving of a verdict by a position like a judge, arbitrator, or umpire. For example, an umpire may declare to a batter, “Strike!” In doing so, the umpire is not just stating the fact that the batter missed hitting the ball, but also expressing his personal judgment that the batter deserved a strike. Performative verbs that fall under the illocutionary act of verdictives include acquit, convict, find, hold, interpret as, understand, read it as, rule, calculate, reckon, estimate, locate, place, date, measure, put it at, make it, take it, grade, rank, rate, assess, value, describe, characterize, diagnose, analyze.¹¹²

Exercitives

Exercitive illocutionary acts “are the exercising of powers, rights, or influence”¹¹³ or “the giving of a decision in favour of or against a certain course of action, or advocacy of it.”¹¹⁴ It may come in the form of a command like a parent telling a child, “Be quiet!” The parent is exercising her authority over the child by giving him a direct command and instructing him to

¹¹¹ Ibid, 152.

¹¹² Ibid, 152.

¹¹³ Ibid, 150.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 154.

take a specific action, which is to be silent. Exercitive illocutionary acts may also be in the form of a request such as “Could you please help me defrost the chicken in the freezer?” The speaker has the influence to request the recipient to help complete the action of making preparations for dinner. Exercitive illocutionary acts may even be a recommendation like, “I strongly recommend that you read the Bible.” The pastor of a congregant has the influence to recommend the action of reading the Bible. Performative verbs that fall under the illocutionary act of exercitives include appoint, degrade, demote, dismiss, excommunicate, order, command, nominate, sentence, choose, urge, proclaim, announce, recommend, and dedicate.¹¹⁵

Commissives

Commissive illocutionary acts “commit you to doing something, but include also declarations or announcements of intention, which are not promises, and also rather vague things which we may call espousals.”¹¹⁶ Someone who owes money to another may say, “I promise to return the money by next week.” In saying so, the speaker is committing himself to the future action of returning the money by a certain time frame. Aside from promising future action, commissive illocutionary acts also declare intentions. A manager working for a presidential candidate in a campaign may make a vow and say, “I vow to always support you, no matter what.” By saying this, the campaign manager is making his intentions known with a solemn commitment to provide ongoing support to the presidential candidate, regardless of the circumstances. Performative verbs that fall under the illocutionary act of commissives include

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 154-155.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 150-151.

promise, covenant, contract, undertake, plan, propose to, shall, swear, guarantee, pledge myself, vow, and consent.¹¹⁷

Behabitives

Behabitive illocutionary acts “include the notion of reaction to other people’s behaviour and fortunes and of attitudes and expressions of attitudes to someone else’s past conduct or imminent conduct.”¹¹⁸ If someone were to give a compliment, he may say, “You did an excellent job on that project.” In this example, the speaker is reacting to the receiver’s past conduct (the great success in completing the project) by expressing a positive attitude through a compliment. If someone were to make a criticism, he may say, “Your behavior at the meeting today was unprofessional.” In this example, the speaker is reacting to the receiver’s past conduct (bad behavior at the meeting) by expressing a negative attitude through criticism. Performative verbs that fall under the illocutionary act of behabitives include apologize, thank, compliment, resent, welcome, bless, toast, defy, and challenge.¹¹⁹

Expositives

According to Austin, “Expositives are used in acts of exposition involving the expounding of views, the conducting of arguments, and the clarifying usages and of references.”¹²⁰ If a witness wanted to clarify a police report, he may say, “I affirm that the figure

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 156-157.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 159.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 159.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 160.

I saw running away from the scene of the crime was a man and not a woman.” The witness’ words expound on what was said earlier to clarify the gender of the culprit. Performative verbs that fall under the illocutionary act of expositives include affirm, deny, report, remark, clarify, inform, answer, accept, and recognize.¹²¹

In Austin’s admission, his taxonomy of illocutionary acts in the categories of verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives is not perfect, satisfactory, or finalized.¹²² There are apparent issues, including illocutionary acts that can easily be classified into more than one of the categories and those that don’t fit into any of the categories. Searle found fault with Austin’s taxonomy and expanded more on its weaknesses before proposing his taxonomy of illocutionary acts. His critique and taxonomy will be presented in a later section.

Perlocutionary Act

The third type of speech act Austin identified is the perlocutionary act, which can be performed with the locutionary and illocutionary acts. Much like illocutionary acts, perlocutionary acts can have a force that locutionary acts don’t. However, the main difference between illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts is one between action and consequence.¹²³ Austin defined perlocutionary acts in the following way: “Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the

¹²¹ Ibid, 161-162.

¹²² Ibid, 149, 150, 151.

¹²³ Ibid, 110.

audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons... We shall call the performance of an act of this kind the performance of a *perlocutionary* act or *perlocution*.”¹²⁴

The perlocutionary act can be seen as the consequence of a locutionary or illocutionary act. However, the intended or desired consequence of a speaker may not be a guarantee. When an illocutionary act is performed, since it is the “performance of an act *in* saying something,”¹²⁵ it is guaranteed or made certain that the act of the speaker is intended and performed. On the other hand, the intended consequence of that action is not guaranteed as it may not be directly affected by the action. Austin adequately described the intended and unintended consequences of perlocutionary acts:

Since our acts are acts, we must always remember the distinction between producing effects or consequences which are intended are unintended; and (i) when the speaker intends to produce an effect it may nevertheless not occur, and (ii) when he does not intend to produce it or intends not to produce it it [*sic*] may nevertheless occur. To cope with complication (i) we invoke as before the distinction between attempt and achievement; to cope with complication (ii) we invoke the normal linguistic devices of disclaiming (adverbs like ‘unintentionally’ and ‘so on’) which we hold ready for personal use in all cases of doing actions.¹²⁶

For example, let’s say a store clerk chases a thief out of a store. The clerk performs the locutionary act by calling out to a bystander and uttering the words, “Stop him!” In doing so, the illocutionary act is to get the bystander to stop the thief from running away and the illocutionary force is one of a command. According to complication (i), the clerk intends to get the bystander to stop the thief, but the bystander does not respond to the command in the intended way and just stands there watching the thief run away. According to complication (ii), the clerk does not

¹²⁴ Ibid, 101.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 99.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 105-106.

intend the bystander to help the thief escape, but the bystander is an accomplice and pulls a gun on the clerk. In both complications, the desired consequence of the speaker was not successfully achieved, or a different consequence unintentionally occurred. This is why the intended consequence of the speaker's perlocutionary act is not a direct effect of an action or a guarantee. It can only be reported on by the recipient or observed from the response of the recipient. If the intended consequence of the speaker's perlocutionary act is achieved, Austin would describe it as happy or felicitous.¹²⁷

The Doctrine of Infelicities

Austin believed that the utterances of performatives are not evaluated as true or false, or right or wrong, but rather as happy or unhappy. This evaluation depends on what he terms as the doctrine of infelicities:

What these are we may hope to discover by looking at and classifying types of case in which something *goes wrong* and the act... is therefore at least to some extent a failure: the utterance is then, we may say, not indeed false but in general *unhappy*. And for this reason we call the doctrine of *the things that can be and go wrong* on the occasion of such utterances, the doctrine of the *Infelicities*.¹²⁸

Austin identified six felicity conditions a smooth and happy speech act performance must satisfy, or else it will be considered unhappy.¹²⁹ Levinson summarized Austin's felicity conditions in the following way:

- A. (i) There must be a conventional procedure having a conventional effect
- (ii) The circumstances and persons must be appropriate, as specified in the procedure
- B. The procedure must be executed (i) correctly and (ii) completely

¹²⁷ Ibid, 14-15, 25-52.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 14.

¹²⁹ Ibid, 14-15.

- C. Often, (i) the persons must have the requisite thoughts, feelings and intentions as specified in the procedure, and (ii) if consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant parties must do so.¹³⁰

These six felicity conditions are placed into three distinct categories (A, B, C). Failures of the conditions in Categories A and B are described by Austin as misfires: “the procedure which we purport to invoke is disallowed or is botched: and our act... is void or without effect.”¹³¹ One type of misfires represented in Category A is misinvocations. For example, one cannot declare, “I am now the president of the United States” and expect to be so. The condition in A (i) is not met as the correct procedure to accomplish such a task was not done and the speech act is infelicitous. While this misinvocation recognizes a wrong procedure, another type of misinvocation recognizes a misapplication of a right procedure. In another example, someone may tell an employee, “Charles, Go take out the trash!” This type of command is the right procedure to get someone to do something. However, the condition in A (ii) is not met if the speaker is merely a customer and has no authority like a boss to command the employee. In other words, the right procedure is not applied correctly as the speaker is not Charles’ boss. It is possible that this same condition may not be met even if the speaker is the boss and it is discovered that the employee he commanded is not named Charles. This is also a misapplication of the right procedure, making the speech act infelicitous.

Aside from misinvocations, the second type of misfires is represented in Category B as misexecutions. Misexecutions are those in which “the purported act is *vitiated* by a flaw or hitch

¹³⁰ Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 229.

¹³¹ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 16.

in the conduct of the ceremony.”¹³² A flaw is defined by the incorrect execution of the procedure as seen in condition B (i). For example, a baptism according to the protestant Christian tradition must be conducted with the conventionally correct words. If a pastor baptizing a congregant speaks, “I now baptize you in the name of Allah”, not only would it be a flaw, but it would also be heretical and render the baptism invalid. A hitch is defined by the incompleteness of the procedure as seen in condition B (ii). For example, in the Southern Baptist tradition, a baptism must be conducted by full immersion. If the pastor baptizing a congregant noticed his head did not make it completely underwater, some would say that the baptism is incomplete and would redo it. Condition B (ii) applies to not only the speaker, but also the recipient as well since the recipient also has a role in executing the procedure completely. From the last example, the reason why the congregant’s head may not have been completely immersed underwater is because he fought being pushed down as he can’t swim and is afraid of the water.

Finally, failures of the conditions in Category C are known as abuses: “infelicitous act as ‘professed’ or ‘hollow’ rather than ‘purported’ or ‘empty’, and as not implemented or not consummated.”¹³³ Condition C (i) can also be known as the sincerity condition. For example, if a speaker makes a promise to do something, he must be sincere and have the intention to keep the promise. A violation of condition C (i) results in an infelicitous speech act as the act is professed, but insincere. However, sincerity is not the only condition. The actual action of what is promised by the speaker must be done for the speech act to be felicitous. Not following the professed promise with the consequent conduct, regardless of sincerity, is a violation of condition C (ii). However, condition C (ii) also applies to the hearer. Assuming that all the

¹³² Ibid, 17.

¹³³ Ibid, 16.

other five conditions are met, the hearer also needs to act with the consequent conduct accordingly for the speech act to be felicitous. This perspective of needing the right response from the hearer as a condition for felicity is consistent with Austin's perspective of needing the recipient to achieve the intended consequence of the speaker's perlocutionary act.¹³⁴

John Searle

John Searle was a student of J.L. Austin who continued to develop the initial work Austin did with Speech Act Theory after his death. One of the biggest contributions he made was to propose a new way to categorize illocutionary acts. In this section, weaknesses of Austin's taxonomy of illocutionary acts will be presented. This will be followed by the dimensions of variations for illocutionary acts that Searle will use to present his taxonomy of illocutionary acts. Finally, some conclusions about illocutionary acts will be drawn from Searle's approach.

Weaknesses of Austin's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts

In the previous section, Austin's taxonomy of illocutionary acts was presented. However, Searle pointed out some inadequacies and weaknesses with it.¹³⁵ These weaknesses are based on Searle's observation that Austin's taxonomy "are not classifications of illocutionary acts but of English illocutionary verbs."¹³⁶ Austin failed to differentiate between illocutionary acts and illocutionary verbs. According to Searle, "Illocutions [or illocutionary acts] are a part of language as opposed to particular languages. Illocutionary verbs are always part of a particular

¹³⁴ Kent Bach and Robert M. Harnish, *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1982), 117.

¹³⁵ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 8-12.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 9.

language.”¹³⁷ Austin’s taxonomy is based on illocutionary verbs that only apply to the English language. Furthermore, there is the confusion that two different illocutionary verbs must result in two different types of illocutionary acts. However, two different illocutionary verbs can be categorized as the same illocutionary act, depending on the language. In other words, there needs to be a taxonomy defining illocutionary acts that would apply generally to all languages since “different basic illocutionary types are realized in the syntax of a natural language.”¹³⁸

Based on this observation, Searle identified six weaknesses of Austin’s taxonomy, summarized in the following way:

In sum, there are (at least) six related difficulties with Austin's taxonomy; in ascending order of importance: there is a persistent confusion between verbs and acts, not all the verbs are illocutionary verbs, there is too much overlap of the categories, too much heterogeneity within the categories, many of the verbs listed in the categories don't satisfy the definition given for the category and, most important, there is no consistent principle of classification.¹³⁹

The last and most important weakness is the need for a standard by which to consistently classify illocutionary acts other than according to one particular language’s illocutionary verbs. It is also interesting to note that even Austin himself said, “I am not putting any of this forward as in the very least definitive.”¹⁴⁰ This shows that he did not see his taxonomy of illocutionary acts as adequate. Furthermore, he is “far from equally happy about all of them”¹⁴¹ and only saw them as “some general preliminary classification.”¹⁴² If Austin had not passed away due to lung cancer

¹³⁷ Ibid, 2.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 1.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 11-12.

¹⁴⁰ J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 151.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 150.

¹⁴² Ibid, 149.

in 1960, he probably would have developed a more definitive classification that he would be satisfied with. As a result of these considerations, Searle sought to propose a new taxonomy of illocutionary acts with a consistent principle of classification.

Dimensions of Variations for Illocutionary Acts

Before proposing a new taxonomy, Searle identified and described twelve dimensions of variations to differentiate illocutionary acts from one another:

- 1) "Differences in the point (or purpose) of the (type of) act"
- 2) "Differences in the direction of fit between words and world"
- 3) "Differences in expressed psychological states"
- 4) "Differences in the force or strength with which the illocutionary point is presented"
- 5) "Differences in the status or position of the speaker and hearer as these bear on the illocutionary force of the utterance"
- 6) "Differences in the way the utterance relates to the interests of the speaker and the hearer"
- 7) "Difference in relations to the rest of the discourse"
- 8) "Differences in propositional content that are determined by illocutionary force-indicating devices"
- 9) "Differences between those acts that must always be speech acts, and those that can be, but need not be performed as speech acts"
- 10) "Differences between those act that require extra-linguistic institutions for their performance and those that do not"
- 11) "Differences between those acts where the corresponding illocutionary verb has a performative use and those where it does not"
- 12) "Differences in the style of performance of the illocutionary act"¹⁴³

From these twelve dimensions of variations, Searle determined that the first three are the most important and built his proposed taxonomy of illocutionary acts around them.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 2-8.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

Illocutionary Point

The first important dimension to build Searle's taxonomy is the illocutionary point. "The illocutionary point or purpose of a description is that it is a representation (true or false, accurate or inaccurate) of how something is."¹⁴⁵ It could be to get a hearer to do something or to make a promise as a speaker. An illocutionary point differs from an illocutionary force because it is a general category as an umbrella that covers various illocutionary forces. Searle gave an example of how requests and commands both have the same illocutionary point of attempting to get a hearer to do something. However, requests and commands are both different illocutionary forces that result from several elements, even though they have the same point.¹⁴⁶ Searle's proposed taxonomy of illocutionary acts will need to differentiate the illocutionary point.

Direction of Fit

The second important dimension to build Searle's taxonomy is the direction of fit between words and the world. This dimension describes the relationship between the content of speech and the reality of the world. Searle said, "Some illocutions have as part of their illocutionary point to get the words (more strictly, their propositional content) to match the world, others to get the world to match the words."¹⁴⁷ The difference between these two is called a direction of fit. For example, speech such as statements, descriptions, assertions, and explanations have a *word-to-world* direction of fit (represented by the symbol ↓) as the words

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 2.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 3.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 3.

seek to match the reality of what is in the world. On the other hand, speech such as requests, commands, vows, and promises have a *world-to-word* direction of fit (represented by the symbol \uparrow) as the words seek to change the reality of what is in the world to match itself.¹⁴⁸ Searle's proposed taxonomy of illocutionary acts will need to differentiate the direction of fit.¹⁴⁹

Sincerity Condition

The third important dimension Searle identified to build his taxonomy is the sincerity condition or differences in expressed psychological states. Searle said, "In general, in the performance of any illocutionary act with a propositional content, the speaker expresses some attitude, state, etc., to that propositional content."¹⁵⁰ For example, one may make a promise and may have the intention to keep that promise. However, it is also possible that one may not have the intention to keep that promise. This psychological state about the performance of the illocutionary act is known as the sincerity condition.¹⁵¹ Searle's proposed taxonomy of illocutionary acts will need to differentiate the sincerity condition. He symbolized the expressed psychological states in the following way: "B for believe, W for want, and I for intend, etc."¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 4.

¹⁴⁹ There are two other possible directions of fit known as double direction and empty direction that Searle identifies to describe the declaration and expressive categories of illocutionary acts respectively in his taxonomy. These two directions of fit will be described in the later sections about these categories.

¹⁵⁰ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 4.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 5. Searle also analyzed the *sincerity condition* of illocutionary acts in chapter 3 of John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

¹⁵² Ibid, 5.

Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts

Due to the weaknesses of Austin's taxonomy of illocutionary acts, Searle proposed his categories based on the three important dimensions of variations for differentiating illocutionary acts presented earlier. Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts includes five different categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations.¹⁵³ In the following sections, each of these five categories will be explained by presenting their illocutionary point and the symbolism that features their direction of fit and sincerity condition. This symbolism is based on the relationship between the illocutionary force and its propositional content **F(p)** in which (**F**) is the illocutionary force and (**p**) is the propositional content.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, Searle's five categories in this taxonomy will also be compared to Austin's categories.

Assertive Illocutionary Acts

The assertive illocutionary acts "commit the speaker... to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition."¹⁵⁵ This means that the utterances in this classification can be assessed by whether it is true or false. Its symbolism is represented by $\vdash \downarrow \mathbf{B(p)}$.

Assertive illocutionary acts (\vdash) have *words-to-world* direction of fit (\downarrow) in which the sincerity condition (**B**) is belief in the propositional content (**p**). This is a *words-to-world* direction of fit because when the speaker expresses the belief (**B**) in the propositional content (**p**) (using words),

¹⁵³ Ibid, 10-16. It should be noted that in John R. Searle, "A Classification of Illocutionary Acts," *Language in Society* 5, no. 1 (1976): 1-23, Searle identified the first category of illocutionary act as "representatives". Upon publication in *Expression and Meaning*, it is unclear why he renamed this category as "assertives".

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 1.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 12.

there is a claim that it matches reality (what is in the world). Illocutionary verbs that may fall under this classification include stating, claiming, hypothesizing, describing, telling, insisting, suggesting, asserting, or swearing that something is believed to be true by the speaker or corresponds with reality. For example, by saying, “The sky is very cloudy”, the speaker believes that this statement is true. According to Searle, assertive illocutionary acts “will contain most of Austin’s expositives and many of his verdictives as well for the... reason that they all have the same illocutionary point and differ only in other features of illocutionary force.”¹⁵⁶ One can begin to see how Searle’s taxonomy is better than Austin’s.

Directive Illocutionary Acts

The directive illocutionary acts “are attempts... by the speaker to get the hearer to do something.”¹⁵⁷ Its symbolism is represented by ! ↑ **W (H does A)**. Directive illocutionary acts (!) have a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) in which the sincerity condition (**W**) is want (or wish or desire). “The propositional content is always that the hearer **H** does some future action **A**.”¹⁵⁸ This is a *world-to-words* direction of fit because when the hearer (**H**) does some future action (**A**) (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched the will of the speaker (expressed by words). For example, a boss may say to an employee, “Finish the report by the end of the day.” In doing so, the boss wants the employee to do this future action of finishing the report by commanding him to do so. Illocutionary verbs that may fall under this classification of directives include asking, ordering, commanding, requesting, begging, pleading, praying,

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 13.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 13.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 14.

entreating, inviting, permitting, and advising. According to Searle, some of Austin's habitives verbs (daring, defying, challenging) and many of his exercitives may be classified as Searle's directive illocutionary acts.¹⁵⁹

Commissive Illocutionary Acts

The commissive illocutionary acts "are those... whose point is to commit the speaker... to some future course of action."¹⁶⁰ Its symbolism is represented by **C ↑ I (S does A)**. Commissive illocutionary acts (**C**) have a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑), in which the sincerity condition (**I**) is intention. "The propositional content is always that the speaker **S** does some future action **A**."¹⁶¹ This is a *world-to-words* direction of fit because when the speaker (**S**) does some future action (**A**) (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched the commitment of the speaker (expressed by words). For example, a husband may say to his wife, "I promise to take you on a shopping spree." In doing so, the husband is intentionally committing himself to the future action of taking his wife on a shopping spree. Illocutionary verbs that may fall under this classification of commissives include promising, threatening, covenanting, contracting, undertaking, binding, planning, guaranteeing, agreeing, consenting, and vowing to do or to refrain from doing something. Searle praised Austin's definition of commissives as unexceptionable but would not include certain verbs including shall, intend, or favor as commissives.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 14.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 14.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 14.

¹⁶² Ibid, 14.

Expressive Illocutionary Acts

The expressive illocutionary acts “express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content.”¹⁶³ In other words, they express the mental state of the speaker about an event that is presumed to be true. Its symbolism is represented by **E Ø (P) (S/H + property)**. Expressive illocutionary acts (**E**) do not have a direction of fit (**Ø**) as the words uttered have nothing to do with matching the reality of what is in the world or seeking to change the reality of what is in the world to match itself. (**P**) represents the different possible psychological states expressed that would ascribe a relevant property to either the speaker (**S**) or the hearer (**H**).

For example, someone may express, “I congratulate you on winning the raffle.” In this case, the expression of congratulating (**P**) is directed to the hearer (**H**) on the relevancy of winning the raffle (**property**). It can also be directed to the speaker. For example, “I compliment myself on a job well done.” The expression of complimenting (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) on the relevancy of winning the raffle (**property**). The relevancy of the property to the speaker or hearer is important as it would be ignorant or presumptuous to congratulate a hearer for forming the gravitational theory when in fact he or she did not. Illocutionary verbs that may fall into this classification of expressives include congratulating, thanking, deploring, condoling, welcoming, and apologizing.

¹⁶³ Ibid, 15.

Declaration Illocutionary Acts

The declaration illocutionary acts are those that “bring about some alteration in the status or condition of the referred to object or objects solely in virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed.”¹⁶⁴ For example, a priest may declare, “I now pronounce you husband and wife”, changing the status of the couple to married. A boss may declare, “You’re fired”, changing the employment status of a worker to unemployed. The symbolism of declaration illocutionary acts is represented by $\mathbf{D} \updownarrow \emptyset (\mathbf{P})$. Declaration illocutionary acts (\mathbf{D}) have double direction of fit (\updownarrow), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This means that the words spoken seek to change the reality of what is in the world, but not in the same way as assertives (by describing the current state of reality) nor directives or commissives (by getting the hearer or speaker to perform a future action). At the same time, the words spoken do not seek to match the reality of what is in the world.¹⁶⁵ There is no sincerity condition (\emptyset) and the proposition is (\mathbf{P}). Illocutionary verbs that may fall into this classification of declaration include blessing, firing, resigning, baptizing, sentencing, excommunicating, and appointing.

Conclusions about Illocutionary Acts

From how Searle classified illocutionary acts in his taxonomy, it can be concluded that there are a limited number of basic things that can be accomplished with language, in contrast to Ludwig Wittgenstein’s claims. Wittgenstein was an Austrian philosopher and considered to be one of the greatest in the 20th century, as he specialized in logic, the philosophy of mathematics,

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 17.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 19.

the philosophy of the mind, and the philosophy of language. According to Wittgenstein, the use of language can be illustrated in a concept he called language games.¹⁶⁶ He believed that language does not have a fixed and universal system of meaning that comes from the mere definitions of words and sentences. Rather, meaning comes from the context of the use of language, or interconnected activities, that each have its own distinct set of rules, much like games. These interconnected activities are what Wittgenstein described as language games. He claimed that there is a countless number of language games resulting in infinite possible meanings.¹⁶⁷ As a result, Wittgenstein and others such as Jacques Derrida, Richard Rorty, Stanley Fish, Paul Ricoeur, and Michael Foucault contributed to a postmodern and deconstructionist hermeneutics in which authorial intent is questioned and readers are just subjective entities who can impose any meaning or interpretation into the text.¹⁶⁸

Searle disagreed with Wittgenstein and the postmodern deconstructionists who say that there is “an infinite or indefinite number of language games or uses of language.”¹⁶⁹ Instead, he concluded that there is a limitation or a fixed set of how language is used, expressed in illocutionary acts:

If we adopt illocutionary point as the basic notion on which to classify uses of language, then there are a rather limited number of basic things we do with language: we tell people how things are, we try to get them to do things, we commit ourselves to doing things, we express our feelings and attitudes and we bring about changes through our utterances.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, ed. Joachim Schulte, 4th Ed. (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K. ; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 7.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁶⁸ For more about the rise of and opposition against postmodern and deconstructionist hermeneutics, see Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*

¹⁶⁹ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 29.

In saying that there are a limited number of basic things done with language, Searle is suggesting that there is original meaning and intention from the author or speaker that can be discovered through illocutionary acts. This is reflected in his proposed taxonomy.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from illocutionary acts is the fact that they can be performed simultaneously. After presenting the limited number of basic things done with language, Searle did not put a limit on how they are done. He said, “Often we do more than one of these [illocutionary acts] at once in the same utterance.”¹⁷¹ The words in one utterance of speech can accomplish multiple illocutionary acts at the same time. For example, by saying, “Let’s move that couch”, the speaker may be commanding the hearer to help accomplish that task (directive) and also committing himself to accomplish that task (commissive) at the same time. As the research in this dissertation seeks to discover the illocutionary acts performed by God the Father when He speaks in the Genesis creation narrative, it will take into account that He can perform multiple illocutionary acts simultaneously.

Donald D. Evans

Donald D. Evans was a professor in philosophy of religion who taught at McGill University and Victoria College at the University of Toronto. He was also an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. *The Logic of Self-Involvement* is one of his earliest works that explored the meaning of religion through language. It is a significant book because in it, Evans was the first person to apply Speech Act Theory to biblical interpretation.¹⁷² He wrote this book

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 29.

¹⁷² Briggs, *Words in Action*, 4.

in response to a lack of a theory of language in the theology of certain biblical scholars, such as Rudolph Bultmann, who do not “provide an adequate account of how any language can involve a speaker logically in something more than a mere assent to a fact.”¹⁷³ Evans saw God’s Word in Scripture as more than just propositional content and saw the need for a new logic in modern theology:

Older logics deal with propositions (statements, assertions); that is, they deal with relations between propositions and relations between terms of *non-propositional* language, both in its account of divine revelation (God’s ‘word’ to man) and in its account of human religious language (man’s word to God). In each case the language or ‘word’ is not (or is not merely) propositional; it is primarily a *self-involving activity*, divine or human. God does not (or does not merely) provide supernatural information concerning Himself, expressed in flat statements of fact; He ‘addresses’ man in an ‘event’ or ‘deed’ which commits Him to man and which expresses His inner Self.¹⁷⁴

Part one of Evan’s book focused on the self-involvement of everyday language and religious language. By self-involvement, Evans means one’s inclusion of self in “practical commitments, attitudes, and feelings” through his or her speech uttered.¹⁷⁵ For example, by saying “I promise to return this book tomorrow”, one is involving himself or herself in a commitment by using language. In particular, Evans described the self-involvement of God’s words in Scripture and of humans’ words as religious language in response to Scripture.

As a student of J.L. Austin, Evans made his case for the self-involvement of language with Austin’s locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary speech acts and believed they have an application to biblical hermeneutics. Instead of using Austin’s terminology, he adopted the phrase “performatives”. Based on a slightly modified version of Austin’s classification of

¹⁷³ Evans, *The Logic of Self-Involvement*, 11.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 14.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 11.

illocutionary acts, Evans divided performatives into five classes: constatives, commissives, exercitives, behabitives, and verdictives.¹⁷⁶ He used these classes to present and analyze how one would involve the self in the use of performative language such as implying, committing, and entailing.¹⁷⁷ Other uses of language covered include causing, expressing feelings, and expressing attitude.¹⁷⁸

God's Self-Involvement in Creation

After explaining the self-involvement of language, in part two, Evans applied the tools from part 1 to biblical language. As an example, he applied them to the biblical language about God as Creator to show the self-involving quality of this concept. Evans sees that God's use of speech in creation and humans' use of speech about God as Creator are performative.¹⁷⁹ Although he applied concepts of Speech Act Theory, Evans did not exegetically examine every one of God's speeches in Genesis 1. Rather, he used the conception of Israel's creation as a parallel to the world's creation¹⁸⁰ to show that God's speech in creation can establish the subordinate status and role of the creature (Exercitive force), determine the value of the creature (Verdictive force), and commit Himself to maintain the order of creation (Commissive force).¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 38. See footnote 1 on this page for the reason why Evans replaced Austin's exercitives class with constatives. Austin's original classification of illocutionary acts are described in Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 150-163.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 46-52. (implying). Ibid, 52-54 (committing). Ibid, 59-66 (entailing). A summary of the use of the performative in a language map may be found in 74-75.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 68-74 (causing). Ibid, 79-114 (expressing feelings). Ibid, 115-141 (expressing attitude).

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 27.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 145-151

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 157, 158.

This is how God expressed His self-involvement in creation through speech. Here, Evans used Austin's classification of illocutionary acts as Searle's taxonomy had not been developed until 1962.

God's Self-Involvement through Christ

Furthermore, Evans did not apply a Trinitarian approach of Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 since he focused on the self-involving nature of Yahweh, or God the Father, and His speech in creation instead of seeing Christ or the Holy Spirit as actors of the speech act. In other words, the first speech conversation plane is not in view.¹⁸² Although Evans acknowledged Christ's involvement as the creative word and causal instrument of God as described in the New Testament, Evans did not explain how Christ was directly involved in original Creation. Rather, he showed God the Father's self-involvement through Christ as the Word in new Creation within man since Christ is the "*observable expression* of God's inner glory... by which men are enabled to 'know' this glory."¹⁸³ The historical Christ was an agent of miraculous power who had healed the sick, casted out demons, calmed the sea, and rose from the dead. Those in the early church who received the word also received the right to become children of God (John 1:12) as forgiven sinners in a new covenant.¹⁸⁴ This new status involved a "new self-evaluation based on the love of God for man as revealed in Jesus."¹⁸⁵ God was accomplishing this in His self-involvement through Christ.

¹⁸² The speech conversation planes were described in Chapter 1 when the methodology was presented in the section entitled, "Speech Conversation Planes".

¹⁸³ Ibid, 205.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 166.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 166.

Evans made a parallel between the causal power of Christ as the Word in new Creation with that of the one behind original Creation:

The idea of Jesus as the ‘Word’ of God is of special logical interest in that His life, passion, resurrection and ascension could be interpreted as actions which have a ‘performative force’ and ‘causal power’ like words. It is as if God in the deeds of Jesus, *said*, ‘I hereby adopt you as sons and decree that you are brothers’; and *said*, ‘Become like this man Jesus’. In each case the performative and causal efficacy of the ‘utterance’ depends on the response of men; it depends on whether men acknowledge the new institutional relation and word of command, and whether men allow themselves to be influenced by divine power. We should note that here the causal power of Jesus as the ‘Word’ is analogous to human moral influence, whereas in the case of world-Creation, the causal power of Jesus as the ‘Word’ is apparently analogous to human magic.¹⁸⁶

By magic, Evans is referring to how God’s words in creation have causal power as “there is no intelligent hearer who understands the words and cooperates freely, yet in which the *meanings* of the words are important.”¹⁸⁷ In his view, Christ does not hear or respond to God’s words in original Creation, but yet He is somehow involved in creation as God’s creative word and causal instrument. Evans did not show or explain how.

God’s Self-Involvement through the Holy Spirit

Evans saw the role of the Holy Spirit in creation in a similar way as to the role of Christ. While the Holy Spirit is not associated with being the Word, “creation by the spirit meant Creation by God’s ‘breath’.”¹⁸⁸ This is seen in two aspects. First, the Holy Spirit as the breath of God is involved in the spoken word of creation. Second, He is also the giving of life in

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 167.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 73-74.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 168.

creation.¹⁸⁹ Through the Holy Spirit as breath, God expressed His self-involvement not only in original Creation, but also in new Creation as well. The Holy Spirit, “though not associated directly with cosmic Creation, is the instrument in the creation of new men in a new community with a new power to love.”¹⁹⁰ Much like Christ as the creative Word, the Holy Spirit as the breath has causal power that results in personal influence in man, but it “requires the free response of agents who are influenced.”¹⁹¹ As God the Father speaks through His creative Word and breath (locutionary act), He shows His intention and self-involvement (illocutionary act), and the result is dependent on the response of man (perlocutionary act).

Concluding Observations

Through his work in *The Logic of Self-Involvement*, Evans made a great contribution to biblical interpretation as he was the first to apply Speech Act Theory to it and influenced others to contribute and develop it, including his student, Anthony C. Thiselton. There are areas for expansion and improvement as Evans only used Austin’s taxonomy of illocutionary acts and was mainly interested in implementing Speech Act Theory “toward issues relating to the philosophy of religion and not necessarily to textual or narrative analysis.”¹⁹² This is apparent in his application of Speech Act Theory to creation as an example. Evans focused on how Speech Act Theory addressed the self-involving nature of what God the Father accomplished with His speech in creation as opposed to how God created with His speech. Subsequently, a Trinitarian

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 168-169.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 169. Evans also referenced Rom. 5:5 and Gal. 5:22 to support this statement.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 170.

¹⁹² White, “The Value of Speech Act Theory for Old Testament Hermeneutics”, 55.

approach was not taken, at least on the first speech conversation plane. The persons of the Holy Trinity were not seen as actors in speech conversation resulting in the direct act of creation.

Evans also addressed how humans can respond to Scripture with speech or religious language that expresses self-involvement. For example, “to say, ‘God is my Creator’ in the biblical context is to acknowledge Him as Guarantor of one’s existence. Both the divine Creator’s word of promise and the correlative human word of acknowledgement are performative.”¹⁹³ Noticing this focus on human religious speech and language as a response, Minton said, “Evans is not interested in ‘the Bible’ as a text or a series of texts as all. Instead, he is here interested, in an almost Searlean sense, in discrete speech acts within Scripture that are appropriated into spoken discourse by the reader, and which have infeasible theological implications.”¹⁹⁴ Due to Evan’s focus on the philosophy of religion, and the self-involvement of God and man through language, he does not offer how to use Speech Act Theory in biblical exegesis. Starting in the next chapter, this dissertation will apply Speech Act Theory to the Genesis account of creation using an updated taxonomy of illocutionary acts and a Trinitarian approach as an exegetical method to discover how God created with His speech.

Kevin J. Vanhoozer

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¹⁹³ Evans, *The Logic of Self-Involvement*, 158.

¹⁹⁴ Bernard Minton, “What Not to Do with Words: Uses of Speech Act Theory in Biblical Hermeneutics” (Sheffield, UK, The University of Sheffield, 2014), 74.

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Vanhoozer is one of the most recent scholars who contributed to Speech Act Theory in biblical interpretation by proposing his Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory as a practical interpretive framework. This was in response to the aspects of postmodernity that resulted in deconstruction hermeneutics, neo-pragmatism, and reader response approaches that affected the Christian reading of Scripture and questioned the inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture.

In this section, the background behind postmodernity and deconstructionism will be presented. This will be followed by the explanation of Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory as his response to postmodernity and deconstructionism. Next, it will discuss Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach to Scripture behind his Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory. Finally, it will respond to the accusation that Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach and Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory are associated with conventionalism.

Postmodernity and Deconstruction

In his book, *Is there a Meaning in this Text?*, Vanhoozer sought to critique aspects of postmodernity and deconstruction that affect textual and biblical interpretation. In the introduction of this book, Vanhoozer began with a survey on how philosophers from Plato to the modern day, handled and understood the idea of meaning. Plato presented three different positions on meaning. The first possibility, supported by Hermogenes, is that words only have conventional meanings and can be changed by the user.¹⁹⁵ The second possibility, supported by Cratylus, is that the meaning of a thing is found perfectly expressed in a name. This is an all-or-

¹⁹⁵ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 17.

nothing position which encapsulates “the modern emphasis on meaning-as-reference and the postmodern emphasis on the indeterminacy of meaning.”¹⁹⁶ Plato personally held the same position at *Cratylus*. The third possibility, supported by Socrates, is that language is both conventional and natural. According to the imitation theory, words resemble things to help define the thing.¹⁹⁷ These three possibilities of meaning, represent the origins of many of the modern and postmodern theories of meaning.

In the next part of the introduction, Vanhoozer identified Jacques Derrida as the source who instigated the deconstruction of meaning into the hermeneutics of Scripture.¹⁹⁸ He presented some of his beliefs and assumptions which include the limitation of interpreters by their pre-understandings and the inability to have absolute truth that is an illusionary construct. Throughout the book, Vanhoozer also interacted with others, including Richard Rorty, Stanley Fish, and Michael Foucault whom he either defined as an “undoer” (deconstructionist)¹⁹⁹ or a “user” (neo-pragmatist)²⁰⁰ Vanhoozer combatted the beliefs of these scholars and other deconstructionists and neo-pragmatists by responding to their views on hermeneutics.

Rather than just outright reject deconstructionism, neo-pragmaticism, and reader response approaches, in part one of the book, Vanhoozer analyzed these in three areas of hermeneutics: the author, the text, and the reader. Traditional hermeneutics are undone or deconstructed in these three areas. Chapter 2 speaks of the death of the author. Derrida contributed to the death

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 17.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, 17-18.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, 20.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 49.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 54.

of the author by first attacking authorial intent. He admitted that there may exist authorial intent, but like Fish questioned whether it can be labeled the meaning of the text as it would be oppressive or authoritarian.²⁰¹ In other words, any interpretation can have valid meaning. This did not kill the author, but only contributed to it. The death of the author was caused by Michael Foucault, who argued that the author is not autonomous or independent since the author's language and thought are shaped by the vocabulary of the era, culture or society he or she is a part of.²⁰² Foucault also argued that even if there was an authorial intention, it would be impossible to know it.

Chapter 3 speaks of the death of the text, caused by the deconstructionists who were students of Wittgenstein. Based on Derrida's ideas, language is not a neutral vehicle to determine ideas as it determines what thoughts are thinkable and how one sees the world. Language is diverse and lies in the rules of its use in a real-life situation.²⁰³ Another cause for the death of the text is the concept of intertextuality, presented by Ricoeur as metaphorical interpretation. Each text has its context. However, by putting two texts in dialogue with one another or reading one text in light of the other, the context is changed and affects the interpretation of meaning.²⁰⁴ While intertextuality is practiced by Christians in interpreting different texts within the same canon, the "undoers" would argue for textual free play and wonder who has the authority to say that certain texts can only be compared within the same

²⁰¹ Ibid, 57.

²⁰² Ibid, 70.

²⁰³ Ibid, 208.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, 132.

canon. With no constraining context, the text of the *Gospel of Mark* can be compared with the text of *Winnie the Pooh*.²⁰⁵ This postmodern concept leads to the death of the text.

Chapter 4 speaks of the death of the reader. Richard Rorty killed the reader by following in the footsteps of Derrida. He argues that there is no such thing as seeing a text objectively as readers are merely subjective entities. In other words, “both our descriptions and evaluations of texts are governed by certain interests.”²⁰⁶ If there is no objectivity, postmodernism argues that there is a “new morality” of knowledge. Vanhoozer summarized this postmodern ethic as “The moral reader is the one who refuses to believe in fixed meanings and final solutions.”²⁰⁷

Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory

After describing the “undoing” or deaths of the author, text, and reader in postmodern deconstruction hermeneutics, Vanhoozer presented a positive response by reconstructing or resurrecting the author, text, and reader. He defended authorial intent, the idea that meaning can be carried neutrally through language in a text, and the possibility for readers to be objective.²⁰⁸ Vanhoozer refused to let the postmodern language theory dictate and set the agenda for his reconstruction response. Instead of debating with Derrida and rebutting all the points of deconstructionism, he presented his approach by laying it on the foundation of God and His transcendence.²⁰⁹ In the beginning of the book, Vanhoozer emphasized that literary theory relies

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 133.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 158.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 183.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 37-196. Vanhoozer describes the death or the undoing of the author, text, and reader of deconstructionism in this second part of his book.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 119.

on philosophical assumptions and theological assumptions.²¹⁰ God is the ultimate source of meaning. This is why to present his reconstructed hermeneutical approach, Vanhoozer began with God in His trinitarian nature. Vanhoozer said, “One’s view of God and one’s view of Scripture are mutually inclusive.”²¹¹ In other words, one’s theological views about God will affect how they theologically view and interpret Scripture.

Since Vanhoozer saw the Trinitarian God as “first and foremost a communicative agent, one who relates to humankind through words and the Word”, God speaks with meaning and intention.²¹² There are a few points that can be drawn and explained from this statement. First, Vanhoozer defined a communicative agent as one who “has the ability to set a language system in motion and so bring about an act of discourse.”²¹³ It is important to note that the Trinitarian God can communicate using the words of human language, as words have the potential for meaning. The philosopher, William Alston said, “An expression having a certain meaning consists in its being usable to play a certain role (to do certain things) in communication.”²¹⁴ This shows that language or words can be a vehicle by which communication is performed. The Holy Scripture, inspired by God, and written in human language, is appropriate and capable of communicating to human beings meaning, intention, and purpose (2 Tim. 3:16).

²¹⁰ Ibid, 25.

²¹¹ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *First Theology: God, Scripture & Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2002), 30.

²¹² Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 456.

²¹³ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 19.

²¹⁴ William P. Alston, *Illocutionary Acts and Sentence Meaning*, 1st Ed. (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2000), 154.

Second, in addition to communicating through human words, the Trinitarian God also communicates through the Word, or Christ the Son (John 1:1-3). How does God communicate through Christ the Son? This question can be answered alongside the question of what does God communicate? According to Vanhoozer, “God communicates himself – Father, Son, and Spirit – to others. In terms of communication theory: the triune God is communicative agent (Father/author), communicative action (Son/Word), and communicative result (Spirit/power of reception).”²¹⁵ There is an association of each member of the Holy Trinity, including Christ the Son, with a certain role in accomplishing the act of communicating to people through Scripture. This resulted in Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory, in which the triadic formula of Austin’s speech acts is presented as a Trinitarian formula for divine communicative action. Vanhoozer described his Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory in the following way:

Speech act theory serves as handmaiden to a trinitarian theology of communication. If the Father is the locutor, the Son is his preeminent illocution. Christ is God’s definitive Word, the substantive content of his message. And the Holy Spirit—the condition and power of receiving the sender’s message—is God the perlocutor, the reason that his words do not return to him empty (Isa. 55:11). The triune God is therefore the epitome of communicative agency: the speech agent who utters, embodies, and keeps his Word.²¹⁶

Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory correlates God the Father with performing the locutionary act as the Utterer and Begetter of words from Scripture. God the Son corresponds to the illocutionary act of the Speaker (God the Father) and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood. Finally, God the Holy Spirit corresponds to the perlocutionary act, convicts the hearer/reader of the illocutionary intention, and calls for an

²¹⁵ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 5.

²¹⁶ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

appropriate response. More about how the persons of the Holy Trinity correlate with each of the respective types of speech acts will be explained in the subsequent sections.

The Trinity should not be seen as an *ad hoc* analogy for communication as “an ontological Trinity alone would not allow the distinction between the three acts of a speech act.”²¹⁷ This is why Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory is based on a theological understanding of communication relating to what Vanhoozer calls the economic Trinity. “The economic Trinity is the technical term for the way in which the triune God progressively reveals himself in history. The economic Trinity is the name for God in communicative (and self-communicative) action.”²¹⁸ This perspective of the Trinity focuses on two relationships. The first relationship is one between each person of the Holy Trinity. Vanhoozer believes that “what constitutes the identity of Father, Son, and Spirit is not merely the manner of origin (e.g., begetting, breathing) but the sum total of their multifarious relations.”²¹⁹ Within this relationship is also an interdependence upon one another to fulfill the roles required for communication and revelation to humans. This relationship between the Holy Trinity and humans is the second one in focus from the perspective of the economic Trinity.

The relationship within the Holy Trinity is covenantal and is also reflected in the covenantal nature of all discourse between speaker and hearer, or author and reader. Vanhoozer sees that “all discourse is a form of interpersonal, communicative – which is to say, covenantal –

²¹⁷ Stone, “Triadic to Trinitarian”, 68. Stone lists out some of Vanhoozer’s admission of tensions and disagreements between the Trinity and Speech Act Theory if the Trinity is seen as an analogy for communication.

²¹⁸ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts,” 10.

²¹⁹ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “Does the Trinity Belong in a Theology of Religions? On Angling in the Rubicon and the ‘Identity’ of God,” in *The Trinity in a Pluralistic Age: Theological Essays on Culture and Religion*, ed. Kevin J Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1997), 66.

action.”²²⁰ Just as the persons of the Holy Trinity are in covenantal relationship with one another through communicative action, the Holy Trinity is also in covenantal relationship with humans through the way He reveals Himself in history with communicative action. Likewise, when humans are in discourse with one another, they are also in covenantal relationship with one another through communicative action. Stone observed that “Vanhoozer is working backward, using Speech Act Theory to support the economic nature of the Trinity.”²²¹ This makes sense as the way God designed the language humans use reflects the way He communicates.

Furthermore, the point that the Trinity should not be seen as an analogy for communication is reiterated. According to Vanhoozer, “The doctrine of the Trinity... stands not as an analogy but as a paradigm to human communication.”²²² Later, he continued by explaining the nature and origin behind the way humans communicate. “Created in the image of God, humans have been given the ‘dignity of communicative agency’. Humans are communicative agents in covenantal relation, creatures able to enter into dialogical relations with others and, to a certain extent, with the world.”²²³ In other words, since humans are created in the image of God, they are also capable of communicative action through language and are in covenant with one another when they discourse. As humans reflect the way God communicates, it is no surprise that Speech Act Theory can defend the economic Trinity as suggested in Vanhoozer’s model: God the Father corresponds to the locutionary act, God the Son corresponds to the illocutionary act, and God the Spirit corresponds to the perlocutionary act.

²²⁰ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 18.

²²¹ Stone, “Triadic to Trinitarian”, 68.

²²² Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 10.

²²³ Ibid, 18-19.

God the Father and the Locutionary Act

God the Father corresponds to performing the locutionary act as the Utterer and Begetter of words from Scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16 states that “All Scripture is breathed out by God...” This breathing out signifies that the words of Scripture are from God Himself. But can God perform a locutionary act even if He did not speak audibly? Earlier, it was shown that Austin described three kinds of acts that either make up a part of an utterance or are different types of utterances in a locutionary act. Even though God the Father may not have performed a phonetic act of producing certain noises through the written words in Scripture, He performed the phatic act and rhetic act.²²⁴ How could God the Father utter the words of Scripture without performing a phonetic act, while still performing the phatic and rhetic act? Vanhoozer said, “God the Father’s locution is the result of his providential involvement in the lives of the human authors of Scripture. God works in and through human intelligence and human imagination to produce a literary account that renders him a mighty speech agent.”²²⁵ God the Father can perform the locutionary act in Scripture through the use of inspired human words.

According to Wolterstorff, there are three modes of discourse that God could employ in divine discourse: authorization, deputization, and appropriation.²²⁶ In authorization, a secretary may write a letter on behalf of the president that is then authorized by the president. Likewise, God may also authorize a prophet to write on His behalf and declare that this is His medium of

²²⁴ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 94-95. The phonetic act is “the act of uttering certain noises.” The phatic act is “the utterance of certain words in a certain construction.” The rhetic act is “the performance of an act of using those vocables with a certain more-or-less definite sense and reference.”

²²⁵ Vanhoozer, *First Theology*, 154.

²²⁶ Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse*, 37-57.

discourse.²²⁷ In deputization, someone may be deputized by a communicator to write a letter and sign on his or her behalf. In doing so, the one deputized is speaking on behalf of the communicator. In the same way, God may deputize a prophet to write in His name.²²⁸

Wolterstorff explained examples of deputization from Hosea, Deuteronomy, and Jeremiah.²²⁹ In appropriation, God may have appropriated the inspired works in the Bible as His own discourse.²³⁰ No matter the mode of discourse, God the Father speaks divinely, and the phatic and rhetic acts necessary in a locutionary act are present. Most importantly, as God the Father speaks in Scripture with meaning and intention, He is doing something and performing acts. His locutionary acts lead to His mission to humans in the world.

God the Son and the Illocutionary Act

God the Son corresponds to the illocutionary act of the Speaker (God the Father) and shows how the Father's intention and communicative act should be understood. Hebrews 1:2 states, "But in these last days [God] has spoken to us by his Son..."²³¹ To understand how this is so, one must first understand God's mission to the world. During one of Jesus' prayers to God the Father, Jesus said, "As you sent me into the world..." (Jn. 17:8). God's mission to the world is to send Jesus. Vanhoozer commented, "At the core of Christian theology, then, is the theme of

²²⁷ Ibid, 41-42.

²²⁸ Ibid, 42-44.

²²⁹ Ibid, 44-50.

²³⁰ Ibid, 51-54.

²³¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008).

the *word sent*.”²³² He continued by explaining how this mission of sending relates to Jesus corresponding to God the Father’s illocutionary acts:

From the perspective of theology, the mission of the Son – God’s ‘sending’ his Word to earth – should be seen in terms of acting, not encoding. For the sending is not simply a conveying of information, but a conveying of God’s very person (i.e., a conveying of one’s communicative as well as informative intentions). For what God purposed in sending the Son (and later, the Holy Spirit) involved much more than conveying information. The purpose of the sending of God’s Word was as much transformative as it was informative.²³³

Jesus conveys God’s very person, including His communicative and informative intentions. For example, as Jesus forgave sinners (Lk. 7:36-50; Mk. 2:1-12), He was conveying not only the fact that God the Father can forgive (informative), but also that God the Father does forgive (transformative). As Jesus healed the sick (Matt. 8:1-4; 8:5-11; 9:20-22; Mk. 5:1-20; 10:46-52; Lk. 6:6-11; 17:11-19), He was conveying not only the fact that God the Father can heal (informative), but also that God the Father does heal (transformative). As Jesus was crucified on the cross (Mt. 27:32-56; Mk. 15:21-41; Lk. 26-49; Jn. 19:16-37), He was conveying that God the Father is a righteous God who does not overlook sin, but is loving and gracious (informative), and offers eternal life through faith and repentance (transformative).

From these examples in His incarnate life, one can see how Jesus corresponds to the illocutionary acts of God the Father. Vanhoozer said, “Jesus’ human history becomes the keystone in the system of projection that is God’s before it enters ours. Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, is God’s public speech act, God’s corporeal discourse. The incarnate life of Jesus is

²³² Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 10.

²³³ Ibid, 11.

thus the ground that gives the terms we apply to God their definitive sense.”²³⁴ However, is Jesus only considered the Word of God and corresponding to the illocutionary acts of God during His incarnate life, as described in the gospels? This is not the case with a canonical reading of Scripture. Scripture, “particularly at the canonical level of communicative action – is pointing to Christ, offering appropriately ‘thick descriptions’ of his meaning and significance for Israel and the church. Is this not what Luke implies: ‘And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he [Jesus] interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself’ (Lk. 24:27)?”²³⁵ The Old Testament points to the pre-incarnate Christ and prophesies matters that are ultimately fulfilled in Him (Matt. 5:17-18). Examining these matters in the Old Testament, including Christ’s involvement in creation, is important in identifying the illocutionary acts of God the Father.

Aside from the Old Testament, Jesus can also be seen as the illocutionary acts of God in other parts of the New Testament. “Yet the Son also speaks – projects his voice – through his apostles: “Christ,” says the apostle Paul, “is speaking in me” (2 Cor. 13:3). The *analogia dramatis* recognizes that divine self-communication comes through Jesus’ manner of living and speaking as well as what he says through others appointed to serve the economy of divine self-communication.”²³⁶ Here, Vanhoozer advocated that Christ speaks in the New Testament

²³⁴ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion, and Authorship* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 197.

²³⁵ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 39. “Thick descriptions” is a phrase from Gilbert Ryle. Vanhoozer defines, “A description is sufficiently thick when it allows us to appreciate everything the author is doing in a text – that is, its illocutions.” Ibid, 21.

²³⁶ Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology*, 197.

writers. Whatever is written in the New Testament is also a reflection of Christ who was sent with a mission to the world and conveys the illocutionary acts of God the Father.²³⁷

Jesus Christ as God the Son, is the center of the self-communication of the Holy Trinity. He conveys the person of God the Father and corresponds to His illocutionary acts. Kasper succinctly described this by saying, “In the economic self-communication the intra-trinitarian self-communication is present in the world in a new way, namely, under the veil of historical words, signs and actions, and ultimately in the figure of the man Jesus of Nazareth.”²³⁸ As contemporary readers of Scripture, this is an important concept to apply for two reasons. First, to understand the meaning and intention of God’s Word, one must “look to its use – or rather, to the use to which Jesus put his own life.”²³⁹ Second, in addition to understanding God’s Word, one must know how to properly respond to have union with Christ. Vanhoozer said, “It is precisely through responding to the various illocutions of Scripture – belief in its assertions, obedience to its commands, faith in its promises – that we become ‘thickly’ related to Christ. Indeed, we cannot have the intended effect – union with Christ – apart from the content of Scripture’s illocutionary acts (e.g., telling a story; making a promise; pronouncing pardon, etc.).”²⁴⁰ To achieve this union with Christ through properly responding to the meaning of God’s Word, the third Person of the Holy Trinity plays an important role as the Perlocutor.²⁴¹

²³⁷ With a canonical reading, this notion of Christ speaking in the New Testament writers also relates to Wolterstorff’s divine discourse of double agency. Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse*, 37-57.

²³⁸ Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1986), 276.

²³⁹ Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology*, 197. Vanhoozer paraphrases Wittgenstein.

²⁴⁰ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 39.

²⁴¹ “What God does with Scripture is covenant with humanity by testifying to Jesus Christ (illocution) and by bringing about the reader’s mutual indwelling with Christ (perlocution) through the Spirit’s rendering Scripture efficacious.” *Ibid*, 44.

God the Holy Spirit and the Perlocutionary Act

God the Holy Spirit corresponds to the perlocutionary act, convicts the hearer/reader of the illocutionary intention, and calls for an appropriate response. He resides in the hearts of believers (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 12:13). He was sent to be a Helper or Counselor (Jn. 14:16), translated from the Greek word *paraklesis* which means “a calling to one’s side” in Greek and has the implication of encouragement and exhortation.²⁴² He “convict[s] the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (Jn. 16:8) and guides believers into all truth (Jn. 16:13). The Holy Spirit has a role in influencing the response of humans. Vanhoozer describes this perlocutionary role of the Holy Spirit in the following way:

The Spirit does indeed perform perlocutionary acts... Yet the Spirit does so only on the basis of the concrete textual illocutions (the content!) of Scripture. The Spirit’s creating a world, then is not a new illocutionary act, but rather the perlocutionary act of enabling readers to appropriate the illocutionary acts already inscribed in the biblical text, especially the narrative act of ‘displaying a world’.²⁴³

It should be acknowledged that the Holy Spirit does speak. But as Vanhoozer implied, He does not speak in a way where new illocutionary acts are performed outside of what is written in Scripture and what is demonstrated through Jesus Christ. When speaking of the Holy Spirit to His disciples, Jesus said, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come” (Jn. 16:13). This is in line with Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory as God the Father performs the locutionary act of speaking the

²⁴² W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White, Jr., *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996), “Comfort, Comforter, Comfortless”.

²⁴³ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 42.

inspired and divinely authored words of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16). Since Jesus corresponds to the illocutionary acts of God the Father, the Holy Spirit speaks to humans what He has received, not new illocutionary acts apart from what God the Father has already spoken.

What then is the relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit in terms of their communicative acts? Vanhoozer explained that the Holy Spirit ministers to Christ as the Word:

The Spirit ministers Christ, not himself... We are now in a position to understand how God's word accomplishes the purpose for which it has been sent. It accomplishes this purpose because the Spirit accompanies it, speaking not another word but ministering the word that was previously spoken. The Spirit is nothing less than the efficacy of the Word. In short, the Spirit renders the word effective by achieving its intended perlocutionary effects. The point that must not be missed, however, is that the Spirit accomplishes these effects not independently of the words and illocutions but precisely by, with and through them.²⁴⁴

As mentioned earlier, God the Father's mission to the world is the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Word to convey God's very person as illocutionary acts to humans.²⁴⁵ Since the Holy Spirit ministers to Christ as the Word, He "enables the Word to complete its mission."²⁴⁶ While human authors or speakers cannot do anything to cause their readers to understand their illocutionary acts or guarantee an intended response as a perlocutionary result, God the Spirit is not limited in such a task. Isaiah 55:11 states, "[My Word] shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it." The illocutionary and perlocutionary purposes of the Word will be accomplished by the Holy Spirit.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 43.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 11.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 38.

“In short, the Spirit convicts, illumines, and sanctifies the reader in order better to minister the Word.”²⁴⁷

The Economic and Immanent Trinity in Creation

One can notice that the economic Trinity in Vanhoozer’s model focuses mainly on the covenant relationships between God and the human reader of Scripture or between God and the human hearers of the narratives of Scripture. These covenant relationships are on the fifth and second speech conversation planes respectively that were described in Chapter 1. While this dissertation will examine the Speech Acts of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 according to these levels of speech conversation planes, it will also do so according to the first speech conversation plane: dialogue between any of the three persons of the Holy Trinity.

Aside from the economic Trinity, Vanhoozer also mentioned in passing about the immanent Trinity. “The triune God is an eternal communion of divine persons. Presumably, there is some ‘communication’ between Father, Son, and Spirit – the so-called ‘immanent’ Trinity.”²⁴⁸ Communication between the three persons of the Holy Trinity represents the first speech conversation plane. Vanhoozer suggested that there is communication on this speech plane as creation is one of the affairs of triune authorship:

Authorship illumines God’s transcendence and immanence, God’s distinctness from and relation to the created order. The Bible depicts God giving substance and structure to created reality through a unique set of speech acts. Creation is an example of non-kenotic authoring, for God is complete in himself both before and after bringing creation into existence. The triune God enjoys a perfect life of eternal fellowship, mutual glorification,

²⁴⁷ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 413.

²⁴⁸ Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts”, 10.

and love in himself before he freely chooses to share it with human creatures. Yet communicate it he does.²⁴⁹

There are speech acts depicted in the creation narrative. Who are the involved parties in this discourse? Here, Vanhoozer emphasized the immanence of God as He was complete before creation existed and before humans were created. This suggests communication among the persons of the Holy Trinity on the first speech conversation plane. Later, Vanhoozer makes the involvement of the Triune godhead in discourse more explicit as he said, “Cosmos... [is] thus ‘works’ of the *triune* Author, for divine authorship on every level is a matter of the Father speaking Word through Spirit.”²⁵⁰ Vanhoozer admitted to not having spoken much about how the speech acts of the Trinity intervened in the natural order of creation since his focus was on God’s communication with humans through Scripture.²⁵¹ This is an area of needed research that this dissertation seeks to cover.

The Interpretive Approach Behind Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model

Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory is a practical interpretive framework that stems from a canonical-linguistic approach to interpreting Scripture. In this section, Vanhoozer’s canonical-linguistic approach will first be explained. This will be followed by a necessary defense of this approach from the accusation of conventionalism.

²⁴⁹ Vanhoozer, *Remythologizing Theology*, 488.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 488.

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, 488fn40. Vanhoozer said, “Admittedly, I have not said much about this level, but simply assumed that “there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things and through whom we exist” (1 Cor. 8:6) and that the Son “upholds the universe by the word of his power” (Heb. 1:3). While I affirm God’s capacity to intervene in the natural order, I have purposely focused, as does Scripture, on God’s dialogical interaction with human beings.”

Foundationalism

Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach to interpreting Scripture is positioned between foundationalism and nonfoundationalism. Foundationalism sees Scripture as a collection of propositional truth. According to the process of "theological *scientia*", these revealed truths are abstracted through an objective rational reading of Scripture and assembled as "sacred doctrine into a coherent system of propositions."²⁵² In other words, the canon, or Scripture, is a foundation. Vanhoozer sees two issues with foundationalism. First, foundationalism privileges propositional truths "to the detriment of the diverse literary genres in and through which that information is canonically processed."²⁵³ It limits interpretation to a particular genre. Second, foundationalism privileges a propositional procedure for generating knowledge over "the particular kinds of texts, the particular location and identity of the exegete [as they]... play no significant role in the getting of knowledge."²⁵⁴ It ignores the role of the interpreter or the knower.

Nonfoundationalism

One way to distance from foundationalism is to embrace nonfoundationalism. Nonfoundationalism "conceive[s] knowledge as a web, net, or mosaic of belief... In many nonfoundationist accounts of knowledge, it is not a set of beliefs but the believing community that is considered 'basic' insofar as the web or mosaic of belief is borne along, and revised by,

²⁵² Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 266.

²⁵³ *Ibid*, 293.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 293.

traditions and communities of inquiry.”²⁵⁵ In other words, one’s interpretive framework to have doctrinal knowledge is dependent on the specific community he or she is part of in its traditions, interests, biases, and practices. Nonfoundationalism can be seen as a postmodern inversion of foundationalism. It is supported by theologians including Stanley Grenz and George Lindbeck. Vanhoozer finds fault with nonfoundationalism as he said, “The main weakness of this position is that the authority of Scripture – God’s communicative action – is relegated (demoted!) to the role of one voice among many.”²⁵⁶

Postfoundationalism

Instead of embracing nonfoundationalism, Vanhoozer adopted another position as a solution to distance from foundationalism. This position is called postfoundationalism which finds itself between the two extremes of foundationalism and nonfoundationalism. Vanhoozer cited Shults’ definition of postfoundationalism. The postfoundationalist seeks to “hold onto the ideals of truth, objectivity, and rationality, while at the same time acknowledging the provisional, contextual, and fallible nature of human reason.”²⁵⁷ According to this view, knowledge is never foundational as it is mediated by interpretive frameworks or theories, acting as filters. However, Vanhoozer believes that “some filters allow true knowledge to get through” in a term he called aspectival realism.²⁵⁸ The filters of nonfoundationalism are based on the interpretive frameworks of the community the interpreter is a part of. Vanhoozer does not believe that these

²⁵⁵ Ibid, 293.

²⁵⁶ Ibid, 294.

²⁵⁷ F. LeRon Shults, *The Postfoundationalist Task of Theology*, 1st Ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 58.

²⁵⁸ Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine*, 293.

filters allow for true knowledge. Instead, he is arguing for the filters of an interpretive framework that involves viewing scriptural texts seriously in their contexts for true knowledge.

Canonical-Linguistic Approach

Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach is based on this background of postfoundationalism. Some nonfoundationalists, like Lindbeck, have taken a cultural-linguistic turn by focusing on how the text is used by the Christian community. However, a canonical-linguistic theological method views the relationship in the other way. The doctrine of the text directs how the Christian community should practice it. In summarizing Vanhoozer, Veeneman said, "This theological view claims that scripture itself, and not as it is used by the church, is the norm for church practice. The use of scripture that is significant in this view is its use by God, particularly when it is used over against the church."²⁵⁹ Furthermore, Veeneman later specified that it is "the use of scripture by the Triune God that makes it canonical."²⁶⁰

How does Vanhoozer view the relationship between God and Scripture in his canonical-linguistic approach? Vanhoozer addressed this very question in his book *First Theology: God, Scripture & Hermeneutics* as he said, "Our view of Scripture affects our view of God, just as our view of God colors our view of Scripture."²⁶¹ He best construed this relationship and explained, "God as a triune communicative agent and Scripture as the written locus of God's communicative action."²⁶² In light of this relationship, Vanhoozer developed a Trinitarian

²⁵⁹ Mary M. Veeneman, *Introducing Theological Method: A Survey of Contemporary Theologians and Approaches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 162.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 164.

²⁶¹ Vanhoozer, *First Theology*, 30.

²⁶² *Ibid*, 38.

Model of Austin's Speech Act Theory as a practical interpretive framework in his canonical-linguistic approach.

Responding to the Accusation of Conventionalism

Carl F.H. Henry was an American evangelical Christian theologian who was known for his leadership of the neo-evangelical movement in the mid-to-late 20th century. He holds that there are cognitive aspects to the revelation of Scripture that are expressed meaningfully in the framework of propositions.²⁶³ One of the non-cognitive views of language that Henry critiques is conventionalism. Geisler defined conventionalism as “the theory that all meaning is relative. Since all truth claims are meaningful statements, this would mean that all truth is relative.”²⁶⁴ Put in another way, conventionalism is an understanding of language according to its use and not necessarily according to its cognitive status or information. This view is commonly associated with Ludwig Wittgenstein's conventionalist theory of meaning. Wittgenstein illustrated the use of language in a concept he called “language games” as there are forms of language “consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven.”²⁶⁵ Words or sentences only have meaning depending on the rules of the game (contextual use) being played. Henry took issue with Wittgenstein's conventionalism:

He [Wittgenstein] therefore warned against assuming what the cognitive meaning of a word is, or even that they intended a cognitive meaning. Consequently, his followers operated on the dictum ‘don't look for the meaning, look for the use’ and concentrated on the use of words rather than on traditional sources of meaning, and considered them human instruments that take on the meaning with which people invest them.

²⁶³ Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, vol. 1–6 (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1999), 3:390-391, 449, 453.

²⁶⁴ Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 158.

²⁶⁵ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 7.

And extremely important work in this area was John L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words*.²⁶⁶

Henry's main contention is that the cognitive status of language is dismissed which results in a focus away from finding the truth value of a sentence and towards the possibility of new meanings in the subjective context of use. Henry sees proposition, which contains cognitive status, as a minimal unit of logical meaning in language to determine the truth value.²⁶⁷ Meaning is obtained in this way as opposed to the use of words.

Henry associated Wittgenstein's conventionalism with Austin's *How to Do Things with Words*. This is where the Speech Act Theory that Vanhoozer adopted in his theological method originated from. Henry would also associate Vanhoozer and his canonical-linguistic approach with conventionalism due to his use of Speech Act Theory. Thornbury commented:

The general tack of speech-act theory, then, departs significantly from a cognitive representational account of the truth or falsity of a statement of fact. For the propositionalist view, the accuracy and reliability of such declarations is the main concern. What matters is not just the statement's reception from an intended audience, but whether it corresponds to an objective state of affairs independent of the author-reader enclosure. Consequently, for anyone wishing to depart from the representational view of symbolic meaning, speech-act theory provides an attractive alternative.²⁶⁸

Does Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic approach and use of Speech Act Theory depart from recognizing the cognitive status of Scripture? Although Vanhoozer did refer to Wittgenstein and his notion of language games as a starting point to introduce the idea of "watching language in action" or looking at the use of language, he mainly did so to differentiate it from Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic approach to the Christian community's use of language and instead, point to

²⁶⁶ Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, vol. 1–6, 3:445.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 3:449.

²⁶⁸ Gregory Alan Thornbury, *Recovering Classic Evangelicalism: Applying the Wisdom and Vision of Carl F. H. Henry*, 1st Ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 104-105.

the uses of the canon itself.²⁶⁹ Vanhoozer did not refer to Wittgenstein to associate with his conventionalism. He does not deny the cognitive status and meaning of language, or see himself as a conventionalist. He affirmed Henry's view of the cognitive content of Scripture.

Vanhoozer said, "Carl Henry was absolutely right to stress the cognitive content of Scripture and doctrine over against those who sought to make revelation a noncognitive experience."²⁷⁰ He also does not associate himself with conventionalists who make revelation a noncognitive experience. The main reason why He proposed the Trinitarian model of Speech Act Theory was to counter deconstructionism and the postmodern literary crisis of textual meaning.²⁷¹ This includes conventionalism and relativism.

Understandably, Henry, Thornbury, and other propositionalists would be concerned with Austin and his Speech Act Theory. However, Vanhoozer's Trinitarian model of Speech Act Theory is different than that of Austin's. This is because Vanhoozer's theistic view of language begins with the Trinitarian God. Vanhoozer believed meaningful communication that humans experience is only possible due to the necessary condition of God as "first and foremost a communicative agent, one who relates to humankind through words and the Word."²⁷² As God speaks through words in Scripture, He is also performing action and communicating truth with those words. The way that a holy God uses words is different than that of fallible human beings who can lie or be deceptive.

²⁶⁹ Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine*, 212.

²⁷⁰ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Lost in Interpretation: Truth, Scripture, and Hermeneutics," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48, no. 1 (2005), 100.

²⁷¹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 456.

²⁷² *Ibid*, 456.

Although Vanhoozer's approach does involve identifying the use of words, it does not necessarily mean that he dismisses the cognitive status of language or fails to seek an objective meaning and truth value like conventionalists. Vanhoozer, referring to himself as a "modified propositionalist", said, "I recognize all of the cognitive significance not only of statements and propositions but all the Bible's figures of speech and literary forms... My approach to theology.... does not deny the importance of cognitive content, but it does resist privileging a single form - the propositional statement - for expressing it."²⁷³ Even though Henry would differ from Vanhoozer and see propositions in all various biblical genres due to it being the minimal unit of logical meaning in language, in the end, they both acknowledge the cognitive significance in all genres. Therefore, it is not accurate to associate Vanhoozer, his canonical-linguistic approach, or his Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory with conventionalism.

²⁷³ Vanhoozer, "Lost in Interpretation", 107.

Chapter 3: The Application of Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1

In this chapter, Speech Act Theory will be applied to the Genesis 1 creation narrative. Conclusions will be drawn about the performative acts God accomplished through speaking, the identity of the Holy Trinity, and the implications for how the universe was made. Before applying Speech Act Theory, a case for the presence of God the Son and Spirit during creation will be made using relevant passages in the canon of Scripture. This is built on the possibility of a Trinitarian reading of Genesis 1 through the grammar of its Hebrew text, as argued for in Appendix 1. Next, the potential creative roles of God the Son and Spirit will be explored. This is important as their creative roles will be considered as responding actions during the speech act analysis of Genesis 1.

The Presence and Creative Role of God the Son

Genesis 1 does not explicitly mention the presence of the second person of the Holy Trinity. However, with the canonical approach to interpreting Scripture, there are passages in the New Testament that attest to the presence and role of Jesus Christ as God the Son in creation. This section will briefly highlight and explain some of these New Testament passages, including John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17; 1 Corinthians 8:6; and Hebrews 1:2. Next, from the truths of these passages, the likely creative roles of the Son will be identified.

The Pre-existence of the Son

John 1:1 opens with “In the beginning”. Sarfati noted that “John 1:1 follows Genesis in starting with ‘In the beginning’: the original Greek copies the Septuagint translation of Genesis

1:1: (*en archē*).”²⁷⁴ Starting the gospel in this way does not just echo the beginning of the Old Testament, but puts John in a biblical-theological framework that connects and develops it with the creation story of the Old Testament.²⁷⁵ “In the beginning was the Word (*logos*)” (John 1:1a). Borchert noted that “This statement asserts that the Logos existed before creation began.”²⁷⁶ Since the context of the chapter refers to the Word (*logos*) to Jesus Christ, this opening statement conveys the message that Jesus Christ existed before creation began and connects Him with the Genesis 1 creation. Klink would support this statement by citing how the continuous tense of the imperfect verb “was” (ἦν) “denies temporal sequence ‘in time’” and also indicates “existence” to contrast the use of “was” (ἐγένετο) meaning “coming into being” in verse 3.²⁷⁷ Jesus Christ as the Word pre-existed in the beginning before time and was not created. Verse 2 also reiterated that Jesus Christ existed in the beginning.

This truth is found in Colossians 1:17 as well. It states, “And he is before (πρὸ) all things (πάντων).” According to Wallace, when πρὸ is used with a genitive (in this case, πάντων) its uses can be spatial, temporal, or in rank/priority.²⁷⁸ Wallace believed that a double nuance of temporal and rank/priority is intended in which, “Jesus Christ takes priority over and is before all

²⁷⁴ Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account: A Theological, Historical, and Scientific Commentary on Genesis 1-11*, 2nd ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publishers, 2015), 121.

²⁷⁵ Edward W. Klink III, *John*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 86.

²⁷⁶ G. L. Borchert, *John 1-11*, vol. 25A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 102.

²⁷⁷ Klink III, *John*, 87.

²⁷⁸ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 379.

things.”²⁷⁹ Pao would also agree with Wallace that both senses are embedded in this phrase.²⁸⁰

On the other hand, Moo would differ from Wallace and Pao. Although he recognized the ambiguity of the phrase, Moo believes that it is referring to Christ’s pre-existence (temporal sense of *πρὸ*) as the priority in rank sense “is quite rare in the New Testament, while all of Paul’s uses of the word have a temporal sense.”²⁸¹ Here, we have an affirmation that Christ was pre-existent before all things (*πάντων*) were created. This confirms His presence before the Genesis 1 creation narrative.

All Things Created Through the Son

In addition to Christ pre-existing before all things, He also was the Agent through which all things were created. John 1:3 states, “All things were made (*ἐγένετο*) through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made (*γένονεν*).” The two parts of this verse proclaim the same truth, but with different force. The first part is the positive force that all things were made, or came into existence (*ἐγένετο*) through Christ as the Word. The second part is the negative force that nothing was made (*γένονεν*) without Christ as the Word. Christ is presented as the necessary Agent through which all things were made. Later in verse 10, John also reiterated that “the world was made through him”. Klink also observed how this truth is connected to Genesis 1:

It is important to note that the verb “made” (*ἐγένετο*) is consistently used to describe creation in the LXX of Genesis 1, where it serves as a foundational term that expresses the creation power and activity of God. The use of this term in the prologue is employing

²⁷⁹ Ibid, 379.

²⁸⁰ David W. Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 98.

²⁸¹ Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 125.

a significant intentionality. It is also clear that the eleven occurrences of the verb (or a related term) in the prologue (see vv. 3, 6, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18) in its variously translated forms, “made/came/became” (γίνομαι), is intentionally deploying the same functional meaning initiated by the use of the term in its twenty-three occurrences in Genesis 1 (see Gen 1:3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 23, 24, 30, 31).²⁸²

This suggests that the way creation is described in the Gospel of John reflects the way creation is described in Genesis as well. All things were created through Jesus Christ as the Word.

This same truth is also expressed elsewhere in the New Testament. 1 Corinthians 8:6 states, “And one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.” This verse echoes Christ as the creative Agent of all things and emphasizes that human beings exist because of Him. Hebrews 1:2 also proclaimed that it is God’s Son, “through whom also he created the world.” Furthermore, Colossians 1:16 states, “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him.” This verse begins with the causal clause ὅτι. According to Harris, “In BGk. ὅτι ranges in meaning from a weak ‘for’ to a strong ‘because’ (cf. T 318). Here (as a strong ‘because’) it introduces the reason for Christ’s priority over all creation: ‘because in him all things were created.’”²⁸³ Ἐν αὐτῷ (in/by him) is a prepositional phrase. H. Wayne House suggested two identifications of this phrase. First, it may be a locative-of-sphere phrase (dative of location) in which creation is centered in Christ. Second, it may be an instrumental phrase (dative of agency) in which Christ is the agent of all creation.²⁸⁴ The Lexham Syntactic Greek New Testament also suggests these two identifications but by the

²⁸² Klink III, *John*, 93-94.

²⁸³ Murray J. Harris, *Colossians and Philemon* (B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 73.

²⁸⁴ H. Wayne House, “Doctrinal Issues in Colossians Part 2: The Doctrine of Christ in Colossians,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (April 1992): 182.

names of preposition of means and preposition of agency, respectively.²⁸⁵ House preferred identifying ἐν αὐτῷ as a dative of location. He reasoned that “Paul regularly used the words ‘in Christ’ (76 times) or ‘in Him’ (20 times) to indicate that Christ is the embodiment of reality, whether of creation or the redemption of mankind.”²⁸⁶ On the other hand, just because House prefers identifying ἐν αὐτῷ as a dative of location, does not mean that he denies that Christ is an Agent in creation. He also reasoned, “The latter portion of Colossians 1:16 refers to Christ as the agency, though indirect, of all creation (‘all things were created through Him;). It would seem redundant to have the idea of agency stated twice in the same verse.”²⁸⁷

As the Agent of creation, what did Christ create? τὰ πάντα (all things) is used as opposed to just πάντα. According to Harris, πάντα “means ‘all things’ or ‘everything’ in a distributive sense” whereas τὰ πάντα means “all things collectively.”²⁸⁸ Seitz believed that the figure of speech called merism is employed in which all things are the totality of not only the extreme points of heaven and earth, but all that is in them and between them.²⁸⁹ In case the Colossians did not grasp this, Paul continued by listing out the examples of “thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers”. Because “all things were created by him, and for him”, Christ could not be a part of τὰ πάντα. He is the Agent through which all things were created and pre-existed in the beginning before all things were created. As Speech Act Theory is applied to the Genesis

²⁸⁵ Albert L. Lukaszewski, Mark Dubis, and J. Ted Blakley, *The Lexham Syntactic Greek New Testament, SBL Edition: Expansions and Annotations* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2011), s.v. "Col. 1:16".

²⁸⁶ House, “Doctrinal Issues in Colossians Part 2”, 182.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 182.

²⁸⁸ Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, 73.

²⁸⁹ Christopher R. Seitz, *Colossians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2014), 97.

1 narrative, the Son's presence and active involvement as the Agent of creation must be considered.

Spoken Logos of God

In the previous sections, it was determined from a canonical reading of New Testament passages that the pre-incarnate Christ as the Son existed before creation and was the Agent through which all things were created. As one may observe in Genesis 1, God the Father created all things by speaking His Word. One way to see the creative role of the Son in Genesis is that of the spoken *Logos* (or Word) of God. Just as God's verbal utterances in creation have causal power to create, the Son as the spoken Word of God also has causal power to create as an Agent. This view is supported by Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory as God the Son corresponds to the illocutionary act of the Speaker (God the Father) and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood.²⁹⁰ As a result, the Son as the spoken Word of God not only has the causal power to create, but also, He Himself performs the action of creating. This understanding of the Son as God's spoken Word and having causal power to create will be instrumental when exploring the directive illocutionary acts of God in the speech act analysis of Genesis 1.

Energizing Logos

Another suggested creative role of the Son, as the Agent by which all things are made, is described as the Energizing *Logos*. Bonting cited Philo and Maximus the Confessor as examples

²⁹⁰ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1998), 457.

of those who held this view. He said, “In the time of Jesus, the Jewish philosopher Philo saw the Logos as the chief power of God, *energeia*, through which the world was made (“Logos” 1972). Likewise, Maximus the Confessor (580-662) defined the *logoi* of creation as the energies of God, as distinct from the essence of God (Thunberg 1985, 137-43)”²⁹¹ Bonting continued by proposing a scientific theory of seeing the *Logos* as the energies of God:

The idea of an initial, non-incarnate Logos as God’s *energeia*, through which God calls all aspects of creation into being, fits very well with modern cosmological theory, which tells us that the cosmos originated in a tremendous explosion, the Big Bang. Although the theory cannot explain the origin of this explosion, it must have required a large amount of energy, more than 10^{22} kilowatt-hours... This energy served partly as the kinetic energy for the expanding fireball and partly for conversion to the primeval matter, quarks and gluons, from which arose the light elements, hydrogen, helium, and lithium... In theological terms, it is reasonable to assume that this energy has been provided by the powerful, energetic Logos.²⁹²

While Bonting’s theory makes a connection between the non-incarnate *Logos* with the Big Bang, it is hard to believe that Philo, Maximus the Confessor, and other early scholars had the modern physical concept of energy as introduced by Galileo in the seventeenth century and later further developed by Newton.²⁹³ Furthermore, this interpretation of the *Logos* as God’s *energeia* requires importing an outside source of science aside from the information that is revealed within the canon of Scripture. Since the research methodology of this dissertation involves applying Speech Act Theory with a canonical reading, seeing the creative role of the Son as the spoken *Logos* of God makes more sense over the energizing *Logos*.

²⁹¹ Sjoerd L. Bonting, “Spirit and Creation,” *Zygon* 41, no. 3 (2006), 719. See *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, Israel: Ketar Publishing House, 1972), s.v. “Logos”, 460-462 and Lars Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos: The Vision of St. Maximus the Confessor* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1985), 137-143.

²⁹² Ibid, 721. See also Sjoerd L. Bonting, *Chaos Theology: A Revised Creation Theology* (Ottawa: Novalis Press, 2002), 13-37.

²⁹³ Bonting, “Spirit and Creation”, 725.

The Presence and Creative Role of God the Holy Spirit

Unlike God the Son, there is explicit mention of God the Holy Spirit in the Genesis 1 creation narrative. Genesis 1:2b states, “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” However, there is some contention around the use of the word “Spirit” in this verse. The Hebrew word translated as “Spirit” is *ruach* (רוּחַ). Depending on the context *ruach* can mean “spirit”, “wind”, or “breath”.²⁹⁴ Neve believed that “Spirit” is the right translation in Genesis 1:2. He saw the strongest argument for this translation existing from the creation texts of Isaiah 40:13, Psalm 33:6, and Job 26:13, which written in the same time period as Genesis.²⁹⁵ These creation texts “use *ruach* not as a created element [such as wind], but as a creating power.”²⁹⁶ Westermann would disagree and argue that *ruach* should be translated as “wind” due to the verb *merachefet* (מְרַחֵףֶת) associated with it, meaning “fluttering”, “flapping”, “shaking”, or “vibrating” like what wind would do.²⁹⁷ However, this would be problematic as *ruach elohim* would need to be translated as “wind of God” or “divine wind”. Neve would question the function of such an entity, as the wind could not be given a creative function or allowed in the Old Testament to participate in the creative process.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), s.v. "רוּחַ".

²⁹⁵ Neve accepts a late date for the book of Genesis (14th Century B.C.) that rejects Mosaic authorship.

²⁹⁶ Lloyd R. Neve, *The Spirit of God in the Old Testament* (Tokyo: Seibunsha, 1972), 68.

²⁹⁷ Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1994), 107.

²⁹⁸ Neve, *The Spirit of God in the Old Testament*, 68.

Furthermore, Westermann admittedly recognized that *ruach elohim* “does not occur anywhere else in the Old Testament with the meaning ‘wind of God’”.²⁹⁹ To remedy this, he interpreted the use of *elohim* as a superlative of *ruach*, rendering the translation, “mighty wind”.³⁰⁰ Neve would respond with two arguments against this interpretation. First, there is no other place in the Old Testament where *elohim* is used as a superlative to mean a strong, powerful, or mighty wind.³⁰¹ Second, there would be an issue with the writer of Genesis using “*elohim* in v.2 with a meaning different from that which he gives it to in vv. 1 and 3, without in some way indicating that it should be translated differently.”³⁰²

From these arguments, it appears there is a stronger case for *ruach elohim* to be translated as “Spirit of God” in Genesis 1:2. Another way to support a reading of the presence of the Holy Spirit in creation is by identifying His necessary creative roles. In the next sections, three potential creative roles of the Holy Spirit as Life-giver, Energizer, and Information Transmitter will be considered.

Life-giving Spirit

The creative role of the Holy Spirit is that of a Life-Giver. This creation by the spirit can be seen in two different senses. The first sense is that of causal power behind God’s spoken

²⁹⁹ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 107.

³⁰⁰ Ibid, 107.

³⁰¹ Neve, *The Spirit of God in the Old Testament*, 67-68.

³⁰² Ibid, 68.

word as God's breath.³⁰³ The Hebrew word for "Spirit", רוח *ruach*, can also mean "breath". Evans saw the relationship between the Holy Spirit and God's act of speaking in creation as he said, "Breath is involved in the spoken *word*, the word of world-Creation."³⁰⁴ He referenced Psalm 33:6 which states, "By the word of the Lord, the heavens were made, and by the breath [רוח *ruach*] of his mouth all their host." From the synonymous parallelism of the two lines in Hebrew poetry, there is a relationship between *ruach* and God's spoken word. This means that the Holy Spirit is involved in creation as God speaks. Evans commented, "The spirit-image here merely supplements the causal element of the word-image... As a causal instrument by itself, it differs from the word in that it does not specify the result to be brought about."³⁰⁵ According to Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory, God the Father is involved with the locutionary act by speaking and uttering words.³⁰⁶ He is responsible as the Source for the meaning and intention of the results of creation. However, it appears that the Holy Spirit is the breath and causal power that instigates the actual results of life and change in the universe.

The second sense of the life-giving creative role of the Holy Spirit is that of breathing life. Psalm 104:30 says, "When you send forth your Spirit [רוח *ruach* or "breath"], they are created, and you renew the face of the ground." This suggests a more active role of the Holy Spirit in creation relating to breathing. Matthews commented, "Although Ps 104:30 does not refer to [Gen. 1:2] specifically, rather to the six days of creation inclusively, it suggests that the

³⁰³ Evans also saw Christ as the Word of God that has causal power. Donald D. Evans, *The Logic of Self-Involvement: A Philosophical Study of Everyday Language with Special Reference to the Christian Use of Language about God as Creator* (London, UK: SCM Press, 1963), 167.

³⁰⁴ Ibid, 168.

³⁰⁵ Ibid, 168.

³⁰⁶ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

psalmist affirmed the personal participation of God's Spirit in the transformation of the earth."³⁰⁷

This transformation can refer to the Spirit's involvement in breathing life into animate beings on earth. The creation account of human beings in Genesis 2 gives insight into this action of breathing life. Genesis 2:7 says, "Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature." There were two parts to the creation of human beings. The first part refers to the material creation of the body from the dust of the ground. The second part refers to the animation of the body.

Williams affirms the Holy Spirit's role in the second part:

Although the role of the Spirit in creation is not explicit in Genesis 1, the second account of creation in the next chapter does suggest an action in the creation of humanity. While the clay figure of the first man was inert when formed from the dust of the ground, it was enlivened when God breathes into it. The word רוח is not present in the Genesis 2 story, but it is implied by the breathing of God.³⁰⁸

The Holy Spirit does not appear to be involved in the first part concerning the creation of matter, which is a role that is reserved for the second Person of the Holy Trinity.³⁰⁹ Instead, He gives and breathes life into the material that does not have life. One can find evidence of this creative role of the Holy Spirit outside of Genesis. In Ezekiel 37, God told Ezekiel to prophesy to the dry bones of the slain host and the רוח *ruach* "breathed into the reassembled corpses to enliven them. So in both Genesis 2 and Ezekiel 37, a clear distinction is drawn between the creation of matter and its enlivening."³¹⁰ The Holy Spirit's role of breathing life as a Life-Giver in creation is

³⁰⁷ Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 136.

³⁰⁸ David T. Williams, "The Spirit in Creation," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 67, no. 1 (2014), 2.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 1.

³¹⁰ *Ibid*, 3.

necessary for the existence of any life at all.³¹¹ In this chapter's speech act analysis of Genesis 1, the Holy Spirit's role of breathing life in the creation of animals and human beings on days 5 and 6 will be considered.³¹²

Energizing Spirit

Another potential creative role of the Holy Spirit is that of an Energizer. In Genesis 1:2b, Morris affirms the Holy Spirit as the subject "hovering [or moving] over the face of the waters". He believed that the mention of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of creation showed that the third person of the Godhead is necessary for the activation and energizing of the universe.³¹³ Morris built his case with the Hebrew verb for "hovering" or "moving": *merachefet* (מְרַחֶפֶת). The root of this word is *rachaph* (רָחַף) and occurs only three times in the Old Testament. The other two times it appears are found in Jeremiah 23:9, translated as "shake" and Deuteronomy 32:11, translated as "fluttereth".³¹⁴ Morris relates this moving or motion back and forth to the scientific term of "vibrating". Since the universe needs to be energized to be formed, there must be an Energizer to initiate it.

³¹¹ Cf. Jacqueline Grey, "Acts of the Spirit: Ezekiel 37 in the Light of Contemporary Speech-Act Theory," *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 1 (2009), 75-76; Williams, "The Spirit in Creation", 4.

³¹² Williams is under the impression that the Holy Spirit's role of breathing life applies to the creation of plant life as well on day 4. Williams, "The Spirit in Creation", 4. This does not seem to be the case as plant life are not animate beings in the same sense as animals or human beings. Cf. Sarna, *Genesis*, 10. In addition, plants were not given a blessing by God as animals and human beings have in Gen. 1:22, 28-30. Furthermore, from the blessing in Gen. 1:29-30, everything that has the breath of life was given green plant for food. That which has the breath of life obviously excludes plant life.

³¹³ Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976), 51-52.

³¹⁴ Ibid, 52.

While Westermann cited the meaning of *merachefet* to support a translation of “wind” over “Spirit”, Morris did so to support the energizing function of the Holy Spirit.³¹⁵ Morris said, “Waves are typically rapid back and forth movements and they are normally produced by the vibratory motion of a wave generator of some kind. Energy cannot create itself. It is most appropriate that the first impartation of energy to the universe is described as the ‘vibrating’ movement of the Spirit of God Himself.”³¹⁶ Morris continued by describing the necessity of an Energizer to prepare for the existence of the universe:

As the outflowing energy from God’s omnipresent Spirit began to flow outward and permeate the cosmos, gravitational forces were activated and water and earth particles came together to form a great sphere moving through space. Other such particles would soon come together also to form sun, moon, and stars throughout the universe. There was now a ‘compass’ on the face of the deep, and the formless earth had assumed the beautiful form of a perfect sphere. It was now ready for light and heat and other forms of enlivening energy.³¹⁷

As a young earth creationist, Morris offers a scientific explanation for the role of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the universe. Although this is a very interesting interpretation in support of material creation, there are two concerns. First, a similar interpretation can be made to support a cosmic and biological evolution of the universe. As presented earlier, Bonting saw the non-incarnate *Logos* as the Energizer instead of the Holy Spirit and the cause for the Big Bang.³¹⁸ Second, an interpretation such as this requires importing an outside source from a scientific supposition aside from the information that is revealed within the canon of Scripture. When

³¹⁵ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 107.

³¹⁶ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 52.

³¹⁷ *Ibid*, 52.

³¹⁸ Bonting, “Spirit and Creation”, 719, 721-722.

applying Speech Act Theory in the interpretation of a passage, one must do so within the boundaries of a canonical reading.

Information-Transmitting Spirit

In addition to Morris' and Bonting's interpretation of the Spirit and the *Logos* as the Energizer respectively, Bonting also saw the creative role of the Spirit as an Information Transmitter who worked in concert with the *Logos* Energizer.³¹⁹ The information Bonting believed the Holy Spirit transmitted is "in the form of the laws of nature, the four physical forces, and the fundamental constants, [and] was required to order the brute explosive force into a creative process."³²⁰ The two concerns presented in the previous section as a response to an Energizing Spirit still apply. Since Morris' and Bonting's interpretations of an Energizer and Information Transmitter require importing an outside source of science, for this study of the application of Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1, only the Holy Spirit's creative role of a Life-giver will be considered, as there is explicit textual support in the canon of Scripture.³²¹

The Analysis of Genesis 1 According to the First Speech Conversation Plane

In this analysis, Speech Act Theory will be applied to the Genesis 1 creation narrative. This will be accomplished according to the first speech conversation plane (dialogue between the three Persons of the Holy Trinity). Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory will be

³¹⁹ Ibid, 719-724.

³²⁰ Ibid, 721.

³²¹ This decision is in no way an advocacy of being anti-science. It is possible that the roles of the *Logos* and Spirit are that of an Energizer or Information Transmitter in actuality. However, the canonical Scriptural texts do not make that clear.

utilized. The following sections feature the eight creative speech acts of God's utterances on the six days of creation. The locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts performed through God's utterances on each day will be identified with some support from the Hebrew text and Septuagint.³²² A strong case will be made that in each of God's utterances, He was performing the illocutionary acts of expressive, directive, commissive, and declaration simultaneously.³²³ Finally, the perlocutionary act effects of God's utterances on each day of creation will be identified. After this analysis is completed for each day of creation according to the first conversation plane, some conclusions will be drawn concerning the origin of the universe and the nature of the Trinitarian God. A determination will also be made concerning whether God's speech acts of creation can be described as felicitous or not, according to Austin's six felicity conditions.³²⁴

Day 1 – The Creation of Light – Genesis 1:3-5

³ *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.* ⁴ *And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.* ⁵ *God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*

³²² A complete summary of all the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts of each day of creation are featured as a table in Appendix 3 entitled "Speech Acts of Genesis 1."

³²³ John R. Searle, *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 10-16. It is believed that Searle's category of assertive illocutionary acts is not applicable to God's speech in the creation narrative of Genesis 1. This is because assertive illocutionary acts are expressions of a speaker's belief in a propositional content, which can be accessed as true or false. God's speech in creation is not merely expressing a statement of propositional content. God could not express the belief or observation of an object or state of affairs if the content being spoken about has not existed yet. Doing so would render the propositional content as being false and make out God to be a liar, which is not possible.

³²⁴ J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1962), 14-15.

Locutionary Act – Day 1

On the first day of creation, God created light and separated it from darkness. God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3). According to Austin, all speech is performative.³²⁵ As a result, God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

Table 1. Illocutionary acts of day 1

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	The Father expressed the will or desire for the existence of light.
Directive Act	The Father called the Son to actively bring about the existence of light.
Commissive Act	The Father committed Himself to actively bring about the existence of light.
Declaration Act	The Father declared the condition of the universe to change with the existence of light.

Searle acknowledged that multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance.³²⁶ As a result, the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these four illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let there be light”.

³²⁵ Ibid, 108.

³²⁶ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

Illocutionary Acts – Day 1

Expressive Act – Day 1

In saying, “Let there be light”, God the Father may be performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will or desire for the existence of light in the universe. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the existence of light.” The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (**E**) is represented by:

E Ø (willing) (God + existence of light)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**³²⁷ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the existence of light (**property**).

This expression of will or desire is supported in the text. Each locutionary speech in the Genesis 1 creation narrative is prefaced with the phrase “God said”. According to Sarna, “‘God said’ means ‘God thought’ or ‘God willed’. It signifies that the Creator is wholly independent of His creation. It implies effortlessness and absolute sovereignty over nature.”³²⁸ In this interpretation of “God said”, God has a will for the existence of light or whatever entities desired on each day of creation. To will for something to be or exist, He must have the power and authority over the universe. This is supported by Revelation 4:11 which states, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

³²⁷ Ibid, 16.

³²⁸ Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, 1st ed, vol. 1, 5 vols., The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2001), 7.

More support for the expression of will is found in the Hebrew Language. In every one of God's creative locutionary statements, the third person jussive verb form is used.³²⁹ The jussive verb form is a simple impersonal command that expresses one's will to another.³³⁰ On day 1, God said, "Let there be (jussive יִהְיֶה *hāyā*) light". The use of the jussive verb form here indicates that God wills, wishes, and even commands the creation or existence of light. God may be performing the expressive illocutionary act with this utterance.

Directive Act – Day 1

A command to the Son. In saying, "Let there be light", God the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively bring about the existence of light. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Son, "I call you to create light." The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create light)

This is based on Searle's original symbolism ! ↑ **W (H does A)**³³¹ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (**W**) God the Son as the Hearer (**H**), to do the future action (**A**) of bringing about the existence of light. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created the light (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

³²⁹ The only exception is found in Genesis 1:26 during the sixth day of creation for humans, in which the verb is used in the cohortative form as opposed to the jussive form. This will be explained in more detail in the later section that addresses Genesis 1:26.

³³⁰ Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 564-565, 568.

³³¹ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

How is “Let there be light” seen as an imperative? From the Hebrew text, a directive illocutionary act is in view, due to the use of the third person jussive verb form that also indicates a simple impersonal command.³³² In addition to the expression of will (expressive illocutionary act), the jussive in “Let there be (יִהְיֶה *hāyâ*) light” also conveys a command. In the Septuagint, the “formulaic speech pattern that continues throughout the chapter, namely, a verb in the third person imperative (let x be)”³³³ conveys a command as well. These indicate a directive illocutionary act being performed. But how can it be concluded that God the Father was directing the command to the Son to create light?

Word and deed account. To understand what may be happening around the event of the creation of light on day 1, it is important to present two different layers that make up Genesis 1:1-2:4a which several scholars in the early part of the 20th century argued. One layer contains a *Tatbericht* (account of the divine act) while the other layer contains a *Wortbericht* (account of the creative divine word).³³⁴ Simpler terms for these layers may be known as a “deed account” or a “word account” respectively. The former refers to the phrases of the Genesis creation narrative that describe creation by action while the latter refers to the phrases that describe creation by speaking. To find support for a directive illocutionary act in God’s speech, one would naturally look for evidence of “deed creation” that may portray how God the Son may have acted in creation.

³³² Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

³³³ Susan Brayford, *Genesis* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2007), 210.

³³⁴ Jürg Hutzli, “Tradition and Interpretation in Gen 1:1-2:4a,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 10, no. 12 (2010): 2–22.

Concerning the creation of light in verses 3 to 5, the phrases that would indicate a “deed account” of creation found on other days of creation are missing. Hamilton said, “One observes that the only item in Gen. 1 that is created by *fiat*, strictly speaking, is light: ‘And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.’ Everything else is created, or emerges, in Gen. 1 by *fiat* plus some subsequent activity that is divinely instigated.”³³⁵ Missing phrases of the subsequent activity include “and God made (עָשָׂה *āśâ*) the light”, the fulfillment formula “And it was so”, and others containing verbs such as “create” (בָּרָא *bārā*), “separate”, and “gather”.³³⁶ Without phrases indicating a “deed account” that portray how God the Son may have acted in the creation of light, one may just see a “word account” instead and question whether there is a directive illocutionary act performed.

However, a “word account” of creation alone does not disqualify the possibility of a directive illocutionary act. Westermann saw God’s speech, “Let there be light” as a command and recognized the execution that followed, “and there was light.” But he did not identify anyone or anything to whom the command was directed to.³³⁷ Was the command directed to light itself? One cannot command something that does not exist yet to cause its existence. Was the command directed to God the Father Himself? It would cease to be considered a command if the speaker also performed the execution. What is left to consider is God’s commanding word as

³³⁵ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990), 119.

³³⁶ While God (possibly the Son) did separate the light from the darkness in verse 4, this act or deed was not one of the creation of light, but an act performed with the light after its creation. This will be discussed with the perlocutionary acts of day 1 in a later section under the heading “And God Saw That the Light Was Good”.

³³⁷ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 111.

also the creative word that performs the execution.³³⁸ Westermann would negatively see this as a magic word. Evans also referenced it as human magic, but as an analogy to the causal power of Jesus as the Word.³³⁹

The Son as the spoken Word. As mentioned earlier, God the Son as the preincarnate Christ is seen as the spoken Word of God in Creation. Since “all things were made through him” (Jn. 1:3a; cf Col. 1:16), Christ is involved with the creation of light as the Word. According to Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory, God the Son corresponds to the illocutionary act of the Speaker (God the Father) and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood.³⁴⁰ As God the Father spoke, “Let there be light” and performed the directive illocutionary act, God the Son as the Word of God would act and respond in a way that reflects the Father’s command for the existence of light. In other words, God the Son is not only the spoken Word that has the causal power to bring about the existence of light, but also, He Himself does the deed of bringing about the existence of light. The narrative did not give details on how the Son accomplished this.³⁴¹ Regardless of the actual mode by which light was created, the Son did so in response to God the Father’s directive illocutionary act calling Him to actively bring about the existence of light.

³³⁸ This may seem similar to a declaration illocutionary act, but there are some nuanced differences which will be described in a later section soon.

³³⁹ Evans, *The Logic of Self-Involvement*, 167.

³⁴⁰ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

³⁴¹ Sarna saw the act of God separating the light from darkness as “the second modality of creation”, suggesting that the action of separating was the means by which light was created. Sarna, *Genesis*, 7. Although possible, this is not likely. See more on the discussion of this issue in the later section on the perlocutionary acts of day 1.

Commissive Act – Day 1

In saying, “Let there be light”, God the Father may also be performing the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively bring about the existence of light. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, “I commit to create light.” The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (**C**) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create light)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**³⁴² in which God the Father is intending (**I**) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (**S**) doing the future action (**A**) of bringing about the existence of light. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created the light (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by creating light through the Son in His directive illocutionary act.

Declaration Act – Day 1

In saying, “Let there be light”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the existence of light. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has light.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

D ↓ ∅ (existence of light)

³⁴² Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism $\mathbf{D} \uparrow \emptyset (\mathbf{P})$ ³⁴³ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (\mathbf{P}) of the existence of light. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (\emptyset), but has double direction of fit (\uparrow), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the existence of light (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the existence of light (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the existence of light (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the existence of light (what happened in the world).

Although it is unclear what his religious beliefs are, Searle categorized God’s command of “Let there be light” as a supernatural declaration and cited it as an example.³⁴⁴ One can safely assume that he would also see all other commands of God in the Genesis 1 creation narrative as declaration illocutionary acts as well. However, out of all the creation commands, “Let there be light” would be the only one best considered as a true declaration illocutionary act. As mentioned earlier, light is the only item created by *fiat* or by speech as a command (“word account”) since everything else is created by *fiat* and a divinely instigated activity (“deed account”).³⁴⁵ Details of a “deed account” are missing as after God said, “Let there be light”, it was followed immediately with, “and there was light”. This matches with Searle’s definition of a declaration illocutionary acts as those that “bring about some alteration in the status or

³⁴³ Ibid, 19.

³⁴⁴ Ibid, 18.

³⁴⁵ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 119.

condition of the referred to object or objects solely in virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed.”³⁴⁶

Directive illocutionary acts differ from those of declaration illocutionary acts. The former are commands that rely on another agent to listen, respond correctly, and bring about the desired result (indicated by a “deed account”). The latter are the commands themselves (“word account”) that bring about the desired result. Would it be incompatible for an utterance like “Let there be light” to be both a directive and declaration illocutionary act as proposed here? They are compatible simultaneously with God’s creation speech in Genesis 1. Whether the Son as the Word of God is commanded to create (directive illocutionary act) or He is seen as the actual spoken Word of God that creates (declaration illocutionary act), the Son still remains as the Divine Subject who creates. This is necessary as “all things were made through him” (Jn. 1:3a; cf. Col. 1:16).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 1

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, “Let there be light”, He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

Table 2. Perlocutionary act effects of day 1

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father’s desire for the existence of light was fulfilled.

³⁴⁶ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 17.

Directive Act	The Son created light.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating light through the Son.
Declaration Act	The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of light.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

“And There Was Light”

After God spoke, “Let there be light”, the narrative followed with the result, “and there was light” (Gen. 1:3). This Hebrew phrase וַיְהִי־אֹר (vayhi-or) has the verb in the *wayyiqtol* form which includes the imperfect tense with a *wāw* consecutive. The verb form “serves to express actions, events, or states, which are to be regarded as the temporal or logical sequel of actions, events, or states mentioned immediately before.”³⁴⁷ It is also called “preterite” and denotes a simple action in the past.³⁴⁸ The *wayyiqtol* form also corresponds to the Greek *aorist*, which is how the Septuagint presents the verb ἐγένετο as a translation.³⁴⁹ From the grammar of the verb “to be” in the Hebrew text as Septuagint, the phrase “and there was light” indicates the

³⁴⁷ Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, ed. Emil Kautzsch, trans. Arthur Ernest Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 326.

³⁴⁸ Gary Davis Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 17.12.

³⁴⁹ Brayford, *Genesis*, 210.

occurrence or creation of the existence of light. This shows that there is fulfillment of God's illocutionary acts and His perlocutionary act effects are achieved.

The standard fulfillment formula "and it was so" (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) is featured on most of the other days of creation (Gen. 1:7, 9, 11, 15, 24). This formula is missing on the first day of creation. When addressing this fulfillment formula in another day of creation, Sarna said, "It was only the brevity of God's initial utterance in verse 3 that permitted repetition of its content without stylistic clumsiness."³⁵⁰ The reference to "and there was light" (Gen. 1:3) on the topic of the phrase "and it was so" suggested that Sarna saw the former phrase as equivalent to the latter fulfillment formula. Even though the text did not include a "deed account" of creation such as "and God made the light", the phrase "and there was light" indicated the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the grammar of the phrase and the equivalence of the phrase to the fulfillment formula.

"And God Saw That the Light Was Good"

Another detail provided in the narrative that indicated success in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects after God spoke, is the phrase "And God saw that the light was good" (Gen. 1:4a).³⁵¹ This phrase is an assessment of creation. Of the possible meanings and uses of the Hebrew word "good" (טוֹב *tôb*), those which express the light's beauty, superior

³⁵⁰ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

³⁵¹ It should be noted that this phrase is unique and differs from that which is repeated on the other days of creation as "And God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 24; cf. 1:31). Despite this, the phrase "And God saw that the light was good" should be seen synonymous with the rest as phrases of assessment.

quality/worth, and God's pleasure/will for it may be in view.³⁵² God's assessment of light as good indicates His approval and satisfaction with it as the result of His speech. This shows that the completion of God's speech act for the creation of light is happy or felicitous.

“And God Separated the Light from the Darkness”

Furthermore, another detail provided in the narrative that indicated success in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects after God spoke, is the phrase, “And God separated the light from the darkness” (Gen. 1:4b). This potentially can be seen in two different ways. The first view is to see this phrase as a “deed account” of creation. The second view is to see this phrase as a separate action not as a direct response to God's locutionary act of “Let there be light”, but only made possible with the existence of light.

In the first view, the perlocutionary act effects are seen as completed or fulfilled due to a “deed account” of creation. Sarna saw the act of God separating the light from darkness as “the second modality of creation”.³⁵³ This suggests that the action of separating was the means by which light was created. If this is really the case, it would explain how the Son as the Spoken Word responded to the Father's directive illocutionary act and created light, successfully producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. While possible, this view is not likely. Hamilton said, “for x can be separated only on the assumption that both x and y are already in

³⁵² R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1980), 345-346. A more detailed presentation on the possible meanings and uses of לָטַף טָרַב will be given after the completion of the analysis for each day of creation. This will be featured in a section concerning the felicity of God's speech acts in creation from repeated phrases.

³⁵³ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

existence.”³⁵⁴ This means that the act of separation is only possible if the light and darkness already exist.

Furthermore, this phrase is not a “deed account” for the creation of light due to the placement of the phrase of assessment. “The major difference between this work of separation and the other two in Gen. 1 is that here the pronouncement of God’s benedictional statement – [“And God separated the light from the darkness”] – precedes the separation. In vv. 6-8 and 14-19 this sentence of evaluation follows the separation.”³⁵⁵ God’s assessment of light as good showed that light was already created before the act of separation. Thus, separation is not likely a “deed account” of the creation of light or the means by which light is created.

The second view of the phrase “And God separated the light from the darkness” is more likely. This act is not a “deed account” of the creation of light, but possibly that of the creation of time. Brayford said, “Although light now exists as a counterpart to darkness and has been declared good, darkness is not eliminated. Instead, God separates the two opposite elements, thereby establishing the cycle of day (what God calls/names ‘light’) and night (what God calls/names ‘darkness’), and thus the passage of time.”³⁵⁶ Westermann would also agree as He said, “It is not the creation of light, but the separation of light and darkness that sets in motion the march and rhythm of time.”³⁵⁷ It is important to note that this act of the creation of time is not a direct response to God’s locutionary act of “Let there be light” as there is nothing in this particular speech of God that indicates the desire, command, commitment, or declaration for the

³⁵⁴ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 119.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 120.

³⁵⁶ Brayford, *Genesis*, 210.

³⁵⁷ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*.

creation of time. However, the phrase “And God separated the light from the darkness” can still be used as evidence for the success in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects of “Let there be light” as it is dependent on the necessity of the creation of light described earlier. As described in this section, the three phrases of resulting details provided by the narrative after God spoke, indicate the fulfillment of God’s intended perlocutionary act effects and a felicitous speech act for the creation of light.

Day 2 – The Creation of an Expanse – Genesis 1:6-8

⁶ And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷ And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. ⁸ And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

Locutionary Act – Day 2

On the second day of creation, God created the expanse (skies) and separated the waters under the expanse from the waters (moisture in the air) above the expanse. God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate waters from the waters.” (Gen. 1:6). Since all speech is performative,³⁵⁸ God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

Table 3. Illocutionary acts of day 2

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	God expressed the will or desire for the creation of the skies and the separation of waters from the waters via the separating function of the skies.

³⁵⁸ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

Directive Act	God called the Son to actively create the skies and separate waters from the waters via the separating function of the skies.
Commissive Act	God committed Himself to actively create the skies and separate waters from the waters via the separating function of the skies.
Declaration Act	God declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the skies and the separation of waters from the waters via the separating function of the skies.

As multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance,³⁵⁹ the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these four illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate waters from the waters”.

Illocutionary Acts – Day 2

Expressive Act – Day 2

In saying, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate waters from the waters”, God the Father may be performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will for the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters”. The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (E) is represented by:

E Ø (willing) (God + creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters).

³⁵⁹ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**³⁶⁰ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters (**property**).

As God’s utterance is preceded by the phrase “God said” in the narrative, there is an indication that God willed for the content of what He spoke.³⁶¹ In this particular utterance, God willed for three elements. The first element is the creation of the skies. God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters...” (Gen. 1:6a). The verb for “let there be” (יָרָא *hāyā*) is in the third person jussive verb form. Since the jussive is a simple impersonal command that expresses one’s will to another,³⁶² God is expressing His will for the existence or creation of an expanse (skies). The second element God willed for is the separation of the waters from the waters. God said, “... and let it separate the waters from the waters.” (Gen. 1:6b). Like the verb “let there be” (יָרָא *hāyā*) earlier in the verse, the verb “and let” (וַיַּחַד *vayehi*) is also in the third person jussive verb form and suggests an expression of will for the separation of the waters from the waters.

The third element God willed for is the means by which the waters are separated from the waters. The verb “and let” (וַיַּחַד *vayehi*) is in the *wayyiqtol* form, which includes the imperfect tense with a *wāw* consecutive. It indicates the expression of the temporal or logical sequel of actions mentioned earlier.³⁶³ This suggests that the separation of the waters from the waters can only occur after the fulfillment of the creation of the expanse (Gen. 1:6a). Why is this the case?

³⁶⁰ Ibid, 16.

³⁶¹ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

³⁶² Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

³⁶³ Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 326.

The verb “and let” (וַיְהִי *vayehi*) is a command that appears to be directed to the English object pronoun “it” which refers to the created expanse (skies). The skies are to separate the waters from the waters. The word for “separate” מַבְדִּיל (*mavdil*) is in the *hiphil* verb stem, which represents the “notion of causing a (grammatical) object to participate as a subject in the action.”³⁶⁴ In this case, the skies are the grammatical object that participates as a subject to separate the waters from the waters. This part of verse 6 can be translated as “And let it [the expanse/skies] cause to separate waters from the waters.” This is why in this expressive illocutionary act, God is expressing His will for the separation of waters from the waters through the means of the separating function of the skies.³⁶⁵

Directive Act – Day 2

A command to the Son. In saying, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate waters from the waters”, God the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively create the skies and separate the waters from the waters (through the means of the separating function of the skies). A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Son, “I call you to create the skies and separate the waters from the waters.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create the skies and separate waters from the waters).

³⁶⁴ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 357.

³⁶⁵ Brayford saw the skies as having the purpose or function of separating the waters from the waters. She said, “The following fulfillment statement [in verse 7] provides additional information that both indicates the precise locations of the now separated water (part under the firmament and part over the firmament) and also suggests the real purpose of the firmament, namely to keep each part of the water in its place.” Brayford, *Genesis*, 211.

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism ! ↑ W (**H does A**)³⁶⁶ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Son as the Hearer (**H**), to do the future action (**A**) of creating the skies and separating the waters from the waters. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created the skies and separated the waters from the waters (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

The two phrases “Let there be an expanse...” and “... let it separate...” are both different imperatives or commands. Directive illocutionary acts are in view, due to the use of the third person jussive verb forms that also indicate simple impersonal commands.³⁶⁷ In addition to the expression of will (expressive illocutionary act), the jussives in “Let there be (׃ hāyâ) an expanse” and “...let it (׃׃׃ vayehi) separate...” also convey commands. However, who were these commands directed to? In the first imperative of the “word account”, the subject of the command “Let there be an expanse” is unknown or ambiguous as it is just a call for the expanse to exist or be created. On the other hand, the “deed account” described, “And God made the expanse...” (Gen. 1:7a). Since God’s speech act must be fulfilled and felicitous, the command must have been directed to the Son who created as the Father could not direct a command to Himself.

Not a command to the skies. In the second imperative of the “word account”, the subject of the command “And let it separate...” appears to be represented by the English object pronoun “it”. As mentioned earlier, “it” refers to the skies as the grammatical object that participates as a

³⁶⁶ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

³⁶⁷ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

subject to separate the waters from the waters. From the words of the locutionary act, the command appears to be directed to the skies to do the action of separating the waters from the waters. There is an association of the skies with the act of separating. If this is the case, God the Father's directive illocutionary act was a command for the skies to separate the waters from the waters. The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) would then be represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The skies do separate the waters from the waters)

This speech act would be examined according to the second speech conversation plane as it involves speech between God and creation (the skies) within the creation narrative. Looking at this second speech conversation plane, God's speech act would not appear to be complete and felicitous for two reasons. First, it would seem implausible for the command to be directed to the skies if at the time of the Father's utterance of this command, the skies have not been created yet. Second, if the command was directed to the skies, there appears to be a disagreement or infelicity between the "word account" and the "deed account". The details of the "deed account" presented by the narrative after God spoke included the identity of who did the creating. They revealed that "God... separated the waters..." (Gen. 1:7a, b).³⁶⁸ How could a command be directed to the skies to do the action of separating when God did the action of separating?

The Son as the spoken Word. One solution for this issue is to interpret the two commands according to a canonical perspective. A canonical reading would see God the Son, the preincarnate Christ, as the Spoken Word of God in creation. According to Vanhoozer, when

³⁶⁸ According to Hutzli, "There is an ambiguity in the 'deed account' of MT: the firmament could also function as the grammatical subject of וַיִּבְרָא. But in light of the fact that God functions as subject in the foregoing sentence and also because a characteristic of sentences relating to the creative acts consists in stressing God's role as the lone creator we assume that the author sees the deity in the subject in 1:7 as well. In contrast to MT the Septuagint makes the subject explicit. [Cf. καὶ διεχώρισεν ὁ θεός]" Hutzli, "Tradition and Interpretation in Gen 1:1-2:4a", 9-10.

God the Father speaks, the Son corresponds to His illocutionary act and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood.³⁶⁹ For the first command, the Son is not only the spoken Word that has the causal power to create the skies, but also, He Himself does the deed to create the skies. For the second command, the Son is not only the spoken Word that has the causal power to separate the waters from the waters, but He Himself does the deed to separate the waters from the waters through the means of the separating function of the skies. The speech acts become felicitous since God the Son as the Spoken Word is seen as the subject for both the “word account” and “deed account”.

Commissive Act – Day 2

In saying, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate waters from the waters”, God the Father may also be performing the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively create the skies and separate the waters from the waters. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, “I commit to create the skies and separate the waters from the waters.” The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (C) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create the skies and separate the waters from the waters)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**³⁷⁰ in which God the Father is intending (**I**) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (**S**) doing the future action (**A**) of creating the skies and separating the waters from the waters. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created

³⁶⁹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

³⁷⁰ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

the skies and separated the waters from the waters (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the skies through the Son in His directive illocutionary act.

Declaration Act – Day 2

In saying, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate waters from the waters”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

D \updownarrow \emptyset (**creation of the skies and separation of the waters from the waters**)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **D** \updownarrow \emptyset (**P**)³⁷¹ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (**P**) of the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (\emptyset), but has double direction of fit (\updownarrow), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the creation of the skies

³⁷¹ Ibid, 19.

and the separation of the waters from the waters (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters (what happened in the world).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 2

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate waters from the waters”, He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

Table 4. Perlocutionary act effects of day 2

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father’s desire for the existence of the skies was fulfilled and His desire for the separation of the waters from the waters was also fulfilled via the means of the separating function of the skies.
Directive Act	The Son created the skies and separated the waters from the waters via the means of the separating function of the skies.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the skies and separating waters from the waters through the Son via the means of the separating function of the skies.
Declaration Act	The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters via the means of the separating function of the skies.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

“And It Was So”

The standard fulfillment formula “and it was so” (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) (Gen. 1:7b) first appears on day 2 of this creation narrative. Whenever this formula is used, it expresses the execution of a divine command.³⁷² However, this first use of the fulfillment formula does not set the precedent for its use in the other days of creation. This is because the fulfillment formula appears at the end of verse 7, after the “deed account”, instead of at the end of verse 6, immediately after the “word account”. All other subsequent appearances of the fulfillment formula are immediately after the “word account”. Westermann asserted, “Only in this position does it make sense. It is unnecessary to say the least, after the sentence ‘and God made...’.”³⁷³ The wording is a bit awkward and redundant to have the phrase “And it was so” after a description of how God had already fulfilled the command in the “word account”. It is important to note that the Septuagint records the fulfillment formula at the end of verse 6, immediately after the divine speech, in a way that is consistent with the other occurrences on the other days of creation in this narrative.³⁷⁴ Regardless of the position, the mention of the fulfillment formula indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

God Made and Separated

The phrases “and God made” and “God... separated” can be seen as fulfillments of the Son’s creative work to bring about the creation of the skies and consequently, the separation of

³⁷² Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

³⁷³ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 116. Westermann believes that redactors placed the fulfillment formula at the end of verse 7 in the Masoretic Text to try to unify the “word account” and “deed account” of creation.

³⁷⁴ Brayford, *Genesis*, 211; Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

the waters from the waters. The verb “and... made” (וַיַּעַשׂ *vayya'as*), “simply means that the divine intention became a reality”.³⁷⁵ The intention for the existence of an expanse (skies) in the “word account” came to be as God made the expanse, correlating it with the deed account. The verb “and separated” (וַיַּבְדֵּל *vayyavdel*) correlates God’s action of separation in the “deed account” with the intention for the skies to separate in the “word account”. As mentioned earlier, God was able to separate the waters from the waters using the separating function of the skies after its creation. The details described of what God made and separated in the “deed account” correlate to what was commanded in the “word account”. These indicate the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

Missing Assessment Formula

The account on day 2 is also unique because it is the only one that is missing the assessment formula of creation “And God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).³⁷⁶ Usually, God’s assessment of creation on each day as good indicates His approval and satisfaction with them as the result of His speech. This would show that the completion of God’s speech act for creation is felicitous and another indicator of the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. However, the absence of such an assessment formula does not mean that the creation of the skies and the separation of waters did not occur, or that God was dissatisfied with them.

³⁷⁵ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

³⁷⁶ On day 1 of creation, the phrase is expressed differently: “And God saw that the light was good” (Gen. 1:4). After the creation of human beings on day 6, the phrase is also expressed differently: “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31).

God used the created expanse (skies) to separate waters under the expanse with waters above the expanse (moisture in the air). In doing so, He essentially created the potential for rain. Sarna provided a reason for the missing assessment formula of creation. He said, “The formula *ki tov*, ‘that it was good,’ is omitted because rain has no value unless there is dry land to be fructified; the creative acts relating to water are not completed until the third day, the account of which appropriately records the formula twice.”³⁷⁷ In one sense, the mention of the assessment formula of creation two times on day 3 makes up for the missing one on day 2. In another sense, the mention of the assessment formulas after the creation of dry land in verse 10 and plant life in verse 12 also become an indicator of God’s approval and satisfaction of the rain. Although missing on day 2, the two assessment formulas of creations on day 3 show the completion and fulfillment of God’s speech act for the creation of the skies and the separation of the waters from the waters.

Day 3a – The Creation of Seas and Dry Land – Genesis 1:9-10

⁹ *And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so.* ¹⁰ *God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.*

Locutionary Act – Day 3a

On the third day of creation, God created the seas and gathered them together to create dry land. God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let dry land appear.” (Gen. 1:9).

³⁷⁷ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

Since all speech is performative,³⁷⁸ God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

Table 5. Illocutionary acts of day 3a

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	God expressed the will or desire for the existence of the seas and dry land via the gathering of waters.
Directive Act	God called the Son to actively bring about the existence of the seas and dry land via the gathering of waters.
Commissive Act	God committed Himself to actively bring about the existence of the seas and dry land via the gathering of waters.
Declaration Act	God declared the condition of the universe to change with the existence of the seas and dry land via the gathering of waters.

As multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance,³⁷⁹ the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these four illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let dry land appear”.

Illocutionary Acts – Day 3a

Expressive Act – Day 3a

In saying, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let

³⁷⁸ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

³⁷⁹ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

dry land appear”, God the Father may be performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will or desire for the existence of the seas and dry land through the means of the gathering of waters. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the existence of the seas and dry land through the gathering of waters.” The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (**E**) is represented by:

E Ø (willing) (God + existence of the seas and dry land via the gathering of waters).

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**³⁸⁰ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the existence of the seas and dry land through the gathering of waters (**property**).

As God’s utterance is preceded by the phrase “God said” in the narrative, there is an indication that God willed for the content of what He spoke.³⁸¹ In this particular utterance, God willed for three elements. The first element is the means by which to create. God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place.” The verb for “let... be gathered together” (יָקָוּ *yi’qaw’u*) is in the third person jussive verb form. Since the jussive is a simple impersonal command that expresses one’s will to another,³⁸² God is expressing His will for the waters to be gathered. God’s expressed will is seen as the means by which to create since verse 10 reveals the result of what was created. “The waters that were gathered together he called seas” (Gen. 1:10b). In turn, the second element God willed for is the creation of the seas.

³⁸⁰ Ibid, 16.

³⁸¹ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

³⁸² Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

Finally, the third element God willed for is the creation of dry land. “And let dry land appear” (Gen. 1:9b). The verb for “let... appear” (וַתֵּרָאֵה *wê'tey'ra'eh*) is also in the third person jussive verb form indicating God’s will for the appearance or existence of dry land. It is important to note that this verb also includes a *waw* conjunctive that connects two parts of speech. This use of the jussive is “depending (with *Wāw*) on an imperative or cohortative to express an intention or an assurance of a contingent occurrence.”³⁸³ This means that the contingent appearance of dry land is dependent on the waters being gathered together. As a result, dry land is also created through the means of the gathering of waters.

Directive Act – Day 3a

A command to the Son. In saying, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let dry land appear”, God the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively bring about the existence of the seas and dry land through the means of the gathering of waters. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Son, “I call you to create the seas and dry land through the gathering of waters.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create the sea and dry land via the gathering of waters)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **! ↑ W (H does A)**³⁸⁴ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (**W**) God the Son as the Hearer (**H**), to do the future action (**A**) of bringing about the existence of the seas and dry land through the gathering of waters. This directive

³⁸³ Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 322.

³⁸⁴ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created the seas and dry land (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

There are two separate imperatives in this utterance. The first is, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together in one place.” The second is, “And let dry land appear.” From the Hebrew text, directive illocutionary acts are in view, due to the use of the third person jussive verb forms that also indicate a simple impersonal command.³⁸⁵ In addition to the expression of will (expressive illocutionary act), the jussive in “let... be gathered together” (יִקָּוּ? *yi'qaw'u*) and in “let... appear” (וַעֲרָא? *wê'tey'ra'eh*) also conveys a command. However, it is unclear as to who or what is commanded to gather the waters or to let dry land appear since these verbs occur in the passive voice as indicated by the Niphal form. The Greek verbs in the Septuagint (συναγωγήν *synagōgēn* and ὄφθη *ōphthē*) that correspond to their Hebrew equivalents respectively are also in the passive voice.³⁸⁶

Not a command to the waters. Despite the ambiguity, some scholars may argue that the commands were directed to the waters itself that responded and acted with a creative role. There is a unique phrase in the Septuagint after the fulfillment formula “and it was so” at the end of verse 9, that is not found in the Hebrew text. According to Westermann, this phrase is a development of the fulfillment formula, and is translated as, “And the water under the heaven gathered together into its own place, and dry land became visible”.³⁸⁷ The Septuagint includes a

³⁸⁵ Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

³⁸⁶ Brayford, *Genesis*, 211.

³⁸⁷ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 121.

“deed account” of creation for this part of day 3 and suggests that it is the water that gathered itself together and has a creative role in the existence of the seas and dry land. Was this “deed account” added to the non-MT *Vorlage* by translators of the Septuagint?³⁸⁸ Or was it omitted by redactors of the Masoretic Text? Brown and Cook do not believe that any addition was made by the Septuagint and support the view that this “deed account” was omitted by the redactors of the Masoretic Text.³⁸⁹ Cook reasoned this was done “in order to avoid the possible deduction that the water was able to generate parts of creation by itself.”³⁹⁰ In other words, the omission was to dissociate from other Ancient Near East creation stories that saw water as having generative capabilities.

If the unique “deed account” that described the creative act of the water is original to the Hebrew Text, then God the Father’s directive illocutionary act was a command for the water to gather together and create the seas and dry land. The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) would then be represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The water does gathering together to create the seas and dry land)

If this is the case, this speech act would be examined according to the second speech conversation plane as it involves speech between God and creation (the waters) within the creation narrative. Looking at this second speech conversation plane, God’s speech act would be complete and felicitous since the interpreted command for the waters to gather and create was fulfilled as detailed in the “deed account” unique to the Septuagint. However, when looking at

³⁸⁸ The non-MT *Vorlage* is the Hebrew text that served as the basis for the Septuagint translation.

³⁸⁹ William P. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology in the Hebrew and Greek Texts of Genesis 1:1-2:3*, ed. David L. Peterson, Society of Biblical Dissertation Series (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 234-235.

³⁹⁰ Johann Cook, “The Exegesis of the Greek Genesis,” in *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies*, ed. Claude E. Cox (Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, 1987), 105.

this second speech conversation plane in the context of the canon of Scripture, God's speech act would be incomplete and infelicitous since God's speech would leave out the creative involvement of the Son as the Word of God.

The Son as the spoken Word. Whether the “deed account” unique to the Septuagint is part of the original Hebrew text or not, Westermann gives preference to the Hebrew Masoretic Text as it stands.³⁹¹ Even if the waters did intend to have a creative role, the passive voice of the verbs “let... be gathered together” (יָקוּוּ? *yi'qaw'u*) and “let... appear” (וַתֵּרָאֶה *wê'tey'ra'eh*) does not disqualify the possibility of God's sole responsibility for creation. In the context of creation, Psalm 33:7 says, “He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses.” For God's speech act to be felicitous on the canonical level, God the Son as the preincarnate Christ should be seen as the spoken Word of God. As He corresponds to God's illocutionary acts, He is not only the spoken Word that has the causal power to create the seas and dry land, but also, He Himself does the deed to create the seas and the dry land. This is consistent with the phrase “and the waters that were gathered together...” (Gen. 1:10b) in which the verb is in the passive voice. The creative role of the Son is also not contradictory to the creative role of waters if described in an existing “deed account” of creation from the Septuagint. This is because any creative role of the waters would have to be enabled by God the Father through the Son as the spoken Word. Therefore, a directive illocutionary act of commanding the Son is the preferred view.

Commissive Act – Day 3a

In saying, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let

³⁹¹ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 121.

dry land appear”, God the Father may also be performing the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively bring about the existence of the seas and dry land through the means of the gathering of waters. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, “I commit to create the seas and dry land through the means of the gathering of waters.”

The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (C) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create the seas and dry land via the gathering of waters)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**³⁹² in which God the Father is intending (I) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (S) doing the future action (A) of bringing about the existence of the seas and dry land through the gathering of waters. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created the seas and the skies through the gathering of waters (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the seas and dry land through the Son in His directive illocutionary act.

Declaration Act – Day 3a

In saying, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let dry land appear”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the existence of the seas and dry land through the means of the gathering of waters. A direct way to communicate this may be God

³⁹² Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has the seas and dry land through the means of the gathering of waters.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

D \updownarrow \emptyset (existence of the seas and dry lands via the gathering of waters)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **D \updownarrow \emptyset (P)**³⁹³ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (**P**) of the existence of the seas and dry land through the gathering of waters. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (\emptyset), but has double direction of fit (\updownarrow), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the existence of the seas and dry lands through the gathering of waters (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the existence of the seas and dry lands through the gathering of waters (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the existence of the seas and dry lands through the gathering of waters (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the existence of the seas and dry lands through the gathering of waters (what happened in the world).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 3a

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let dry land appear”, He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

³⁹³ Ibid, 19.

Table 6. Perlocutionary act effects of day 3a

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father's desire for the existence of the seas and dry land was fulfilled via the means of the gathering of waters.
Directive Act	The Son created the seas and dry land via the means of the gathering of waters.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the seas and dry land through the Son via the means of the gathering of waters.
Declaration Act	The Father's speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the seas and dry land via the means of the gathering of waters.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

“And It Was So”

Immediately after the “word account” of creation when God spoke, followed the standard fulfillment formula “and it was so” (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) (Gen. 1:9c) that expresses the execution of the divine command to create the seas and dry land.³⁹⁴ This is the first use of the fulfillment formula in this narrative that occurred immediately after God spoke as opposed to after the “deed account” of creation described on day 2. All other subsequent uses of the fulfillment formula in this narrative also occur immediately after God spoke. The mention of the fulfillment formula indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

³⁹⁴ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

The Naming of the Earth and Seas

After the fulfillment formula, the narrative does not give a “deed account” of creation but describes God’s subsequent action of calling. “God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas” (Gen 1:10a-b). Since God cannot bestow the names of Earth and Seas to entities that do not exist, this phrase indicates that the dry land and seas were successfully created and corresponds to the fulfillment of the creative desires of God in His utterance in verse 9. Furthermore, this phrase also affirms that the means by which the dry land and seas were created (the gathering of waters together) were executed in the way God desired. Since this phrase still does not indicate who or what gathered the waters, it is consistent as the fulfillment of God’s speech in verse 9, regardless of whether the agent of creation is the Son, the waters itself, or the waters enabled by God the Father through the Son as the spoken Word.

“And God Saw That It Was Good”

An assessment formula of creation, “And God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:10c), is featured at the end of this first part of day 3. Of the possible meanings and uses of the Hebrew word “good” (טוֹב *tôb*), those which express the seas’ and dry land’s beauty, superior quality/worth, and God’s pleasure/will for them may be in view.³⁹⁵ God’s assessment of the seas and dry land as good indicates His approval and satisfaction with them as the result of His speech. This shows that the completion of God’s speech act for the creation of the seas and dry land is felicitous and indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. Furthermore, this phrase as an assessment formula of creation is the first of two mentioned on

³⁹⁵ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 345-346.

day 3. Since there was no assessment formula on day 2 with the separated waters above the expanse (rain), the assessment formula here on day 3a also indicates God's approval and satisfaction of the rain as there is now dry land to fructify.³⁹⁶

The Use of the Earth to Create

In the second part of the third day of creation, God gave another command and said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation..." (Gen. 1:11a). God was able to use the earth to create plant life if the earth (the name for the dry land) had already existed. This affirms that the earth was successfully created through the means of the gathering of waters as a result of God's command during the first part of the third day of creation. The involvement of the earth in creation according to God's speech acts will be discussed in the next sections.

Day 3b – The Creation of Plant Life – Genesis 1:11-13

¹¹ And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

Locutionary Act – Day 3b

On the third day of creation, God also created plant life. God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." (Gen.

³⁹⁶ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

1:11). Since all speech is performative,³⁹⁷ God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

Table 7. Illocutionary acts of day 3b

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	God expressed the will or desire for the existence of plant life via the sprouting action of the earth.
Directive Act	God called the Son to actively bring about the existence of plant life via the sprouting action of the earth.
Commissive Act	God committed Himself to actively bring about the existence of plant life via the sprouting action of the earth.
Declaration Act	God declared the condition of the universe to change with the existence of plant life via the sprouting action of the earth.

As multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance,³⁹⁸ the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these four illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth”.

Illocutionary Acts – Day 3b

Expressive Act – Day 3b

In saying, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth”, God the Father may be

³⁹⁷ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

³⁹⁸ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will or desire for the existence of plant life through the means of the sprouting action of the earth. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the existence of plant life through the sprouting action of the earth.” The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (**E**) is represented by:

E Ø (willing) (God + the existence of plant life via the sprouting action of the earth)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**³⁹⁹ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the existence of plant life through the sprouting action of the earth (**property**).

As God’s utterance is preceded by the phrase “God said” in the narrative, there is an indication that God willed for the content of what He spoke.⁴⁰⁰ In this particular utterance, God willed for the creation of plant life. He also willed for plant life to be created through the means of the sprouting action of the earth. The verb for “let... sprout” (נִשְׂרָתָּ *tadshē*) is in the third person jussive verb form. Since the jussive is a simple impersonal command that expresses one’s will to another,⁴⁰¹ God is expressing His will for the earth to sprout as the means by which plant life is created. God may be performing the expressive illocutionary act with this utterance.

Directive Act – Day 3b

A command to the Son. In saying, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth”, God

³⁹⁹ Ibid, 16.

⁴⁰⁰ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

⁴⁰¹ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively bring about the existence of plant life through the means of the sprouting action of the earth. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Son, “I call you to create plant life through the sprouting action of the earth.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create plant life through the sprouting action of the earth)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism ! ↑ W (H does A)⁴⁰² in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Son as the Hearer (H), to do the future action (A) of bringing about the existence of plant life through the sprouting action of the earth. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created plant life through the sprouting action of the earth (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

Not a command to the earth. As one examines the want of the Father through His words, he or she may wonder if the directive illocutionary act is a command to the earth as opposed to the Son. The subject of the verb “let... sprout” (טַדְשֶׁהָ *tadshē*) is the earth. Since the verb is in the third person jussive form, it indicates a simple impersonal command.⁴⁰³ In addition to the expression of will (expressive illocutionary act), the jussive in “let... sprout” (טַדְשֶׁהָ *tadshē*) also grammatically conveys a command to the earth. If this is the case, God the Father’s directive illocutionary act was a command for the earth to create plant life by sprouting. The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) would then be represented by:

⁴⁰² Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

⁴⁰³ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

! ↑ Wanting (The earth does sprout to create plant life)

This speech act would be examined according to the second speech conversation plane as it involves speech between God and creation (the earth) within the creation narrative. Looking at this second speech conversation plane, God's speech act would be complete and felicitous. The details of the "deed account" presented by the narrative after God spoke include, "The earth brought forth vegetation..." (Gen. 1:12a) which fulfills and corresponds to God's want. However, looking at this second speech conversation plane in the context of the canon of Scripture, God's speech act would be incomplete and infelicitous since God's speech would leave out the creative involvement of the Son as the Word of God. This would be theologically problematic as it suggests that the earth has an independent creative role in generating plant life, as opposed to God's sole responsibility for the creation of plant life.

The Son as the spoken Word. Matthews provided a solution to this apparent theological problem. He said, "The land by itself, of course, does not produce vegetation; rather God enables the land to do so by his creative word."⁴⁰⁴ From a canonical reading, by God's spoken Word, His Son, the land was enabled to produce plant life as "all things were made through him" (Jn. 1:3a; cf Col. 1:16). In this light, the sprouting action of the earth can be seen as the means by which plant life is created. Sarna referred to the earth as a mediating element and also provided the reasoning for this view:

Here the earth is depicted as the mediating element, implying that God endows it with generative powers that He now activates by His utterance. The significance of this singularity is that the sources of power in what we call nature, which were personified and deified in the ancient world, are now emptied of sanctity. The productive forces of

⁴⁰⁴ Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:2*, 152.

nature exist only by the will of one sovereign Creator and are not independent spiritual entities.⁴⁰⁵

Depicting the earth as a mediating element for the production of plant life becomes a polemic against the Ancient Near East worldview. Thus, it is best to see God's utterance in verse 11 as a directive illocutionary act towards the Son to create plant life through the means of the sprouting action of the earth.

Commissive Act – Day 3b

In saying, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth", God the Father may also be performing the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively bring about the existence of plant life through the means of the sprouting action of the earth. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, "I commit to create the plant life through the means of the sprouting action of the earth." The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (C) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create plant life via the sprouting action of the earth)

This is based on Searle's original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**⁴⁰⁶ in which God the Father is intending (**I**) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (**S**) doing the future action (**A**) of bringing about plant life through the sprouting action of the earth. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created plant life through the sprouting action of the earth (what happened in the world), it

⁴⁰⁵ Sarna, *Genesis*, 9.

⁴⁰⁶ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by creating plant life through the Son in His directive illocutionary act.

Declaration Act – Day 3b

In saying, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the existence of plant life through the means of the sprouting action of the earth. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has plant life through the means of the sprouting of the earth.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

D \updownarrow \emptyset (existence of plant life via the sprouting of the earth)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **D \updownarrow \emptyset (P)**⁴⁰⁷ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (**P**) of the existence of plant life through the sprouting of the earth. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (**\emptyset**), but has double direction of fit (**\updownarrow**), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the existence of plant life through the sprouting action of the earth (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the existence of plant life through the sprouting action of the earth (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the existence of plant life through the sprouting action

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid, 19.

of the earth (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the existence of plant life through the sprouting action of the earth (what happened in the world).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 3b

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth”, He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

Table 8. Perlocutionary act effects of day 3b

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father’s desire for the existence of plant life was fulfilled via the means of the sprouting action of the earth.
Directive Act	The Son created plant life via the means of the sprouting action of the earth.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating plant life through the Son via the means of the sprouting action of the earth.
Declaration Act	The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of plant life via the means of the gathering of waters.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

“And It Was So”

Immediately after the “word account” of creation when God spoke, followed the standard fulfillment formula “and it was so” (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) (Gen. 1:11b) that expresses the execution of the divine command to create plant life through the sprouting action of the earth.⁴⁰⁸ The mention of the fulfillment formula indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. What follows after the fulfillment formula are the details indicating what was fulfilled.

The “Deed Account”

After the fulfillment formula came the details of the “deed account” in Genesis 1:12a-c. Each part of the “deed account” corresponds with what God spoke in the “word account”.

Table 9. Comparison of the “word account” and “deed account” on day 3b

<u>“Word Account”</u>	<u>“Deed Account”</u>
“Let the earth sprout vegetation...” (Gen. 1:11a)	“The earth brought forth vegetation...” (Gen. 1:12a)
“...plants yielding seed...” (Gen 1:11b)	“...plants yielding seeds according to their own kind...” (Gen. 1:12b)
“... and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth...” (Gen 1:11c)	“...and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind.” (Gen. 1:12c)

⁴⁰⁸ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

Everything spoken by God in the “word account” from verse 11 was described as fulfilled in action in the “deed account” from verse 12. This includes the view of seeing the sprouting action of the earth as the means by which plant life is created. These details affirm a felicitous speech act and a successful production of the intended perlocutionary act effects.

“And God Saw That It Was Good”

An assessment formula of creation, “And God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:12d), is featured at the end of this second part of day 3. Of the possible meanings and uses of the Hebrew word “good” (טוֹב *tôb*), those which express the plant life’s beauty, superior quality/worth, and God’s pleasure/will for it may be in view.⁴⁰⁹ God’s assessment of the plant life as good indicates His approval and satisfaction with it as the result of His speech. This shows that the completion of God’s speech act for the creation of plant life is felicitous and indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. Furthermore, this phrase as an assessment formula of creation is the second one mentioned on day 3. Since there was no assessment formula on day 2 with the separated waters above the expanse (rain), the assessment formulas on day 3a and here on day 3b also indicate God’s approval and satisfaction of the rain as there is now dry land to fructify and the production of plant life as a result.⁴¹⁰

Day 4 – The Creation of the Sun, Moon, and Stars – Genesis 1:14-19

¹⁴ *And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the*

⁴⁰⁹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 345-346.

⁴¹⁰ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

stars. ¹⁷ And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

Locutionary Act – Day 4

On the fourth day of creation, God created the sun, moon, and stars, and gave them three purposes.⁴¹¹ God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” (Gen. 1:14-15). Since all speech is performative,⁴¹² God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

Table 10. Illocutionary acts of day 4

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	God expressed the will or desire for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three purposes.
Directive Act	God called the Son to actively create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes.
Commissive Act	God committed Himself to actively create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes.
Declaration Act	God declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars and their given purposes.

⁴¹¹ Purpose 1: Separate the day from the night (1:14b). Purpose 2: Be signs for seasons, days, and years (1:14c). Purpose 3: Give light upon the earth (1:15).

⁴¹² Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

As multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance,⁴¹³ the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these four illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth”.

Illocutionary Acts – Day 4

Expressive Act – Day 4

In saying, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth”, God the Father may be performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will or desire for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three purposes. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three purposes.” The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (**E**) is represented by:

E Ø (willing) (God + creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three purposes)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**⁴¹⁴ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three purposes (**property**).

⁴¹³ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid*, 16.

As God’s utterance is preceded by the phrase “God said” in the narrative, there is an indication that God willed for the content of what He spoke.⁴¹⁵ His will for the existence of lights (sun, moon, and stars) in the expanse of the heavens is also indicated by the use of the third person jussive verb “let there be” (יְהִי *hāyā*) since the jussive is a simple impersonal command that expresses one’s will to another.⁴¹⁶ The content of what “God said” is not just limited to His will for the existence of the sun, moon, and stars, but also His will for them to have three purposes. The first purpose is for the lights “to separate the day from the night” (Gen. 1:14b). The verb “to separate” (לְהַבְדִּיל *lehabdil*) contains the *lamed* לְ prefix which when used with an infinitive, can serve as the function of indicating purpose.⁴¹⁷ Furthermore, this verb is also in the *hiphil* stem, which indicates causative action.⁴¹⁸ As a result, the verb can be translated as “to cause to separate”, emphasizing that it is the lights as the subject that is given the purpose to cause the separation.

The second purpose God willed is to “let them [the lights] be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years” (Gen. 1:14c). The verb “and let them be” (וַיְהִי *v’hayu*) is not a command as it is not in the jussive form. However, since this verb is in the perfect tense with a *wāw* consecutive and appears after the jussive “let there be” (יְהִי *hāyā*), it is used “to express future actions, &c., as the temporal or logical consequence of tenses, or their equivalents, which announce or require such future actions or events.”⁴¹⁹ In other words, the creation of the lights,

⁴¹⁵ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

⁴¹⁶ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

⁴¹⁷ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 463.

⁴¹⁸ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 433.

⁴¹⁹ Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 333. Gesenius cited Genesis 1:14 as an example of the use of a perfect consecutive verb after a jussive verb.

as indicated by the jussive “let there be” (יְהִי *hāyā*), requires that the lights themselves have the future action of being for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, as indicated by the perfect consecutive verb “and let them be” (וַיְהִי *v'hayu*). The lights were created with this purpose.

The third purpose God willed is to “let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth” (Gen. 1:15). The verb “and let them be” (וַיְהִי *v'hayu*) is also in the perfect tense with a *wāw* consecutive. There is a succession of perfect consecutives as this verb appears after the previous perfect consecutive “and let them be” (וַיְהִי *v'hayu*) in verse 14. The perfect consecutive in verse 15 can be categorized as one “in immediate dependence on the preceding tense”.⁴²⁰ The will for the lights being “in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth” is just as much seen as a purpose as the previous one to “let them [the lights] be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years” (Gen. 1:14c). Furthermore, in the third purpose, the verb “to give” (לְהַאֲרִיחַ *leha'ir*) contains the *lamed* ל prefix which when used with an infinitive, can serve as the function of indicating purpose.⁴²¹ God may be performing the expressive illocutionary act with the utterance of day 4 by expressing His will for the creation of the lights (sun, moon, and stars) and His will for them to have the three purposes described above.

Directive Act – Day 4

A command to the Son. In saying, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and

⁴²⁰ Ibid, 331, 332.

⁴²¹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 463.

years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth”, God the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Son, “I call you to create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes).

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism ! ↑ **W (H does A)**⁴²² in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (**W**) God the Son as the Hearer (**H**), to do the future action (**A**) of creating the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created the sun, moon, and stars (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

“Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens...” is seen as an imperative. From the Hebrew text, a directive illocutionary act is in view, due to the use of the third person jussive verb form that also indicates a simple impersonal command.⁴²³ In addition to the expression of will (expressive illocutionary act), the jussive in “let there be (ָׁׁ׃ *hāyā*) lights” also conveys a command. The command “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens...” is directed to God since the “deed account” expressed that it is God who responded in two actions: He “made the two great lights... and the stars” (Gen. 1:16) and “set them in the expanse of the heavens...” (Gen. 1:17a). According to a canonical reading, there are other parts of the Hebrew Scripture

⁴²² Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

⁴²³ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

that affirm God as the Creator of these lights. Psalm 136:7-9 does so while affirming the first purpose given to the lights. Psalm 104:19 also does so while affirming the second purpose given to the lights. God is the One to whom the command is directed to.

The Son as the spoken Word. According to a canonical reading in the New Testament, God the Son can be seen as the spoken Word who acted in response to the command. Since “all things were made through him” (Jn. 1:3a; cf Col. 1:16), Christ as the Word is involved with the creation of lights in the expanse of the heavens. He corresponds to the Father’s illocutionary act in a way that reflects the Father’s command for the creation of these lights.⁴²⁴

The emphasis of the “deed account” is on God as the One who made the lights and set them in the expanse in the heavens is significant. It can be seen as a polemic against many Ancient Near East cultures that consider the lights as deities.⁴²⁵ Brayford said, “To reinforce the subordination and dependence of these lights on God, Genesis 1 reports that God actively makes them. Thus, both the earth and the celestial lights come into being by both word and deed.”⁴²⁶ Furthermore, it is God who gave these lights their purposes and roles. As a result, the directive illocutionary act cannot be directed to the lights themselves that have creative roles as deities.

Commissive Act – Day 4

In saying, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth”, God the Father may also be performing

⁴²⁴ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

⁴²⁵ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 127; Brayford, *Genesis*, 216.

⁴²⁶ Brayford, *Genesis*, 216.

the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, “I commit to create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes.” The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (**C**) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create the sun, moon, and stars and give them three purposes)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**⁴²⁷ in which God the Father is intending (**I**) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (**S**) doing the future action (**A**) of creating the sun, moon, and stars and giving them three purposes. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created the sun, moon, and stars (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by the sun, moon, and stars through the Son in His directive illocutionary act.

Declaration Act – Day 4

In saying, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, and their three given purposes. A direct way to

⁴²⁷ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

communicate this may be God saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has the sun, moon, and stars, and their three given purposes.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

D \updownarrow \emptyset (existence of the sun, moon, and stars with three given purposes)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **D \updownarrow \emptyset (P)**⁴²⁸ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (**P**) of the existence of the sun, moon, and stars with three given purposes. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (\emptyset), but has double direction of fit (\updownarrow), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three given purposes (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three given purposes (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three given purposes (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three given purposes (what happened in the world).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 4

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth”, He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

⁴²⁸ Ibid, 19.

Table 11. Perlocutionary act effects of day 4

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father's desire for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with three given purposes was fulfilled.
Directive Act	The Son created the sun, moon, and stars, and gave them three purposes.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the sun, moon, and stars, and giving them three purposes through the Son.
Declaration Act	The Father's speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, and their three given purposes.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

“And It Was So”

Immediately after the “word account” of creation when God spoke, followed the standard fulfillment formula “and it was so” (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) (Gen. 1:15b) that expresses the execution of the divine command to create the sun, moon, and stars in the expanse of the heavens with three purposes.⁴²⁹ The mention of the fulfillment formula indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. What follows after the fulfillment formula are the details indicating what was fulfilled.

⁴²⁹ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

God Made and Set

The “deed account” indicated that God acted and accomplished what was stated in the “word account”. Two verbs indicated God’s action: “And... made” (וַיַּעַשׂ *vayya'as*) and “And... set” (וַיַּצִּיחַ *vayyiten*). These two verbs are both in the *wayyiqtol* form which includes the imperfect tense with a *wāw* consecutive. They indicate the expression of the temporal or logical sequel of actions mentioned earlier.⁴³⁰ In other words, God's making and setting are actions that are in response to the “word account”. These verbs are also “preterites” and denote a simple action in the past, indicating the completion of these actions.⁴³¹ “And God made (וַיַּעַשׂ *vayya'as*) the two great lights... and the stars” (Gen. 1:16) correlates to “Let there be lights...” (Gen. 1:14) since the act of making correlates to a command for the existence of the lights. “And God set (וַיַּצִּיחַ *vayyiten*) them in the expanse of the heavens” (Gen. 1:17) correlates to “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens” (Gen. 1:14) since the act of setting correlates to the specified location in the command. These indicate fulfillment and the successful production of the intended perlocutionary act effects.

Purposes Reiterated

The details of the narrative after the words God spoke reiterated the three purposes of the created lights. Each purpose reiterated in the “deed account” corresponds with what God spoke in the “word account”.

⁴³⁰ Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 326.

⁴³¹ Gary Davis Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 17.12.

Table 12. Reiteration of the purposes in the “word account” and “deed account” on day 4

	<u>“Word Account”</u>	<u>“Deed Account”</u>
Purpose 1	“Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night...” (Gen. 1:14a-b)	“... and to separate the light from the darkness” (Gen. 1:18b) “... the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night...” (Gen. 1:16b)
Purpose 2	“... And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.” (Gen 1:14c)	“to rule over the day and over the night...” (Gen. 1:18a) “... the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night...” (Gen. 1:16b)
Purpose 3	“And let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth...” (Gen 1:15a)	“And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth” (Gen. 1:17)

The purposes of the lights spoken by God in the “word account” from verses 14 and 15 were reiterated as fulfilled in the “deed account” from verses 16 to 18. While ignoring the reiteration in verse 16, Hamilton noticed that “so important is the delineation of these functions [purposes] that they are repeated in vv. 17-18, in reverse order, perhaps as an attention-getting device.”⁴³²

What is clear is that the assignment of the purposes to the lights is fulfilled due to their reiterations. These details affirm a felicitous speech act and a successful production of the intended perlocutionary act effects.

⁴³² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 127.

“And God Saw That It Was Good”

An assessment formula of creation, “And God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:18b), is featured at the end of day 4. Of the possible meanings and uses of the Hebrew word “good” (טוב *tôb*), those which express the sun, moon, and stars’ beauty, superior quality/worth, and God’s pleasure/will for them may be in view.⁴³³ God’s assessment of these lights indicates His approval and satisfaction with them as the result of His speech. This shows that the completion of God’s speech act for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars is felicitous and indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

Day 5 – The Creation of Sea and Sky Creatures – Genesis 1:20-23

20 And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” 21 So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23 And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

Locutionary Act – Day 5

On the fifth day of creation, God created creatures of the seas and skies. God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” (Gen. 1:20). Since all speech is performative,⁴³⁴ God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

⁴³³ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 345-346.

⁴³⁴ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

Table 13. Illocutionary acts of day 5

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	God expressed the will or desire for the creation of creatures of the seas and skies.
Directive Act	God called the Son to actively create creatures of the seas and skies.
Directive Act	God called the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life into creatures of the seas and skies.
Commissive Act	God committed Himself to actively create creatures of the seas and skies.
Declaration Act	God declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of creatures of the seas and skies.

An additional directive illocutionary act towards the Holy Spirit was included due to His role as a Life Giver described earlier. As multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance,⁴³⁵ the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these five illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens”. God the Father also performed the locutionary act by uttering speech in verse 22. This speech is directed to the creatures of the seas and skies. Although the focus of this dissertation is not on God’s speech acts according to the second conversation plane, the speech in verse 22 will briefly be addressed.⁴³⁶

⁴³⁵ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

⁴³⁶ See footnote 462.

Illocutionary Acts – Day 5

Expressive Act – Day 5

In saying, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens”, God the Father may be performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will or desire for the existence or creation of creatures of the seas and skies. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the creation of creatures of the seas and skies.” The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (**E**) is represented by:

E Ø (willing) (God + creation of creatures of the seas and skies)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**⁴³⁷ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the creation of creatures of the seas and skies (**property**).

As God’s utterance is preceded by the phrase “God said” in the narrative, there is an indication that God willed for the content of what He spoke.⁴³⁸ In this particular utterance, God willed for the creation of creatures of the seas and skies. His will is also suggested by the verbs used. The verbs for “let... swarm” (יִשְׁרֹטוּ *yishretzu*) involved in the creation of the sea creatures and “let... fly” (יְעוֹפְפוּ *ye’ofef*) involved in the creation of the sky creatures are both in the third person jussive verb form. Since the jussive is a simple impersonal command that expresses

⁴³⁷ Ibid, 16.

⁴³⁸ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

one's will to another,⁴³⁹ God is expressing His will for the creation of creatures of the seas and skies.

Directive Act – Day 5

A command to the Son. In saying, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens”, God the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively create creatures of the seas and skies. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Son, “I call you to create creatures of the seas and skies.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create creatures of the seas and skies)

This is based on Searle's original symbolism ! ↑ W (H does A)⁴⁴⁰ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Son as the Hearer (H), to do the future action (A) of creating creatures of the seas and skies. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created creatures of the seas and skies (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

Not a command to the waters. As one examines the want of the Father through His words, he or she may wonder if the directive illocutionary act is a command to the waters as opposed to the Son. The subject of the verb “let... swarm” (יִשְׁרְצוּ yishretzu) is the waters. Since

⁴³⁹ Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

⁴⁴⁰ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

the verb is in the third person jussive form, it indicates a simple impersonal command.⁴⁴¹ The jussive in “let... swarm” (יִשְׁרֹטוּ *yishretzu*) grammatically conveys a command to the waters. One interpretation of this verb is to see it as a command to create or generate sea creatures. The Septuagint takes this interpretation with the use of the verb “let... bring forth” (Ἐξαγαγέτω *exagetō*) in verse 20 that follows by analogy the command for the earth to sprout (generate) vegetation in verse 11.⁴⁴² If this is the case, God the Father’s directive illocutionary act was a command for the waters to create or “bring forth” (KJV) sea creatures. The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) would then be represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The waters do create sea creatures)⁴⁴³

This speech act would be examined according to the second speech conversation plane as it involves speech between God and creation (the waters) within the creation narrative. Looking at this second speech conversation plane, God’s speech act would not appear to be complete and felicitous. This is because details of the “deed account” presented by the narrative after God spoke included the identity of who did the creating. “So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves...” (Gen. 1:21a). If God was the One who created the sea creatures, the Father’s command of creating sea creatures could not be directed to the waters.

⁴⁴¹ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

⁴⁴² Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 136.

⁴⁴³ In the Septuagint, “the waters are to bring forth (ἔξαγαγέτω) two types of creatures... creeping and flying creatures.” Brayford, *Genesis*, 217. “Unlike LXX-G whose single verb has two objects (reptiles and birds), the MT has two jussive verbs directed to two objects.” Brayford, *Genesis*, 218. According to the interpretation of the Septuagint, the waters are commanded to create or bring forth sea, creeping, and flying creatures. The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act would then be represented by: **! ↑ Wanting (The waters does create sea, creeping, and flying creatures)**. Regardless of the accuracy of the interpretation of the Septuagint, the following presents the same concern of seeing the waters as the subject creative agent.

It would be theologically problematic for the Father's command to be directed to the waters as it suggests that the waters have an independent creative role in generating sea creatures, as opposed to God's sole responsibility for the creation of the sea creatures. Sarna said, "Water does not here possess inherent, independent generative powers as it does in the pagan mythologies. It produces marine life only in response to the divine command."⁴⁴⁴ Brayford would agree as she noted, "God supplements his creative word with a creative act of making. This supplementation also implies that the waters need God's involvement to carry out their task of bringing forth."⁴⁴⁵ God's active role in creating the sea creatures is a polemic against the Ancient Near Eastern worldview of seeing waters as creative deities.

Another interpretation of the verb "let... swarm" (יִשְׁרְצוּ *yishretzu*) may provide a different insight. This interpretation does not see an analogy between the command for the earth to sprout (generate) vegetation in verse 11 and the command to let the waters swarm in verse 20. W.H. Schmidt believes, "V.20a is not stating that the sea is to generate water animals, but merely that these animals are to swarm in the water, that is to be present there."⁴⁴⁶ Westermann agreed and said, "Nothing more than this is intended."⁴⁴⁷ If this is the case, the symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) would then be represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The waters do have sea creatures present)

⁴⁴⁴ Sarna, *Genesis*, 10.

⁴⁴⁵ Brayford, *Genesis*, 218.

⁴⁴⁶ Werner H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte Der Priesterschrift*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien Zum Alten Und Neuen Testament (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1964), 121 n.3.

⁴⁴⁷ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 136.

Since this interpretation of “let... swarm” (יִשְׁרְצוּ *yishretzu*) would be more passive, although the words of the locutionary act specify the waters as the subject, the subject of the directive illocutionary act does not necessarily have to be the waters. The Father could intend to direct the command to the Son to act in a way that would produce the result of letting the waters swarm with or be present with sea creatures. This interpretation would include the active role of God in creating the sea creatures.

Not a command to the birds. Another issue arises when one wonders if the directive illocutionary act is also a command to the birds. The subject of the verb “let... fly” (יְעוֹפֵף *ye'ofef*) is the birds. Since the verb is in the third person jussive form, it indicates a simple impersonal command.⁴⁴⁸ The jussive in “let... fly” (יְעוֹפֵף *ye'ofef*) grammatically conveys a command to the birds. If this is the case, God the Father’s directive illocutionary act was a command for the birds to fly. The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) would then be represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The birds do fly)

This speech act would be examined according to the second speech conversation plane as it involves speech between God and creation (the birds) within the creation narrative. Looking at this second speech conversation plane, God’s speech act would not appear to be complete and felicitous. As mentioned earlier, the details of the “deed account” presented by the narrative after God spoke included God as the One who created not only the sea creatures in the waters, but also the birds in the skies. “So God created... every winged bird of its kind” (Gen. 1:21a, b). The command cannot be directed to the birds to fly if God has not created them yet.

⁴⁴⁸ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

The Son as the spoken Word. The issues of infelicities presented may be resolved by viewing the two commands to the waters and the birds (from the actual words the Father spoke in the locutionary act) according to the second speech conversation plane in the context of the canon of Scripture. In doing so, a canonical reading would view God the Son, the preincarnate Christ, as the Spoken Word of God in creation. According to Vanhoozer, when God the Father speaks, the Son corresponds to His illocutionary act and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood.⁴⁴⁹ The Son accomplished this by actively creating the creatures of the sea and skies as indicated by the words “God created” (Gen. 1:21a). The speech acts become felicitous since God the Son as the Spoken Word is seen as the subject for both the “word account” and “deed account”.

A command to the Holy Spirit. Given the Holy Spirit’s necessary role in creation as the Life-Giver who breathes life to enliven the material bodies of creatures, God the Father’s creative speech may also be directed to the Holy Spirit in addition to the Son. From the same utterance, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens”, God the Father may also be calling the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life into creatures of the seas and skies. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Holy Spirit, “I call you to breathe life into creatures of the seas and skies.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Holy Spirit does breathe life into creatures of the seas and skies)

⁴⁴⁹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

This is based on Searle's original symbolism ! ↑ W (**H does A**)⁴⁵⁰ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Holy Spirit as the Hearer (**H**), to do the future action (**A**) of breathing life into creatures of the seas and skies. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Holy Spirit actively breathed life into creatures of the sea and skies (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

In order for sea creatures to swarm in the waters and for birds to fly in the expanse, it is necessary not only for them to have a material body that is created by the Son, but also for them to be given life, which is the role of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵¹ According to Sarna, the Hebrew phrase in Genesis 1:20 translated as “living creatures”, נְפִשׁוֹת חַיִּים “*nefesh hayyah* means literally ‘animate life,’ that which embodies the breath of life.”⁴⁵² Although this phrase may only appear to refer to the sea creatures in verse 20, it appears again in verse 21 generalizing to “every living creature that moves” and being in apposition to “every winged bird”. Both creatures of the seas and skies embody the breath of life that the Holy Spirit breathes into. Morris would also agree with this assessment as he said, “The ‘living creature’ is the same as the ‘living soul,’ so that this act of creation can be understood as the creation of the entity of conscious life which would henceforth be an integral part of every animate being, including man.”⁴⁵³ As the Genesis 2 account described the breath of life breathed into man (Gen. 2:7), day 5 of the Genesis 1 account also describes the command for the Holy Spirit to breathe the breath of life into the creatures of the

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid, 14.

⁴⁵¹ Williams, “The Spirit in Creation”, 1.

⁴⁵² Sarna, *Genesis*, 10.

⁴⁵³ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 69.

seas and skies. The fulfillment of this action would be represented by the phrase “So God created” (Gen. 1:21), which may also refer to the Holy Spirit breathing life as a necessary part of creating the creatures of the seas and skies.

Commissive Act – Day 5

In saying, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens”, God the Father may also be performing the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively create creatures of the seas and skies. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, “I commit to create creatures of the seas and skies.” The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (**C**) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create creatures of the seas and skies)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**⁴⁵⁴ in which God the Father is intending (**I**) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (**S**) doing the future action (**A**) of creating creatures of the seas and skies. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created creatures of the seas and skies (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by creating creatures of the seas and skies through the Son and the Holy Spirit in His directive illocutionary acts.

⁴⁵⁴ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

Declaration Act – Day 5

In saying, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the creation of creatures of the seas and skies. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has the creatures of the seas and skies.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

D \updownarrow \emptyset (creation of creatures of the seas and skies)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **D \updownarrow \emptyset (P)**⁴⁵⁵ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (**P**) of the creation of creatures of the seas and skies. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (**\emptyset**), but has double direction of fit (**\updownarrow**), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the creation of creatures of the seas and skies (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the creation of creatures of the seas and skies (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the creation of creatures of the seas and skies (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the creation of creatures of the seas and skies (what happened in the world).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 5

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid, 19.

across the expanse of the heavens”, He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

Table 14. Perlocutionary act effects of day 5

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father’s desire for the creation of creatures of the seas and skies was fulfilled.
Directive Act	The Son created creatures of the seas and skies.
Directive Act	The Holy Spirit breathed life into creatures of the seas and skies.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating creatures of the seas and skies through the Son and Holy Spirit.
Declaration Act	The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of creatures of the seas and skies.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

Missing Fulfillment Formula

Unlike the previous three days, the fulfillment formula “and it was so” (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) is omitted with the creation of creatures of the sea and skies. This omission does not mean that the creation of these creatures was unfulfilled as the other details in the narrative after God spoke indicate their successful creation. Sarna noted, “It is unclear why the formula ‘and it was so’ is

omitted here. It appears in the Septuagint version.”⁴⁵⁶ The fulfillment formula in the Septuagint is translated as καὶ ἐγένετο οὕτως (*kai egeneto houtōs*). Hamilton suggested a reason for the Septuagint’s inclusion of the fulfillment formula here. “LXX adds ‘And it was so,’ which reflects the LXX’s tendency to systematize and make the text uniform. Here it supplies ‘and it was so’ to parallel the phrase used in the preceding days (vv. 6, 11, 15).”⁴⁵⁷ The translators of the Septuagint believed it was necessary to include the fulfillment formula here.

“So God Created”

As mentioned earlier, “God created” can be seen as a fulfillment of the Son and Holy Spirit’s creative work to bring about the existence of the creatures of the seas and skies. This is significant as the word “create” (בָּרָא *bārā*) has two unique qualities. First, it is a word that only refers to the divine creative work of God that humans cannot reproduce.⁴⁵⁸ Second, it is a word that emphasizes “the origin of something great, new, and ‘epoch-making’, as only God can do it, whether it be in the realm of the physical or of the spiritual.”⁴⁵⁹ What was made that was so revolutionary as indicated by the word “create” (בָּרָא *bārā*)? According to Sarna, it appeared here for the first time after its first use in verse 1 and “signifies that a new stage has been reached with the emergence of animate beings.”⁴⁶⁰ The use of בָּרָא *bārā* is significant with the

⁴⁵⁶ Sarna, *Genesis*, 10.

⁴⁵⁷ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 129 fn. 210.

⁴⁵⁸ Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1, 10 vols. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1857), 1:47; Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 40; Sarna, *Genesis*, 5.

⁴⁵⁹ H.C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: The Wartburg Press, 1942), 1:40.

⁴⁶⁰ Sarna, *Genesis*, 10.

involvement of the Holy Spirit breathing life to create animate beings that are distinct from the other creation so far.

One of the results of God's creating are creatures “with which the waters swarm” (Gen. 1:21) which corresponds to God’s speech, “Let the waters swarm with living creatures...” (Gen. 1:20). Another result of God's creating is “every winged bird according to its kind” (Gen. 1:21) which corresponds to God’s speech, “...and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens” (Gen 1:20) as birds need to exist before they can fulfill the command to fly. These details also indicate the fulfillment of creating the creatures of the seas and skies and the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

“And God Saw That It Was Good”

An assessment formula of creation, “And God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:21b), is featured on day 5. Of the possible meanings and uses of the Hebrew word “good” (טוֹב *tôb*), those which express the sea and sky creatures’ beauty, superior quality/worth, and God’s pleasure/will for them may be in view.⁴⁶¹ God’s assessment of these creatures indicates His approval and satisfaction with them as the result of His speech. This shows that the completion of God’s speech act for the creation of the sea and sky creatures is felicitous and indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

“And God Blessed Them”

Day 5 is unique because it is the first to end with God giving a blessing to the creatures of the seas and skies. “And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters

⁴⁶¹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 345-346.

in the seas, and let the birds multiply on earth.” (Gen. 1:22). Although this blessing may be examined according to the second speech conversation plane, the focus of this dissertation is on examining God’s speech acts according to the first conversation plane.⁴⁶² The purpose of mentioning the blessing in this section on perlocutionary acts is to show that God can only bless what already exists or was created. The blessing is an indication that the creatures of the seas and skies were created and the intended perlocutionary act effects achieved.

Day 6a – The Creation of Land Creatures – Genesis 1:24-25

²⁴ And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Locutionary Act – Day 6a

On the sixth day of creation, God created land creatures. God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” (Gen. 1:24). Since all speech is performative,⁴⁶³ God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

⁴⁶² Genesis 1:22 may be examined according to the second speech conversation plane as it is God’s speech directed to the creatures of the seas and skies. God may be performing a directive illocutionary act by commanding the creatures of the seas and skies to be fruitful and multiply (Hebrew imperative verbs). God may also be performing a declaration illocutionary act in the form of a blessing. The perlocutionary acts effects of the creatures of the sea and skies to be fruitful and multiply are achieved as seen by the global presence of these creatures in Scripture (cf. Gen. 7:20-23) and visual evidence of these creatures on Earth by contemporary human readers.

⁴⁶³ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

Table 15. Illocutionary acts of day 6a

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	God expressed the will or desire for the creation of land creatures.
Directive Act	God called the Son to actively bring about the creation of land creatures.
Directive Act	God called the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life into land creatures.
Commissive Act	God committed Himself to actively bring about the creation of land creatures.
Declaration Act	God declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of land creatures.

An additional directive illocutionary act towards the Holy Spirit was included due to His role as a Life Giver described earlier. As multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance,⁴⁶⁴ the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these five illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds”.

Illocutionary Acts – Day 6a

Expressive Act – Day 6a

In saying, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds”, God the Father may be

⁴⁶⁴ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will or desire for the creation of land creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the creation of land creatures.” The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (**E**) is represented by:

E Ø (willing) (God + creation of land creatures)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**⁴⁶⁵ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the creation of land creatures (**property**).

As God’s utterance is preceded by the phrase “God said” in the narrative, there is an indication that God willed for the content of what He spoke.⁴⁶⁶ In this particular utterance, God willed for the creation of land creatures. His will is also suggested by the verb “let... bring forth” (נְצַוֵּת *totez*) as it is in the third person jussive verb form. Since the jussive is a simple impersonal command that expresses one’s will to another,⁴⁶⁷ God is expressing His will for the creation of land creatures.

Directive Act – Day 6a

A command to the Son. In saying, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds”, God the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively create land creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid, 16.

⁴⁶⁶ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

⁴⁶⁷ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

Son, “I call you to create land creatures.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create land creatures)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism ! ↑ W (H does A)⁴⁶⁸ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Son as the Hearer (H), to do the future action (A) of creating land creatures. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created land creatures (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

Not a command to the earth. Much like the situation on day 3, the actual words of the Father’s locutionary act appear to address a command to the earth. The subject of the verb “let... bring forth” (אֲנִי תֹתֵז *totez*) is the earth. Since the verb is in the third person jussive form, it indicates a simple impersonal command.⁴⁶⁹ In addition to the expression of will (expressive illocutionary act), the jussive in “let... bring forth” (אֲנִי תֹתֵז *totez*) also grammatically conveys a command to the earth. If this is the case, God the Father’s directive illocutionary act was a command for the earth to create land creatures. The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) would then be represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The earth does create land creatures)

This speech act would be examined according to the second speech conversation plane as it involves speech between God and creation (the earth) within the creation narrative. Unlike the

⁴⁶⁸ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

⁴⁶⁹ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 564-565, 568.

speech to the earth on day 3, looking at this speech according to the second speech conversation plane would reveal that God’s speech act would not be complete and felicitous. This is because details of the “deed account” presented by the narrative after God spoke included the identity of who did the creating. “And God made the beasts of the earth...” (Gen. 1:25a). If God was the One who created the land creatures, the Father’s command to create could not be directed to the earth.

Westermann would agree with this assessment and offer another interpretation as he said, “‘Let the earth bring forth’ in v. 24... cannot mean a direct participation of the earth in the creation of the animals – there is no sign of this in the action-account – but only that the animals belong to the earth.”⁴⁷⁰ In this interpretation, if “bring forth” merely means that the animals belong to the earth, then this is not a command directed to the earth. Morris offers a slightly different interpretation that leads to the same conclusion. He said, “All these land animals were said to have been ‘brought forth’ from the earth, or ground. That is, their bodies were composed of the same elements as the earth; and when they died, they would go back to the earth.”⁴⁷¹ It is not just that the land animals belonged to the earth in a possessive and locative sense as seen in Westermann’s interpretation. It is also that the land animals were “brought forth” or made from the same substance as the earth.⁴⁷² All of these views point toward the likelihood that the Father’s command to create was not directed to the earth.

The Son as the spoken Word. The issue is more closely related to that described on day 5 in which the words of the locutionary act (“word account”) appear to direct a command to the

⁴⁷⁰ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 142.

⁴⁷¹ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 71-72.

⁴⁷² Man was made from the same source of the earth as well (Gen. 2:7).

waters to create but the “deed account” revealed that it was God who created. The resolution presented in response to the issue of infelicity on day 5 applies here on the first part of day 6 as well. A canonical reading would view God the Son, the preincarnate Christ, as the Spoken Word of God in creation. Since the Son corresponds to the Father’s illocutionary act according to Vanhoozer,⁴⁷³ the speech act becomes felicitous because God the Son as the Spoken Word is seen as the subject for both the “word account” and “deed account”.

A command to the Holy Spirit. Given the Holy Spirit’s necessary role in creation as the Life-Giver who breathes life to enliven the material bodies of creatures, God the Father’s creative speech may also be directed to the Holy Spirit in addition to the Son. From the same utterance, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds”, God the Father may also be calling the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life into land creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Holy Spirit, “I call you to breathe life into land creatures.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Holy Spirit does breathe life into land creatures)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism ! ↑ W (H does A)⁴⁷⁴ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Holy Spirit as the Hearer (H), to do the future action (A) of breathing life into land creatures. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Holy Spirit actively breathed life into land creatures (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

⁴⁷³ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 14.

Much like the creatures of the seas and skies on day 5, the creatures of the land are also referred to as “living creatures” נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה (*nefesh hayyah*) who “embodies the breath of life”.⁴⁷⁵ In describing the results of the flood, Genesis 7:22 also describes that land creatures have the breath of life: “Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died.” This shows that it is necessary that the Holy Spirit breathed life into the land animals after the creation of their material bodies just as how human beings were created in Genesis 2:7. The fulfillment of this action would be represented by the phrase, “And God made (וַיַּעַשׂ *vayya'as*)” (Gen. 1:25). This differs from the phrase used on day 5, “So God created (וַיַּבְרָא *vayivra*)” (Gen. 1:21), which referred to the creative fulfillment for creatures of the seas and skies. Morris provided a reason for this difference:

The reason for this apparent anomaly undoubtedly is that the act of *creation* (verse 21) was that of “every living soul,” not only of the sea and air creatures. Since this “soul” principle was created on the fifth day, there was no need to mention it again on the sixth day. The formation of land creatures merely involved new types of organization of materials in existence, including the *nephesh* as well as the physical elements.⁴⁷⁶

With these considerations, one can see a directive command for the Holy Spirit to breathe life into the material bodies of land creatures as a necessary part of existence.

Commissive Act – Day 6a

In saying, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds”, God the Father may also be performing the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively create land

⁴⁷⁵ Sarna, *Genesis*, 10.

⁴⁷⁶ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 71.

creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, “I commit to creating land creatures.” The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (**C**) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create land creatures)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**⁴⁷⁷ in which God the Father is intending (**I**) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (**S**) doing the future action (**A**) of creating land creatures. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created land creatures (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by creating land creatures through the Son and Holy Spirit in His directive illocutionary acts.

Declaration Act – Day 6a

In saying, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the creation of land creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has land creatures.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

⁴⁷⁷ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

D \updownarrow \emptyset (creation of land creatures)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **D \updownarrow \emptyset (P)**⁴⁷⁸ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (**P**) of the creation of land creatures. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (**\emptyset**), but has double direction of fit (**\updownarrow**), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the creation of land creatures (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the creation of land creatures (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the existence of the seas and the skies through the gathering of waters (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the creation of land animals (what happened in the world).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 6a

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds”, He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

Table 16. Perlocutionary act effects of day 6a

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father’s desire for the creation of land creatures was fulfilled.
Directive Act	The Son created the land creatures.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid, 19.

Directive Act	The Holy Spirit breathed life into the land creatures.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating land creatures through the Son and Holy Spirit.
Declaration Act	The Father's speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of land creatures.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

“And It Was So”

Immediately after the “word account” of creation when God spoke, followed the standard fulfillment formula “and it was so” (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) (Gen. 1:24b) that expresses the execution of the divine command to create plant life through the sprouting action of the earth.⁴⁷⁹ The mention of the fulfillment formula indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. What follows the fulfillment formula are the details indicating what was fulfilled.

“And God Made”

“And God made” can be seen as a fulfillment of the Son and Holy Spirit's creative work to bring about the existence of the land creatures through the creation of their material bodies and the breathing of life in them, respectively. The verb “and... made” (וַיַּעַשׂ *vayya'as*), as described earlier, “simply means that the divine intention became a reality”.⁴⁸⁰ The exact details described

⁴⁷⁹ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 8.

of what God made in the “deed account” correlate to what was commanded in the “word account”. God commanded for the creation of three types of “living creatures” (on the land): “livestock”, “creeping things”, and “beasts of the earth” all “according to their kinds” (Gen. 1:24). In the “deed account”, God made the three types of land creatures: “the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind...” (Gen. 1:25a). These details indicate fulfillment, a felicitous speech act, and the successful production of the intended perlocutionary act effects.

“And God Saw That It Was Good”

An assessment formula of creation, “And God saw that it was good” (Gen. 1:25b), is featured at the end of this first part of day 6. Of the possible meanings and uses of the Hebrew word “good” (טוֹב *tôb*), those which express the land creatures’ beauty, superior quality/worth, and God’s pleasure/will for them may be in view.⁴⁸¹ God’s assessment of these land creatures indicates His approval and satisfaction with them as the result of His speech. This shows that the completion of God’s speech act for the creation of the land creatures and indicates the successful production of the intended perlocutionary act effects.

Day 6b – The Creation of Human Beings – Genesis 1:26-31

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You

⁴⁸¹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 345-346.

shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Locutionary Act – Day 6b

On the sixth day of creation, God also created human beings and blessed them with dominion over all creatures. God the Father performed the locutionary act by uttering the words, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” (Gen. 1:26). Since all speech is performative,⁴⁸² God may be performing the following illocutionary acts with this utterance.

Table 17. Illocutionary acts of day 6b

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Intention</u>
Expressive Act	God expressed the will or desire for the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.
Directive Act	God called the Son to actively create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.
Directive Act	God called the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life into human beings.
Commissive Act	God committed Himself to actively create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.
Declaration Act	God declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of human beings and their given blessing of having dominion over all creatures.

⁴⁸² Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 108.

An additional directive illocutionary act towards the Holy Spirit was included due to His role as a Life Giver described earlier. As multiple illocutionary acts can be performed simultaneously in the same utterance,⁴⁸³ the following sections seek to explain from the text how God the Father performed these five illocutionary acts simultaneously by uttering, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth”. God the Father also performed the locutionary act by uttering speech in verses 28 to 30. This speech is directed at human beings. Although the focus of this dissertation is not on God’s speech acts according to the second conversation plane, the speech in verses 28 to 30 will briefly be addressed.⁴⁸⁴

Illocutionary Acts – Day 6b

Expressive Act – Day 6b

In saying, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth”, God the Father may be performing the expressive illocutionary act by expressing His will or desire for the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I will for the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.” The symbolism of this expressive illocutionary act (**E**) is represented by:

⁴⁸³ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 29.

⁴⁸⁴ See footnote 506.

E Ø (willing) (God + creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures)

This is based on Searle's original symbolism **E Ø (P) (S + property)**⁴⁸⁵ in which the expression of willing or desiring (**P**) is directed to the speaker (**S**) God on the relevancy of His will or desire for the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures (**property**).

As God's utterance is preceded by the phrase "God said" in the narrative, there is an indication that God willed for the content of what He spoke.⁴⁸⁶ In this particular utterance, God willed for the creation of human beings. While the use of the jussive verb form is present in the previous days of creation to indicate the expression of a will and command, what is unique about the command on this second part of day 6 is that a cohortative verb form is used instead. The cohortative verb form of "let us make" (נַעֲשֶׂה *na'aseh*) "expresses the will or strong desire of the speaker."⁴⁸⁷ This differs from the jussive as it is an expression of a stronger volitional form. Sarna notes, "The creation of human life is an exception to the rule of creation by divine fiat, as signaled by the replacement of the simple impersonal Hebrew command (the jussive) with a personal, strongly expressed resolve (the cohortative)."⁴⁸⁸ This shift to a cohortative to express strong will and resolve emphasizes not only the uniqueness and specialness of the creation of

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid, 16.

⁴⁸⁶ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

⁴⁸⁷ Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 573.

⁴⁸⁸ Sarna, *Genesis*, 11.

human beings over the rest of creation, but also “prepare[s] the reader for something momentous on this sixth day”.⁴⁸⁹

Directive Act – Day 6b

The use of the cohortative verb “let us make” (נַעֲשֶׂה *na'aseh*) is also an indicator of a directive illocutionary act. Since this verb is in the first person plural, the usage of this cohortative is that in which “the speakers usually seek to instigate... each other to some action.”⁴⁹⁰ A case was made in Appendix 1 to show how the first person pronoun “us” is a “clear reference to the plurality of persons within the Godhead.”⁴⁹¹ With this grammatical interpretation and support from a canonical reading of Scripture, God the Father is seen as instigating or commanding the Son and the Holy Spirit to create human beings. As a result, there are two directive illocutionary acts from the Father’s utterance in view. The first is directed to the Son while the second is directed to the Holy Spirit.

A command to the Son. In saying, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth”, God the Father may also be performing the directive illocutionary act of calling the Son to actively create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Son, “I call you to create human beings

⁴⁸⁹ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 134. Aside from the use of the cohortative, the high and unique status of human beings are also indicated by the fact that they were created “last in a manifestly ascending, gradational order.” Sarna, *Genesis*, 11. Furthermore, they were called to be made “in our [God’s] image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26) and were given dominion and special rule over all other creation.

⁴⁹⁰ Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 573.

⁴⁹¹ Bryan Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation,” *The Masters Seminary Journal* 24, no. 2 (2013), 167.

and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Son does create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism ! ↑ W (H does A)⁴⁹² in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Son as the Hearer (H), to do the future action (A) of creating human beings and giving them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Son actively created human beings and gave them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

A command to the Holy Spirit. Given the Holy Spirit’s necessary role in creation as the Life-Giver who breathes life to enliven the material bodies of creatures, God the Father’s creative speech may also be directed to the Holy Spirit in addition to the Son. From the same utterance, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth”, God the Father may also be calling the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life into human beings. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying to the Holy Spirit, “I call you to breathe life into human beings.” The symbolism of this directive illocutionary act (!) is represented by:

! ↑ Wanting (The Holy Spirit does breathe life into human beings)

⁴⁹² Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

This is based on Searle's original symbolism ! ↑ W (**H does A**)⁴⁹³ in which God the Father as the Speaker is wanting (W) God the Holy Spirit as the Hearer (**H**), to do the future action (**A**) of breathing life into human beings. This directive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when the Holy Spirit actively breathed life into human beings (what happened in the world), He fulfilled and matched the want of the Father (expressed by words).

Just as the Holy Spirit has the role to breathe life into the living creatures (נִפְשׁוֹת הַחַיִּים *nefesh hayyah*) of the seas, skies, and earth on days 5 and 6, He also has a role to do so for the creation of human beings. The creation account in Genesis 2 suggests the Holy Spirit's life-breathing action in human beings after the material creation of their bodies (Gen. 2:7).⁴⁹⁴ The fulfillment of this action would be represented by the three-fold phrases "So God created", "he created him", and "he created them" (Gen. 1:27).

Commissive Act – Day 6b

In saying, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth", God the Father may also be performing the commissive illocutionary act of committing Himself to actively create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God the Father saying, "I commit to create human beings and give

⁴⁹³ Ibid, 14.

⁴⁹⁴ Williams, "The Spirit in Creation", 2.

them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.” The symbolism of this commissive illocutionary act (C) is represented by:

C ↑ Intending (The Father does create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures)

This is based on Searle’s original symbolism **C ↑ I (S does A)**⁴⁹⁵ in which God the Father is intending (I) to fulfill the propositional content of Himself as the Speaker (S) doing the future action (A) of creating human beings and giving them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures. This commissive illocutionary act has a *world-to-words* direction of fit (↑) because when God the Father created human beings and gave them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures (what happened in the world), it fulfilled and matched His commitment (expressed by words). Although performing a commissive illocutionary act may appear to be contradictory to performing a directive illocutionary act, this may not be the case as God the Father fulfilled His commitment by creating human beings and giving them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures through the Son and the Holy Spirit in His directive illocutionary acts.

If God is performing this commissive illocutionary act, is it possible for Him to commit all persons of the Holy Trinity to actively create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures? From Searle’s symbolism: **C ↑ I (S does A)**⁴⁹⁶, the action (A) of commitment is only accomplished by and directed to the speaker (S). If this is the case, since the Father corresponds to the locutionary act as the Speaker of His Word, only He could commit to the act of creating human beings and blessing them. The use of the first person plural cohortative verb “let us make” (נַעֲשֶׂה *na'aseh*) is only a command to the Son and the Holy Spirit

⁴⁹⁵ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 14.

to create, or at least a call to be in agreement to create together. At the moment of the Father's utterance, the Son and Holy Spirit would be the Hearers and have not responded yet.

From the perspective of human beings, there is no guarantee that the hearers would always agree to take an action commanded or proposed by the speaker. That is why only the speaker can commit himself or herself to an action. Grammatically, God the Father only commits Himself to create human beings with His speech. Theologically, on the other hand, God the Father can commit all persons of the Holy Trinity to create human beings as He, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God in unity and cannot be in disagreement. Thus, from the locutionary act of God the Father in verse 26, it is theologically sound to say that God the Father is performing the illocutionary act of committing Himself and all persons of the Holy Trinity to actively create human beings and give them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.

Declaration Act – Day 6b

In saying, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth”, God the Father may also be performing the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the creation of human beings and their given blessing of having dominion over all creatures. A direct way to communicate this may be God saying, “I pronounce the universe as one that has human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.” The symbolism of this declaration illocutionary act (**D**) is represented by:

D ⇕ **∅** (creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures)

This is based on Searle's original symbolism $\mathbf{D} \uparrow \emptyset (\mathbf{P})$ ⁴⁹⁷ in which God the Father brings about the alteration in the status or condition of the universe with the proposition (\mathbf{P}) of the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures. This declaration illocutionary act has no sincerity condition (\emptyset), but has double direction of fit (\uparrow), or *world-to-words-to-world* direction of fit. This is because the changed condition of the universe with the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures (what happened in the world) fulfilled and matched the declared proposition of the existence of the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures (expressed in words). Also, the declared proposition of the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures (expressed in words) caused the altered condition of the universe with the creation of human beings with the blessing of having dominion over all creatures (what happened in the world).

Perlocutionary Acts – Day 6b

As God the Father performed the illocutionary acts described above by speaking the words, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth", He also performed perlocutionary acts to produce certain consequential effects.

⁴⁹⁷ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 19.

Table 18. Perlocutionary act effects of day 6b

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father's desire for the creation of human beings with the given blessing of having dominion over all creatures was fulfilled.
Directive Act	The Son created human beings and gave them the blessing of having dominion over all creatures.
Directive Act	The Holy Spirit breathed life into human beings.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating human beings and giving them the blessing of having dominion over all creation through the Son and Holy Spirit.
Declaration Act	The Father's speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of human beings with the given blessing of having dominion over all creation.

If God the Father performed these illocutionary acts, it follows that He succeeded in producing the intended perlocutionary act effects based on the other details of results the narrative provided after God spoke.

“And It Was So”

Unlike most of the previous days of creation, the placement of the fulfillment formula “and it was so” (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) (Gen. 1:30b) does not appear right after what God spoke in the “word account”. This fulfillment formula directly relates to the fulfillment of the blessing God gave to human beings in verses 28 to 30. This blessing includes the proclamation for them to have dominion over all creatures (Gen 1:28b). The fulfillment of this blessing is also a fulfillment of the second command in the utterance of God's “word account” to “let them have dominion...” (Gen. 1:26b). However, the fulfillment formula in Genesis 1:30b does not appear

to have a direct relationship with the fulfillment of the first command in the utterance of God's "word account" to "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26a).

A case can be made that a previous mention of the fulfillment formula can relate to the first command to create human beings in Genesis 1:26. Sarna seemed to suggest that the fulfillment formula (probably from verse 24) "gives way to a thrice-repeated avowal that God created the man."⁴⁹⁸ The fulfillment formula in verse 24 refers to the fulfillment of the creation of land animals on the first part of day 6. The utterance of God's command included, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures..." (Gen. 1:24a). "Living creatures" (*נְפֹשׁוֹת חַיִּים* *nefesh hayyah*) are those that "embod[y] the breath of life".⁴⁹⁹ The word *נְפֹשׁוֹת* *nefesh* "is frequently used to refer both the soul of man and the life of animals."⁵⁰⁰ God's command on the first part of day 6 to create living creatures may categorically refer to human beings as well. Morris presented three comparisons between animals and human beings to show they are made of the "same basic essence" despite the latter as the pinnacle of all creation.⁵⁰¹ These comparisons may support the inclusion of humans in the command for the creation of living creatures in verse 24. If so, the fulfillment formula immediately after the "word account" at the end of verse 24 may be a premature pronouncement that refers to the creation of human beings in the second part of day 6.

Even if this is not the case, Westermann observed a potential parallel that could serve as the function of the fulfillment formula. This parallel is between the narratives of the creation of

⁴⁹⁸ Sarna, *Genesis*, 11.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 10.

⁵⁰⁰ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 69.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid*, 73. The three comparisons Morris presented are 1) the bodies of both animals and man were formed from the ground (Gen. 1:24; 2:7); 2) both have the "breath of life" (Gen. 2:7; 7:22); and 3) both have the "living soul" (Gen. 1:24; 2:7).

human beings and the rest of creation on the other days. Westermann said, “‘Let us make... and God created’ [verses 26 and 27] correspond to ‘God said – and it was so...’ of the other works of creation.”⁵⁰² He is claiming that the phrase “God created” in verse 27 serves the same function as the fulfillment formula. These observations about the fulfillment formula indicate the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

“So God Created Man”

The phrase “So God created man” (Gen. 1:27) can be seen as a fulfillment of the Son and the Holy Spirit’s creative work to bring about the existence of human beings. In particular, the verb וַיִּבְרָא (*vayivra*) is in the *wayyiqtol* form, which includes the imperfect tense with a *wāw* consecutive. This indicates the expression of the temporal or logical sequel of actions mentioned earlier.⁵⁰³ In other words, God’s action of creating is in response to the “word account” calling for the creation of human beings. God the Son responded with the creation of the material body of human beings from the dust and God the Holy Spirit responded with the action of breathing life (Gen. 2:7). Since the verb וַיִּבְרָא (*vayivra*) is also called a “preterite”, it denotes a simple action in the past and indicates the completion of the creation of human beings.

In verse 27 of the deed account, the verb “created” appeared three times.⁵⁰⁴ The verbs of the second and third appearances are in the *qatal* perfect tense which indicates completed action. Together, these three appearances of “created” may reference the inclusive work of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity in the creation of human beings. Similarly, the text also mentions the

⁵⁰² Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 143.

⁵⁰³ Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, 326.

⁵⁰⁴ Sarna, *Genesis*, 11.

word “image” three times, which may also indicate the completion of human beings made in the image of the Trinitarian God.⁵⁰⁵ There is evidence from these details of fulfillment that God’s intended perlocutionary act effects are successfully produced.

“And God Blessed Them”

A blessing (Gen. 1:28-30) was given to human beings similar to one given to creatures on day 5.⁵⁰⁶ However, part of the actual act of blessing in verse 28 was a direct response to the command to bless in verse 26b. God called for the members of the Godhead to “let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on earth” (Gen. 1:26b). This was fulfilled as God spoke to the created human beings and blessed them, saying “... and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Gen 1:28b). However, God blessed the human beings with more than what was commanded to. He also commanded them to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28a) which is the same blessing given to the living creatures on day 5 (Gen. 1:22). Furthermore, God blessed human beings and living creatures with plant life for food (Gen. 1:29-30). The command to bless human beings in a certain way was not only fulfilled, but also exceeded, indicating the

⁵⁰⁵ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 75.

⁵⁰⁶ Although this blessing may be examined according to the second speech conversation plane, the focus of this dissertation is on examining God’s speech acts according to the first conversation plane. Genesis 1:28 is God’s speech directed to human beings. God may be performing a directive illocutionary act by commanding the human beings to be fruitful and multiply as well as to fill and subdue the earth and have dominion over all creatures. All the verbs mentioned are Hebrew imperatives. God may also be performing a declaration illocutionary act in the form of a blessing. The perlocutionary acts effects of the human beings to be fruitful and multiply are achieved (cf. Gen. 4:1-2, 17-22, 25-26; 5:1-32; 6:1; 10:1-32; 11:10-27). The perlocutionary acts effects of the human beings to subdue the earth and have dominion over all creatures are also achieved (cf. Gen. 2:15; 4:2b). Another speech act of blessing directed to human beings is found in Genesis 1:29-30. God may be performing an assertive illocutionary act by informing human beings that He has given plants and fruits as food to them and all creatures. The perlocutionary act effects of the human beings believing this assertion are achieved (cf. Gen. 2:15-16; 3:2, 17-18; 4:2b).

success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects. In addition, since God can only bless what is already created, the blessing is also an indication that human beings were created and the intended perlocutionary act effects were achieved.

“It Was Very Good.”

Day 6 ends with an assessment formula. However, this formula differs from those of the other days of creation in two ways. First is the difference in wording. Instead of “And God saw that it was good”, the assessment formula is presented as “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31a). According to Westermann, this formula “is not the close of a particular work, but of the whole work of creation.”⁵⁰⁷ Likewise, the assessment is not just of the creation of human beings, but of all of creation as “very good” (מְאֹד טוֹב *tôb me’od*). Of the possible meanings and uses of the Hebrew word “good” (טוֹב *tôb*), those which express the human beings’ and all of creation’s beauty, superior quality/worth, and God’s pleasure/will for them may be in view.⁵⁰⁸ God’s assessment of human beings and all creation as “very good” indicates His approval and satisfaction of them as the result of His speech. Sarna describes this final assessment formula as “A verdict on the totality of Creation, now completed.”⁵⁰⁹ This shows that the completion of God’s speech acts for the creation of human beings and all of creation is felicitous and indicates the success of producing the intended perlocutionary act effects.

⁵⁰⁷ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 165.

⁵⁰⁸ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 345-346.

⁵⁰⁹ Sarna, *Genesis*, 14.

Conclusions from the Speech Act Analysis of Genesis 1

Performative Acts Identified

After applying Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 according to the first speech conversation plane, all the performative acts of God were identified. God the Father spoke on each day of creation and performed the locutionary act of uttering words with meaning and intention. A strong case was made that in each of God's utterances, He was performing the illocutionary acts of expressive, directive, commissive, and declaration simultaneously. God the Son and Holy Spirit responded to the directive illocutionary acts, when applicable, to materially create with actions such as separating, gathering, giving purpose, blessing, and breathing life. God's intended perlocutionary acts of creation were all fulfilled and its effects were always achieved. A complete summary of all the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts of each day of creation is featured as a table in Appendix 3 entitled "Speech Acts of Genesis 1." The contents of this table answer research question 1 in this dissertation: "What performative acts are accomplished by God the Father when He speaks in the Genesis creation narrative?"

Always Felicitous

With the performative acts of God on each day of creation identified through the application of Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1, one can conclude from the generated tables that the intended perlocutionary act effects on the Hearers were always achieved.

Table 19. Fulfilled perlocutionary act effects in Genesis 1 creation

<u>Illocutionary Act</u>	<u>Perlocutionary Act Effects</u>
Expressive Act	The Father's expressed desire for the creation of a specified entity was fulfilled.
Directive Act	The Son fulfilled the creative will of God the Father in creating what was specified in the way it was specified.
Commissive Act	The Father fulfilled His commitment to create what was specified, in the way it was specified.
Declaration Act	The creative change in the condition of the universe exactly reflected the Father's declarative speech.

The Genesis 1 narrative indicates the intended perlocutionary effects of God the Father's creative speech are always performed successfully. God the Father's will for the specific creation of an entity in a specific way (as expressed in His speech) was always fulfilled exactly. Thus, these speech acts would be described by Austin as happy or felicitous.⁵¹⁰

Unity Between God and Creation

During the analysis, there were a few disagreements noted between the subjects described in the "word account" (God's spoken word of creation) and the "deed account" (resulting act of creation) on some of the days. These would initially suggest the intended perlocutionary act effects of God were not achieved, rendering the speech acts as unsuccessful performances and infelicitous.

⁵¹⁰ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 14-15, 25-52. Austin's six felicity conditions will be reviewed in a later section to confirm that the speech acts of God in creation meet the conditions for felicity.

Table 20. Disagreements between “word account” and “deed account” on days 2, 5, and 6.

Day	“Word Account” (Locutionary / Illocutionary Act)	“Deed Account” (Perlocutionary Act Effect)
2	“...and let it [the expanse] separate (ויהי מבדיל) the waters from the waters.” (Gen. 1:6)	“And God... separated (אֱלֹהִים... וַיַּבְדֵּל) the waters...” (Gen. 1:7)
5	“Let the waters swarm (יִשְׂרָצוּ הַמַּיִם) with swarms of living creatures...” (Gen. 1:20)	“So God created (וַיַּבְדֵּא אֱלֹהִים) the great sea creatures...” (Gen. 1:21)
6	“Let the earth bring forth (חֹזְעָא הָאָרֶץ) living creatures...” (Gen. 1:24)	“And God made (וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים) the beasts of the earth...” (Gen. 1:25)

Furthermore, these disagreements would also suggest disunity between God and creation as God did not create a perfect creation in the beginning that would obey. As explained in the previous sections where these particular speech acts were addressed, there is a solution that would rectify these apparent disagreements and lead to successful performances and felicitous speech acts.

With a canonical reading, God the Son as the preincarnate Christ is seen as the Spoken Word of God in creation. According to Vanhoozer, when God the Father speaks, the Son corresponds to His illocutionary act and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood.⁵¹¹ In turn, the Son may be seen in Genesis 1 as actively creating in a way that

⁵¹¹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

reflects the Father's command. As a result, God the Son as the Spoken Word is seen as the subject for both the "word account" and "deed account", rendering these speech acts as felicitous, and preserving the unity between a perfect God and a perfect creation.

The Necessity of the Son as the Spoken Word

Seeing Jesus Christ, the Son, as the Spoken Word in creation is necessary not only due to a canonical reading, but also necessary for God's speech acts in creation to be seen as felicitous. Several theological concerns arise if any of God's speech acts in creation are not fulfilled as intended. First, as described in the previous section, it would mean that God did not create a perfect creation. From a surface reading of the words of God's locutionary utterances, God's commands on days 2, 5, and 6 do not appear to be completed or obeyed by the waters or the earth since the text describes God as the Subject who actively created the living creatures instead. This infelicity would show that God is not sovereign over creation and there would be no unity between God and creation at the beginning.⁵¹²

Second, without seeing the Son as the Spoken Word, there would be no unity in the text. In response to the disagreements within the speech acts featured in Table 20, Hutzli does not see unity in the Genesis text. He said, "Because of the demonstrated theological tensions and linguistic discrepancies between the 'word account' and 'deed account' assertions we do not share the opinion of the majority of modern scholars that views Gen 1:1–2:4a as a unity."⁵¹³ Hutzli saw the "word account" and "deed account" as separate and showed how the former is

⁵¹² Westermann describes how the repeated phrase, "And God saw that it was good" is an indication of creation's dependence on God's regard for creation as a link to the praise of the Creator. This regard and praise between Creator and creation shows unity. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 113.

⁵¹³ Hutzli, "Tradition and Interpretation in Gen 1:1-2:4a.", 11.

complete in the sense that it contains all works of creation while the latter lacks one or two works.⁵¹⁴ He concluded the “word account” is the original layer while the “deed account” is “*a later redaction layer*”, positing the redactor (possibly the Priestly author of document P^g) wanted to limit the act of creation to the divine as the “word account” ascribed some creative acts to the expanse, the waters, and the earth.⁵¹⁵

The issues raised here do not need to be explained with disunity in the text. It is a false dichotomy to have to choose between the “word account” or “deed account” especially when there is no evidence of a P document being discovered. The Son as the Spoken Word can be the solution to clarify the act of creation as only divine while affirming the unity of both the “word account” and “deed account” as part of the original Genesis text.

Third, since the speech acts in creation are examined according to the first speech conversation plane, any infelicitous or unfulfilled speech acts would suggest tension, misunderstanding, or mistakes among the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. This would go against not only the character of God, but also the unity of the Trinity. These concerns will be addressed in more detail in a later section. In summary, seeing the Son as the Spoken Word in Genesis 1 is necessary for felicitous speech acts, unity between God and creation, unity in the text, and unity of the Trinity.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid, 12, 7-8. Westermann explained, “It was only at the beginning of this century that the two different types of creation were noticed: creation by making and creation by word stand side-by-side.” Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 82. He cites Schwally as one of the first who noticed this in F. Schwally, “Die biblischen Schöpfungsberichte,” ARW 9 (1906) 159-175.

⁵¹⁵ Hutzli, “Tradition and Interpretation in Gen 1:1-2:4a.”, 12-13. Westermann cited many who also attempted to “separate the account of creation by word from the account of creation by action.” These include J. Morgenstern, M. Lambert, G. von Rad, and B. P. Humbert. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 82-83.

Unity in the Text - Felicity from Repeated Phrases

Within the unity of the text, two repeated phrases support the felicity of God's speech act performances. The first repeated phrase is "And it was so" (Gen 1:7, 9, 11, 15, 24, 30). The second repeated phrase is "And God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). Although not present in all six days or eight acts of creation, Cook describes a structure in Genesis 1 in which the former phrase is seen as the ending formula for the *Wortbericht* (account of the creative divine word or "word account") and the latter phrase is seen as the ending formula for the *Tatbericht* (account of the divine act or "deed account").⁵¹⁶ In the view of the unity of the Genesis text, both repeated phrases give evidence that supports the fulfillment of the perlocutionary act effects, not only in terms of the occurrence of the result, but also in terms of the assessment of the result respectively.⁵¹⁷

"And It Was So"

"And it was so" (וַיְהִי כֵן *vayehi ken*) is known as a fulfillment formula that indicates the occurrence of the intended result. According to Sarna, "This is the standard formula for expressing the execution of the divine command."⁵¹⁸ Whenever this phrase is repeated, it is

⁵¹⁶ Johann Cook, "The Exegesis of the Greek Genesis," in *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies*, ed. Claude E. Cox (Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, 1987), 102.

⁵¹⁷ A third repeated phrase not addressed here or in the speech act analysis earlier is the formula "And there was evening and there was morning, the ____ day." (Gen. 1:5b, 8b, 13, 19, 23, 31b). This formula concerns the timing of the result as opposed to the occurrence and assessment of the result in the fulfillment formula and assessment formula respectively. The reason why this formula concerning time is not addressed here is because it does not appear to affect the contention between the differences of a separate "word account" and "deed account" and the question of the unity of the text. This formula about time will be addressed at the end of the chapter when considering whether the application of Speech Act Theory necessitates the reading of an instantaneous and miraculous creation.

⁵¹⁸ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

affirming that the perlocutionary act effects (execution) are performed in reflection of the intended illocutionary acts (divine command). Steck argued that the “And it was so” formula in the Hebrew never refers to a fulfillment of a command by itself as it “must be accompanied by an assertion of fulfillment.”⁵¹⁹ He provided four examples outside of Genesis 1 of the formula כן ויהי כן (*vayehi ken*) in Judges 6:38; 2 Kings 7:20; 2 Kings 15:12 and an equivalent variant consistent of עשה + כן (*aseh + ken*) in Judges 6:39-40 to show the necessity of a strict correspondence to a fulfillment report.⁵²⁰

However, Hutzli saw some problems with Steck’s argument. Of the four examples, 2 Kings 15:12 lacks a fulfillment report afterward as the historical event the formula refers to appears in the preceding narrative context.⁵²¹ Furthermore, while Judges 6:39-40 is an example of the fulfillment formula variant עשה + כן (*aseh + ken*) with a corresponding fulfillment report, Hutzli can cite many examples of that formula without.⁵²² He concluded that Steck was wrong in his assessment of the fulfillment formula, as the counterexamples in and outside of Genesis 1 show that it can express a notion of fulfillment without a report of accomplishment.⁵²³

The appearances of the fulfillment formula *alone* in the Genesis creation narrative are a good sign that indicates the successful performance of God’s speech acts and the achievement of the intended perlocutionary act effects. Although Hutzli does affirm the fulfillments in Genesis

⁵¹⁹ Hutzli, “Tradition and Interpretation in Gen 1:1-2:4a”, 5.

⁵²⁰ Odil Hannes Steck, *Der Schöpfungsbericht der Priesterschrift: Studien zur literarkrit und überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Problematik von Genesis 1, 1-2, 4a* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975), 32-39.

⁵²¹ Hutzli, “Tradition and Interpretation in Gen 1:1-2:4a”, 4-5.

⁵²² Ibid, 5. The other examples Hutzli cited without the corresponding fulfillment report include Gen. 42:25; Ex. 14:2-4; 17:5-6; Judg. 6:20; 2 Sam. 5:23-25; Jer. 38:12; Esth. 2:2-4.

⁵²³ Ibid, 6.

1 with the formula alone, he still does not see unity in the text due to the differences between the “word accounts” and “deed accounts” on each day of creation.⁵²⁴ He believed they are separate as some reports of fulfillment in the “deed account” (if any even occur after the fulfillment formula), do not match what was commanded in the “word account”.⁵²⁵ For example, on day 3 of creation, God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” (Gen. 1:9). In Hutzli’s mind, evidence for a unified text from the “deed account” would include phrases like “And God gathered the waters”, “And the waters gathered themselves”, and “Dry land appeared. However, the “deed account” in verse 10 does not mention the gathering of the waters in an active voice or anything about the dry land appearing.

Speech Act Theory does not require a report of fulfillment worded in a strict “assertion of consistent equivalence”⁵²⁶ for it to be felicitous and have the intended perlocutionary effects achieved. In verse 10, the “deed account” states, “God called the dry land Earth...” Even though it never mentioned that the dry land appeared, as commanded by God in the “word account”, it implies that the dry land had to have appeared for God to name it. This suggests fulfillment. The “deed account” also states, “and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas” (Gen. 1:10b). Even though the gathering of the waters was described in the passive voice, it is consistent with the ambiguity of who was called to gather the waters together in the “word account”. The waters were gathered for God to name them. This also suggests fulfillment. It is possible to see unity in the Genesis 1 text as opposed to the redaction of two originally separate accounts.

⁵²⁴ Ibid, 11.

⁵²⁵ Ibid, 7-8.

⁵²⁶ This is Hutzli’s description of the kind of report. Ibid, 5.

“And God Saw That It Was Good”

Another repeated phrase that indicates fulfillment and unity in the Genesis 1 text is the assessment formula, “And God saw that it was good”. The Hebrew word for “good” is טוב (*tôb*). The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT) presents various possible meanings and usages of this word. Harris, Archer, and Waltke said, “Some usages blend two or more of the areas of meaning... each individual usage must be clearly examined to see which of the... meanings are possible.”⁵²⁷ This section will examine and affirm three possible meanings and uses of טוב (*tôb*) in the Genesis 1 creation narrative: 1) the beauty of each part of creation; 2) their superior quality/worth; and 3) God’s pleasure/will for them.

The first possible meaning of טוב (*tôb*) may be that of the beauty of each part of creation. The TWOT described, “Esthetic or sensual goodness may be denoted” by the word טוב (*tôb*).⁵²⁸ This term has been used to describe the beauty of women or men (cf. Gen. 6:2; 24:16; 2 Sam. 11:2; 1 Sam. 16:12). The strongest evidence for this meaning may come from the Septuagint which uses the word καλός (*kalos*) as a translation for “good”. “*Kalos*, ‘good,’ describes that which is ‘beautiful’ as being well proportioned in all its parts, or intrinsically excellent.”⁵²⁹ Some English translations of the Septuagint use the word “beautiful” instead of “good” when translating טוב (*tôb*).

⁵²⁷ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 346.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid*, 345.

⁵²⁹ W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White, Jr., *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996), s.v. “Beautiful”. See also s.v. “Good, Goodly, Goodness” and “Fair”.

The second possible meaning of טוב (*tôb*) “may include ideas of superior quality or relative worth.”⁵³⁰ In the context of Genesis 1, the assessment of “good” would describe the superior quality/worth of each part of creation. This use is applicable in the context of things that are made or crafted. The TWOT listed Isaiah 41:7 as an example of “quality craftsmanship... designated.”⁵³¹ Westermann echoed this idea of craftsmanship as well. He said, “The procedure in itself is quite clear: a craftsman has completed a work, he looks at it and finds that it is a success or judges that it is good. The Hebrew sentence includes the ‘finding’ or ‘judging’ in the act of looking. He regards the work as good. The work was good ‘in the eyes of God,’ it exists as good in God’s regard and acceptance.”⁵³² God’s judgment of what He crafted as good and acceptance of them reflect the necessary superior quality or worth of created entities. Anything less would not be acceptable and challenge God’s ability to create what He intended perfectly on the first try. Westermann’s comments about the creative work as good “in the eyes of God” also relate to a third possible meaning of טוב (*tôb*).

The third possible meaning of טוב (*tôb*) may be the expression of God’s pleasure or will for each part of creation. The TWOT made a connection to a related idiom “‘good in [one’s] eyes’ to express preference or will”.⁵³³ Based on this meaning, the assessment formula, “and God saw that it was good” acts as a fulfillment formula for God’s expressive illocutionary acts on each day of creation. As God expressed the will or desire for the creation of each entity in

⁵³⁰ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 346.

⁵³¹ *Ibid*, 346.

⁵³² Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 113.

⁵³³ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 346.

creation, the mention of the assessment formula reveals that the created entities were judged as “good” in the sense that His will or desire was met and satisfied.

The first two possible meanings of טוב (*tôb*) as beautiful or superior in quality/worth suggest a literal seeing for entities to be judged as “good in one’s eyes”. However, for the third possible meaning of expression of will, Sarna rightly noted that God saw, “not visual examination but perception. The formula of divine approbation, ‘God saw that [it] was good,’ affirms the consummate perfection of God’s creation, an idea that has important consequences for the religion of Israel. Reality is imbued with God’s goodness.”⁵³⁴ It is God’s perception that deemed His creation as perfect. The perfection of creation implies the necessity of unity between God and creation as described earlier.⁵³⁵ Furthermore, perfection also requires existence in reality. This may suggest a link between the assessment formula and a material creation. For God to see each entity of creation as good in terms of its beauty, superior quality/worth, and the expression of God’s will fulfilled, each created entity must exist materially. Like the fulfillment formula, the assessment formula also indicates the completion of God’s speech acts for the material creation and existence of each entity. This shows that God’s speech acts in creation are felicitous and successfully produce the intended perlocutionary act effects. As a result, both the fulfillment formula and assessment formula communicate the same goal and are evidence of unity in the text as opposed to two separate “word account” and “deed accounts” redacted as one.

⁵³⁴ Sarna, *Genesis*, 7.

⁵³⁵ Westermann describes how the repeated phrase, “And God saw that it was good” is an indication of creation’s dependence on God’s regard for creation as a link to the praise of the Creator. This regard and praise between Creator and creation shows unity. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 113.

Unity of the Trinity – Felicity Conditions Met

The felicity of God’s speech acts in the Genesis 1 creation narrative also points to the unity of the Trinity in terms of the character of the three Persons and their relationship with one another. However, the unity of the Persons within the Trinity is not dependent on the felicity of God’s speech acts in creation. Rather, the felicity of God’s speech acts is dependent on the identity and character of the Trinity. In this section, God’s speech acts in the creation narrative will be reviewed to see if they meet Austin’s felicity conditions.⁵³⁶ Doing so in the process will affirm the identity, character, and unity of the Trinity. Austin’s six felicity conditions may be summarized in the following way:

- A. (i) There must be a conventional procedure having a conventional effect
 (ii) The circumstances and persons must be appropriate, as specified in the procedure
- B. The procedure must be executed (i) correctly and (ii) completely
- C. Often, (i) the persons must have the requisite thoughts, feelings and intentions as specified in the procedure, and (ii) if consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant parties must do so.⁵³⁷

Absence of Misinvocations

Condition A (i)⁵³⁸

Two types of misfires, known as misinvocations, are featured in the failure of conditions A (i) and A (ii) respectively. In condition A (i) a conventional procedure with a conventional effect is needed. Since the *ex nihilo* creation by speaking and breathing life is only an act that is

⁵³⁶ A review of Austin’s felicity conditions may be found in Chapter 2 under the heading, “The Doctrine of Infelicities” or in Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 14-15, 25-52.

⁵³⁷ Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 229.

⁵³⁸ There is no title given for the failure of condition A (i). See Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 18.

performed by God alone, it is not conventional in the sense that the ability is available to human beings. However, it is a conventional procedure for God (cf. Ps. 33: 6, 9) as God determines the procedure for the creation of the universe. This is supported by the verbs “and... made” (וַיַּעַשׂ *vayya'as*) in which its use in Genesis 1 suggests that “the divine intention became a reality”⁵³⁹ and “create” (בָּרָא *bārā*) which only refers to the divine creative work of God that humans cannot reproduce.⁵⁴⁰ In this sense, condition A (i) is met.

Condition A (ii) - Misapplications

A second type of misfire and misinvocation is featured in the failure of condition A (ii) as misapplications. This condition requires the right application of the procedure with the right people. Since only God has the divine power to create *ex nihilo* and breathe life, the spoken command by God the Father must be made to the appropriate actors, namely God the Son and the Holy Spirit. Any other beings or things do not have generating creative power or life-giving power. During the analysis of Genesis 1 with Speech Act Theory, a case was made for the Father’s utterances to be the performance of directive illocutionary acts made to God the Son and/or the Holy Spirit to create and/or give life when applicable. Any issues concerning the apparent creative command directed to the waters or the earth (non-divine or inanimate entities) from the words of the locutionary act, were resolved by seeing the Son as the spoken Word and the actions of the waters or earth as the means used to create. Condition A (ii) is met given that

⁵³⁹ Sarna, *Genesis*, 8.

⁵⁴⁰ Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1, 10 vols. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1857), 1:47; Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 40; Sarna, *Genesis*, 5.

the creative Actors involved are God. There is unity of the Trinity in the sense of the three Persons' unique and unmatched divine abilities to create.

Absence of Misexecutions

Conditions B (i) and B (ii) – Flaws and Hitches

Misfires are also represented in the failure of Category B conditions as misexecutions. There are two types of misexecutions. Failure of condition B (i) is defined as a flaw by Austin⁵⁴¹ since it requires the correct execution of the procedure. Failure of condition B (ii) is a hitch⁵⁴² since it requires that the execution of the procedure is also complete. It would be unacceptable to accuse God of misexecutions in the creation of the universe. First, He is the One who decided and determined the creative process to execute (cf. Ps. 33: 6, 9). Second, any misexecutions either by flaw or hitch would question the personhood of God as holy and perfect without mistake. Given the evidence of successful fulfillment and achievement of the intended perlocutionary act effects on each day of creation in the Genesis 1 narrative, there are no creative misexecutions by flaws or hitches. Although there is potential for flaws and hitches applicable to human speakers and hearers of speech due to sin, this would be impossible for all three divine Persons of the Godhead. Conditions B (i) and B (ii) are met as there is unity of the Trinity in holiness and perfection.

⁵⁴¹ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 16.

⁵⁴² *Ibid*, 16.

Absence of Abuses

Condition C (i) - Insincerities

Abuses are represented in the failure of Category C conditions.⁵⁴³ Failure of condition C (i) is an abuse of the speaker since it requires truthfulness, sincerity, and intention when executing the procedure. In the speech act analysis of Genesis 1, it has been shown that when God the Father speaks as a creative act, He does so truthfully with sincerity and intention. This was indicated by His expressive illocutionary acts which expressed His will, desire, or intention for the creation of an entity on each day. Despite the intention, the Father's sincerity is also present. In some days of creation, His expressive illocutionary act also expressed His will or desire for the means by which to create, the purposes to give to a created entity, or the blessing of a created entity. An insincere expression or command would not include such details. Ultimately, the jussive verbs and cohortative verb in Genesis 1:26 used in the Father's speech verify His truthfulness, sincerity, and intention.

The Father's commissive illocutionary act can be another indication of His truthfulness, sincerity, and intention in committing Himself to create through His speech, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Finally, the repeated assessment formula "And God saw that it was good" also implies truthfulness, sincerity, and intention. For God to assess of all creation as good, He must have an intended standard by which creation should be when He spoke to create. Outside of Genesis 1, there are many other parts of Scripture which affirm the everlasting truthfulness when

⁵⁴³ Ibid, 16.

God speaks that is accompanied by sincere action.⁵⁴⁴ All these are evidence that God the Father as the Speaker in creation met condition C (i) and can never be abusive in the nature of His identity and character.

Condition C (ii)⁵⁴⁵

Failure of condition C (ii) is an abuse of the hearers since it requires an expectation for them to respond in a specified way given the execution of the right procedure involving the right actors. Since the Son correlates to the Father's illocutionary act and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood,⁵⁴⁶ He is expected as the Hearer of God's command to respond in the specified way to create. The Holy Spirit is also expected as the Hearer of God's command to breathe life into living creatures on days 5 and 6 when applicable. But are these expectations considered obligations?

Searle provided some insight and does not see an obligation for hearers. He recognized that in a directive illocutionary act, "the point of a request is to try to get the hearer to do something (and not necessarily to commit or obligate him to do it)."⁵⁴⁷ Also, in a commissive illocutionary act, "the point of a promise is to commit the speaker to doing something (and not necessarily to try to get himself to do it)."⁵⁴⁸ In other words, Searle recognized the possibility that a hearer may not be obligated to act and a speaker may not keep a promise. While these

⁵⁴⁴ Num. 23:19; 2 Sam. 7:28; Ps. 12:6; 33:4; 119:89, 160; Prov. 30:5; Is. 40:8; 55:1; Jn. 17:17; Rom. 3:4; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18.

⁵⁴⁵ There is no title given for the failure of condition C (ii). See Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 18.

⁵⁴⁶ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

⁵⁴⁷ Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 14.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 14.

possibilities may be true of human hearers and speakers, they are not true of God due to the nature of His character.

Although Wolterstorff saw that there are moral rights and duties related to discourse, he believed that according to Divine Command Theory, God does not have the property for moral obligations imposed on Himself to perform the actions that come from the “normative standings”. Despite having no obligations, anything that God does, including speaking, is not inconsistent or foreign to His character of goodness. God always acts according to His character.⁵⁴⁹ Therefore, as the Hearer, the Son and Holy Spirit did act in fulfilling God the Father’s will for creation out of their character of goodness, as opposed to obligation. As the Speaker, God committed Himself to act in creation out of His good character of always keeping His commitments and promises, as opposed to obligation.⁵⁵⁰ From the speech act analysis of Genesis 1, all of God’s illocutionary acts are fulfilled and the intended perlocutionary act effects are achieved. Condition C (ii) is met since the Son and Holy Spirit as the hearers are not abusive and responded to the Father’s command in the expected specified way, but not out of obligation.

Fullness in Unity

From reviewing Austin’s six felicity conditions in light of the Genesis 1 creation narrative, it can be concluded that all the conditions are met for God’s speech acts to be felicitous. A major factor for the fulfillment of these conditions is due to the identity, character, and unity of the Trinity in fullness. While Austin proposed these felicity conditions with human actors in mind, many of them do not apply to God as the divine Actor in relationship within the

⁵⁴⁹ Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 95-103.

⁵⁵⁰ Num. 23:19; Jos. 21:45; 23:14; 1 Sam 15:29; Rom. 4:21; 2 Cor. 1:20; Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18; 10:23.

Trinity. Even though God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three distinct persons of the Trinity, they are one God (cf. Deut. 6:4). That is why the directive and commissive illocutionary acts can both be simultaneously performed with God's speech. The Son as the Hearer can create, and God the Father as the Speaker can also commit to creating the same entity in creation because they are the same God. The Trinity is also in unity because the three Persons always have a complete understanding of the intentions for the illocutionary acts and always respond with the intended perlocutionary acts. When God the Father speaks, the Son and the Holy Spirit have complete understanding and are in agreement as one God. Therefore, God's speech act performances in creation among the persons of the Holy Trinity are always felicitous.

Research question 2 in this dissertation asks, "What do the performative acts of Genesis 1 reveal about the relationship between the persons of the Holy Trinity, the character of God, and His intention in creation?" From this section, one can see that Speech Act Theory affirmed that there is unity in the Trinity as the speech acts between members of the Holy Trinity are always felicitous. It also affirms God's character of holiness, perfection, and goodness. As Austin's six conditions for felicity are met for God's speech acts in Genesis 1, God cannot fail with misinvocations of employing a wrong procedure of creation or involving the wrong beings in the procedure. God cannot fail with misexecutions through flaws or hitches as He cannot make a mistake. God cannot fail with abuses with insincerities or falsity in His speech. God cannot fail with abuses by responding to another Person of the Trinity in an unexpected way or out of obligation. The relationship between the three Persons of the Trinity is always in unity and reflects His character of holiness, perfection, and goodness.

Modification of Vanhoozer's Model for the First Speech Conversation Plane

Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory is mainly applicable to the second and fifth speech conversation planes. This is because these speech conversation planes feature speech from God to human beings, whether they are the human beings in the narrative of the text (second speech conversation plane) or human beings as the readers of the text (fifth speech conversation plane). According to Vanhoozer's model, the Holy Spirit corresponds to the perlocutionary act, convicts the hearer/reader of the illocutionary intention, and calls for an appropriate response.⁵⁵¹ This does not apply to the first speech conversation plane which features dialogue between the three persons of the Holy Trinity. There is no need for the Holy Spirit to convict the divine Hearer of God's speech for an appropriate response. As shown from the speech act analysis of Genesis 1, all of God's speech act performances in creation are always happy or felicitous. It was determined that the unity of the Trinity in identity and character prevents the possibility of infelicity and the need for the role of the Holy Spirit to convict another person of the Trinity.

Since Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory does not account for the analysis of speech on the first speech conversation plane, it may be modified in the following way for application to do so:

1. God the Father performs the locutionary act as the Utterer and Begetter of words from Scripture.
2. God the Son and God the Holy Spirit correspond to the illocutionary act of the Speaker (God the Father).
3. There is no role to correspond to the perlocutionary act, as there is no need to convict the Hearers (God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) of the Speaker's illocutionary intention.

⁵⁵¹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

4. As persons of the Holy Trinity in unity, there is always a complete understanding of the illocutionary intention and successful performance of the perlocutionary act, resulting in happy or felicitous speech acts.

This revision of Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory can be applied to Scripture involving dialogue between any of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity on the first speech conversation plane.

An Instantaneous and Miraculous Creation

Research question 3 in this dissertation asks, "Does the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative imply the necessity of an instantaneous and miraculous creation?" After the speech act analysis of Genesis 1 in this chapter, it can be concluded that the application of Speech Act Theory does necessitate an instantaneous and miraculous creation and can be used as a tool to argue for a traditional young earth creation view. There are three main arguments to support this conclusion: 1) the performance of declaration illocutionary actions; 2) the miraculous performances of Christ; and 3) the authorial performative intention using יום (*yom*).

The Performance of Declaration Illocutionary Acts

The first argument to support an instantaneous and miraculous creation is that of the performance of declaration illocutionary acts. Declaration illocutionary acts are those that "bring about some alteration in the status or condition of the referred to object or objects solely in virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed."⁵⁵² The speech act analysis of Genesis 1 in this chapter has shown how God can be performing the declaration illocutionary act

⁵⁵² Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 17.

with the utterances on each day of creation. Even Searle categorized God’s command of “Let there be light” as a supernatural declaration, which can reasonably be applied to the other commands of creation.⁵⁵³ If this is the case, based on the defined function of declaration illocutionary acts, the declaration of “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3a) should immediately bring about the change in the condition of the universe with the existence of light (“and there was light” Gen. 1:b) solely on the fact that the declaration was successful. This is easily applied to all the other declarations on each day of creation (“word account”) with evidence of fulfillment described in the “deed account”. If the actual creation of each entity took billions of years or undefined periods of time as suggested by some old earth evolutionist or progressive creationist views, God’s utterances cannot be categorized as declaration illocutionary acts.

The Miraculous Performances of Christ

The second argument to support an instantaneous and miraculous creation is the miraculous performances of Christ. The speech act analysis of Genesis 1 in this chapter has established God the Son’s creative role on each day of creation. The timing of how He created as the spoken Word of God is reflected not only by the function of declaration illocutionary acts, but also by how He created in His miracles in His incarnate form on Earth. Sarfati described this argument in the following way:

Genesis tells us that God spoke things into existence; God speaks and things happen. As it says in Psalm 33:9: For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. The bottom line is: God is the *creator of time, so needs no time* for His creative acts. Jesus as Creator gives us an indication of how God would have created in Genesis. A striking feature of His miracles was the speed. For example, He instantly turned water into wine, whereas fermentation normally takes months (of course, the miracle also

⁵⁵³ Ibid, 18.

required creation of new carbon atoms, for example, to form the molecular components of wine absent from water).⁵⁵⁴

Sarfati's statement about Jesus as Creator indicating how God would have created is consistent with Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory. Vanhoozer said, "If the Father is the locutor, the Son is his preeminent illocution. Christ is God's definitive Word, the substantive content of his message."⁵⁵⁵ In other words, God the Son corresponds to the illocutionary act of the Speaker (God the Father) and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood. Everything that Christ does as the Word of God embodies, reflects, and communicates the authority of what God the Father speaks. Therefore, as Jesus performed creative miracles instantaneously, He reflects how God the Father created instantaneously and miraculously as well with His spoken Word in the Genesis 1 creation.

The Authorial Performative Intention Using יום (*yom*)

The third argument to support an instantaneous and miraculous creation is the authorial performative intention using יום (*yom*), whose literal meaning is "day". As described earlier, on day 1, God created time after creating light and separating it from darkness (Gen. 1:3-4).

Westermann said, "Everything that God creates, including human existence, is determined by this polarity [the separation of light and darkness]: the beginning and the conclusion of creation..."⁵⁵⁶ He pointed out among other examples that the timing of creation is determined by separation of light and darkness as a measure of time. In verse 5, God defined His terms by

⁵⁵⁴ Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 74.

⁵⁵⁵ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

⁵⁵⁶ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 114.

defining “light” as “day” (יום *yom*) and “darkness” as “night”.⁵⁵⁷ The formula of time, “And there was evening and there was morning, the _____ day” (Gen. 1:5b, 8b, 13, 19, 23, 31b) repeated at the end of each creation act suggests a consistent period of time measured by days and nights that define the timing of each creation act. Morris affirmed this observation:

Having separated the day and night, God had completed His first day’s work. “The evening and the morning were the first day.” This same formula is used at the conclusion of each of the six days; so it is obvious that the duration of each of the days, including the first, was the same. Furthermore, the “day” was the “light” time, when God did His work; the darkness was the “night” time when God did no work – nothing new took place between the “evening” and “morning” of each day. The formula may be rendered literally: “And there was evening, then morning – day one,” and so on. It is clear that, beginning with the first day and continuing thereafter, there was established a cyclical succession of days and nights - periods of light and periods of darkness.⁵⁵⁸

Time was created as a byproduct of the creation of light by speech on day 1. From the formula of time presented by the author of the narrative, there is a period of day and night that measured each creation day. But what is the intended definition of the length of each period? This depends on how the author used the Hebrew word יום (*yom*) which is translated as “day”. The usage of this word can range from a literal period of 24 hours to a vague extended period of time.⁵⁵⁹ In Appendix 2, a strong case is made that the author of Genesis 1 intended a literal 24-hour meaning of “days” (יום *yom*) in creation. This is based on a brief survey of the history concerning the understanding of *yom* from select church fathers and Reformers, and five exegetical and syntactical arguments.⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁷ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 55.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 55.

⁵⁵⁹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 370-371.

⁵⁶⁰ The five exegetical and syntactical arguments include the arguments from Ordinal Prefix, Explicit Qualification, Coherent Usage, Plural Expression, and Divine Exemplar. In addition to Appendix 2, see also Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., “Reformed Theology and Six Day Creationism,” *Christianity & Society* 5 (October 1995): 25–30.

Speech Act Theory is not needed to argue for a literal six 24-hour day of creation. However, Speech Act Theory can help with understanding the communicative intention of both the human author and Divine Author to the original and contemporary audiences. In the speech act analysis of Genesis 1 in this chapter, the main focus was on the examination of God’s dialogue according to the first speech conversation plane. However, aside from God’s dialogue in the creation narrative, there is also speech in the voice of the narrator (or the human author of Genesis) directed to the reader. These speech of the author’s locutionary acts include Genesis 1:1-2; 2:1-3 and the “deed account” featured on each day of creation.⁵⁶¹

The speech of the human author may be examined according to the fourth speech conversation plane (speech from the human author to readers of Scripture). Out of all the possible illocutionary acts one can perform, the human author of Genesis 1 may be best described as performing the assertive illocutionary act of stating and informing the reader of the truth of expressed propositions.⁵⁶² The human author is communicating the propositional truth that “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). From the inclusion of the creative speech of God in the narrative, he is also communicating the propositional truth that God created by speaking. After God’s speech on each day of creation, the human author communicated the propositional truth that God successfully created with His speech by continuing the narrative with the fulfillment formula and assessment formula found in the “deed accounts”. However, the human author also included the time formula: “And there was evening and there was morning, the _____ day” (Gen. 1:5b, 8b, 13, 19, 23, 31b). In doing so, the human author is communicating the propositional truth that God successfully created with His speech

⁵⁶¹ “Deed accounts” of each day of creation: Gen. 1:4-5 [day 1], 7-8 [day 2], 9c-10, 11b-13 [day 3], 15b-19 [day 4], 21-23 [day 5], 24b-25, 27-31 [day 6].

⁵⁶² Searle, *Expression and Meaning*, 12.

within a literal 24-hour day (יוֹם *yom*) of creation. With the assertive illocutionary acts, the human author is communicating these propositional truths, including the short time of God's creative acts, to the readers of Scripture. It is up to each reader whether to believe and accept these propositional truths to determine whether the perlocutionary act effects are achieved.

The speech in Genesis 1 may also be examined according to the fifth speech conversation plane (speech from the Divine Author to readers of Scripture). Wolterstorff described a concept of double agency in which “one person says something with words which he himself hasn't uttered or inscribed.”⁵⁶³ Put in another way, through some human modes of discourse⁵⁶⁴ in double agency, one may be able “to find out what God might have said or be saying with [a] text”⁵⁶⁵ that has been divinely inspired by biblical authors to write. On the one hand, in Genesis 1, God may be performing different assertive illocutionary acts and communicating different propositional truths to contemporary readers than what the human author communicated to the original readers. This is because God is communicating according to the context of the canon of Scripture. For example, according to the fourth speech conversation plane, the human author likely did not write with the knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity or the identity of Jesus Christ as the Word of God. However, according to the fifth speech conversation plane, God may use Genesis 1 to communicate the propositional truth of Jesus Christ's creative role to contemporary readers due to a canonical reading.

On the other hand, in Genesis 1, God may also be performing assertive illocutionary acts and communicating similar propositional truths to contemporary readers as those the human

⁵⁶³ Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse*, 38.

⁵⁶⁴ Three human modes of discourse Wolterstorff described are that of authorization, deputization, and appropriation. See *Ibid*, 38-54.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 38.

author communicated to the original readers. These include the propositional truths listed earlier that God successfully created the heavens and the earth through the act of speaking in a short period of time (indicated by the use and meaning of יום *yom*). In addition to performing the assertive illocutionary, God may also use the Genesis 1 text to perform the directive illocutionary act of calling contemporary readers to believe and accept the propositional truth of a short period of creation. If that is the case, according to Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory,⁵⁶⁶ the Holy Spirit has the role of convicting the reader of the illocutionary intention and leading them to an appropriate response of believing that God created in a short period of time.

This section addressed research question 3 in this dissertation: "Does the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative imply the necessity of an instantaneous and miraculous creation?" In response, three arguments were presented: 1) the performance of declaration illocutionary actions; 2) the miraculous performances of Christ; and 3) the authorial performative intention using יום (*yom*). From these three arguments, an affirmative answer was given that defended the view of an instantaneous and miraculous creation.

A Material Creation

Research question 4 in this dissertation asks, "Does the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative imply the necessity of a material creation over a functional creation?" This question is best answered with a negative approach. In Chapter 4, Speech Act Theory will be applied to Genesis 1 to explore whether there is a possibility that its purpose is to

⁵⁶⁶ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

describe the origin of functions in creation, as advocated by John Walton.⁵⁶⁷ From this analysis, some challenges will be discovered as God's speech acts are deemed infelicitous if interpreted as the ordering of functions. From this negative approach of using Speech Act Theory, it is concluded that the Genesis creation narrative best describes a material creation over a functional creation.

⁵⁶⁷ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 125.

Chapter 4: Walton's Understanding and Application of Speech Act Theory

In his book, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate*, John H. Walton made eighteen propositions and defended the idea that Genesis 1 “was never intended to be an account of material origins. Rather it was intended as an account of functional origins...”⁵⁶⁸ In other words, the purpose of Genesis 1 was not to explain the creation or the beginning existence of matter, but the initiation of the function or operation of creation. He saw days 1 to 3 of creation in Genesis 1 as the establishment of functions while days 4 to 6 were the installation of functionaries.⁵⁶⁹ These ideas culminated in the conclusion of what Walton terms as the Cosmic Temple Inauguration View. “This label picks up the most important aspect of the view that the cosmos is being given its functions as God’s temple, where he has taken up his residence and from where he runs the cosmos. The world is his headquarters.”⁵⁷⁰

To come to this functional interpretation of Genesis 1, Walton heavily relies on the worldview of contemporary Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) creation myths by Ancient Israel’s neighboring nations. He utilized a methodology called “comparative study”, also known as ANE Form Criticism, to juxtapose data drawn from different cultures of the broader Ancient Near East with one another to understand one another better.⁵⁷¹ Walton believes to understand the human author’s intended meaning of a functional creation in Genesis 1, one must understand the culture

⁵⁶⁸ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 125.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid. See Propositions 5 and 6.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid, 153.

⁵⁷¹ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 16. The historical developments behind ANE Form Criticism and the weaknesses behind the presuppositions of Walton’s use of this methodology will be presented in Chapter 5.

behind the Ancient Near East creation myths. He supports the benefit of this methodology with tools provided by Speech Act Theory.⁵⁷² In this chapter, Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory will first be presented and critiqued. This will be followed with a summary of the functions established and functionaries installed on each day of creation in Genesis 1 using Walton's speech act methodology and ANE Form Criticism. Finally, Walton's functional creation will be critiqued. This will be accomplished by applying Austin and Searle's traditional Speech Act Theory to God's speech on each day of creation while adopting Walton's interpretation and assumptions from the Ancient Near East worldview. The purpose is to determine whether the speech acts under these conditions are felicitous and can allow the possibility that God's illocutions communicated the establishment of functions or installation of functionaries instead of a material creation.

Walton's Understanding and Application of Speech Act Theory

In proposition 3 of *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority*, Walton attempted to defend the inerrancy and authority of Scripture by using Speech Act Theory.⁵⁷³ He rightly understands that the theory "recognizes... communication is an action with particular intentions."⁵⁷⁴ Walton also understands the three types of speech acts: "The communicator uses *locutions* (words, sentences, rhetorical structures, genres) to embody an *illocution* (the intention to do something with those locutions – bless, promise, instruct, assert) with a *perlocution* that anticipates a certain sort of response from the audience (obedience, trust,

⁵⁷² John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 40.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid*, 39-48.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 41.

belief).”⁵⁷⁵ He is also commended for his hermeneutical principles of identifying authorial intention and avoiding the reading of one’s meanings into the text.⁵⁷⁶ However, Walton focuses on “locating the meaning of the text between the communicator [human author] and the implied audience.”⁵⁷⁷ This is equivalent to this dissertation’s identification of applying Speech Act Theory according to the fourth speech conversation plane. While this statement does not seem unusual at first glance, three main concerns with Walton’s approach will be addressed in the following sections.

ANE Comparative Studies to Understand Illocutions

The first concern is how Walton locates the meaning of the text. He believes, “Comparative studies applied in the context of speech-act theory can help us to understand the cultural aspects of locution so that we might better discern the illocution of the communicator.”⁵⁷⁸ This is a possibility because he saw that the implementation of Speech Act Theory “addresses both philosophical hermeneutics and comparative studies.”⁵⁷⁹ As mentioned earlier, the use of comparative studies or ANE Form Criticism requires a knowledge of the Ancient Near East worldview and assumes the biblical human authors adopted the same worldview and creation myths as their pagan neighbors. For example, Walton believes the human author was communicating that the pre-creation state in Genesis 1:2 features “an absence

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid, 41.

⁵⁷⁶ cf. Ibid, 51, 52; See also John H. Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2011), 82-84.

⁵⁷⁷ Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 41.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid, 46.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid, 41.

of functions rather than an absence of material”⁵⁸⁰ due to the pre-cosmic descriptions of Egyptian, Sumerian, and Akkadian creation myths.⁵⁸¹ Although it is good hermeneutical practice to study the historical, cultural, and literary backgrounds of the human author’s immediate worldview, it is problematic when one imports an outside source like the Ancient Near East worldview as Walton has.⁵⁸²

Understanding of Divine Illocutions Limited

The second concern of Walton’s approach is that he emphasizes the human author’s illocutionary act on the fourth speech conversation plane as the way to understand the Divine Author’s illocutionary act on the fifth speech conversation plane. He said, “By applying the tenets of speech-act theory, evangelical interpreters are able to associate the authoritative communicative act (God’s illocution) specifically with the illocution of the human communicator.”⁵⁸³ The concern is that this limits how one can understand the Divine Author’s illocutionary acts on the fifth speech conversation plane, as it is based only on the human author’s illocutionary act. It does not consider how the Divine Author may communicate to the contemporary reader in the context of the whole canon of Scripture. This assessment of Walton is accurate as he said, “Without a specific New Testament treatment [of a particular Old

⁵⁸⁰ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 52.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid*, 50-52.

⁵⁸² The problems and weaknesses of Walton’s ANE Form Criticism approach are further addressed in Chapter 5.

⁵⁸³ Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 42.

Testament text], we have no authoritative basis for bypassing the human author.”⁵⁸⁴ In addition, how one understands the Divine Author’s illocutionary acts on the fifth speech conversation plane is further limited due to the previous concern. Since an Ancient Near East worldview is needed via comparative studies or ANE Form Criticism to understand the human author’s illocutionary act, and the human author’s illocutionary act is needed to understand the Divine Author’s illocutionary act, by application of the transitive property, an Ancient Near East worldview is needed to understand the Divine Author’s illocutionary act.

Association with the Accommodation Method

The third concern about Walton’s emphasis on requiring the human author’s illocutionary act to understand the Divine Author’s illocutionary act is its relationship with the concept of God’s accommodation. According to Sparks, “Accommodation is God’s adoption in inscripturation of the human audience’s finite and fallen perspective. Its underlying conceptual assumption is that in many cases God does not correct our mistaken human viewpoints but merely assumes them in order to communicate with us.”⁵⁸⁵ Walton admits that Sparks describes how God may not only use and accommodate the faulty “human viewpoints and perspectives, but also... human errors.”⁵⁸⁶ These may include the “Old World Science”⁵⁸⁷ of the Ancient Near

⁵⁸⁴ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 128. For example, Walton rejects a Trinitarian reading in Genesis 1:26 because there is no specific New Testament treatment of that verse even though the New Testament reveals the doctrine of the Trinity. *Ibid*, 128. Furthermore, Walton does not accept a messianic reading of Genesis 3:15 as there is no other Scriptures that indicates a fulfillment identified to transcend the original context. *Ibid*, 235-236.

⁵⁸⁵ Kenton L. Sparks, *God’s Word in Human Words: An Evangelical Appropriation of Critical Biblical Scholarship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 243.

⁵⁸⁶ Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 40.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 54.

East. For example, “God may well accommodate the human communicator’s view that the earth is the center of the cosmos. But if God’s intention is not to communicate truth about cosmic geography, that accommodation is simply part of the shape of the locution—it is incidental, not part of God’s illocution.”⁵⁸⁸ In the context of Genesis 1:6-8, Walton argued that despite the translations of רָקִיעַ (*raqia’*) to scientifically precise terms such as “expanse” or “atmosphere”, the ancient Israelite audience and the Ancient Near East would perceive the sky or firmament as a solid dome.⁵⁸⁹ According to Walton, God accommodated this “Old World Science” to convey that “the function of the *raqia’* was to regulate the weather, as is evident from the description of the waters above it.”⁵⁹⁰ By accommodation, God was not offering any corrective or qualification of the understanding of the sky, nor was He offering scientific truth for the ages.⁵⁹¹ Rather, he accommodated the thinking of the ancient audience to communicate the truth of the establishment of this function.

The accommodation method is problematic because it is not consistent with the character of God and questions the inerrancy of Scripture. In a chapter entitled “Exposing Faulty Methods of Hermeneutics”, Lisle critiqued the accommodation method:

Advocates of this position [accommodation] assert that God used the accepted (though false) views of the day, especially the ancient near-east cosmology, to teach true spiritual principles such as monotheism... It seems to me that the accommodation hermeneutic can be summarized as “God uses lies to teach truth.”... This “accommodation” is different from genuine, biblical accommodation that uses simplifications of truth to teach truth. The notion that God would use a lie to teach the truth is contrary to His nature as

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid, 42.

⁵⁸⁹ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 110; See also Paul H. Seely, “The First Four Days of Genesis in Concordist Theory and in Biblical Context,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 49 (1997), 88.

⁵⁹⁰ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 112.

⁵⁹¹ cf. Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 54.

God (Titus 1:2; John 14:6; see also Matthew 12:25). And it leads to an insurmountable problem. If God is willing to lie in His Word, then how could we ever know which parts are true?⁵⁹²

Here, Lisle rejects the accommodation method because it does not coincide with the character of a truthful God. The accommodation method is also problematic because it questions the inerrancy of Scripture. This method is very similar to a human mode of discourse called appropriation, described by Wolterstorff as a part of double agency.⁵⁹³ Appropriation is when “one’s own discourse is a function of that other person’s discourse.”⁵⁹⁴ In other words, God may have appropriated the human authors’ words in the Bible as His own discourse. If this is the case, God’s Word is based on humanly-produced works which are not infallible or inerrant.

An Attempt to Defend the Inerrancy of Scripture

Despite these concerns, Walton distanced his ANE Form Criticism approach to Speech Act Theory from Spark’s accommodation method and attempted to use it to defend the inerrancy of Scripture. He did so by defining what was associated with each type of speech act:

We believe that God has inspired the locutions (words, whether spoken or written) that the communicator has used to accomplish with God their joint illocutions (which lead to an understanding of intentions, claims, affirmations and, ultimately, meaning), but that those locutions are tied to the communicator’s world. That is, God has made accommodation to the high context communication between the implied communicator and implied audience so as to optimize and facilitate the transmission of meaning by means of an authoritative illocution. Inspiration is tied to locutions (they have their

⁵⁹² Jason Lisle, *Understanding Genesis: How to Analyze, Interpret, and Defend Scripture* (Greenforest, AR: Master Books, 2015), 52-53.

⁵⁹³ Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 51-54.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

source in God); illocutions define the necessary path to meaning, which is characterized by authority and inerrancy.”⁵⁹⁵

Walton associated locutions with the genre of the text and accommodation from the thinking of the Ancient Near East worldview. As inspiration is also associated with the locutions, Walton can argue that God led the human authors to write according to their potentially faulty genres, viewpoints, and perspectives and accommodated them to communicate His illocutions. On the other hand, illocutions are associated with inerrancy and authority. Walton concluded, “Therefore inerrancy and authority cannot be undermined, compromised or jeopardized by genre or accommodation.”⁵⁹⁶ Walton attempted to defend the inerrancy of Scripture in its illocutions despite the accommodation of faulty Ancient Near East worldviews in the locutions.

No Authority and Inerrancy in the Locutions

With this approach, Walton fails to defend the inerrancy of Scripture in two ways. First, he does not put authority in the locution of God’s Word. Walton admitted, “Authority is not found in the locution, but has to come through the illocution.”⁵⁹⁷ If this is the case, Walton is saying that the actual words of God found in Scripture have no authority and are not inerrant, while the intended meaning in the illocutions of the words has authority and is inerrant. It is problematic to perceive that an aspect of God’s Word can have no authority or inerrancy. Furthermore, according to Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory, God the Father corresponds to performing the locutionary act as the Utterer and Begetter of words from

⁵⁹⁵ Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 44.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid, 45.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid, 54.

Scripture.⁵⁹⁸ Walton's understanding of Speech Act Theory would render God the Father's locutionary act of speaking in Scripture, including that of creating in Genesis 1, without authority or inerrancy.

No Authority and Inerrancy in the Illocutions

Walton also fails to defend the inerrancy of Scripture in a second way. According to Walton, since the genre of the text and accommodation from the thinking of the Ancient Near East worldview are associated with the locutionary act, there is no authority or inerrancy in the locution. However, a case can be made that if genre and Ancient Near East worldviews are involved, these elements can affect some illocutions. This would result in the conclusion that some illocutions of God's Word shouldn't be seen as authoritative or inerrant as well.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Austin presented three different types of locutionary acts: 1) the phonetic act, 2) the phatic act, and 3) the rhetic act.⁵⁹⁹ Only the second and third types would relate to written texts such as Scripture. The phatic act is "the utterance of certain words in a certain construction."⁶⁰⁰ From the examples that Austin gave, Genesis 1:3a "And God said, 'Let there be light'" is considered a phatic act. The rhetic act is "the performance of an act of using those vocables with a certain more-or-less definite sense and reference."⁶⁰¹ If Genesis 1:3a was written as a rhetic act, it would be, "God said that He would let there be light." Although this is

⁵⁹⁸ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1998), 457.

⁵⁹⁹ J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1962), 94-95.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 94, 95.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid*, 95, 94.

not what is written in the Genesis 1 creation narrative, other parts are clearly rhetic acts. For example, after there was light, Genesis 1:7 states, “And God made the expanse and separated the waters....” If it was written as a phatic act, it would be, “And God said, ‘I made the expanse and separated the waters.’”. Genesis 1:7 is a locutionary rhetic act because on the fourth speech conversation plane, the reader needs to determine what the author (human or divine) is informing, teaching, or expressing his belief about. In particular, is the author asserting that God made a material expanse (skies) that separated the waters below from those above (moisture in the air)? Or is the author asserting that God established the function of weather by making a solid dome and separating the waters? The latter functional view is drawn from Walton’s comparative study of the Ancient Near East worldview.⁶⁰²

The point in presenting this example is to show that while Walton is correct that the genre of the text and accommodation from the thinking of the Ancient Near East worldview affects the construction of the locutionary rhetic act, they also affect how the author performs his illocutionary acts. From examining Austin’s examples of rhetic acts, Searle noticed that “the verb phrases in the reports of *rhetic* acts invariably contain illocutionary verbs.”⁶⁰³ Searle concluded “there is no way to give an indirect speech report of a rhetic act... which does not turn the report into the report of an illocutionary act.”⁶⁰⁴ From the example of Genesis 1:7 above and Searle’s observation, there is a relationship between a locutionary rhetic act and an illocutionary act. If Walton does not see authority or inerrancy in the locutions due to the genre of the text and

⁶⁰² Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 110-113.

⁶⁰³ John R. Searle, “Austin on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts,” *The Philosophical Review* 77, no. 4 (1968), 411.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 412.

accommodation from the thinking of the Ancient Near East worldview, he would also need to extend the lack of authority and inerrancy to illocutionary acts as well.

Other Notes about Walton's Understanding of Speech Act Theory

Aside from Walton's understanding and application of Austin's three types of speech acts, Walton never shared his thoughts about any other aspects of Speech Act Theory. Although he addressed illocutionary acts, Walton did not mention anything about Austin or Searle's taxonomies of illocutionary acts. Furthermore, he did not mention Austin's six conditions for felicity. However, Walton acknowledged with Sandy that, "We do not agree with many of the conclusions associated with speech-act theory."⁶⁰⁵ While it may be unknown what specific aspects of Speech Act Theory Walton is in disagreement with, it is clear that his main purpose of using the tools of Speech Act Theory is to defend the positive contributions of comparative studies or ANE Form Criticism to understand Scripture.⁶⁰⁶

Functions and Functionaries of Genesis 1

With Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory in conjunction with the Ancient Near East Form Criticism, he interprets a functional creation on each day of the Genesis 1 creation narrative. The following table summarizes the functions established (days 1 to 3) and functionaries installed (days 4 to 6).⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁵ Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 41.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid, 40.

⁶⁰⁷ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*. See Propositions 5 and 6.

Table 21. Functions and Functionaries of Genesis 1

Day	Functions / Functionaries
1	Function of Time
2	Function of Regulating Weather
3	Function of Vegetation
4	Functionaries of Celestial Bodies
5	Functionaries of Sea and Sky Creatures
6	Functionaries of Land Creatures and Human Beings

Concerning the function of the first three days, Walton said, “These three great functions – time, weather and food – are the foundation of life... We should not be surprised to find that the three major functions introduced in the first three days of Genesis 1 are also prominent in the ancient Near Eastern texts.”⁶⁰⁸ The functionaries installed on days 4 to 6 “carry out their own functions in the spheres delineated in the first three days (time, cosmic space, terrestrial space)”⁶⁰⁹ In the next section, each day of Walton’s functional creation will be critiqued with the traditional understanding of the Speech Act Theory of Austin and Searle.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid, 58. Walton cites Papyrus Insinger and Marduk’s creative activity in *Enuma Elish* as examples that feature these three functions. Ibid, 58-59.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid, 62.

Critique of Walton's Functional Creation using Speech Act Theory

From Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory explained in an earlier section, Walton focuses on applying Speech Act Theory according to the fourth speech conversation plane. Comparative studies or ANE Form Criticism are used to help determine the human author's illocutions to translate them to the Divine Author's illocutions on the fifth speech conversation plane. While focusing on the fourth speech conversation plane in the Genesis 1 creation narrative, one can determine what the human author or Divine Author may be communicating from the locutionary phatic or rhetic acts. However, since the author is employing a narrative to communicate, Speech Act Theory can be applied within the narrative, either on the first speech conversation plane, second speech conversation plane, or strictly as divine *fiat*.⁶¹⁰ Regardless of how Walton viewed God's act of speaking in the creation narrative, it is clear that the author of Genesis 1 utilized this narrative with God's speech to communicate to readers.

If Speech Act Theory is applied to God's speech within the creation narrative, the illocutions God is communicating as an Actor within the narrative should be consistent with the illocutions the human author is communicating on the fourth speech conversation plane by

⁶¹⁰ Walton would not apply Speech Act Theory according to the first speech conversation plane as he rejects a trinitarian reading in Genesis 1. Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 128. Furthermore, Walton's view of Speech Act Theory would not make sense with the first speech conversation plane as God does not need to accommodate Himself with His locutions or speak in a certain genre. It is unclear whether he would apply Speech Act Theory according to the second speech conversation plane. Would he see God as speaking to creation to establish, bless, or bestow functions to them? Similarly, Walton would see God's speaking in Genesis 1 as divine *fiat*, but not for the purpose of creating material entities. As a contrast to the Ancient Near East's myths of creation through battles with cosmic monsters, Walton saw God as "simply speaking the functions into existence." Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 91. However, it is also unclear whether Walton would see God's act of speaking as an accommodation to the ancient audience who may have been familiar with the Egyptian creation myths such as the Memphite Theology, in which Ptah created with his spoken word. Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 125.

employing this narrative. In turn, the illocutions God is communicating through the human author to readers on the fifth speech conversation plane should also be consistent. In the following sections, Speech Act Theory will be applied to God's speech within the creation narrative of Genesis 1 while adopting Walton's presuppositions of the influence by the Ancient Near East worldview. The purpose of applying Speech Act Theory in this way is to determine whether there is a possibility that God's illocutions communicated the establishment of functions or installation of functionaries instead of a material creation. If this can be proven on this level of speech conversation plane (regardless of whether it is seen as the first or second one), it will support Walton's belief that the illocutions of the human author of Genesis 1 communicate a functional creation on the fourth speech conversation plane.

Day 1 – Function of Time

According to Walton's interpretation, on day 1 of creation, God established the function of time. This interpretation comes from Walton's belief that "light is never treated as a material object in the ancient Near East, despite our modern physics."⁶¹¹ As a result, Walton saw the light God called *yom* as a period of light⁶¹² that can be separated from darkness (Gen. 1:4b).⁶¹³ These alternating periods of light and darkness represents the function of time.⁶¹⁴ The application of Speech Act Theory shows that God's speech can't have the illocution to establish the function of time.

⁶¹¹ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 53.

⁶¹² *Ibid*, 54.

⁶¹³ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 79.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid*, 80.

If light is not material, God the Father's locutionary act is uttering the words, "Let there be light [a period of light]" (Gen. 1:3a). For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the declaration illocutionary act by declaring the condition of the universe to change with the function of a period of light, or the function of time. Was the perlocutionary act effect achieved? Genesis 1:3b would state, "And there was light [a period of light]". This merely reveals that there now existed a period of light, but not the function of time that comes with the alternating periods of light and darkness since God's action of separating the period of light and the period of darkness in Genesis 1:4b has not occurred yet. Walton's notion that God "established order and function by his spoken word"⁶¹⁵ is questioned as God's speech only established a period of light, which is a necessary element to establish the function of time. But the actual establishment of the function of time came from the action of separating, not of speaking.

Furthermore, the assessment formula, "And God saw that the light [period of light] was good" (Gen. 1:4a) was positioned before God's action of separating. Since Walton interpreted this assessment as meaning "the cosmos functions just as it was designed to function"⁶¹⁶ the speech act would be considered infelicitous because this assessment states God's satisfaction in the function of time when He hasn't separated the period of light from the period of darkness yet. As God's action of separation is necessary to fulfill the function of time, it would be infelicitous and unusual for Him to assess the function before the function was fully installed. Austin's

⁶¹⁵ Ibid, 135.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid, 75. Also meaning "functioning properly". Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 50.

condition B (ii) for felicity is not met as the procedure was not executed completely yet.⁶¹⁷ From the conclusions of the speech act analysis in Chapter 3, God’s speech acts in the first conversation plane must always be felicitous. Therefore, it is more likely for God to call for the creation of a physicist’s light or a material light.⁶¹⁸ Even if God’s speech act was felicitous with the interpretation that He was declaring for a period of light and function of time, it would necessarily imply that material light was created. Without material light, there cannot be a period of light and function of time.

Day 2 – Function of Regulating Weather

Walton believes that the purpose of day 2 was to establish the function of regulating weather.⁶¹⁹ He first asserted that the translation of *raqia* ‘ as “expanse” or “atmosphere” in some English translations was an attempt to be scientifically precise.⁶²⁰ However, the Israelites would perceive it as a solid dome.⁶²¹ Walton cited lexical data from the Old Testament usage of the noun with the cultural context of the ancient Near East as the cultural context of the biblical author.⁶²² As *raqia* ‘ has been portrayed as the home for heavenly bodies in Genesis 1:17 as well as a realm where birds fly in Genesis 1:20, Walton’s point is to show that “there is no

⁶¹⁷ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 15-17; See also Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 229.

⁶¹⁸ See the section in Chapter 3 entitled, “Day 1 – The Creation of Light – Genesis 1:3-5” to understand the illocutions of the material creation of light and the speech acts’ felicity.

⁶¹⁹ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 112.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid*, 110.

⁶²¹ *Ibid*, 110.

⁶²² *Ibid*, 111.

scientifically identifiable structure with which it can be identified”⁶²³ and not approach the text with the assumption of the purpose to explain a material creation.

The purpose of the text is to establish function. Walton said, “The function of the *raqia*’ was to regulate the weather, as is evident from the description of the waters above it.”⁶²⁴ This is supported by the ancient biblical concept of a floodgate (cf. Gen. 1:8; 7:11; 8:2; Ps. 148:4)⁶²⁵ or storehouses (Job 38:22; Ps. 135:7) that hold back the waters.⁶²⁶ Walton also compared this to the ancient Near East Mesopotamian cosmological idea of the ends of the earth as where the weather god opens the gates of heaven.⁶²⁷ The application of Speech Act Theory shows that God’s speech can’t have the illocution to establish the function of regulating the weather.

According to Walton’s interpretation, on day 2, God the Father’s locutionary act is uttering the words, “Let there be an expanse [*raqia*] in the midst of the waters, and let it [*raqia*] separate waters from the waters” (Gen. 1:6).⁶²⁸ For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the directive illocutionary act on the second speech conversation plane of commanding it (*raqia*’) to separate the waters from the waters (to have the function of regulating weather). Was the perlocutionary act effect achieved? The

⁶²³ Ibid, 112.

⁶²⁴ Ibid, 112.

⁶²⁵ Ibid, 111.

⁶²⁶ Ibid, 112.

⁶²⁷ Ibid, 111.

⁶²⁸ Unlike day 1, God’s speech on day 2 included the command of separating, which according to Walton, is an important action to establish function.

speech act would appear to be infelicitous as Genesis 1:7 stated that “God... separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse [has the function of regulating weather].” If the separating of waters refers to establishing the function of regulating weather, the speech act would be infelicitous for two reasons. First, it would be implausible for the command to be directed to *raqia* ‘ if at the time of God’s utterance, the *raqia* ‘ had not been created yet. Walton would not see this as a problem since the text is not concerned with material creation. Second, the account would reveal that God has the function of regulating weather (Gen. 1:7) while His speech called for *raqia* ‘ to have the function of regulating weather (Gen. 1:6). Both of these reasons reflect that Austin’s condition A (ii) is not met since the procedure specified certain circumstances that were not fulfilled.⁶²⁹

Even if felicity condition A (ii) was met and the text states that the *raqia* ‘ separated the waters instead of God, there is no explicit indication in the text the separation of waters equates to the function of regulating weather. This interpretation is imported externally from the Ancient Near East worldview. Furthermore, although attributing *raqia* ‘ with the action of separating waters would be felicitous according to Austin, it would not be theologically felicitous as an act of creation was given to a created entity apart from the Creator God. Another problem arises from the missin assessment formula on day 2, which Walton sees as meaning “the cosmos functions just as it was designed to function”⁶³⁰ Walton doesn’t explain why this assessment formula is missing here. Based on his interpretation, the missing assessment formula would suggest that the function of regulating weather is not functioning in the way it was designed.

⁶²⁹ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 15, 17; See also Levinson, *Pragmatics*, 229.

⁶³⁰ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 65. Also meaning “functioning properly”. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 50.

This would also convey the idea of infelicity. From the conclusions of the speech act analysis in Chapter 3, if God’s speech act directed to a created entity is infelicitous, it would suggest that God did not create a perfect creation and there is no unity between the Creator and creation. Therefore, it is more likely for God to use His speech to call for the creation of a material expanse and the material separation of the waters using the expanse as the means to do so.⁶³¹

Day 3 – Function of Vegetation

According to Walton’s interpretation, on day 3 of creation, God established the function of vegetation. There are two elements or sequences on day 3: the separation of water and dry land, and the production of vegetation. While some may see these two elements as separate acts, Walton sees them as “intrinsically related in a functional approach”⁶³² as “the soil, the water and the principle of seed bearing are all very much related as essential to the production of food.”⁶³³ Walton saw this function of vegetation as necessary in the creation narrative due to the parallels with Ancient Near Eastern creation myths. He continued by presenting Egyptian cosmology as an example:

The emergence of dry land from the waters is a common element in Egyptian cosmology, and there it has a definite referent. That is, the emergence of the primeval hillock in cosmology reflects the yearly reality of the fertile soil emerging in the aftermath of the inundation of the Nile. Thus it is clear that the emergence of dry land is associated with the growing of food.⁶³⁴

⁶³¹ See the section in Chapter 3 entitled, Day 2 – The Creation of an Expanse – Genesis 1:6-8” to understand the illocutions of the material creation of the skies and the speech acts’ felicity.

⁶³² Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 113.

⁶³³ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 57.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid*, 57.

The application of Speech Act Theory can show that not all of God's speech on day 3 has the illocution to establish the function of vegetation.

Day 3a

During the first part of day 3, God the Father's locutionary act is uttering the words, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear." (Gen. 1:9). For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the declaration illocutionary act. However, this illocutionary act does not declare the condition of the universe to change with the function of vegetation. With Walton's interpretation, this function of vegetation is more likely established in the condition of the universe during the second part of day 3 as God uttered the words, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth" (Gen. 1:11). If this is the case, it is unclear what is accomplished with the illocutionary act of God's speech in the first part of day 3 (Gen. 1:9).

At the end of the first part of day 3, the assessment formula "And God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:10c) is found. Given that Walton interprets this formula as meaning "functioning properly,"⁶³⁵ the illocutionary act of, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear" (Gen 1:9) should be the establishment of a function. Austin's felicity condition C (ii)⁶³⁶ is not met if the intended illocution was to establish the function of vegetation and vegetation was not produced. If this is not the intended illocution, it

⁶³⁵ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 50; See also Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 65.

⁶³⁶ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 15-16; See also Levinson, *Pragmatics*, 229.

is more likely that Austin's felicity condition B (ii) is not met since the procedure is incomplete.⁶³⁷ Soil, water, and the principle of seed bearing are needed to produce vegetation.⁶³⁸ However, only the first two are established with God's speech in the first part of day 3 (Gen. 1:9). As a result, this speech act in light of establishing the function of vegetation is infelicitous as further indicated by the assessment formula in Genesis 1:10c. For God's speech in the first part of day 3 (Gen. 1:9) to have the possibility of felicity, an appropriate illocution must be determined. As mentioned before, the illocution here cannot be to establish the function of vegetation. The illocution of creating material seas and dry land is more likely with felicitous results.⁶³⁹ However, Walton does not allow for the illocution of material creation due to his comparative studies with the Ancient Near East worldview. No alternative establishment of function is suggested by Walton for God's speech in Genesis 1:9.

Day 3b

God's speech during the second part of day 3 appears to be felicitous under Walton's interpretation of the function of vegetation. God uttered the locutionary words "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth" (Gen. 1:11). For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the directive illocutionary act on the second speech conversation plane of commanding the earth to have the function of producing vegetation. The perlocutionary act results are felicitous as indicated by the fulfillment formula

⁶³⁷ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 15-17; See also Levinson, *Pragmatics*, 229.

⁶³⁸ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 57.

⁶³⁹ See the section in Chapter 3 entitled, "Day 3a – The Creation of Seas and Dry Land – Genesis 1:9-10" to understand the illocutions of the material creation of the seas and dry land and the speech acts' felicity.

(Gen. 1:11b), the report of the earth bringing forth vegetation (Gen. 1:12a), and the assessment formula (Gen. 1:12b). However, the felicity of this speech act on day 3b for the function of vegetation is dependent on the felicity of the speech act on day 3a since soil and water are needed to establish the function of vegetation. Given that the speech act on day 3a is infelicitous or at least inconclusive with Walton's functional view, the speech act on day 3b would also be infelicitous. Since the view of a material creation on day 3a would be more likely and have a felicitous speech act, the felicity of day 3b should not be limited to a functional creation.⁶⁴⁰

Day 4 – Functionaries of Celestial Bodies

According to Walton's interpretation, on day 4 of creation, God installed the functionaries of lights, or celestial bodies, in the expanse. These celestial bodies are given the three functions. Walton said, "On the functional side of the equation, we find that [1] they separate day and night (thus the link to day one), [2] that they provide light and that they serve for 'signs, seasons, days and years.' [3] Finally we are told that their function is to govern the day and night—the closest the text comes to personification."⁶⁴¹ He clarifies that these are "not scientific functions but human-oriented functions."⁶⁴² For example, signs are the celestial beings "through which God conveys knowledge and reveals himself."⁶⁴³ Seasons do not refer to the four, but to "related festivals and religious feast days of the liturgical calendar."⁶⁴⁴ Days and years refer to the

⁶⁴⁰ See the section in Chapter 3 entitled "Day 3b – The Creation of Plant Life – Genesis 1:11-13" to understand the illocutions of the material creation of vegetation and the speech acts' felicity.

⁶⁴¹ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 63.

⁶⁴² *Ibid*, 63.

⁶⁴³ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 122.

⁶⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 122-123.

calculation of solar years using the stars for the lunar calendar and agricultural seasons.⁶⁴⁵

Walton cited Sumerian, Babylonian, and Akkadian literature from the Ancient Near East to support this understanding of the function of celestial bodies.

In applying Speech Act Theory to God's locutionary utterances in Genesis 1:14-15, one can agree with Walton that the illocutions may include the declaration illocutionary act of declaring the condition of the universe to change with the three functions of these celestial bodies. This is similar to the conclusions of the speech analysis of day 4 in Chapter 3 as the same three functions (or purposes) of the celestial bodies are identified.⁶⁴⁶ The speech acts with these functional illocutions identified are considered felicitous due to the fulfillment formula (Gen. 1:15b), the reports of fulfillment (Gen. 1:16-18a) and the assessment formula (Gen. 1:18b). However, there are three slight differences between Walton's interpretation and the one featured in Chapter 3. First, the illocutions for the functional assignments of the celestial bodies do not need to be determined using the Ancient Near East worldview. Rather, they come explicitly from God's locutionary speech in the text.

Second, even though the same three functions of the celestial bodies are identified, the interpretation of how to view these functions differs in Walton's interpretation due to the use of the Ancient Near East worldview. In other words, the Ancient Near East worldview is not needed as an outside source to determine functional illocutions on day 4, but it does affect how the functions of the celestial bodies are viewed. The third difference between Walton's interpretation and the one featured in Chapter 3 is that the latter also involves the illocution of a

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid, 123.

⁶⁴⁶ See the section in Chapter 3 entitled "Day 4 – The Creation of the Sun, Moon, and Stars – Genesis 1:14-19" to understand the illocutions of the material creation of the celestial bodies and the speech acts' felicity.

material creation of the celestial bodies. Even though the illocutions of God's utterances in Genesis 1:14-15 may assign functions to the celestial bodies, they are not mutually exclusive from the illocutions of a material creation of the celestial bodies. The main source of these three differences comes from the use of comparative studies with the Ancient Near East worldview.

Day 5 – Functionaries of Sea and Sky Creatures

According to Walton's interpretation, on day 5 of creation, God installed the functionaries of creatures in the seas and skies. These "functionaries simply carry out their own functions in the cosmic space that they inhabit. The text addresses what they do (teem, fly) rather than the role they serve. But in the blessing God also gives them a function: to be fruitful and multiply. God created them capable of doing so, and it is their function to fill their respective realms."⁶⁴⁷ In summary, the creatures in the seas and skies were given the functions of teeming or flying in their respective realms (Gen. 1:20-21) and blessed with the function of reproduction or being fruitful and multiplying (Gen. 1:22). Furthermore, Walton cited the use of the Ancient Near East worldview to support this. The creatures of the seas were given special attention in response to the sea creatures of other Ancient Near Eastern creation myths who were seen as part of the chaos in cosmic waters that needed to be defeated. Walton said, "The polemic comes to the surface, as the creatures are not antagonists that have to be defeated, but creatures that have been given functions (*br'*) just like any other."⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴⁷ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 65.

⁶⁴⁸ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 127. Walton is right to indicate that Genesis 1 was written as a polemic against the Ancient Near East worldview. However, this brings up concerns about whether God would borrow the ideas of the Ancient Near East to communicate a biblical creation account. This will be addressed in the section of Chapter 5 entitled, "The Purposes of Ancient Near Eastern Creation Myths and Genesis 1".

During day 5, God the Father uttered two different locutionary acts. The first utterance was the words, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens” (Gen. 1:20). For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the declaration illocutionary act by declaring the condition of the universe to change with the function of the creatures of the sea and skies. According to Walton, the functions of teeming (swarming) or flying are what the sea creatures and sky creatures do respectively in their own realms and are not roles.⁶⁴⁹ However, the subject of the verb “let... swarm” or “let... teem” (יִשְׂרְצוּ yishretzu) is the waters. Grammatically, the act of teeming or swarming is associated with the waters and not the sea creatures. This can be overlooked with the interpretation that “V.20a is not stating that the sea is to generate water animals, but merely that these animals are to swarm in the water, that is to be present there.”⁶⁵⁰ This interpretation does not rule out the explanation of a material presence as opposed to just a functional presence of swarming in the sea.

Regardless of these technicalities, let it be given that God’s utterance in Genesis 1:20 does perform a declaration illocutionary act of assigning the function of teeming/swarming and flying to the sea and sky creatures respectively. If these are all the intended functions of these creatures, based on the details given in Genesis 1:21, the speech act would be considered felicitous given Walton’s interpretation that the word “create” concerns assigning functions.⁶⁵¹ The felicity would also be affirmed by the assessment formula at the end of Genesis 1:21 which

⁶⁴⁹ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 65.

⁶⁵⁰ Werner H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte Der Priesterschrift*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien Zum Alten Und Neuen Testament (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1964), 121 n.3. See also Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1994), 136.

⁶⁵¹ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, Proposition 3, 36-45.

Walton defined as meaning “functioning properly,”⁶⁵² However, this felicity is questioned as not all of the intended functions of the sea and sky creatures have been granted by the utterance in Genesis 1:20.

The second locutionary act that God uttered on the fifth day was, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth” (Gen. 1:22). For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the directive illocutionary act on the second speech conversation plane. He commanded the sea and sky creatures to have the function of being fruitful and multiplying. If the intention of day 5 was merely to install these functionaries to carry out their functions, it would be premature to place the assessment formula at the end of Genesis 1:21 before the command in Genesis 1:22. This is because at the time of the pronouncement of the assessment formula, the functionaries were not yet functioning properly (or completely) without the blessing or command to be fruitful and multiply. Austin’s condition B (ii) for felicity is not met as the procedure was not executed completely yet.⁶⁵³ From the conclusions of the speech act analysis in Chapter 3, God’s speech acts in the first conversation plane must always be felicitous. Therefore, it is more likely for God to call for the material creation of the sea and sky creatures.

Day 6 – Functionaries of Land Creatures and Human Beings

According to Walton’s interpretation, on day 6 of creation, God installed the functionaries of creatures on the land of the earth. These functionaries include land creatures and human

⁶⁵² Ibid, 50; See also Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 65.

⁶⁵³ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 15-17; See also Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 229.

beings. Much like the sea and sky creatures on day 5, land and human beings “carry out their own function in that space [earth]... They are viewed in their categories, and they reproduce after their own kind as part of the blessing of God. Their function is to reproduce and to fill the earth—this is what God made them to do.”⁶⁵⁴ Day 6 is seen in two different parts. The first part includes the locutionary acts for the installation of the functionary land creatures while the second part includes the locutionary acts for the installation of the functionary human beings.

Day 6a

During the first part of day 6, God the Father’s locutionary act is uttering the words, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds” (Gen. 1:24). For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the declaration illocutionary act by declaring the condition of the universe to change with the function of the land creatures. If this is the case, does this illocution make sense based on the words of the locution? Genesis 1:24 does not mention anything about the land creatures being given the function to be fruitful and multiply. The other locutions on day 6 do not either, at least directed to land creatures.⁶⁵⁵ Functions such as what the land creatures do on the earth, similar to the sea creatures swarming/teeming and sky creatures flying on day 5, are not presented in the locution of Genesis 1:24 either. If functions are not mentioned, then what could be the intended illocution of God’s words in Genesis 1:24?

⁶⁵⁴ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 66.

⁶⁵⁵ The command to be fruitful and multiply in Genesis 1:28 was explicitly directed to human beings.

While reasoning against a material creation, Walton explained the role of the earth. He said, “The role of the land or the mountains in producing animals does not give us material information as if this were some sort of spontaneous regeneration or a subtle indication of an evolutionary process. Rather the land and mountain are locations of origin. This is where animal life comes from, not what it is produced from.”⁶⁵⁶ Walton’s statements suggest that the human author on the fourth speech conversation plane or the God as the Divine author on the fifth speech conversation plane is performing an assertive illocutionary act of stating the propositional truth that the land animals originate or come from the earth. If this is the case, God’s utterance in Genesis 1:24 does not have the illocution of assigning functions to the land creatures. If Walton insists that it is based on the Ancient Near East worldview, the speech act would be considered infelicitous. Austin’s condition B (i) for felicity is not met since the procedure was not executed correctly with the right words.⁶⁵⁷ Since God is without error and cannot execute His creative speech wrongly, it is more likely the intended illocutionary act of His utterance in Genesis 1:24 is that of communicating material creation over function.

Day 6b

During the second part of day 6, Walton described the difference in the installation of the functionaries of human beings from other functionaries:

The difference when we get to the creation of people is that even as they function to populate the world (like fish, birds and animals), they also have a function relative to the rest of God’s creatures, to subdue and rule. Not only that, but they have a function relative to God as they are in his image. They also have a function relative to each other

⁶⁵⁶ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 67.

⁶⁵⁷ Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 15-17; See also Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 229.

as they are designated male and female. All of these show the functional orientation with no reference to the material at all.⁶⁵⁸

There are two locutions in the second part of day 6 that concern the assignment of the functions Walton described to humans. In the first, God the Father's locutionary act is uttering the words, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (Gen. 1:26). Walton adopts the view that the first person plural pronoun refers to God consulting or discussing with a heavenly court of angels.⁶⁵⁹

For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase in Genesis 1:26, God was performing the directive illocutionary act of consulting or discussing with angels about the function of having dominion or subduing all of creation. This speech act would be considered felicitous as Genesis 1:27 describes the creation of human beings. First, according to Walton, the word "create" concerns assigning functions.⁶⁶⁰ Second, Walton sees humans created in the image of God as "a physical manifestation of divine (or royal) essence that bears the function of that which it represents."⁶⁶¹ Furthermore, the second locution of blessing in the second part of day 6 also fulfills the assigning of function from Genesis 1:26.

In the blessing, God's locutionary act is uttering the words, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the

⁶⁵⁸ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 67.

⁶⁵⁹ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 129-130. See Appendix 1 to understand the different views of the first person plural pronoun in Genesis 1:26.

⁶⁶⁰ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, Proposition 3, 36-45.

⁶⁶¹ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 131.

heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Gen. 1:28). For the sake of this example, let it be assumed that in uttering this phrase, God was performing the directive illocutionary act on the second speech conversation plane for human beings to act according to the functions given to them. In speaking directly to human beings and blessing them, God not only assigned functions to them, but also commanded them to act according to those functions. Assuming Walton’s interpretation, these speech acts may be considered felicitous.

In applying Speech Act Theory to God’s locutionary utterances in Genesis 1:26 and 1:28, one can agree with Walton that the illocutions may include the illocutionary acts of assigning and commanding functions to human beings. This is similar to the conclusions of the speech analysis of day 6b in Chapter 3. However, instead of labeling what was given to human beings as functions, they were referred to as blessings.⁶⁶² The speech acts with these functional or blessing illocutions identified are considered felicitous due to the reports of fulfillment (Gen. 1:27-28) and the assessment formula (Gen. 1:31a). However, there are two slight differences between Walton’s interpretation and the one featured in Chapter 3. First, the illocutions for the functional assignments of human beings do not need to be determined using the Ancient Near East worldview. Rather, they come explicitly from God’s locutionary speech in the text. Second, the interpretation of the speech act analysis in Chapter 3 also involves the illocution of a material creation of human beings. Even though the illocutions of God’s utterances in Genesis 1:26 and 1:28 may assign and command functions to human beings, they are not mutually exclusive from the illocutions of a material creation of human beings. The main source of these differences comes from the use of comparative studies with the Ancient Near East worldview.

⁶⁶² See the section in Chapter 3 entitled “Day 6b – The Creation of Human Beings – Genesis 1:26-31” to understand the illocutions of the material creation of the human beings with blessings and the speech acts’ felicity.

Conclusions of the Critique

This chapter critiqued Walton's functional creation in Genesis 1 by assuming Walton's interpretation and Ancient Near East presuppositions while applying Speech Act Theory to each day of creation. From this critique, one can see that not all the illocutionary acts of God's speech likely establish functions. This is due to the challenges of infelicity especially from the speech on days 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6a. Many of the infelicities are identified by the unusual placement of the assessment formula which Walton interprets as a pronouncement that "the cosmos functions just as it was designed to function"⁶⁶³ Since it was established from Chapter 3 that God's speech acts on the first conversation plane cannot be infelicitous, the intention of establishing functions is questioned. Furthermore, God's locutionary speech featured on day 6a does not appear to have the illocution of assigning functions to the land creatures. With a material view of creation, the speech acts are seen as felicitous and make more sense.

It should be noted that the speech acts on days 4 and 6b may be seen as felicitous and affirmative of the functions of the celestial bodies and human beings respectively. However, these functions (regardless of whether they are labeled as purposes, blessings, or functions) are seen due to the words of the locutionary utterances in the text and not assumed due to an imported Ancient Near East worldview. Even though the speech acts on days 4 and 6b are felicitous, it does not mean establishing functions are the main and only illocutions in creation. Even if the speech acts in the other days of creation are felicitous under Walton's interpretation, a material view of creation should not be disqualified. The only reason why Walton would do so is due to the Ancient Near East worldview.

⁶⁶³ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 65. Also meaning "functioning properly". Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 50.

Another reason to not disqualify a material view of creation comes from the implied necessity of physical entities. With Walton's interpretation and assumptions, God's locutions spoken on each day of creation make mention of entities that are needed to establish the function. For example, day 1 includes the entity of a period of light. The function of time is only established with the action of separating the period of light. Day 2 includes the entity of *raqia'* (expanse). The function of regulating weather comes from the separation of waters above and below it. In the first part of day 3, the speech establishes the presence of the waters and dry lands before the function of vegetation is established from the speech in the second part of day 3. The establishment of these functions requires the necessity of the creation and existence of these material entities, which can be argued for without the Ancient Near East presuppositions.

It was shown that a material view of creation in Genesis 1 is more likely due to the challenges and infelicities of the speech acts from applying a functional view of creation. God as an Actor within the creation narrative, was not likely establishing functions and installing functionaries through the illocutions of His speech on the first or second speech conversation plane. As a result, it is also not likely that the human author or Divine Author who employed the use of this narrative in the text was intending to communicate a functional creation on the fourth or fifth speech conversation plane respectively, to the readers.

Chapter 5: A Critique of Walton's Ancient Near East Form Criticism and Exegesis

As described in the previous chapter, Walton argued for a functional creation over a material one by interpreting Genesis 1 in the light of the worldview and framework of its contemporary Ancient Near Eastern creation myths of Ancient Israel's neighboring nations. This interpretive approach may be known as comparative studies or Ancient Near East (ANE) Form Criticism. As a result, Walton sees Genesis 1 as ancient cosmology as opposed to modern cosmology. In his application of Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1, Walton requires the use of ANE Form Criticism to understand the locutionary acts and effectively determine the intended illocutionary acts of the author. This chapter seeks to critique Walton's ANE Form Criticism and show its weaknesses as an interpretive approach in conjunction with Speech Act Theory. It will first describe Form Criticism and give a brief history of developments that led to the ANE Form Criticism that Walton applies for his interpretation of Genesis. Next, the presuppositions of ANE Form Criticism will be presented and evaluated by explaining the basis for them and their challenges. This will be followed by an explanation of the issues associated with the use of ANE creation myths for biblical interpretation. Finally, some of Walton's exegetical arguments made to support his functional creation view will be critiqued.

The Historical Developments behind ANE Form Criticism

Form Criticism seeks to isolate individual units (stories or sayings) of the biblical text and determine their origins from oral tradition before they were preserved in written form.⁶⁶⁴ In other words, it is assumed that the Bible and other ancient religious texts were products of

⁶⁶⁴ Blomberg et al., *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views*, ed. Stanley E. Porter Jr and Beth M. Stovell (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 8.

“nameless social groups (rather than individual authors)... passed down through the ages” and this method seeks to identify the history of transmission.⁶⁶⁵ In 1895, Hermann Gunkel was one of the earliest proponents of Form Criticism. He mainly developed this method to interpret the Old Testament as he attempted to show how Israel depended on Babylonian mythology to understand creation.⁶⁶⁶ He saw that the interpretation of a text required a “recognition of standard forms used in communication and the importance of the *Sitz im Leben* [setting in life].”⁶⁶⁷ By identifying standard forms of communication and locating these units in their original “setting in life”, there may be insights into how the Israelites borrowed, used, and adapted them in the Torah narrative. In his studies, Gunkel’s interest in genre, oral traditions, and *Sitz im Leben*, led to many connections between the Bible and Ancient Near Eastern elements. This “new thinking” resulted in many generations of scholars after him continuing the exploration of this aspect of biblical tradition.⁶⁶⁸

One of the scholars who was strongly influenced by Gunkel and the “history of religions school” was Rudolf Bultmann.⁶⁶⁹ Although Bultmann was not known for his use of Ancient Near Eastern mythologies in interpreting Scripture, he popularized form criticism in the twentieth century as applied to the gospels and the New Testament. However, a significant

⁶⁶⁵ William Yarchin, *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), 237.

⁶⁶⁶ Ronald A. Simkins, *Creator and Creation: Nature in the Worldview of Ancient Israel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 60-61. The Babylonian background was based on a late date for the Genesis creation/flood account in the period of the Babylonian exile.

⁶⁶⁷ John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 30.

⁶⁶⁸ Yarchin, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, 238.

⁶⁶⁹ Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 132.

contribution he made to hermeneutics is that “de-objectifying texts was a major way of understanding religious texts and exposing their importance for today.”⁶⁷⁰ Bultmann saw that any objective language in the New Testament is mythological in expression and needs to be de-objectified or demythologized. He defined myth in the following way:

Myth is the use of imagery (die Vorstellungsweise) to express the other worldly in terms of this world, the divine in terms of human life... The real purpose of myth is not to present an objective picture of the world as it is, but to express man’s understanding of himself in the world in which he lives. Myth should be interpreted not cosmologically, but anthropologically, or, better still, existentially.⁶⁷¹

Any reference to God or the supernatural is considered a myth. Consequently, Bultmann had issues with miracles in the Bible, including the ones that Jesus performed and His resurrection. His solution of demythologizing involved translating any mythic content into truth in the form of the expression of human self-understanding. Bultmann said, “To insist on retaining faith in primitive mythology demands nowadays a sacrifice of intellect which man in New Testament times was not asked to make. It is an additional stumbling-block.”⁶⁷² His significant contribution to demythologizing has been applied to the Old Testament in addition to the New Testament.

The scholarship based on the foundation of those including Gunkel and Bultmann paved the way for the implementation of an Ancient Near East Form Criticism. Before the nineteenth century the Bible was seen as the inspired Word of God in the West. However, that was challenged as tens of thousands of ancient texts from Egypt and Mesopotamia were discovered,

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid, 228.

⁶⁷¹ Rudolf Bultmann, “New Testament and Mythology,” in *Kerygma And Myth: A Theological Debate* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1961), 1:10.

⁶⁷² Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (London, UK: SCM Press, 1960), 36.

translated, and analyzed in the eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.⁶⁷³ In 1902, the Assyriologist, Friedrich Delitzsch gave a series of lectures entitled “Babel und Bibel”.⁶⁷⁴ In these lectures, his main thesis was: “The Mesopotamian evidence shows us not just parallels to Old Testament customs and ideas, but genuine evidence regarding their origin.”⁶⁷⁵ This resulted in the “Pan-Babylonianism” movement that believed that “all world myths and all Christian Scriptures (Old and New Testament alike) were simply versions of Babylonian mythology.”⁶⁷⁶ Decades later, W.W. Hallo developed a methodology called the “contextual approach” to compare the similarities and differences between biblical and Ancient Near East texts.⁶⁷⁷

John Walton prefers a methodology called “comparative study” which is also known as “background studies” or “cultural studies”. He described the comparative study as “a branch of cultural studies in that it attempts to draw data from different segments of the broader culture (in time and/or space) into juxtaposition with one another in order to assess what might be learned from one to enhance the understanding of another.”⁶⁷⁸ He proposed ten principles and four goals of comparative studies to keep in mind when applying this method.⁶⁷⁹ In applying this

⁶⁷³ Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 13.

⁶⁷⁴ Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*, trans. Thomas J. (Thomas Joseph) McCormack and William Herbert Carruth (Chicago, IL: Chicago, The Open Court Publishing Company, 1903).

⁶⁷⁵ Mogens Trolle Larsen, “The ‘Babel/Bible’ Controversy and Its Aftermath,” *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, no. 1 (1995), 99.

⁶⁷⁶ Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 15.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 16.

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 16.

⁶⁷⁹ John H. Walton, “Cultural Background of the Old Testament,” in *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation: A Complete Library of Tools and Resources*, ed. David S Dockery, Kenneth A. Matthews, and Robert B. Sloan (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 256. Walton’s ten principles of comparative study: “1. Both similarities and differences must be considered. 2. Similarities may suggest a common cultural heritage or cognitive environment rather than borrowing. 3. It is not uncommon to find similarities at the

comparative study methodology which is also known as ANE Form Criticism, Walton interpreted Genesis 1 in the light of the worldview and framework of its contemporary Ancient Near Eastern creation myths of Ancient Israel's neighboring nations.

The Presuppositions of Walton's ANE Form Criticism

The Bible has Origins from ANE Mythic Sources

In this section, some presuppositions behind Ancient Near East Form Criticism will be described and evaluated. First, some presuppositions stem from the definition of form criticism itself. According to Gunkel and other proponents of form criticism influenced by him:

... many laws and narrative pieces that had been thought to come from later periods of Israelite history were recognized to derive from earlier centuries of the Old Testament period... During biblical times, religion was, generally speaking, more a matter of communal experience than of individual engagement with the divine. This meant that ancient religious texts, such as the documents of the Bible, were more likely the products of what nameless social groups (rather than individual authors) had passed down through the ages.⁶⁸⁰

surface but differences at the conceptual level and vice versa. 4. All elements must be understood in their own context as accurately as possible before cross-cultural comparisons are made (i.e., careful background study must precede comparative study). 5. Proximity in time, geography, and spheres of cultural contact all increase the possibility of interaction leading to influence. 6. A case for literary borrowing requires identification of likely channels of transmission. 7. The significance of differences between two pieces of literature is minimized if the works are not the same genre. 8. Similar functions may be performed by different genres in different cultures. 9. When literary or cultural elements are borrowed they may in turn be transformed into something quite different by those who borrowed them. 10. A single culture will rarely be monolithic, either in a contemporary cross-section or in consideration of a passage of time"; Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 28. Walton's goals of background and comparative studies: "1. Students may study the history of the ancient Near East as a means of recovering knowledge of the events that shaped the lives of people in the ancient world. 2. Students may study archaeology as a means of recovering the lifestyle reflected in the material culture of the ancient world. 3. Students may study the literature of the ancient Near East as a means of penetrating the heart and soul of the people who inhabited the ancient world that Israel shared. 4. Students may study the language of the ancient Near East as a means of gaining additional insight into the semantics, lexicography, idioms, and metaphors used in Hebrew."

⁶⁸⁰ Yarchin, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, 236-237.

As a result, form criticism is the study of the history of this transmission (usually oral tradition) through the examination of the history of the literary form.⁶⁸¹ From this definition, there is the presupposition that the Bible contains individual units, such as stories or sayings, that have origins from different earlier sources, such as the Ancient Near East myths.

Biblical Writers Had Access to ANE Myths

If the first presupposition is true, it also entails a second presupposition that the biblical writers had the accessibility to these traditional myths in written form to refer to them. Knowing the mode of transmission is important. Walton's sixth principle out of the ten for comparative study is, "A case for literary borrowing requires identification of likely channels of transmission."⁶⁸² However, there are some issues with identifying such a clear channel of transmission. According to Noel Weeks, "advocates of Egyptian origin sometimes create the parallels by taking elements out of different Egyptian accounts. Are we to imagine the biblical author having access to this whole range of materials and picking a bit out of this and a bit out of that myth? That of course assumes that the biblical author read Egyptian."⁶⁸³ In this example, Weeks not only questioned whether the biblical writers had access to all these ancient Egyptian accounts, but also questioned their ability to read the language even if they did have access.

Later, Weeks also made the following conclusion:

In other words I am suggesting that there are large problems in postulating a way in which the ideas passed from their pagan form to their biblical form. Surely the fact that those postulating the transmission do not deal with the problem of manner of

⁶⁸¹ Ibid, 237.

⁶⁸² Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 27.

⁶⁸³ Noel K. Weeks, "The Ambiguity of Biblical 'Background,'" *Westminster Theological Journal* 72, no. 2 (Fall 2010), 230.

transmission shows that presuppositions show them that it must have happened, so why worry about the problem of how it happened?⁶⁸⁴

Weeks noticed that proponents of Ancient Near East Form Criticism usually assume transmission rather than identify how the transmission happened. Often, any issues regarding transmission are ignored due to the assumption. Walton's principle of comparative study for identifying likely channels of transmission is important.⁶⁸⁵ However, when judging his methodology, he is betrayed by his own principle as he and others who apply Ancient Near East Form Criticism often presuppose transmission.

Cosmological Themes of ANE Myths are the Setting of Genesis 1

A third presupposition of Ancient Near East Form Criticism is that ANE myths and their cosmological themes were necessarily considered as the *Sitz im Leben* in the writing of Genesis 1. There are a few issues with this presupposition. First, it is unclear as to whether the Babylonian myths were written before Genesis. For example, VanDoodewaard said, "The earliest extant fragments of the Epic of Gilgamesh are believed to date between 1100 and 1700 BC; Moses and the exodus are often dated to the period of 1400–1500 BC, leaving open the question of which was written first."⁶⁸⁶ If Genesis was written before Babylonian myths, it is not likely that it depended on their cosmological themes. There should not be confidence in this presupposition for this method of interpretation since it is based on uncertainty. Aside from the sequence of writing, Lambert would argue with more certainty that Genesis could not have used

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid, 230.

⁶⁸⁵ Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 27.

⁶⁸⁶ William VanDoodewaard, *The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Human Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015), 262.

Ancient Near Eastern myths as a source. He said, “Earlier borrowing of the material [Mesopotamian works] is ruled out... because Genesis shows no knowledge of Mesopotamian matters prior to 1500 B.C., a point of inconsiderable importance.”⁶⁸⁷ This would also suggest an earlier writing of Moses before these Ancient Near East myths.

Walton’s fifth principle of the ten for comparative study states, “Proximity in time, geography, and spheres of cultural contact all increase the possibility of interaction leading to influence.”⁶⁸⁸ Here, Walton lists a set of criteria by which to determine the likelihood of transmission as opposed to just stating that transmission needs to be identified in the sixth principle. While the issue of timing and the dating of the ancient texts have already been questioned, there are similar issues regarding the proximity of geography and spheres of cultural contact that also minimize the presupposition that Ancient Near East myths and their cosmological themes are necessary as the *Sitz im Leben* of Genesis 1.

Another argument against this third presupposition is that the Ancient Near East worldview is not a single or homogeneous one across various cultures and a broad landscape. Peter Enns appeared to see a single Ancient Near East worldview that the Old Testament is a part of. He said that biblical readers today must “acknowledge that the Genesis story is firmly rooted in *the* [emphasis added] worldview of its time.”⁶⁸⁹ This is doubtful as there is first a question of an appropriate method to make such a conclusion of a homogeneous worldview. Weeks asks,

⁶⁸⁷ Wilfred G. Lambert, “A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 16, no. 2 (1965), 300.

⁶⁸⁸ Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 27.

⁶⁸⁹ Peter Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 27.

“whether a single non-conformity disproves a scientific law”.⁶⁹⁰ Walton acknowledged that the Bible is distinctive in its monotheism compared to other Ancient Near East myths.⁶⁹¹ Just because it is non-conforming in this aspect does not mean that there isn’t a homogenous worldview among the others. Therefore, Walton sees more similarities among the Ancient Near East Form Criticism. His second principle of the ten for comparative study states, “Similarities may suggest a common cultural heritage or cognitive environment rather than borrowing.”⁶⁹² This principle suggests that Walton presupposed similarities that would lead to the conclusion of a homogeneous Ancient Near East.

On the other hand, Weeks said despite any apparent similarities, there is no established methodology to determine how the evidence presented could constitute “conclusive proof of *universal* ancient ways.”⁶⁹³ Walton’s fourth principle of the ten for comparative study states, “All elements must be understood in their own context as accurately as possible before cross-cultural comparisons are made (i.e., careful background study must precede comparative study).”⁶⁹⁴ Weeks would agree and propose the same approach by considering the contexts. However, by doing so, one would see more differences and fewer parallels that become evidence against a single or homogeneous Ancient Near East worldview:

The thing to note in these and many other cases, where a suggested confirming parallel of the biblical text has been criticized, is the fact that when the supposed parallel is read more carefully within its own context, the supposed parallel becomes less convincing. Put

⁶⁹⁰ Noel K. Weeks, “The Bible and the ‘Universal’ Ancient World: A Critique of John Walton,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 78 (2016), 2.

⁶⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁶⁹² Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 27.

⁶⁹³ Weeks, “The Bible and the ‘Universal’ Ancient World: A Critique of John Walton”, 2.

⁶⁹⁴ Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 27.

another way, the differences between the environment of the biblical text and the cultural context of the supposed parallel are so great as to make it clear that an apparent parallel is not a real one. Thus, one calls into question the cultural uniformity which was a hidden premise of the whole argument.⁶⁹⁵

Aside from the proximity of time, Weeks noticed that the differences in the proximity of geography, and spheres of cultural contact also become an issue from seeing a universal Ancient Near East worldview. Geographically, there is a broad landscape between nations, including Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Canaan, Persia, and the Hittites. In his comparative study, Weeks discovered more differences than similarities among Ancient Near East myths. For example:

A corollary of the common culture notion would seem to be that if any one culture has creation accounts, the others could be expected to have them. Is the corollary true? I know of nothing that looks like a creation account in Hittite. Closer to the issue, did Ugarit have creation accounts? The attempts to prove that, simply by changing what we understand by creation, we can classify the Ugaritic Baal stories as creation myths, illustrates the problem but not a convincing solution.⁶⁹⁶

From these particular case studies presented, one can see that a single or homogeneous Ancient Near East worldview is hard to argue for. Consequently, the presupposition of seeing ANE myths and their cosmological themes as the *Sitz im Leben* in the writing of Genesis 1 is also challenged as well.

Genesis 1 is Functional Ancient Cosmology

Walton holds the previous three presuppositions discussed so far in this section. Building on these, he formed more presuppositions that he presented in the form of propositions in *The Lost World of Genesis One*. The first two propositions Walton made are that “Genesis 1 Is

⁶⁹⁵ Weeks, “The Ambiguity of Biblical ‘Background’”, 221.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid, 229.

Ancient Cosmology” and “Ancient Cosmology Is Function Oriented”, respectively.⁶⁹⁷ He presupposed that Genesis 1 is ancient cosmology by pointing out the presuppositions of the modern scientific mind. Walton argued that the ancient Israelite readers did not view Genesis 1 through the modern cosmological lens of science using “modern terms or address[ing] modern questions” such as material origins.⁶⁹⁸ Assuming that Genesis 1 can be a guide for modern science is an approach called “concordism”.⁶⁹⁹ Rather, Walton believed that the ancient Israelites would view creation and origin in a functional perspective like the cosmological worldviews of their neighbors in the Ancient Near East.

In his article entitled “Creation” in the *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, Walton wrote more about the Ancient Near Eastern creation myths than the Bible or specifically the Old Testament itself. Nevertheless, Walton warned against the modern presupposition and asserted that one should interpret Genesis according to this Ancient Near East worldview:

...the theological message of the Bible was communicated to people who lived in the ancient Near Eastern world. If we desire to understand the theological message of the text, we will benefit by positioning it within the worldview of the ancient world rather than simply applying our own cultural perspectives... It is only our post-Enlightenment, Western way of thinking that focuses so steadfastly and exclusively on physical structure and formational history... The origin of matter is what our society has taught us is important (indeed that matter is all there is), but we cannot afford to be so distracted by our cultural ideas. Matter was not the concern of the author of Genesis.⁷⁰⁰

Walton made a very strong case against the danger of reading one’s own presuppositions and worldviews into Scripture. He is correct that one should not assume that the message of Genesis

⁶⁹⁷ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 13, 20.

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 13.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 13.

⁷⁰⁰ John H. Walton, “Creation,” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2002), 156, 161-162.

is about material origins. On the other hand, Walton did the very thing he warned against. Rather than assume a material origin, he assumed a functional origin based on the Ancient Near Eastern Worldview. Walton argued against the modern presupposition by presupposing an ancient one. Just because one should not presuppose a material origin does not mean that Genesis 1 does not offer insight into material existence. Furthermore, this does not automatically mean that a functional origin is in view. Although Genesis 1 could address functional origin and/or material origin, both conclusions should not be based on presupposition, but on a careful exegesis of the text. Since Walton presupposed an Ancient Near East worldview and a functional origin, this affected his exegesis of Genesis 1, as this chapter will show later.

Issues with Considering ANE Creation Myths

Aside from the issue of merely proposing that the ancient Israelites would read Genesis according to the rest of the Ancient Near Eastern world, there are some other concerns with involving the Ancient Near Eastern creation myths in one's interpretation of Scripture. This section will explore the issues of not using Scripture to interpret Scripture and the differing purposes of Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern creation myths.

Scripture Must Interpret Scripture

Walton's use of Ancient Near Eastern creation myths to interpret Genesis results in ignoring the basic hermeneutical principle that Scripture must interpret Scripture. If the Bible is inerrant and infallible, passages should not contradict one another. The clearer passages offer consistent propositional truths that can be used to interpret those that may not be as clear. Statham presented his observation of Walton's failure to adhere to this principle as he said, "In

evaluating Walton's claims, we must apply the usual rules of hermeneutics and, particularly, that Scripture must be used to interpret Scripture. Our interpretation of any one passage must be such that it is harmonious with and sits comfortably with our interpretation of related passages. This could not be said of Walton's exposition of Genesis."⁷⁰¹

Statham continued by giving some examples of Old Testament and New Testament passages outside of Genesis that suggest a material origin of creation. For example, in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 10:12 states that the heavens and earth were materially created by God. "It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens." In the New Testament, John 1:3 emphasizes the *ex nihilo* material creation of all things through Christ. "All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." A similar message is also seen in Colossians 3:16. "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him."⁷⁰² With the hermeneutical principle of using Scripture to interpret Scripture and Biblical Theology, these passages can be used to interpret Genesis.

How would Walton respond to the passages outside of Genesis that suggest an *ex nihilo* material origin of creation? Walton believes and acknowledges that God is the cause of material creation:

If we conclude that Genesis 1 is not an account of material origins, we are not thereby suggesting that God is not responsible for material origins. I firmly believe that God is fully responsible for material origins, and that, in fact, material origins do involve at

⁷⁰¹ Dominic Statham, "Dubious and Dangerous Exposition: A Review of The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate by John H. Walton," *Journal of Creation* 24, no. 3 (2009): 24–26.

⁷⁰² Other examples Statham gave include Is. 40:25, 26, 28; Is. 42:5; Ps. 33:6, 9; Ps. 102:25; Job. 38:44ff; Neh. 9:6; Rom. 1:20, 25.

some point creation out of nothing. But that theological question is not the one we are asking. We are asking a textual question: What sort of origins account do we find in Genesis 1?⁷⁰³

Although Walton acknowledged that God is responsible for *ex nihilo* material origins from the theological messages of passages outside of Genesis 1, he still asserts that this theological message is not one found in Genesis 1 as it concerns functional origins. He said, “Later Scripture supports our belief that God also made all of the matter of which the cosmos is composed (and that he made it out of nothing, Col. 1:16–17; Heb. 11:3), but that is not what Genesis means by the use of *bara’*.”⁷⁰⁴ An analysis of Walton’s view of the word *bara’* will be addressed in a later section.

It is clear that Walton’s conclusion of a functional origin of creation in Genesis 1 stems not from the application of the hermeneutical principle of using Scripture to interpret Scripture. Rather, it stems from the use of Ancient Near East creation myths. By doing so, he is implying two things. First, is the authority of Ancient Near East creation myths. For example, one can notice Walton’s high view of inauguration texts, such as the dedication of the temple of Ningirsu:

We have many inauguration texts from the ancient world, the most detailed being the dedication of the temple of Ningirsu by Gudea about 2100 B.C. One of the first things to note is that at the inauguration the “destiny” and the powers of the temple are assigned... This is the ultimate function-giving act in the ancient world. Likewise the roles of the functionaries are proclaimed and they are installed.⁷⁰⁵

⁷⁰³ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 41.

⁷⁰⁴ John H. Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2011), 71.

⁷⁰⁵ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 87.

Walton's authoritative view of these Ancient Near Eastern texts is enough for him to interpret the roles of functionaries in Genesis 1. The second implication of Walton's use of Ancient Near Eastern creation myths is that Scripture itself is not enough to understand Scripture. Walton discussed the importance of having an understanding of the ancient worldview as he said, "While this reading [Walton's interpretation of Genesis] is initially based on observations of the biblical text ... without an understanding of the ancient worldview, it would have been difficult to ask the questions that have led to this position and nearly impossible to provide the answers to the question that we have proposed."⁷⁰⁶ According to Walton, there is a view that can only be interpreted with an understanding of the ancient worldview beyond what is described in Scripture.

Doukhan summarized Walton's troubling approach in the following way. "Although he [Walton] holds a high value of Scripture in the evangelical tradition, his theological and philosophical presuppositions still prevail over his exegesis."⁷⁰⁷ To justify his conclusion, Doukhan also cited Walton's own troubling words. "Even though it is natural to defend our exegesis, it is arguably even more important to defend our theology."⁷⁰⁸ Walton's use of the Ancient Near Eastern creation myths to interpret Genesis shows the issue of not using the hermeneutical principle of using Scripture to interpret Scripture.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid, 160-161.

⁷⁰⁷ Jacques B Doukhan, "A Response to John H. Walton's Lost World of Genesis One," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 49, no. 1 (2011), 204.

⁷⁰⁸ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 142.

The Purposes of Ancient Near Eastern Creation Myths and Genesis 1

Another issue with using the worldview of Ancient Near Eastern creation myths to interpret Genesis is the apparent differences in the purposes of each. One of the common purposes of Ancient Near Eastern creation myths is to describe and explain the human condition in relationship with nature and divine realms. Oswalt defined a myth as “a form of expression, whether literary or oral, whereby the continuities among the human, natural, and divine realms are expressed and actualized”⁷⁰⁹ There is a blurring of the boundaries between these realms as Oswalt also explained this idea as “all things that exist are part of each other.”⁷¹⁰ Doukhan would agree, but emphasize that these myths are anthropocentric. He said, “Unlike the Genesis creation accounts, these other cosmogonies are not meant to be ‘creation stories.’ Instead, they are cosmogonic texts. They are anthropocentric. Thus their purpose is not to explain the presence of created objects, but to provide reasons for phenomena observed in the present human condition.”⁷¹¹

With this purpose of Ancient Near Eastern creation myths in mind, one can see that the Bible, including Genesis 1, cannot be defined as a myth. Oswalt made his argument in the following way:

The fact is that the Bible has a completely different understanding of existence and of the relations among the realms. As a result, it functions entirely differently. Its telling does not actualize continuous divine reality out of the real invisible world into this visible reflection of that reality. Rather, it is a rehearsal of the nonrepeatable acts of God in identifiable time and space in concert with human beings.⁷¹²

⁷⁰⁹ John N. Oswalt, *The Bible among the Myths: Unique Revelation or Just Ancient Literature?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2009), 45-46.

⁷¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁷¹¹ Doukhan, “A Response to John H. Walton’s Lost World of Genesis One”, 197.

⁷¹² Oswalt, *The Bible among the Myths*, 44.

The emphasis of the Bible is on the one, true God of Israel and how He acts in the lives of humans. Specifically in Genesis 1, the emphasis is on the nonrepeatable acts of God in creation as an explanation of the presence or existence of created objects. This differs from the purpose of anthropocentric Ancient Near Eastern creation myths as they seek to explain the current human condition through continuity, or the blurring of boundaries between the human, natural, and divine realms.

There is another purpose of Genesis 1 that not only differs from that of Ancient Near Eastern creation myths, but also is starkly against them. This purpose has a polemic nature, as observed by Doukhan:

Another important problem in Walton's connection with the ancient Near Eastern cosmogonies is his uncritical adoption of these texts as "the key" for understanding the biblical text of creation. He not only overlooks the significant differences between the two cosmogonic traditions, but also deliberately ignores the strong polemic intent of the biblical text precisely directed against these other cosmogonic traditions of the ancient Near East.⁷¹³

This makes sense as the worldviews of the nations that wrote their Ancient Near Eastern creation myths hold many beliefs and practices that are contrary to that of the Biblical worldview. God specifically called for the Israelites to be holy and separate from these other nations to not be influenced by their polytheistic worldview of beliefs and practices. If that is the case, why would God and the author of Genesis 1 rely on these Ancient Near Eastern creation myths or borrow their ideas to write and communicate their creation account? Rather than doing so, they take a further step to counter these Ancient Near Eastern creation mythic beliefs by presenting Genesis 1 as a polemic. Beall made the same observation:

⁷¹³ Doukhan, "A Response to John H. Walton's Lost World of Genesis One", 198.

And the Lord continually tells the children of Israel in the OT not to be like all the other nations in their worship of other gods, in their worldview, and so forth: they are unique as a people, and they serve a God who alone is worthy of worship, trust, and obedience. Far from following the thinking of the ANE, Israel was told to reject it categorically. In fact, the biblical account in Genesis is so unlike other ANE literature that many scholars hold that the creation account is actually a polemic against the ANE creation myths.⁷¹⁴

Although Beall emphasized the differences between Genesis and other Ancient Near Eastern creation myths, any parallels or similarities found can still be used as a case for the polemic nature of Genesis. In his article, Hyers described many different cosmological alternatives to Genesis in the Ancient Near East. He asserted that Genesis was not about the modern debate between creation and evolution, nor science and natural history. Rather, it was about teaching the worldview of Jewish monotheism against a dominant culture of polytheism, idolatry, and syncretism that surrounded it.⁷¹⁵ While Pharaohs, kings, and other heroes were seen as sons of gods in these Ancient Near Eastern cultures, Israel wanted to proclaim that there is only one, true God.⁷¹⁶ Hyers continued by giving a specific example of how Genesis 1 was a polemic against the Ancient Near Eastern worldview of polytheism:

In light of this historical context, it becomes clearer what Genesis 1 is undertaking and accomplishing: a radical and sweeping affirmation of monotheism vis-à-vis polytheism, syncretism, and idolatry. Each day of creation takes on two principal categories of divinity in the pantheons of the day and declares that these are not gods at all but creatures, creations of the one true God who is the only one, without a second or third. Each day dismisses an additional cluster of deities, arranged in a cosmological and symmetrical order.⁷¹⁷

⁷¹⁴ Todd S. Beall, “Contemporary Hermeneutical Approaches to Genesis 1–11,” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Publishing Group, 2008), 143.

⁷¹⁵ M. Conrad Hyers, *The Meaning of Creation: Genesis and Modern Science* (Atlanta, GA: Westminster John Knox Press, 1984), 43.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid*, *The Meaning of Creation*, 44.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid*, 44.

As each day of creation in Genesis 1 presents its case against the polytheistic categories of divinity, many scholars may have noticed some parallels and similarities with other Ancient Near Eastern creation myths. These parallels and similarities should not lead to the wrong conclusion that Genesis borrowed from these Ancient Near Eastern creation myths or were influenced by them. Rather, they should be seen as evidence for the polemic nature of Genesis 1 against the Ancient Near Eastern creation myths.⁷¹⁸ In his research, Johnston saw some parallels and similarities in Genesis that were used against Egyptian creation myths. He concluded that, “Genesis 1 appears to be a literary polemic designed to refute ancient Near Eastern creation mythology in general, but ancient Egyptian creation mythology in particular.”⁷¹⁹ Due to the differing purposes of the Ancient Near Eastern creation myths and Genesis 1 presented in this section, it is problematic for Walton and others to use Ancient Near Eastern creation myths to interpret Genesis 1.

Walton’s Exegesis

With the presuppositions of his ANE Form Criticism and use of the Ancient Near Eastern creation myths, Walton’s understanding of the locutionary acts and illocutionary acts of the Genesis 1 author is influenced by utilizing them. For example, there are interpretations of a few Hebrew words in Genesis 1 that he is dependent on to support his functional creation view. These words include *bara’*, *tōhû*, and *bōhû*. In this section, Walton’s interpretations of each word will be explained and critiqued.

⁷¹⁸ For more details on how Genesis 1 is a polemic against Ancient Near Eastern creation myths, see Gerhard F. Hasel, “The Polemic Nature of the Genesis Cosmology,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* (1974): 81–101.

⁷¹⁹ Gordon H. Johnston, “Genesis 1 and Ancient Egyptian Creation Myths,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 165 (2008), 194.

Bārā'

“In the beginning, God created (*bārā'*) the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1) *Bara'*, presented as “created” in English translations, is also found in Genesis 1:21, 27; 2:3, 4. According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, *bārā'* “possesses the meaning of ‘bringing into existence’ in several passages (Isa 43:1; Ezk 21:30; [H 35]; 28:13, 15).”⁷²⁰ Walton would agree with this definition, but believes “a few refinements are necessary.”⁷²¹ One way he modified this definition is reflected in his third proposition which states, “‘Create’ (Hebrew *bārā'*) Concerns Functions”.⁷²² Existence is not viewed in material terms, but functional. Walton supported this proposition by presenting a comprehensive table of some of the objects of *bārā'* used in Scripture and analyzing them.⁷²³ From this analysis, Walton is correct in observing that *bārā'* never occurs with the object of the material. In his commentary on Genesis, he said: “Indeed, *bara'* never occurs in a context in which materials are mentioned. Instead of suggesting manufacture of matter out of nothing, its usages suggest that manufacture is not the issue. The essence of *bara'* concerns bringing heaven and earth into existence and focuses on operation through organization and assignment of roles and functions.”⁷²⁴ Although there is no object of the material with *bārā'*, Walton automatically assumed that what God created in Genesis 1 has to do with functions. He admitted that there are some examples in his

⁷²⁰ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1980), 127.

⁷²¹ John H. Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 1st ed. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 132.

⁷²² Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 36.

⁷²³ *Ibid*, 36-39.

⁷²⁴ Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary*, 71.

table that are ambiguous for a material perspective of *bārā*, which still opens up the possibility of a material creation.⁷²⁵

Furthermore, Walton also acknowledged that although “a large percentage of the contexts require a functional understanding [,] [t]hese data cannot be used to prove a functional ontology, but they offer support that existence is viewed in functional rather than material terms, as is true throughout the rest of the ancient world.”⁷²⁶ Even though this analysis cannot prove a functional ontology, Walton still concludes that. The reason for doing so stems from the presupposition of Genesis adopting the worldview of the Ancient Near East creation myths. As a result, the material view of “bringing into existence” as a definition of *bārā* is rejected. Statham argued against Walton’s rejection of a material creation:

Furthermore, Walton’s argument that the ancient Israelites’ understanding of the Hebrew word ‘*bara*’ (translated ‘create’) would have emphasized function is hardly a reason to reject the view that it also refers to a material creation. Would God have created something without intending it to have purpose? In Gen. 1:14 we read, “God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night’”, suggesting both creation from nothing and assignment of function. If assignment of function was the only intended meaning, why does the text not read, “Let the lights in the expanse of the sky separate day from night”? Similarly, why does v. 6 not read “Let the expanse separate water from water” instead of “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water”?”⁷²⁷

Statham raised some very good questions in the context of Genesis 1 that Walton needs to address. Walton would still argue that “the absence of reference to materials, rather than suggesting material creation out of nothing, is better explained as indication that *bārā*’ is not a

⁷²⁵ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 39.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid*, 39-40.

⁷²⁷ Statham, “Dubious and Dangerous Exposition: A Review of The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate by John H. Walton.”

material activity but a functional one.”⁷²⁸ However, the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* suggests the contrary. “Since the word never occurs with the object of the material, and since the primary emphasis of the word is on the newness of the created object, the word lends itself as well to the concept of creation *ex nihilo*...”⁷²⁹ The JPS Torah Commentary also agrees that “*bara*’ itself denote the creation of something out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*).”⁷³⁰ This creation out of nothing requires a material view of *bārā*’.

Tōhû and Bōhû

“The earth was without form (*tōhû*) and void (*bōhû*), and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” (Genesis 1:2) Translated in English as “formless” and “empty” respectively, *tōhû*, and *bōhû* are important in Walton’s functional creation view as they describe the initial condition of the universe. Walton’s fourth proposition says, “The Beginning State in Genesis 1 Is Nonfunctional.”⁷³¹ “*Bōhû* appears only three times (in addition to Gen 1:2, only in Isa 34:11 and Jer 4:23) and only appears in combination with *tōhû*, never alone.”⁷³² As a result, Walton only focused on an analysis of the twenty usages of *tōhû* in Scripture which he presented in a table.⁷³³ From his study, Walton observed, “One can see nothing in these contexts that would lead us to believe that *tōhû* has anything to do with material form. The contexts in which they occur and the words and phrases

⁷²⁸ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 40.

⁷²⁹ Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, 127.

⁷³⁰ Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, 1st ed., vol. 1, 5 vols., The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2001), 5.

⁷³¹ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 44.

⁷³² Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 140.

⁷³³ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 44-46.

used in parallel suggest rather that the word describes that which is nonfunctional, having no purpose and generally unproductive in human terms.”⁷³⁴ As a result, he concluded “that *tōhû* and *bōhû* together convey the idea of nonexistence (in their functional ontology), that is, that the earth is described as not yet functioning in an ordered system.”⁷³⁵

Doukhan agreed with Walton that nothing yet functioned at the beginning. However, he made a strong case to explain why this phrase isn’t just limited to function:

But the reason for this unproductivity is not just because it does not work; it does not work simply because there is nothing yet there. The terminology chosen by the author intends to mark nonexistence rather than just the absence of functionality, an understanding suggested by the parallelism of the two creation accounts, which makes the words *tohu wabohu* (“without form and void”) in Gen 1:2 correspond to the negative words ’ayin (“not”), terem (“not yet”), and lo’ (“not”) in Gen 2:5,11 an equivalence that is confirmed in biblical usage (Isa 40:17; 45:19; Jer 4:23).⁷³⁶

Of course, something is not going to function if it has not materially existed yet. Furthermore, out of the twenty instances of *tōhû* that Walton examined in the table, there are two that would refer to the absence or non-existence of material. However, Walton still saw Isaiah 45:18 and Jeremiah 4:23 in the non-functional view. He asked, “Why then has the term been so consistently translated as a reference to the absence of material form? One can only surmise that the translation tradition has been driven by the predominant material focus of the cultures that produced the translations.”⁷³⁷ Once again, Walton is pointing to cultural presuppositions as the cause for one’s interpretation or translation. However, one can also say the same about the translation that Walton would produce. It is his presuppositions about the usage of the Ancient

⁷³⁴ Ibid, 45-46.

⁷³⁵ Ibid, 46.

⁷³⁶ Doukhan, “A Response to John H. Walton’s Lost World of Genesis One”, 200.

⁷³⁷ Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, 46.

Near Eastern creation myths that would lead him to translate *tōhû*, and *bōhû* in a non-functional sense.

Conclusion

This chapter critiqued Walton's ANE Form Criticism as an interpretive approach behind his application of Speech Act Theory and his exegesis of Genesis 1. First, the historical developments behind ANE Form Criticism were presented, which included the influences of Gunkel, Bultmann, Delitzsch, and Hallo. Next, it evaluated the presuppositions of ANE Form Criticism and discovered many weaknesses associated with them. These weaknesses include the lack of a channel of transmission, uncertainty in the dating of ancient texts, and doubt of a homogeneous worldview in the broad Ancient Near East landscape. Furthermore, many of Walton's ten principles for comparative study, when applied properly, may be used as a case against the use of ANE Form Criticism and its presuppositions rather than a support for them. Walton is also inconsistent with the formation of his functional ancient cosmology view in Genesis. This is because he proposed his presuppositions of a functional origins of Genesis right after criticizing the contemporary western community of making its presuppositions of a material origins from the modern cosmological lens of science.

This chapter also critiqued Walton's use of ANE creation myths. His consideration of them showed that he does not follow the hermeneutical principle of using Scripture to interpret Scripture. He put more authority on these Ancient Near Eastern creation myths over Scripture itself. This approach is fueled mainly by his presupposition that the ancient Israelites read Genesis within the same cosmological worldview as their Ancient Near East neighboring nations. This chapter also showed the issues of using the Ancient Near Eastern creation myths to interpret Genesis 1 due to their differing purposes. The former had the anthropocentric purpose

of explaining the current human experience whereas the latter had the purpose of proclaiming the being and acts of the one, true God of Israel through a series of polemical arguments against the polytheistic, idolatrous, and syncretistic worldview of the former.

Finally, this chapter examined and critiqued some of Walton's exegesis and interpretation of important key words including *bārā'*, *tōhû*, and *bōhû* in Genesis 1. It was shown that Walton's presuppositions of his ANE Form Criticism and his use of the ANE creation myths affected his interpretation of these words. When applying his understanding of Speech Act Theory, these words contributed toward a basis to support his functional creation view. Due to the weaknesses of its presuppositions and the issues concerning the use of ANE creation myths, Walton's ANE Form Criticism in conjunction with Speech Act Theory is not a viable interpretative method of Genesis, rendering his functional view of Genesis 1 as questionable.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The research of this dissertation began by addressing the problem of how to interpret and understand the Genesis 1 creation narrative. It proposed and showed how the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis 1 creation narrative can be a viable hermeneutical tool to understand that the narrative intended to communicate how God created a universe of material origins instantaneously in a way that is consistent with His character as the Trinitarian God. After Chapter 1 introduced the design and methodology of this research, Chapter 2 presented the important background and concepts of Speech Act Theory that were referenced frequently during the research in the subsequent chapters.

Summary of Arguments

Research Question 1: What Performative Acts are Accomplished by God the Father when He Speaks in the Genesis Creation Narrative?

Chapter 3 applied Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 and identified God's potential performative acts accomplished with His creative speech on each day of creation. It did so with a canonical approach to interpreting Scripture by assuming the doctrine of the Trinity and the pre-existence of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity in Genesis 1 with creative roles.⁷³⁸ As a result, Speech Act Theory was mainly applied to Genesis 1 according to the first speech conversation plane (dialogue between the Persons of the Holy Trinity). Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory was considered. God the Father corresponds with performing the

⁷³⁸ See Appendix 1 entitled "The Pre-Existence of the Trinity in Genesis 1" and the beginning sections of Chapter 3 for arguments for the presence of the Trinity in Genesis and the creative roles of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

locutionary act as the Utterer and Begetter of words from Scripture. God the Son corresponds to the illocutionary act of the Speaker (God the Father) and shows how the intention and communicative act should be understood.⁷³⁹

During the speech act analysis in Chapter 3, God the Father's utterances of the locutionary acts were first identified on each day of creation. It was shown that God could be performing four different illocutionary acts simultaneously: expressive, directive, commissive, and declaration acts. Through the expressive illocutionary act, the Father expressed the desire for the creation of a specific entity. Through the directive illocutionary act, the Father commanded the Son to create the entity specified in the way it was specified. He also commanded the Holy Spirit to breathe life to enliven the material bodies of living creatures and human beings on days 5 and 6 (cf. Gen. 2:7; Ps. 33:6; 104:30). Through the commissive act, the Father committed Himself to create a specific entity in the way it was specified, through the creative action of the Son and Holy Spirit. Through the declaration illocutionary act, the Father declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of a specified entity, in the way it was specified. Evidence from the Genesis text showed the intended perlocutionary act effects were fulfilled and God's speech acts are considered by Austin as felicitous, or not wrong.⁷⁴⁰ All the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts on day of creation in Genesis 1 are identified and summarized in Appendix 3. These answer the first research question of this dissertation.

⁷³⁹ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1998), 457.

⁷⁴⁰ J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1962), 14-15.

Research Question 2. What do these Performative Acts Reveal about the Relationship Between the Persons of the Holy Trinity, the Character of God, and His Intention in Creation?

The performative acts identified in the speech act analysis of Chapter 3 and summarized in Appendix 3 show the relationship between the persons of the Holy Trinity and their character as God. First, they show the roles each played in creation. As God the Father uttered the words of the locutionary acts, the Son responded by corresponding to the illocutionary acts in creative action to show how the intended communicative act should be understood as suggested by Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory.⁷⁴¹ Regardless of the type of illocutionary act, the Son's creative action (and the Holy Spirit's when it comes to the enlivening of creatures and human beings on day 5 and 6) fulfilled the intended perlocutionary act effects of God the Father. As a result, all God's speech acts in the Genesis 1 creation narrative according to the first speech conversation plane are always seen as felicitous and must be the case. This conclusion affirms the relationship of unity in the Trinity. Any infelicitous speech act would suggest an error, incompleteness in action, misunderstanding, and/or disagreement among the three Persons of the Trinity.⁷⁴² These would be uncharacteristic and impossible of the Trinity in unity.

This understanding of a united relationship between the Persons of the Holy Trinity in creation is challenged on days 2, 5, and 6 as it appears God's speech could be directed toward a created entity to be involved in the creative process of another entity. Aside from the theological concerns of involving a created entity to create, God's speech acts would also be considered infelicitous as the resulting details (in the "deed account") presented after each speech indicate

⁷⁴¹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

⁷⁴² These may result from the failure of at least one of Austin's six felicity conditions. See Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 14-15. Austin's six felicity conditions are summarized in Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 229.

that it was God who performed the action of creating and not the created entity spoken of (in the “word account”).⁷⁴³ The solution to rectify these apparent “infelicities” is to see God the Son as the spoken Word of God (John 1:1) with a canonical reading. The Son as the spoken Word of God not only has the causal power to create, but also, He Himself performs the action of creating, as suggested by Vanhoozer’s Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory that corresponds the Son with showing how the illocutionary act should be understood.⁷⁴⁴ In other words, God the Son as the Spoken Word is seen as the Creator subject for both the “word account” and “deed account”, rendering these speech acts as felicitous.

Finally, the speech act analysis in Genesis 1 also affirms God’s character of holiness, perfection, and goodness.⁷⁴⁵ As Austin’s six conditions for felicity are met for God’s speech acts in Genesis 1, God cannot fail with misinvocations of employing a wrong procedure of creation or involving the wrong beings in the procedure. God cannot fail with misexecutions through flaws or hitches as He cannot make a mistake. God cannot fail with abuses with insincerities or falsity in His speech. God cannot fail with abuses by responding to another Person of the Trinity in an unexpected way or out of obligation. The relationship between the three Persons of the Trinity is always in unity and reflects His character of holiness, perfection, and goodness.

⁷⁴³ See Table 20 in Chapter 3 for the apparent “infelicities” on days 2, 5, and 6. These infelicitous speech acts would also challenge unity of the text as some scholars see Genesis 1 as two separate “word” and “deed” accounts of creation due to the work of a redactor (possibly the Priestly author of document P^s). See Jürg Hutzli, “Tradition and Interpretation in Gen 1:1-2:4a,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 10, no. 12 (2010), 12-13, 7-8.

⁷⁴⁴ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

⁷⁴⁵ See the section entitled, “Unity of the Trinity – Felicity Conditions Met” in Chapter 3 for a more detailed explanation.

Research Question 3. Does the Application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis Creation Narrative Imply the Necessity of an Instantaneous and Miraculous Creation?

Three main arguments were presented to support the conclusion that the application of Speech Act Theory does necessitate an instantaneous and miraculous creation and can be used as a tool to argue for a traditional young earth creation view: 1) the performance of declaration illocutionary actions; 2) the miraculous performances of Christ; and 3) the authorial performative intention using יום (*yom*).⁷⁴⁶ In the first argument, the definition of a declaration illocutionary act requires an immediate change in the condition of the universe solely on the fact that the declaration was successful. Since the speech act analysis of Genesis 1 showed that God could be performing the declaration illocutionary acts in His creative utterances, the results of creation must be instantaneous and miraculous. In the second argument, everything that Christ does as the Word of God embodies, reflects, and communicates the authority of what God the Father speaks according to Vanhoozer's Trinitarian Model of Speech Act Theory.⁷⁴⁷ Therefore, as Jesus performed creative miracles instantaneously during His earthly ministry, He reflects how God the Father created instantaneously and miraculously as well with His spoken Word in the Genesis 1 creation.

In the third argument, it was argued that the human author intended for a literal 24-hour meaning of "day" יום (*yom*).⁷⁴⁸ With the repeated use of the time formula, "And there was evening and there was morning, the _____ day" (Gen. 1:5b, 8b, 13, 19, 23, 31b) the human

⁷⁴⁶ See the section entitled, "An Instantaneous and Miraculous Creation" in Chapter 3 for a more detailed explanation.

⁷⁴⁷ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 457.

⁷⁴⁸ See Appendix 2 entitled, "The Use of the Term יום (*yom*) in Genesis 1 and Its Importance to the Creation Debate".

author was performing the assertive illocutionary act and communicating the propositional truth of a short time of God's creative acts to the readers according to the fourth speech conversation plane. This same assertive illocutionary act of a short time of creation can be applied to God as the Divine Author according to the fifth speech conversation plane.

Research Question 4: Does the Application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis Creation Narrative Imply the Necessity of a Material Creation over a Functional Creation?

This research question was mainly addressed with a negative approach. In the second part of Chapter 4, Walton's understanding of Speech Act Theory and presuppositions of the Ancient Near East worldview that were used to conclude his functional view of Genesis 1 were assumed. By applying the traditional understanding of Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 with Walton's assumptions and functional view, it was shown that many of the speech acts were determined to be infelicitous.⁷⁴⁹ Since it was concluded from the speech act analysis of Chapter 3 that it is impossible for God's speech acts to be infelicitous according to the first speech conversation plane, it is more likely that a material creation was intended over a functional creational.

Research Question 5: How does John H. Walton's Understanding and Application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis Creation Narrative Support His View of a Functional Creation?

In the first part of Chapter 4, Walton's understanding and application of Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 was presented. In his methodology, Walton mainly focuses on determining

⁷⁴⁹ See the section entitled, "Critique of Walton's Functional Creation using Speech Act Theory" in Chapter 4.

what the human author intended in the illocutionary acts to communicate to the implied audience, which is consistent with applying Speech Act Theory according to the fourth speech conversation plane.⁷⁵⁰ To do so, Walton believes that comparative studies, or Ancient Near East (ANE) Form Criticism, is needed in conjunction with Speech Act Theory.⁷⁵¹ ANE Form Criticism assumes the biblical authors adopted the same Ancient Near East worldview and creation myths as their pagan neighbors. As a result, the biblical authors, including that of Genesis 1, would use similar language and ideas of the Ancient Near East in their locutionary acts to communicate to the implied audience, despite any actual faulty genres, viewpoints, perspectives of cosmology, and human errors.⁷⁵²

Walton believes that an understanding of the Ancient Near East in the locutionary acts is needed to determine the meaning of the text through the illocutionary acts of the biblical authors.⁷⁵³ As a result, it is the illocutionary acts that have authority and inerrancy in Scripture and not the locutionary acts, due to any factual errors of the Ancient Near East Worldview. After determining the meaning of the text through the intended illocutionary acts of the human author according to the fourth speech conversation plane, Walton believes they can be associated with the authority of the Divine Author's illocutionary acts according to the fifth speech conversation plane.⁷⁵⁴ Since the Ancient Near East worldview discusses the origin of functions

⁷⁵⁰ John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 41.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁷⁵² Kenton L. Sparks, *God's Word in Human Words: An Evangelical Appropriation of Critical Biblical Scholarship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 243.

⁷⁵³ Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 54.

⁷⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

over materials in their creation myths, any similar language of the Genesis 1 author's locutions must also defend a functional creation over a material one in the illocutionary acts of both the human author and Divine Author.⁷⁵⁵ Walton's use of ANE Form Criticism in conjunction with his understanding of Speech Act Theory supports his functional view of creation in Genesis 1.

Research Question 6: What are the Challenges Associated with Walton's Understanding and Application of Speech Act Theory?

This research question is answered by critiquing Walton's Speech Act Theory methodology in Chapter 4 and evaluating the weaknesses of the presuppositions behind Walton's comparative studies or ANE Form Criticism in Chapter 5. Chapter 4's critique of Walton's Speech Act Theory presented three concerns. The first concern was the requirement of knowing the Ancient Near East worldview to truly determine a biblical author's intention from his illocutionary acts. Although it is a good hermeneutical practice to study the historical, cultural, and literary backgrounds of the human author's immediate worldview, it is problematic when one imports an outside source like the Ancient Near East worldview just as Walton has. These problems are described in more detail during the evaluation of the presuppositions behind ANE Form Criticism.

The second concern was that Walton's Speech Act Theory methodology limited how divine illocutions on the fifth conversation plane are understood. Walton believed understanding the illocutions of the human author according to the fourth speech conversation plane was the

⁷⁵⁵ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 125.

way to understand the illocutions of the Divine Author.⁷⁵⁶ This is limiting as the understanding of the human author's illocutionary acts is dependent on the Ancient Near East worldview and ignores the potential of how the Divine Author may communicate to the reader in the context of the whole canon of Scripture. The third concern of Walton's Speech Act Theory methodology was its association with the accommodation method. If God were to accommodate the faulty human viewpoints, perspectives, and errors to communicate truth to readers, it would not coincide with the character of a truthful God, since it would mean "God uses lies to teach truth."⁷⁵⁷ Furthermore, the association with the accommodation method questions the inerrancy of Scripture as the faulty human Ancient Near Eastern views and perspectives are tied to the locutions.⁷⁵⁸

Chapter 5 evaluated the presuppositions of ANE Form Criticism and discovered many weaknesses associated with them. These weaknesses include the lack of a channel of transmission, uncertainty in the dating of ancient texts, and doubt of a homogeneous worldview in the broad Ancient Near East landscape. Walton's use of Ancient Near East creation myths to interpret Scripture is also questionable as it does not follow the hermeneutical principle of using Scripture to interpret Scripture. Furthermore, the Ancient Near East creation myths were written with the anthropocentric purpose of explaining the current human experience while the Bible has the purpose of proclaiming the being and acts of the one, true God of Israel through a series of polemical arguments against the polytheistic, idolatrous, and syncretistic Ancient Near East worldview. Due to the challenges of Walton's understanding of Speech Act Theory and the

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid, 42.

⁷⁵⁷ Jason Lisle, *Understanding Genesis: How to Analyze, Interpret, and Defend Scripture* (Greenforest, AR: Master Books, 2015), 52.

⁷⁵⁸ Walton and Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, 54.

weaknesses of the presuppositions behind the use of the Ancient Near Eastern worldview and ANE Form Criticism, Walton's methodology to support a functional view of creation in Genesis 1 is questionable.

Recommendations for Further Research

Due to space limitations, the focus of this dissertation was to apply Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 according to the first speech conversation plane and critique John Walton's methodology of Speech Act Theory with ANE Form Criticism. However, there are many areas of research to further pursue on the application of Speech Act Theory for the topic of creation. This concluding section will make five areas of recommendation for further research.

The first area of recommendation for further research involves greater focus invested in applying Speech Act Theory to Genesis 1 according to the second speech conversation plane. The relevant passages of speech from God to creation are found in the blessings of Genesis 1:22 and 1:28-30. Although this dissertation only briefly analyzed these speech acts in footnotes in Chapter 3, it would be worth identifying all the potential performative acts God may accomplish by blessing creation. These acts would include the locutionary acts, different types of illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Do the speech according to the second speech conversation plane in Genesis 1 offer other insights concerning a universe of material origins created instantaneously and the character of the Trinitarian God?

The second area of recommendation for further research involves applying Speech Act Theory to the creation narrative in Genesis 2. Some may claim that Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 are two separate creation events or contradict one another, particularly in the timing of the creation of plant life and animal life to the creation of human beings. How can Speech Act Theory

defend against the claims of separate or contradictory creation events? Furthermore, since the Genesis 2 creation narrative can be seen as a focus on the creation of human beings, how can Speech Act Theory be used to better understand day 6 creation in the Genesis 1 narrative?

The third area of recommendation for further research involves applying Speech Act Theory to the Ancient Near East creation myths. Some famous and often-referenced ones include the Babylonian creation myth, *Enuma Elish*, the Akkadian epic of *Atrahasis*, and Egyptian Mythology called *The Memphite Theology*, which includes creation by performative thought and speech. The purpose of applying Speech Act Theory to these creation myths can be to discover further differences from the Genesis creation narratives and arguments to not utilize them in the interpretation of biblical Scripture.

The fourth area of recommendation for further research is to see how the application of Speech Act Theory to the Genesis creation narrative can be used to argue against competing creation theories that are not of the traditional young earth material creation views. While the research in this dissertation focused on arguing against Walton's functional view of creation, other creation theories to critique may involve the Gap Theory, Day/Age Theory, Framework Hypothesis, and Progressive Creation. How can Speech Act Theory be used to form more arguments against these or affirm and strengthen current arguments?

The fifth area of recommendation for further research involves testing the speech conversation plane model of applying Speech Act Theory to other biblical passages. This model was proposed and developed by the author of this dissertation for this research. However, do the defined five speech conversation planes cover all the possible types of conversations between different participants for biblical interpretation? Are there particular rules or guidelines for applying Speech Act Theory according to each speech conversation plane? While there are

many research examples of applying Speech Act Theory to particular passages, usually they are done with a focus on just one of the speech conversation planes without consideration of any others. More research can be done to further develop this new model of speech conversation planes for Speech Act Theory.

Appendix 1: The Pre-Existence of the Trinity in Genesis 1

According to the doctrine of the Trinity, there is one God but in three distinct Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Although the word “trinity” does not appear in Scripture, this doctrine has been developed and defended throughout church history due to the revealed truths of each Person in both the Old and New Testaments. Therefore, a canonical reading of Scripture is necessary for the doctrine of the Trinity. If the three Persons of the Trinity are co-equal, co-eternal, and uncreated, it suggests that they were pre-existent before the creation of the universe. Is there evidence in the text of the Genesis 1 creation account that suggests the presence of the Trinity? This appendix seeks to answer this question by exploring the use of the plural *elohim* throughout Genesis 1 and the use of the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26.

Plural Elohim

The plural noun *elohim* is a word that has been used in Scripture to refer to the one true God, gods (a general sense of deity), judges, and angels.⁷⁵⁹ In the context of Genesis 1, this is the name that refers to God as the Creator. However, how would one know if *elohim* does not refer to plurality of gods or pagan deities as used throughout the Old Testament? The main key indicator has to do with the grammatical number of the verbs and predicators associated with *elohim*. Murphy described the difference in the following way:

The normal way to tell the difference in most OT contexts is that *Elohim* is used in conjunction with singular verbs and predicators when it refers to the God of Israel — e.g., in Gen 1:1, “In the beginning *Elohim* (pl. form) created (3rd singular verb) the heavens and the earth.” In comparison, one can see that when *Elohim* is used in reference to other gods conveying plurality, it is used with plural verbs and predicators—

⁷⁵⁹ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1980), 44-45.

e.g., in 1 Kings 20:10, “May the gods (pl. form) do (3rd plural verb) so to me...”⁷⁶⁰

Given that *elohim* in Genesis 1 is always consistently used with singular verbs and predicators, it is clear that the author is referring to the one true God as Creator. Since *elohim* here cannot refer to the plurality of pagan gods, can its plural form instead refer to the plurality of the three Persons of the Trinity in one Godhead? Morris believed so and argued his case based on the categories of what was created:

Thus Genesis 1:1 can legitimately and incisively be paraphrased as follows: “The transcendent, omnipotent Godhead called into existence the space-mass-time universe.” As noted earlier, the name Elohim suggests that God is both one God, yet more than one. Though it does not specify that God is a trinity, the fact that the product of His creative activity was a tri-universe does at least strongly suggest this possibility. A trinity, or tri-unity is not the same as a triad (in which there are three distinct and separate components comprising a system), but rather is a continuum in which each component is itself coexistent and coterminous with the whole. That is, the universe is not part space, part time, and part matter, but rather *all* space, *all* time, *all* matter, and so is a true tri-unity.⁷⁶¹

Although this is an interesting interpretation that makes a case for the pre-existence of the Trinity in Genesis 1, there is some concern. First, according to the fourth speech conversation plane, it is not likely that this was the communicative intention of the human author, who would have no concept of these three contemporary scientific categories. Second, according to the fifth speech conversation plane, it is also not likely that this could be the communicative intention of the Divine Author as there is no direct revelation in the canon of Scripture about using these three contemporary scientific categories to suggest a parallel to the Trinitarian God. This is mere speculation on Morris’ part.

⁷⁶⁰ Bryan Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation,” *The Masters Seminary Journal* 24, no. 2 (2013), 168.

⁷⁶¹ Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976), 40-41.

Murphy does not believe that the plural noun *elohim* is enough evidence on grammatical grounds alone to reason for the plurality of persons in the Trinity.⁷⁶² Instead, he believes from the grammatical and contextual considerations of *elohim* in the Old Testament and Genesis, that the plural noun is best seen as the plural of majesty. This usage “shows a heightened level of respect for the individual being referred to in the context.”⁷⁶³ Murphy noted that *elohim* meets the two ways that plurals of majesty are usually recognized. “First, is to note that the word, though it occurs in a plural form in a given context, is used in conjunction with singular syntax in the surrounding immediate context. Second, the word itself in this context speaks of or to an individual of significance or importance – or an individual that epitomizes a class.”⁷⁶⁴

Despite these ways of recognizing a plural of majesty, Frame does not agree with Murphy’s assessment of *elohim*. He said, “[*Elohim*] is not a plural of majesty (as when kings and queens refer to themselves as ‘we’), for there is no evidence of such a use of the plural during the biblical period.”⁷⁶⁵ This is not true as Murphy cited many examples of the use of this plural, including Psalm 7:10; Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 10:17; and 1 Kings 1:43. Frame would prefer to see *elohim* as a plural of abstraction. He said, “I regard the word initially as a plural of abstraction, that is, ‘a more or less intensive focus of the characteristics inherent in the idea of the stem... rendered in English by forms in *-hood*, *-ness*, *-ship*.”⁷⁶⁶ Frame is referring to

⁷⁶² Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation”, 172. Read about Murphy’s full argument by considering the grammar and context of the plural form of *elohim* on pages 169-172.

⁷⁶³ Ibid, 171.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid, 171.

⁷⁶⁵ John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God*, vol. 2, 4 vols., A Theology of Lordship (Phillipsburg, N.J: P&R Publishing, 2002), 355.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid, 355. Here, Frame cites Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, ed. Emil Kautzsch, trans. Arthur Ernest Cowley, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 396.

grammatical abstraction and is saying that “the Trinity is abstract in the sense that it includes the three persons as three particulars.”⁷⁶⁷ Although *elohim* as a plural of abstraction may refer to a Trinity, Frame arrived at the same conclusion as Murphy despite seeing *elohim* as a plural of majesty. Frame said, “Certainly such a plural would be appropriate to designate the Trinity... But it would not be possible to prove from the plurality of *'elohim* that God is triune, or even that he is a plurality of persons with a single nature.”⁷⁶⁸ Both Frame and Murphy do not see the plural *elohim* by itself as enough evidence for the plurality of Persons in the Trinity.

Plural Pronoun of Genesis 1:26

If there is no evidence for the plural noun *Elohim* to indicate the pre-existence of the Trinity in Genesis 1, is there any potential found in Genesis 1:26? This verse states, “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.’” The first person plural pronouns “us” and “our” featured in this verse have been interpreted by many to be an early reference to the Trinity. In the following sections, five different views of the pronouns will be presented and critiqued: 1) Reference to Polytheism, 2) Reference to the Heavenly Court, 3) Plural of Majesty, 4) Plural of Deliberation, and 5) Trinitarian Divine Plurality. It will be argued that the Trinitarian view of the pronouns in Genesis 1:26 is the best out of five.

Reference to Polytheism

The use of the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26 has been interpreted as a reference to polytheism. This is known as the Mythical View. Hamilton summarized this view

⁷⁶⁷ Frame, *The Doctrine of God*, 355 fn. 21.

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 355.

in the following way: “A mythological interpretation understands the us to refer to other gods. Thus this text is a remnant of the earliest form of the story that somehow escaped the editor who removed from his borrowed tale any pagan elements that would be offensive and unacceptable to monotheists.”⁷⁶⁹ There are two main reasons to reject this view. First, one of the emphases of the Old Testament is to convince the ancient Israelites that there is one true God despite the polytheistic cultural worldviews of their neighbors in the Ancient Near East. Matthews said, “It is unlikely when we consider the elevated theology of 1:1–2:3, that any polytheistic element would be tolerated by the author; therefore, the first option can be ruled out.”⁷⁷⁰ It would be contradictory for the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26 to refer to polytheism.

Furthermore, the implications of the Mythical View also require adopting a view that contradicts that of the inspiration or inerrancy of Scripture. If the first person plural pronouns refer to polytheism, they remain in the verse only because of the failure of the redactors to remove all the pagan elements from sources that were used.⁷⁷¹ Murphy said, “This exegetical issue is actually a proof of literary dependence and redaction of some kind. Obviously, this view contradicts an evangelical view of inspiration and can thus be rejected.” This second reason for rejecting the Mythical View is also supported by Walton who said, “Unfortunately, they can only accommodate their view by the means of many presuppositions concerning the derived nature of the text and the incompetence of a series of editors. Since most readers, like myself, are not

⁷⁶⁹ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990), 133.

⁷⁷⁰ Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 161.

⁷⁷¹ Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation”, 173.

persuaded in the least by those presuppositions, we simply set that option aside.”⁷⁷² It is also notable that among Westermann’s summaries of the four explanations of the plural in “Let us make man”, he did not even include this view as an option to consider.

Reference to the Heavenly Court

Another common interpretation of the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26 is the view that they refer to the court of heavenly angels. In other words, God is announcing the creation of humans to angels. This view stems from two sources. The first view is suggested by Babylonian parallels such as the *Enuma Elish* and other Assyrian and Mesopotamian creation myths.⁷⁷³ The second view stems from “the description of a heavenly court in the Old Testament: 1 Kings 22:19; Job 1:6f.; 2:1f.; 38:7; etc.”⁷⁷⁴ Sarna holds to this view and sees it as “the Israelite version of the polytheistic assemblies of the pantheon – monotheized and depaganized.”⁷⁷⁵ Due to these two sources, Walton sees this view of the first person plural pronouns as the best out of five:

The other position informed by cultural background, the heavenly court option, is much more defensible in that the concept of a heavenly court can be shown to be current not only in the ancient worldview, but also in the biblical text. Thus the belief in such a

⁷⁷² John H. Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2011), 129.

⁷⁷³ Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1994), 144.

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 144.

⁷⁷⁵ Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, 1st ed, vol. 1, 5 vols., The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2001), 12. Sarna also cited Gen. 3:22 and 11:7 as other examples of the use of the plural form of divine address involving humans.

heavenly court does not need to be imported from the general culture (though the evidence for it is extensive and clear); one needs only read the Bible.⁷⁷⁶

However, there are two arguments against the view of the heavenly court that must be addressed.

Sarfati said, “The plurality can’t mean that God is addressing angels, since they are not in view in Creation Week [argument 1], and man was made in God’s image, not in the image of angels [argument 2].”⁷⁷⁷ Matthews also presented these two arguments.⁷⁷⁸ Concerning the first argument, he further expressed the issue by saying that, “the narrative has shown by its theological stance that God has no antecedent partner or source for creation. The sudden introduction of a heavenly court diminishes the force of the presentation.”⁷⁷⁹ It would be impossible for other beings aside from God Himself to be involved in the act of creation.

Following the speech in Genesis 1:26, Genesis 1:27 clearly stated the result that God created man. Walton would respond to this first argument in two ways:

(1) We must distinguish between consulting and discussing. God has no need to either consult or discuss with anyone (as Isa. 40:14 affirms). (2) It is his prerogative, however, to discuss anything he wants with whomever he chooses (Gen. 18:17-19). Such inclusion of the heavenly court in discussion does not in any sense necessitate that angels must then have been used as agents of creation. In Isaiah 6:8 the council’s decision is carried out by Yahweh alone.⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷⁶ Walton, *Genesis*, 129. Walton also concluded, “If, then, we are going to link our interpretation to the sense that the Israelite audience would have understood (and methodologically I believe that is essential for maintaining the authority of the text), the heavenly court is the most defensible interpretation and poses no insuperable theological obstacles.” Walton, *Genesis*, 130.

⁷⁷⁷ Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account: A Theological, Historical, and Scientific Commentary on Genesis 1-11*, 2nd ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publishers, 2015), 99.

⁷⁷⁸ Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 162.

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 162.

⁷⁸⁰ Walton, *Genesis*, 129.

In his first response, Walton is correct that God does not need to consult or discuss with anyone. His second response to the dissociation of angels as agents of creation may be similarly represented by Heiser who presented an illustration of an announcement to a group of friends to get pizza.⁷⁸¹ However, Walton and Heiser's responses are under the presupposition that God is performing the directive illocutionary acts of consulting/discussing or the assertive illocutionary act of announcing, respectively, in Genesis 1:26. As this dissertation has shown, "let us make" (נַעֲשֶׂה *na'aseh*) is a cohortative verb. Since this verb is in the first person plural, the usage of this cohortative is that in which "the speakers usually seek to instigate... each other to some action."⁷⁸² In other words, there is a command to call for one another to create. From this grammatical argument, if God is speaking to angels of the heavenly court, He would be commanding them to create. As mentioned earlier, this is a theological problem as only God can create. Furthermore, Walton and Heiser's insistence on God as the sole Agent of creation would not make sense in light of their heavenly court view. Matthews argued, "But such a resolution is odd since it undermines the very contention of the angel view, namely, that God consulted with the heavenly court when in fact the consultation had no appreciable meaning."⁷⁸³

Aside from Matthew and Sarfati's first argument, the heavenly courts view should also be rejected due to their second argument concerning the image of God that is presented by many

⁷⁸¹ Heiser's illustration: "It's like me going into a room of friends saying, 'Hey, let's go get some pizza!' I'm the one speaking. A group is hearing what I say. Similarly, God comes to the divine council with an exciting announcement: 'Let's create humankind!' But if God is speaking to his divine council here, does that suggest that humankind was created by more than one *elohim*? Was the creation of humankind a group project? Not at all. Back to my pizza illustration: If I am the one paying for the pizza – making the plan happen after announcement it – then I retain both the inspiration and the initiative for the entire project. That's how Genesis 1:26 works. Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, 1st Ed. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 39-40.

⁷⁸² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 134.

⁷⁸³ Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 162.

others as well. McKeown said, “One possible explanation is that God was speaking to heavenly beings whom he had already created, but this would imply that humans were created not only in the image of God but also in the image of these other creatures.”⁷⁸⁴ Some may respond by claiming that human beings were made in the image of angels as well by citing Genesis 6:1-4. However, Matthews said, “Appealing to 6:1-4 only begs the question since it is not clear that the ‘sons of God’ are angels.”⁷⁸⁵ Walton also defended the heavenly courts view by saying, “Finally, the idea that the image should be referred to as ‘our’ image does not imply that humans are created in the image of angels; it is possible though not necessary, that angels also share the divine image in their nature. The image of God differentiates people from animals, not from angels.”⁷⁸⁶ Here, Walton is implying the possibility that angels were also made in the image of God. However, his argument is not strong as he mentions that it is only a possibility and not a necessity. Furthermore, there is no scriptural support for this idea. On the other hand, there is scripture that may suggest the contrary. Sarfati defended that man was made in God’s image alone and not angels by referencing that “the Epistle to the Hebrews also explains how Jesus took upon Himself the nature of a man to save mankind, but not angels (Hebrews 2:11–18).”⁷⁸⁷ For these reasons, the heavenly courts view should be rejected.

⁷⁸⁴ James McKeown, *Genesis*, The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008), 26.

⁷⁸⁵ Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 162.

⁷⁸⁶ Walton, *Genesis*, 129.

⁷⁸⁷ Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 99.

Plural of Majesty

Another interpretation of Genesis 1:26 is to see the first person plural pronouns as plurals of majesty to convey the honor and reverence of God, much like that of the plural noun *elohim*. Hamilton said, “Some grammarians have opted here for what they call a plural of majesty, for the word God is itself plural — *’elōhîm*. Comparison has been made to the ‘us’ in Gen. 11:7 and Isa. 6:8.”⁷⁸⁸ In other words, the pronouns are seen as plurals of majesty to correspond to and be consistent with the plural *elohim*. This view can be easily rejected for three reasons. First, according to Murphy, “The chief and convincing objection to this is the fact that plural predication accompanies the plural pronoun here in contrast to the consistent use of singular predication throughout for *Elohim*.”⁷⁸⁹ The correspondence and consistency between the plural pronouns and *Elohim* is not the case due to the difference of their respective predications.

The second reason to reject this view is that “plurals of majesty exist with nouns in the Hebrew language. But there are no certain examples of plurals of majesty with either verbs or pronouns.”⁷⁹⁰ The claim that the pronouns in Genesis 1:26 are plurals of majesty does not hold due to lack of parallel examples. Finally, the third reason to reject this view comes from an inconsistent purpose for implementing such a use of this pronoun. Matthews observed, “The plural as used to show special reverence (honorific plural) is flawed since the point of the verse is the unique correspondence between God and man, not the majesty of God.”⁷⁹¹ Due to these

⁷⁸⁸ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, 133.

⁷⁸⁹ Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation”, 174.

⁷⁹⁰ Gerhard F. Hasel, “The Meaning of ‘Let Us’ in Gn 1:26,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 13, no. 1 (1975), 63.

⁷⁹¹ Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 161.

three reasons, the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26 cannot be considered plurals of majesty.

Plural of Deliberation

The first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26 have also been interpreted as plurals of deliberation in which God is anthropomorphized and seen as talking to Himself, contemplating about making human beings. Westermann holds to this view over the others. He argued, “In favor of a plural of deliberation in 1:26 is the fact that in Is 6:8 the plural and the singular are used in the same sentence with the same meaning; similarly in 2 Sam 24:14 where it is a question of one and the same conclusion...”⁷⁹² Hasel questioned “whether such a use can be found in the OT.”⁷⁹³ He examined 2 Sam 24:14 and Song of Solomon 1:11 as often cited close parallels to Genesis 1:26 and argued that they fail to qualify as explanations “because in none of these examples do we find God as the speaker.”⁷⁹⁴ Supposed examples of plural of deliberations that include God as the speaker, such as Isaiah 6:8, Genesis 3:22, and 11:17, also fail according to Hasel due to the lack of “supportive evidence or are to be explained as Gn. 1:26 in other ways.”⁷⁹⁵ In response to both the plural of majesty and deliberation, Walton observed the same as Hasel. He said, “The rare instances in which they can be claimed generally have either other possible explanations or characteristics that differentiate them from the usage here.”⁷⁹⁶ These

⁷⁹² Westermann, *Genesis 1-11* 145.

⁷⁹³ Hasel, “The Meaning of ‘Let Us’ in Gn 1”, 64.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid, 64. Hasel quotes Song of Solomon 1:11, but mistakenly references it as Psalm 1:11.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid, 64.

⁷⁹⁶ Walton, *Genesis*, 128.

observations led to many scholars who reject the plural of deliberation. Murphy said, “The chief objection to it is that there is no clear OT parallel that similarly used the plural form for this type of deliberation.”⁷⁹⁷ Similarly, Clines said, “The rarity of parallels gives us little confidence in the correctness of this view...”⁷⁹⁸ Aside from the lack of close parallels, Matthews contributed another claim. He said, “Self-deliberation is attested in the Old Testament (e.g., Pss 42:5, 11; 43:5), but there is no attestation that the plural form is used in this way.”⁷⁹⁹ Not only are there no parallels, but also the plural form has never been utilized for this purpose. Therefore, the plural of deliberation view should be rejected.

Trinitarian Divine Plurality

Due to the concerns and issues of the previously described views, the final and most likely view of the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26 is that of the Trinitarian Divine Plurality. In other words, the plural pronouns are an early reference to the plurality of the three Persons of the Trinity. The original human author of Genesis 1 most likely did not know the Son and Holy Spirit as one God with the Father in the Trinity. According to the fourth speech conversation plane, he would not have intended to communicate this to the original readers. This is the exact reason why Walton rejects a Trinitarian reading in Genesis 1:26. He said, “The *theological* [Trinitarian View] is probably the most popular in traditional circles, but it suffers when subjected to hermeneutical cross-examination. That is, if we ask what the Hebrew author

⁷⁹⁷ Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation”, 174.

⁷⁹⁸ D. J. A. Clines, “The Image of God in Man,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 19, no. 1 (1968), 68.

⁷⁹⁹ Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, 161.

and audience understood, any explanation assuming plurality in the Godhead is easily eliminated.”⁸⁰⁰

To overcome this concern, Hasel preferred to present this view of the pronouns in Genesis 1:26 as a plural of fullness without the language of the Trinity. He described, “This plural supposes that there is within the divine Being the distinction of personalities, a plurality within the deity, a ‘unanimity of intention and plan.’ In other words, a distinction in the divine Being with regard to a plurality of persons is here represented as a germinal idea.”⁸⁰¹ Hasel’s description of this view satisfies two conditions. The first condition is that of plurality involved in the creation of human beings, as shown in the grammar. The second condition is the limitation of this plurality to God as shown in the context of Genesis 1:27.

However, the Divine Author of Genesis 1 can communicate to readers today about the connection of Genesis 1:26 to the doctrine of the Trinity according to the fifth speech conversation plane. This is done through a canonical reading of Scripture and the revealed truths of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, especially in the New Testament. Murphy considered the revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity in Scripture in his argument for this Trinitarian Divine Plurality View:

While the fullness of this may not have been comprehended by either Moses, the human author, or the original readers (the nation of Israel immediately following the Exodus), through inspiration, God intended to convey Trinitarian involvement in creation through the progress of revelation... Moses, in Genesis 1, wrote the first inspired revelatory expression conveying the truth about the plurality of persons within the Godhead. It is the rest of Scripture that confirms the reference to be Trinitarian... Genesis 1 reveals God as

⁸⁰⁰ Walton, *Genesis*, 128.

⁸⁰¹ Hasel, “The Meaning of ‘Let Us’ in Gn 1”, 65. Hasel also referenced Barth to describe a plurality within the deity. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics III.1: The Doctrine of Creation § 40-42*, ed. T. F. Torrance and G. W. Bromiley, vol. III.1, 4 vols. (New York, NY: T&T Clark International, 2009), 182.

a single God with a plurality of persons within the Godhead. It calls for the rest of Scripture progressively to confirm that plurality as the Trinity.⁸⁰²

Walton recognizes the revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity in the New Testament. However, he would still respond by saying, “But it is not enough for the New Testament simply to affirm that there is such thing as the Trinity. That affirmation does not prove that the Trinity is referred to in Genesis 1:26. Without a specific New Testament treatment, we have no authoritative basis for bypassing the human author.”⁸⁰³ This approach is a part of Walton’s hermeneutical method which he applies consistently.⁸⁰⁴ While this can be seen as one way to apply a canonical approach to Scripture, it is a limitation as it puts more emphasis on the intention of the human author (fourth speech conversation plane) over that of the Divine author (fifth speech conversation plane).

Westermann dismissed a Trinitarian view of Genesis 1:26 based on it being a dogmatic interpretation. He said, “It was often explained in the early church as an expression of the Trinity, the threefold God... but that is a dogmatic judgment, which is echoed in Karl Barth.”⁸⁰⁵ One of the earliest examples in church history of a Trinitarian reading of Genesis 1:26 may be found in the writings of Tertullian (160-240 A.D.). In *Against Praxeas*, he argued for the distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit by citing Genesis 1:26 as evidence for plurality within the Godhead. Tertullian also saw the plural pronouns as indicators of speech

⁸⁰² Murphy, “The Trinity in Creation”, 176-177.

⁸⁰³ Walton, *Genesis*, 128.

⁸⁰⁴ For example, Walton does not accept a messianic reading of Genesis 3:15 as there is no other Scriptures that indicates a fulfillment identified to transcend the original context. *Ibid*, 235-236.

⁸⁰⁵ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 144. Westermann cited Barth, *Church Dogmatics III.1*, 191ff.

among the Persons of the Trinity.⁸⁰⁶ Many other early theologians and church fathers referenced Genesis 1:26 in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, including Athanasius of Alexandria and Augustine of Hippo. Contrary to Westermann's concern, the fact that a Trinitarian view of Genesis 1:26 has been held since the early centuries of the church is significant as it has been judged, affirmed, and taught by many believers. Due to this understanding of the Trinitarian Divine Plurality View along with the responses to any objections to it, it can be concluded that the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26, alongside the plural *elohim*, may be seen as early attestations to the plurality of divine Persons in the oneness of the Holy Trinity, as revealed in the canon of Scripture.

Conclusion

This appendix sought evidence in the Genesis 1 creation account that suggests the pre-existence of the Trinity. The first part explored the usage of the plural *elohim* which referred to God as Creator in Genesis 1. Due to its consistent use with singular verbs and predicators, the plural *elohim* in Genesis 1 cannot refer to the plurality of gods or pagan deities, but to the one true God. Despite its reference to the one true God, there is doubt that it points to the plurality of Persons in the Trinity. Murphy saw *elohim* as a plural of majesty while Frame saw it as a plural of abstraction. Although the former is more likely than the latter, the differing views of Murphy and Frame come to the same conclusion that the plural *elohim* by itself is not enough evidence to support the plurality of Persons in the Trinity.

⁸⁰⁶ Tertullian, "Against Praxeas," ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, trans. Peter Holmes, vol. 3 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), Chapter 12.

The second part of this appendix explored the usage of the first person plural pronouns in Genesis 1:26. Five views of these pronouns were presented and critiqued: 1) Reference to Polytheism, 2) Reference to the Heavenly Court, 3) Plural of Majesty, 4) Plural of Deliberation, and 5) Trinitarian Divine Plurality. The first view is rejected as the author of Genesis is writing against the polytheistic cultural worldviews of their neighbors in the Ancient Near East and is seeking to convince the ancient Israelites that there is one true God. Furthermore, this first view is rejected as it requires adopting a view of redaction criticism that contradicts that of the inspiration or inerrancy of Scripture. The second view is rejected due to the lack of angels and their creative involvement mentioned in the narrative, and the issue of needing to read that humans were created in the image of angels in addition to God. The third view is rejected since there are no examples of the Hebrew plural of majesty as a verb or pronoun in the Old Testament. Furthermore, the purpose of Genesis 1:26 is to highlight the unique correspondence between God and man, and not the majesty of God. The fourth view is rejected as there are no examples of the plural form of the pronoun used for deliberation.

The remaining fifth view is that of the Trinitarian Divine Plurality. This view fulfills the plurality as demanded by the grammar while taking into account the limitation of the plurality to God in the context of Genesis 1:27. It is best seen as early evidence of the Trinity, as later revealed in the canon of Scripture, and viewed in conjunction with the plural *elohim*. This shows that the three Persons of the Holy Trinity pre-existed in the Genesis 1 creation narrative. As this dissertation applied Speech Act Theory to the Genesis 1 creation narrative, the presence and creative involvement of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were considered.

Appendix 2: The Use of the Term יום (*yom*) in Genesis 1 and Its Importance to the Creation Debate

The Hebrew word יום (*yom*) is one of the most important words in Genesis 1 concerning the creation/evolution debate. While its plain and literal meaning is “day”, many people can interpret its timeframe differently and come to various conclusions about the age of the universe and how it came to be. How should *yom* be properly understood and interpreted while considering the authority of Scripture? The first half of this appendix will provide a historical overview of the understanding of *yom* in Genesis. In the second half, it will be followed by an exegetical case for a literal 24-hour day as the meaning of *yom*. Finally, it will conclude with some reasons why a proper understanding of *yom* is important to the creation/evolution debate.

A Brief History of the Understanding of *Yom*

Early Church Fathers (100-700 A.D.)

According to scholars like Hugh Ross and Gleason Archer, the early church fathers did not pay much attention to the length of the creation days. However, the few who wrote about this matter did not view the creation days as a literal 24-hour day. Ross states:

Many of the early Church Fathers and other biblical scholars interpreted the creation days of Genesis 1 as long periods of time. The list of such proponents includes the Jewish historian Josephus (1st century); Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, apologist, and martyr (2nd century); Origen, who rebutted heathen attacks on Christian doctrine (3rd century); Basil (4th century); Augustine (5th century); and, later, Aquinas (13th century), to name a few.⁸⁰⁷

Are scholars like Ross right in making this claim? Did the early church father view the creation days as long periods of time? In this section, the writings of select Church Fathers such as Origen, Basil, and Augustine will be examined.

⁸⁰⁷ Hugh Ross, *The Fingerprint of God*, 2nd ed. (Orange, CA: Promise Publishing Company, 1991), 141.

Origen

Origen was a Greek scholar and early church theologian who lived from 185 to 254 A.D. In his work entitled, *Contra Celsus*, he rebuts arguments against Christianity made by Celsus, an opponent from a century before. It is clear that Origen did not believe in literal 24-hour days of creation as he “found fault with those who, taking the words in their apparent signification, said that the time of six days was occupied in the creation of the world.”⁸⁰⁸ Although he admitted that the plain meaning is that creation took six days, he rejected this interpretation. According to Letham, this is due to Origen’s neo-platonist leanings.⁸⁰⁹ As a result, it led Origen to doubt the plain meaning and write in *De Principiis*, “Nor even do the law and the commandments wholly convey what is agreeable to reason. For who that has understanding will suppose that the first, and second, and third day, and the evening and the morning, ex-isted without a sun, and moon, and stars?”⁸¹⁰ Even though Origen did not believe in a literal 24-hour day in creation, he did believe in a young earth as he said, “the Mosaic account of creation... teaches that the world is not yet ten thousand years old, but very much under that.”⁸¹¹ This is contrary to what scholars like Ross claim Origen believed.

Basil the Great

Basil the Great of Caesarea (330-379) wrote a collection of homilies on Genesis called *Hexaemeron*. In homily 9, he distanced himself from those like Origen who allegorize Scripture:

⁸⁰⁸ Origen, *Contra Celsus*, 6.60.

⁸⁰⁹ Robert Letham, “‘In The Space Of Six Days’: The Days Of Creation From Origen To The Westminster Assembly,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 61, no. 2 (1999): 151.

⁸¹⁰ Origen, *De Principiis*, 4.1.16.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.1.16.

I know the laws of allegory, though less by myself than from the works of others. There are those truly, who do not admit the common sense of the Scriptures, for whom water is not water, but some other nature, who see in a plant, in a fish, what their fancy wishes, who change the nature of reptiles and of wild beasts to suit their allegories, like the interpreters of dreams who explain visions in sleep to make them serve their own ends. For me grass is grass; plant, fish, wild beast, domestic animal, I take all in the literal sense. For I am not ashamed of the gospel... It is this which those seem to me not to have understood, who, giving themselves up to the distorted meaning of allegory, have undertaken to give a majesty of their own invention to Scripture. It is to believe themselves wiser than the Holy Spirit, and to bring forth their own ideas under a pretext of exegesis. Let us hear Scripture as it has been written.⁸¹²

Due to Basil's literal approach to interpretation, it is apparent and necessary that he viewed creation in six 24-hour days. This is evidenced in homily 2:

And the evening and the morning were one day. Why does Scripture say one day the first day? Before speaking to us of the second, the third, and the fourth days, would it not have been more natural to call that one the first which began the series? If it therefore says one day, it is from a wish to determine the measure of day and night, and to combine the time that they contain. Now twenty-four hours fill up the space of one day— we mean of a day and of a night; and if, at the time of the solstices, they have not both an equal length, the time marked by Scripture does not the less circumscribe their duration. It is as though it said: twenty-four hours measure the space of a day, or that, in reality a day is the time that the heavens starting from one point take to return there. Thus, every time that, in the revolution of the sun, evening and morning occupy the world, their periodical succession never exceeds the space of one day.⁸¹³

Basil appealed to many arguments to support a 24-hour reading of *yom*. First, he pointed out that Scripture mentioned that evening and morning made up one creation day. This means that *yom* includes daytime and night. Second, he appealed to his understanding of the solar system as he cited evidence that one revolution of the sun equated to evening and morning in one day. Third, Basil also referred to a natural reading of 24-hour days when it came to the sequential ordering

⁸¹² Basil of Caesarea, *Hexaemeron*, 9.1.

⁸¹³ *Ibid*, 2.8.

of the creation days. Other early church fathers such as his predecessor, Lactantius (240-320), and Ambrose (338-397) also believed in literal 24-hour days of creation.⁸¹⁴

Augustine of Hippo

Like Origen, Augustine of Hippo (354-430) did not take a literal view of the days of creation. He admitted that the lengths of days were hard for anyone to conceive as he said, “For in these days the morning and evening are counted, until, on the sixth day, all things which God then made were finished, and on the seventh the rest of God was mysteriously and sublimely signalized. What kind of days these were it is extremely difficult, or perhaps impossible for us to conceive, and how much more to say!”⁸¹⁵ But unlike Origen, part of his puzzlement came at the thought of how God could have rested on the seventh day if he had not create it. According to Letham, Augustine’s solution was that “God created only one day, which recurred seven times and, but its recurrence, many days passed by. So it was not necessary for God to create the seventh day, for it was made by the seventh recurrence of the one day he had created.”⁸¹⁶ In Augustine’s mind, six days are difficult for people to conceive because there was only one day of creation. This thought is also consistent with his belief that all of creation was made simultaneously:

And if the sacred and infallible Scriptures say that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, in order that it may be understood that He had made nothing previously—for if He had made anything before the rest, this thing would rather be said to have been made in the beginning,— then assuredly the world was made, not in time, but simultaneously with time. For that which is made in time is made both after and before some time,— after that which is past, before that which is future. But none could then be past, for there was no creature by whose movements its duration could be

⁸¹⁴ Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury, eds., *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth* (Green Forest, AK: New Leaf Publishing Group, 2008), 29, 35.

⁸¹⁵ Augustine of Hippo, *City of God*, 11.6.

⁸¹⁶ Letham, ““In The Space Of Six Days.””, 156.

measured. But simultaneously with time the world was made, if in the world's creation change and motion were created, as seems evident from the order of the first six or seven days.⁸¹⁷

Even though Augustine did not believe in literal 24-hour days of creation, his belief in a simultaneous one indicates a short creation as opposed to one that lasts a long period of time as Ross believed.

From examining just a few of the writings of these early church fathers, one can contest that they could not have held to a reading of *yom* as a long period of time. James R. Mook countered Ross and Archer in their inaccurate views of the early church fathers. He said, “A natural reading of the Church fathers show that though they held diverse views on the days of creation, and correctly gave priority to the theological meaning of the creation, they definitely asserted that the earth was created suddenly and in less than 6,000 years before their time.”⁸¹⁸ McCabe would agree with Mook as he said, “Though a few significant interpreters prior to the Reformation did not consistently interpret the days of the creation week in a literal manner, they clearly did not support, nor could they have even envisioned, a figurative use for each of the creation days representing an extended period of time.”⁸¹⁹ It is a wonder how scholars like Ross can make a strong case that these early church fathers believed in an old earth creation.

Protestant Reformers (1517-1648)

The start of the Protestant Reformation in 1517 resulted in important doctrinal assertions and helped with the development of evangelical Christianity. It could do so because the

⁸¹⁷ *City of God*, 11.6.

⁸¹⁸ Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury, eds., *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth* (Green Forest, Ark: New Leaf Publishing Group, 2008), 26.

⁸¹⁹ Robert V. McCabe, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week,” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 5 (Fall 2000): 97-98.

reformers had a high view of the authority of the Bible. McCabe said, “Since the days of the Reformation, with a renewed and more consistent emphasis on a grammatical-historical hermeneutic, a literal interpretation of the creation days has been the prevailing view of orthodox Christianity.”⁸²⁰ This is apparent as the writings of reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin are examined.

Martin Luther

In his *Lectures on Genesis*, Martin Luther (1483-1546) wrote, “We assert that Moses spoke in the literal sense, not allegorically or figuratively, i.e., that the world, with all its creatures, was created within six days, as the words read.”⁸²¹ Luther believed in literal 24-hour days of creation. Letham confirmed this as he commented, “Luther is therefore the first of the major exegetes we have considered who without ambiguity adopts the interpretation that the days of creation are of twenty-four hour duration, at the same time arguing that the earth is only six thousand years old.”⁸²² Not only did Luther adopt a plain and literal meaning of *yom*, but he also clearly supported a young earth creation.

John Calvin

In his work called *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin (1509-1564) opposed Augustine’s belief of a sudden and instantaneous creation even though he didn’t mention him by name as he said:

⁸²⁰ McCabe, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week”, 98.

⁸²¹ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1–5*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 1 (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Seminary, 1958), 5.

⁸²² Robert Letham, “‘In The Space Of Six Days’: The Days Of Creation From Origen To The Westminster Assembly,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 61, no. 2 (1999): 164.

The mere fact of creation should lead us to acknowledge God, but to prevent our falling away to Gentile fictions, God has been pleased to furnish a history of the creation. An impious objection, Why the world was not created sooner? Answer to it. Shrewd saying of an old man. For the same reason, the world was created, not in an instant, but in six days. The order of creation described, showing that Adam was not created until God had, with infinite goodness made ample provision for him.⁸²³

It is also clear that Calvin believed in literal 24-hour days of creation. This is because in the same chapter he later expressed favor for the interpretations of Basil and Ambrose as he said, “Wherefore, in order that we may apprehend with true faith what it is necessary to know concerning God, it is of importance to attend to the history of the creation, as briefly recorded by Moses and afterwards more copiously illustrated by pious writers, more especially by Basil and Ambrose.”⁸²⁴ As Calvin examined the history of creation by reading the writings of his predecessors, Christians today should also not forget to do the same.

Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Developments

Before the 1800s, the Christian community was unified in the idea that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and Adam was a direct creation of God. But with the discovery and introduction of ideas in geology concerning an old age of the earth of billions of years, people began to reinterpret what Genesis means, not in an allegorical fashion, but in a literal way that coincides with the scientific discoveries in geology. McCabe said:

The literal interpretation of the creation days has come under a more threatening and increasing assault within the last 150 to 200 years. With the rise of modern geology, it became apparent to some that if modern man were to be able to explain the earth’s topography by the processes that he could observe, he would have to allow for an earth that has existed for millions of years. Because the geological data for an old earth seemed so overwhelming, some who claimed loyalty to the teachings of Scripture felt compelled to reevaluate the literal understanding of the days of the creation week and to find novel ways to bring their exegetical and theological results into conformity with an old earth.

⁸²³ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. Henry Beveridge, 1536, 1.14.1-2.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.14.20.

Because of this, reevaluation has resulted in a polarization of thought concerning the earth's age.⁸²⁵

In 1804, a founder of the Free Church of Scotland and popular evangelical preacher named Thomas Chalmers promoted the Gap Theory, which advocated for a gap of a million years between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2.⁸²⁶ Around the same time, the Day/Age Theory was also becoming popular among conservative circles. This theory advocated that each day of creation was a long period of time, each corresponding roughly to the geological periods.

While the Gap Theory and Day/Age Theory began to fail due to poor exegesis, in 1952 the Framework Hypothesis became popularized by a Dutch Theologian and Biblical Scholar named Nicolaas Ridderbos. Another leading proponent later on was Meredith Kline in the 1990s.⁸²⁷ The Framework Hypothesis “dispenses with Genesis as history, despite the overwhelming evidence above that it’s a historical narrative, and instead treats it as a literary device. In other words, Genesis 1 is not a record of what happened, but the literary framework within which God teaches us about Himself and His Creation.”⁸²⁸ It is based on two triads of forming on days 1-3 of creation and filling on days 4-6 of creation.⁸²⁹

In 1961, a theologian named John Whitcomb and an engineer named Henry Morris published a book called *The Genesis Flood*, which popularized the Young Earth Creationist view again.⁸³⁰ This book developed theological and scientific arguments for treating Genesis as literal

⁸²⁵ McCabe, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week.”, 98.

⁸²⁶ Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account: A Theological, Historical, and Scientific Commentary on Genesis 1-11*, 2nd ed. (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publishers, 2015), 109.

⁸²⁷ Ibid., 53.

⁸²⁸ Ibid, 52.

⁸²⁹ Ibid, 52.

⁸³⁰ John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood: The Biblical Record and Its Scientific Implications* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 1961).

and historical. As a result, it revitalized Young Earth Creationism in conservative denominations such as Baptist, Lutheran, and Presbyterian and presented challenges to Old Earth Creationism.

Due to the popularization of Young Earth Creationism, from 1970-1990, the debate about how to interpret *yom* became relevant again. Organizations such as the Creation Research Society and Henry Morris' Institute for Creation Research were started. Further growth in the 1990s and 2000s included the start of Ken Ham's Answers in Genesis and the academic presence of Young Earth Creationism in Christian schools. By the late 1980's the Gap Theory receded and the Day/Age Theory morphs into Progressive Creationism, led by Hugh Ross. From observing this brief historical overview of the creation/evolution debate over the past two centuries, it is shown that one's view of creation is dependent on the way Scripture is interpreted and the role science has in it. The following sections will assume the authority of Scripture over science and exegetically explore how *yom* should be interpreted in Scripture to support a young earth view of creation in Genesis 1.

Lexical Meaning of *Yom* and Syntagmatic Relationships

Yom appears in the Bible quite frequently. It occurs a total of 2291 times: 1446 times in the singular and 845 times in the plural.⁸³¹ Therefore, it is of immense importance that readers understand the meaning of *yom* and its usages in Scripture. Considering the creation/evolution debate, one's understanding of the meaning of *yom* in Genesis will greatly affect his or her view on the origin of life. In Genesis alone, *yom* is used 152 times with 83 times in the singular. It is used 11 times specifically in Genesis 1 with 10 times in the singular and once in the plural.⁸³²

⁸³¹ James Stambaugh, "The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach," *Journal of Creation* 5, no. 1 (April 1991).

⁸³² Robert V. McCabe, "A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 5 (Fall 2000): 103.

Upon examination of trusted Hebrew lexicons and dictionaries, one will find that there is a wide range of definitions for *yom*. For example, according to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, *yom* can mean:

- i. a period of light in a day/night cycle;
- ii. a period of 24 hours;
- iii. a general or vague concept of time;
- iv. a specific point of time; and
- v. a period of a year.⁸³³

It is significant to note that many lexicons and dictionaries often refer to Scripture verses from Genesis 1 as examples of *yom* which mean a literal 24-hour day. McCabe said, “While the semantic range of יום reflects that its various uses range from a literal day to a figurative use of ‘day’ as an extended period of time, lexicographers consistently cite the enumerated days of Genesis 1:1–31 as examples of a solar day.”⁸³⁴ Various lexicons and dictionaries cite Genesis 1 in this way.⁸³⁵

How do the writers of these lexicons and dictionaries know that instances of *yom* in Genesis 1 refer to a literal 24-hour day? Ken Ham, a Young Earth Creationist and President of *Answers in Genesis*, provided some reasons for why they reached their conclusion:

⁸³³ R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr, and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, s.v. Yom, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1980), 370-371.

⁸³⁴ McCabe, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week.”, 101.

⁸³⁵ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), s.v. "Yom"; Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 5 vols., rev. W. Baumgartner and J. J. Stamm (Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000), 2:399; *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, s.v. “יום,” by M. Saeboe, 6:23); *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, s.v. “יום” by P. A. Verhoef, 2:420

Respected Hebrew dictionaries, like the Brown, Driver, Briggs lexicon, give a number of meanings for the word *yom* depending upon context. One of the passages they give for *yom*'s meaning an ordinary day happens to be Genesis chapter 1. The reason is obvious. Every time the word *yom* is used with a number, or with the phrase "evening and morning", anywhere in the Old Testament, it always means an ordinary day. In Genesis chapter 1, for each of the six days of creation, the Hebrew word *yom* is used with a number and the phrase, "evening and morning". There is no doubt that the writer is being emphatic that these are ordinary days.⁸³⁶

According to Ham, the writers of these Hebrew lexicons and dictionaries can conclude a 24-hour *yom* every time based on the contextual relationships between *yom* and other words such as a number, "evening", or "morning". Examples of these will be explained in more detail later in this paper. James Stambaugh referred to these contextual relationships as syntagmatic relationships. He described them as "a linear relationship with other words or units with which it is chained together."⁸³⁷ This hermeneutical approach is best especially for the instances of *yom* in Genesis 1 since *yom* is rarely used syntactically by itself in the Hebrew language. According to the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*:

The semantic content of the words can be seen more directly and more clearly in the various combinations with other words and their extended semantic field, since *yom* and *yamim*, and to an extent also *yomam*, are seldom syntactically independent. They are usually associated closely with another word or word element more frequently than as a subject (182 times) or as an object (81 times).⁸³⁸

This affirms the basic hermeneutical principle that context, specifically through the syntagmatic relationships, determines the meaning.

⁸³⁶ Ken Ham, "The Necessity for Believing in Six Literal Days," *Journal of Creation* 18, no. 1 (December 1995).

⁸³⁷ Stambaugh, "The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach," 51.

⁸³⁸ G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 6, 11 vols. (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990), s.v. "*Yom*".

A Case for Literal 24-Hour Days in Creation

If one wants to determine the meaning of *yom*, he or she must examine its syntagmatic relationships. In the following sections, a few of these syntagmatic relationships will be explored in the form of five arguments. These arguments make a strong exegetical case for a literal 24-hour day *yom* in the Genesis creation account. As a result, there are challenges for anyone who interpret *yom* as long periods of time during creation.

Argument from Ordinal Prefix

The first syntagmatic relationship is one between *yom* and a number or an ordinal prefix. Whenever this kind of relationship is found, *yom* always refers to a literal 24-hour day. This is what Kenneth L. Gentry refers to as the “Argument from ordinal prefix”. He said, “In the 119 cases in Moses’ writings where the Hebrew word *yom* stands in conjunction with a numerical adjective (first, second, third, etc.), it never means anything other than a literal day. The same is true of the 357 instances outside the Pentateuch, where numerical adjectives occur.”⁸³⁹ Take Genesis 1:5 as an example: “God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.”

In this verse, *yom* is used twice. The first appearance of *yom* refers to day as a period of light as opposed to night. However, the second appearance of *yom* must refer to a literal 24-hour day since it has a syntagmatic relationship with אֶחָד (first). Other scholars such as McCabe and Frethiem would agree with Gentry’s argument. McCabe said, “When יום is qualified by a number, it is almost invariably used in a literal sense.”⁸⁴⁰ Similarly, Frethiem said, “When the

⁸³⁹ Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., “Reformed Theology and Six Day Creationism,” *Christianity & Society* 5 (October 1995).

⁸⁴⁰ McCabe, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week.”, 104.

word ‘day’ is used with a specific number, it always has reference to a normal day (cf. Gen. 8:14; 17:12).”⁸⁴¹ However, there is even greater evidence for a literal 24-hour day when this syntagmatic relationship between *yom* and an ordinal prefix is used sequentially. Stambaugh believed this is the case as he responded to Fretheim as he said, “So, as Fretheim suggests, when the interpreter sees the word *yôm*, used with a number, occurring several times in succession and in a specific context, this construction serves to denote a solar day.”⁸⁴² As one examines the creation account, he or she will see that the days of creation are numbered from first to seventh. *Yom* must refer to a literal 24-hour day in this chronological progression. Furthermore, in these cases, it is not only that each day is 24 hours, but also that there is no break between each ordered day. Hasel described this matter:

What seems of significance is the sequential emphasis of the numerals 1–7 without any break or temporal interruption. This seven-day schema, the schema of the week of six workdays followed by “the seventh day” as rest day, interlinks the creation “days” as normal days in a consecutive and noninterrupted sequence.⁸⁴³

The argument from ordinal prefix is very strong. Even Robert C. Newman, a scholar who does not believe the days of Genesis 1 were twenty-four hours, admitted that in Genesis 1, “no clear counter-example can be cited with *yôm* meaning a long period of time.”⁸⁴⁴ The syntagmatic relationship between *yom* and a number or ordinal prefix determines a literal 24-hour creation day.

⁸⁴¹ Terence E. Fretheim, “Were the Days of Creation Twenty–four Hours Long?,” in *The Genesis Debate*, ed. Ronald Youngblood (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2000), 18.

⁸⁴² Stambaugh, “The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach.”

⁸⁴³ Gerhard F. Hasel, “The ‘Days’ of Creation in Genesis 1: Literal ‘Days’ or Figurative ‘Periods/Epochs’ of Time?,” *Origins* 21, no. 1 (1994): 26.

⁸⁴⁴ Robert Chapman Newman and Herman J. Eckelmann, *Genesis One and the Origin of the Earth* (Baker Book House, 1981), 61.

Argument from Explicit Qualification

A second syntagmatic relationship is one between *yom* and the phrase “evening and morning”. Gentry used this relationship in an argument for a literal 24-hour day he called, “Argument form explicit qualification”. He said, “Moses carefully qualifies each of the six creative days with the phraseology: ‘evening and morning.’ The qualification is a deliberate defining of the concept of day.”⁸⁴⁵ One can see that this phraseology is present with *yom* in each description of the creation days in Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31.

What makes this argument stronger is the consistent usage of this phrase outside of the Genesis creation account. Gentry continued as he said, “Outside of Genesis 1 the words ‘evening’ and ‘morning’ occur together in thirty-seven verses. In each instance it speaks of a normal day”⁸⁴⁶ Stambaugh made the same point as Gentry and provided similar statistics. However, he continued by making a stronger clarification of the phraseology “evening and morning” outside of Genesis 1. Stambaugh said, “This is true no matter what the literary genre or context might be. It should be further observed that when ‘morning’ and ‘evening’ occur together without *yôm* (this happens 38 times outside of Genesis 1, 25 of the 38 occur in historical narrative), it always, without exception, designates a literal solar day.”⁸⁴⁷ Even if the phraseology “evening and morning” exists independently without *yom* in a passage outside of Genesis 1, the meaning is still a literal 24-hour day.

One may ask why the phrase “evening and morning” has the function of indicating a solar day. McCabe would respond, “With this understanding, ‘evening’ is used to represent the

⁸⁴⁵ Gentry Jr., “Reformed Theology and Six Day Creationism.”

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁷ Stambaugh, “The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach.”

entire nighttime portion of a literal day, and ‘morning’ to stand for the entire daytime segment of a day.”⁸⁴⁸ Fretheim simply described the phraseology as indicating “the normal daily exchange of light and darkness.”⁸⁴⁹ He further made the point that “if ‘day’ is not understood in its normal sense, then ‘evening and morning’ cannot be either (which is never otherwise the case in the Old Testament...).”⁸⁵⁰ As a solar day includes a time of darkness and a time of light, the phrase “evening and morning” also paints the same picture which clarifies that it entails a literal 24-hour meaning of *yom*.

Someone who is not satisfied with this argument may object by pointing out a scientific inconsistency. Since the sun was not created until the fourth day, days one to three of creation could not have been solar days even though the phraseology “evening and morning” is present in the Genesis text. A scholar such as Fischer, would make this objection.⁸⁵¹ The next argument in the following section can serve as a rebuttal to this objection.

Argument from Coherent Usage

The first and second syntagmatic relationships described thus far apply to days one to three of creation before the creation of the sun and days four to six after the creation of the sun. According to the argument from coherent usage, Gentry said:

The word *yom* is used of the creative days of four, five, and six, which occur after the creation of the sun, which was expressly designated to ‘rule’ the day/night pattern (Gen. 1:14). The identical word (*yom*) and phraseology (“evening and morning,”

⁸⁴⁸ McCabe, “A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week.”, 105-106.

⁸⁴⁹ Fretheim, “Were the Days of Creation Twenty-Four Hours Long?”, 19.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid, 19.

⁸⁵¹ Dick Fischer, “The Days of Creation: Hours or Eons?,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 42 (March 1990): 13.

numerical adjectives) associated with days four through six are employed of days one through three, which compel us to understand those days as normal earth days.⁸⁵²

Gentry was saying that it does not matter whether the sun was created during the days of creation. Moses used the same syntagmatic relationships in his writings to convey his intended message. If he employed them to describe days four to six as literal 24-hour days, when he used them to describe days one to three, they must also describe the same message.

Aside from this argument, there are other ways to respond to the objection presented in the previous section. Stambaugh said, “It seems that most of those who raise this objection might not be aware that the sun is not necessary to determine the length of a ‘day’; all that is needed is some source of light. A ‘day’ can be defined as ‘the time taken for the Earth to complete one rotation on its axis.’”⁸⁵³ To put it very bluntly, LaSor would respond, “So to conclude, as some do, that the first three ‘days’ could not have been days of one axial rotation is ridiculous, and is exegetical nonsense.”⁸⁵⁴ The objection to the argument from explicit qualification has no standing.

Argument from Plural Expression

A 24-hour reading of *yom* in Genesis 1 is necessary for some other writings of Moses to make sense. For example, Fretheim said, “The references to the days of creation in Exodus 20:11 and 31:17 in connection with the Sabbath law make sense only if understood in terms of a normal seven-day week.”⁸⁵⁵ Two different arguments for a 24-hour reading of *yom* can be made

⁸⁵² Gentry Jr., “Reformed Theology and Six Day Creationism.”

⁸⁵³ James Stambaugh, “The Days of Creation: A Semantic Approach Part II,” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 8, no. 1 (2004): 41.

⁸⁵⁴ William Lasor, “Biblical Creationism,” *The Asbury Journal* 42, no. 2 (January 1, 1987): 11.

⁸⁵⁵ Lasor, “Biblical Creationism”, 19.

from these verses in Exodus. The first argument will be addressed in this section while the second argument will be addressed in the next.

In the argument from plural expression, Gentry stated, “In Exodus 20:11 God’s creation week is spoken of as involving ‘six days’ (*yammim*), plural. In the 608 instances of the plural ‘days’ in the Old Testament, we never find any other meaning than normal days. Ages are never expressed as *yammim*.”⁸⁵⁶ One may wonder why there are seven days in a week. Everything must have an origin. Ham said, “This is where the seven-day week comes from. The seven-day week has no basis for existing except from Scripture. If one believes that the days of creation are long periods of time, then the week becomes meaningless.”⁸⁵⁷ The same argument can be made in Exodus 31:15-17. In this context, Moses used Creation as an illustration to describe the workweek of the Israelites. Ham also said, “Now, if the days of Creation Week were long, indefinite periods of time, then the reference to the week of creation would set up an incredibly long workweek! But that is not how the days of creation are used in Exodus 31.”⁸⁵⁸ There would be no other explanation for our seven-day week if it did not come from the Scriptural account of creation.

Argument from Divine Exemplar

The second argument that can be made from Exodus 20 and 31 is called the argument from divine exemplar. Gentry said, “In Exodus 20:9-11 (the Fourth Commandment) God specifically patterns man’s work week after his own original creational work week. Man’s work

⁸⁵⁶ Gentry Jr., “Reformed Theology and Six Day Creationism.”

⁸⁵⁷ Ham, “The Necessity for Believing in Six Literal Days.”

⁸⁵⁸ Ham, *Six Days*, 91.

week is expressly tied to God's: "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth" (Ex. 20:11).⁸⁵⁹ The reason Christians are to keep the Sabbath and rest on the seventh day after working for six is because that is what God did when he created. If *yom* in Genesis 1 were an indefinite period of time, this analogy in Exodus would not make sense. Exodus 20:9-10 would read, "Six [indefinite period of times] you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh [indefinite period of time] is a Sabbath to the Lord your God." McCabe put it even more absurdly with geological ages:

According to this text, Israel's workweek is patterned after God's creative activity. If, for argument sake, we assume that each day was a geological age, we could interpret Exodus 20:11 in this fashion: "For in six geological ages of a million years or so, the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh geological age of a million years or so; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath geological age of a million years or so and made it holy." Any interpretation other than literal days is problematic for Israel's proper observance of the sabbath, and seriously undermines a literal interpretation of the days of Genesis 1.⁸⁶⁰

It would not make sense to assume a figurative meaning of *yom* in Genesis 1 and apply it to texts like Exodus 20 and 31. However, it would make sense if you assume a literal meaning of *yom* in Exodus 20 and 31 and apply it to Genesis 1. R. L. Dabney made a good point as he said, "In Gen. ii:2, 3; Ex. xx:11, God's creating the world and its creatures in six days, and resting the seventh, is given as the ground of His sanctifying the Sabbath day. The latter is the natural day; why not the former? The evasions from this seem peculiarly weak."⁸⁶¹ Despite the weak arguments against a natural reading of a literal 24-hour day, attempts have still been made.

⁸⁵⁹ Gentry Jr., "Reformed Theology and Six Day Creationism."

⁸⁶⁰ McCabe, "A Defense of Literal Days in the Creation Week.", 110-111.

⁸⁶¹ R. L. Dabney, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, 1972, 255.

For example, Archer argued, “By no means does this demonstrate that 24-hour intervals were involved in the first six ‘days,’ any more than the eight-day celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles proves that the wilderness wanderings under Moses occupied only eight days.”⁸⁶² While this argument may seem convincing at first glance, upon further examination one may see that Archer committed a fallacy. Lisle responded to Archer by pointing out this fallacy:

Here, Archer has recklessly committed the fallacy of the false analogy. He argues that the timescale of creation cannot be linked to our workweek because the timescale of the Feast of Tabernacles is not linked to the timescale of the wilderness wanderings. The problem is that the Bible directly teaches that the timescale of the workweek is connected to the timescale of creation – Exodus 20:8-11. But the Bible does not link the timescale of the Feast of Tabernacles to the 40 years of wandering.⁸⁶³

A good sound argument for a reading of *yom* that is not a literal 24-hour day is very hard to make while trying to overcome the challenges brought by the syntagmatic relationships of *yom* and its consistent readings in other Mosaic passages.

Conclusion

This appendix first presented a brief survey of the history concerning the understanding of *yom*. From examining the writings of select early church fathers, it was concluded that the church fathers examined all had diverse views of the length of the days described in the Genesis creation account. However, they all viewed creation to be sudden and instantaneous as opposed to over a long period of time as scholars like Ross and Archer proposed. From examining the writings of select Reformers, it was concluded that the Reformers held to literal 24-hour days of creation due to grammatical-historical hermeneutical emphasis that arose from the Reformation.

⁸⁶² Gleason L. Archer, “A Response to the Trustworthiness of Scripture in Areas Relating to Natural Science,” in *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible: Papers from ICBI Summit II* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academic Books, 1984), 329.

⁸⁶³ Jason Lisle, *Understanding Genesis: How to Analyze, Interpret, and Defend Scripture* (Greenforest, AR: Master Books, 2015), 236.

From an overview of events in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, one could see that the literal interpretation of *yom* came under attack as the rise of geological and scientific data brought about doubt and resulted in the development of new theories such as the Gap Theory, Day/Age Theory, and the Theory of Evolution.

These theories rely on assumptions aside from Scripture that the interpreter brings in. J. Ligon Duncan III and David W. Hall argued that those who interpret a different meaning of *yom* “have no reason, other than cosmological assumptions, for construing [it] to mean anything other than a normal day.”⁸⁶⁴ The best way to interpret the meaning of *yom* is to examine the Scriptures in the context of syntagmatic relationships. A case for literal 24-hour days of creation was made based on five exegetical and syntactical arguments. As shown, these arguments come directly from the proper interpretation of the specific indicators in the context of Genesis 1, which drive the meaning of *yom*. Based on the arguments, it would be impossible for there to be an interpretation of *yom* in Genesis 1 that represents a period of time longer than a 24-hour day. As one can see, a proper understanding of *yom* is critical to the creation/evolution debate because there are important consequences at stake. First, a literal 24-hour interpretation of *yom* supports a young age of the Earth of around 6,000 years. An interpretation of a longer period of time results in an old age of the Earth and the support of evolution. Second, a proper interpretation of *yom* supports the traditional Christian worldview of creationism over the naturalistic worldview of evolution. Third, a proper interpretation of *yom* rejects other wayward origin theories such as Theistic evolution, Framework Hypothesis, Gap Theory, Progression Creation, and Day/Age

⁸⁶⁴ J. Ligon Duncan et al., *The Genesis Debate: Three Views on the Days of Creation*, ed. David G. Hagopian, F. (Mission Viejo, CA.: Crux Press, 2000), 54.

Theory. Finally, a proper interpretation of *yom* affirms the Gospel Message and the theology of the rest of the Bible since the foundation of all comes from the Book of Genesis.

Appendix 3 – Speech Acts of Genesis 1

Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
1	Desire 1: “Let <u>there be</u> light” (1:3a)	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire (1) for the existence of light. • Directive: Called the Son to actively bring about the existence of light (desire 1). • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively bring about the existence of light (desire 1). • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the existence of light (desire 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desire (1) was fulfilled. • The Son created light (desire 1). • The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating light (desire 1) through the Son. • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of light (desire 1). 	<p>Desire 1 fulfilled: “And <u>there was</u> light” (1:3b)</p> <p>Means 1 executed / Time created: “And <u>God separated</u> the light from the darkness.” (1:4b)⁸⁶⁵</p> <p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “And there was light” (1:3b)⁸⁶⁶ • Assessment formula of Beauty, Quality, and Will: “And God saw that the light was good.” (1:4a)

⁸⁶⁵ Means 1 were not specified in God’s speech, even though the execution was shared in 1:4b. But separation is suggested by Sarna as modality of creation. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, 1st ed, vol. 1, 5 vols., The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2001), 7. However, separation is more likely not an action for the creation of light, but for the creation of time. See in Chapter 3, the section “And God Separated the Light from the Darkness” under “Perlocutionary Acts – Day 1”.

⁸⁶⁶ Equivalent of “And it was so” as suggested by Sarna. Ibid, 8.

Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
2	<p>Desire 2.1: “Let <u>there be</u> an expanse [skies] in the midst of the waters,” (1:6a)</p> <p>Desire 2.2: “And let it <u>separate the waters from the waters.</u>” (1:6b)</p> <p>Means 2: “and let it [the skies] <u>separate</u> the waters from the waters.” (1.6:b)</p> <p>i.e. the separating function of the skies</p>	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire for the creation of the skies (desire 2.1) and the separation of waters from the waters (desire 2.2) via the means (2). • Directive: Called the Son to actively create the skies (desire 2.1) and separate the waters from the waters (desire 2.2) via the means (2). • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively create the skies (desire 2.1) and separate the waters from the waters (desire 2.2) via the means (2). • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the skies (desire 2.1) and the separation of waters from the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desire (2.1) was fulfilled and His desire (2.2) was also fulfilled via the means (2). • The Son created the skies (desire 2.1) and separated the waters from the waters (desire 2.2) via the means (2). • The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the skies (desire 2.1) through the Son and separating the waters from the waters (desire 2.2) through the Son via the means (2). • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the skies (desire 2) and the separation of the waters from the waters 	<p>Desire 2.1 fulfilled: “And <u>God</u> made the expanse [skies]...”</p> <p>Desire 2.2 fulfilled & Means 2 executed: “... and [<u>God</u>] <u>separated</u> the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse.” (1:7a)</p> <p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “And it was so.” (1:7b)⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶⁷ Although the assessment formula is missing on this day, the two mentioned on day 3a and 3b are also seen to be an assessment of the rain (waters above the expanse) on day 2. Ibid, 8.

		waters (desire 2.2) via the means (2) .	(desire 2.2) via the means (2) .	
Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
3a	<p>Desire 3.1 / Means 3.1: “Let the waters under the heavens <u>be gathered</u> together into one place,” (1:9a)</p> <p>Desire 3.2: “And let the dry land <u>appear</u>.” (1:9b)</p>	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire for the formation of the sea (desire 3.1) and the appearance of the dry land (desire 3.2) via the means (3.1). • Directive: Called the Son to actively bring about the formation of the sea (desire 3.1) and the appearance of the dry land (desire 3.2) via the means (3.1). • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively bring about the formation of the sea (desire 3.1) and the appearance of the dry land (desire 3.2) via the means (3.1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desires (3.1 & 3.2) were fulfilled via the means (3.1). • The Son formed the sea (desire 3.1) and made the dry land appear (desire 3.2) via the means (3.1). • The Father fulfilled His commitment by forming the sea (desire 3.1) and making the dry land appear (desire 3.2) through the Son via the means (3.1). 	<p>Desire 3.2 fulfilled: “<u>God called</u> the dry land Earth” (1:10a)</p> <p>Desire 3.1 fulfilled: “and the waters that <u>were gathered</u> together he called Seas.” (1:10b)</p> <p>Means 3.1 executed: “and the waters that were gathered together” (1:10b)⁸⁶⁸</p> <p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “And it was so.” (1:9c)

⁸⁶⁸ Issue: Didn’t specify who gathered the waters. The Septuagint includes a unique “deed account” phrase at the end of verse 9 that indicate the possibility of the waters gathering itself together. Claus Westermann, Genesis 1-11: A Commentary, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1994), 121. Ps. 33:7 indicates it was God who gathered the waters together.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the formation of the sea (desire 3.1) and the appearance of the dry land (desire 3.2) via the means (3.1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the formation of the sea (desire 3.1) and the appearance of the dry land (desire 3.2) via the means (3.1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment formula of Beauty, Quality, and Will: “And God saw that it was good.” (1:10c)
Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
3b	<p>Desire 3.3 / Means 3.2: “Let <u>the earth</u> sprout (means 3.2) vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth. (desire 3.3)” (1:11a)</p>	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire (3.3) existence of plant life via the means (3.2). • Directive: Called the Son to actively bring about the existence of plant life (desire 3.3) via the means (3.2). • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively bring about the existence of plant life (desire 3.3) via the means (3.2). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desire (3.3) was fulfilled via the means (3.2). • The Son brought about the existence of plant life (desire 3.3) via the means (3.2). • The Father fulfilled His commitment by bringing about the existence of plant life (desire 3.3) through the 	<p>Desire 3.3 fulfilled & Means 3.2 Executed: “<u>The earth</u> brought forth (means 3.2) vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind.” (1:12a)⁸⁶⁹</p> <p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “And it was so.” (1:11b)

⁸⁶⁹ Issue: The earth as the subject had the active role of creating. The Son and the Holy Spirit were not explicitly mentioned. According to Matthews, “The land by itself, of course, does not produce vegetation; rather God enables the land to do so by his creative word.” By God’s word, the illocutionary acts are performed. Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 152.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the existence of plant life (3.3) via the means (3.2). 	<p>Son & Holy Spirit, via means (3.2).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the existence of plant life (desire 3.3) via the means (3.2). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment formula of Beauty, Quality, and Will: “And God saw that it was good.” (1:12b)
Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
4	<p>Desire 4 / Purpose 4.1: “Let <u>there be</u> lights in the expanse of the heavens (desire 4) to separate the day from the night. (purpose 4.1)” (1:14a-b)</p> <p>Purpose 4.2: “And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years (purpose 4.2)” (1:14c)</p> <p>Desire 4 / Purpose 4.3: “And let them <u>be</u> lights in the expanse of the heavens (desire 4) to give light upon the earth. (purpose 4.3)” (1:15a)</p>	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire (4) for the creation of the sun, moon, and stars with purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3). • Directive: Called the Son to actively create the sun, moon, and stars (desire 4) and give them purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3). • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively create the sun, moon, and stars (desire 4) and give them purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desire (4) was fulfilled with the purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3). • The Son created the sun, moon, and stars (desire 4) and gave them purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3). • The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the sun, moon, and stars (desire 4) and giving them purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3) through the Son. 	<p>Desire 4 fulfilled & Purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3) given: “And <u>God made</u> the two great lights (desire 4) —the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night (purpose 4.1 & 4.2) —and the stars (desire 4). And <u>God set</u> them in the expanse of the heavens (desire 4) to give light on the earth (purpose 4.3), to rule over the day and over the night (purpose 4.2), and to separate the light from the darkness. (purpose 4.1)” (1:16-18a)⁸⁷⁰</p>

⁸⁷⁰ Purpose 4.2 is not explicitly reiterated as a fulfillment in 1:16-18.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars (desire 4) and their given purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars (desire 4) and their given purposes (4.1, 4.2, 4.3). 	<p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “And it was so.” (1:15b) • Assessment formula of Beauty, Quality, and Will: “And God saw that it was good.” (1:18b)
Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
5	<p>Desire 5: “Let the waters <u>swarm</u> with swarms of living creatures, and let birds <u>fly</u> above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” (1:20)</p>	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire (5) for the creation of creatures of the seas and skies. • Directive: Called the Son to actively create creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5). • Directive: Called the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desire (5) was fulfilled. • The Son created creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5). • The Holy Spirit breathed life into creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5). 	<p>Desire 5 fulfilled: “So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.” (desire 5) (1:21a)</p> <p>Blessing 5 given: “And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’” (1:22)⁸⁷¹</p>

⁸⁷¹ Blessing 5 was not specified in God’s speech even though it was given in 1:22. Additional blessing 6.4 was given to all creatures with the breath of life during day 6b (1:30a).

		<p>into creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively create creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5). • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5) through the Son & Holy Spirit. • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of creatures of the seas and skies (desire 5). 	<p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “And it was so.” (Gen. 1:20c, Only in the Septuagint.) • Assessment formula of Beauty, Quality, and Will: “And God saw that it was good.” (1:21b)
Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
6a	<p>Desire 6.1: “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds - livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” (1:24)</p>	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire (6.1) for the creation of land creatures. • Directive: Called the Son to actively create the land creatures (desire 6.1). • Directive: Called the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desire (6.1) was fulfilled. • The Son created land creatures (desire 6.1). • The Holy Spirit breathed life into the land creatures (desire 6.1). 	<p>Desire 6.1 fulfilled: “And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind.” (1:25a)⁸⁷²</p> <p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “And it was so.” (1:24b)

⁸⁷² Additional blessing 6.4 was given to all creatures with the breath of life during day 6b (1:30a).

		<p>into the land creatures (desire 6.1).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively create the land creatures (desire 6.1). • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the land creatures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating the land creatures (desire 6.1) through the Son & Holy Spirit. • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of the land creatures (desire 6.1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment formula of Beauty, Quality, and Will: “And God saw that it was good.” (1:25b)
Day	Locutionary Acts	Illocutionary Acts	Perlocutionary Acts	Resulting Effects
6b	<p>Desire 6.2: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” (1:26a)</p> <p>Blessing 6.1: “And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” (1:26b)</p>	<p>The Father...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive: Expressed the desire (6.2) for the creation of human beings with the given blessing (6.1). • Directive: Called the Son to actively create human beings (desire 6.2) and give them the blessing (6.1). • Directive: Called the Holy Spirit to actively breathe life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father’s desire (6.2) was fulfilled with the purpose (6). • The Son created human beings (desire 6.2) and gave them purpose (6). • The Holy Spirit breathed life into human beings (desire 6.2). 	<p>Desire fulfilled: “So <u>God created</u> man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” (1:27)</p> <p>Blessings (6.1, 6.2, 6.3) given: “And <u>God blessed</u> them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (Blessing 6.2) and subdue it (Blessing 6.1), and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens</p>

		<p>into human beings (desire 6.2).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissive: Committed Himself to actively create human beings (desire 6.2) and give them the blessing (6.1). • Declaration: Declared the condition of the universe to change with the creation of human being (desire 6.2) their given blessing (6.1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Father fulfilled His commitment by creating human beings (desire 6.2) through the Son & Holy Spirit and giving human beings purpose (6). • The Father’s speech caused the condition of the universe to change with the creation of man (desire 6.2) and man’s given purpose (6). 	<p>and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ (Blessing 6.1) And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. (Blessing 6.3)’” (1:28-29)⁸⁷³</p> <p>Blessing 6.4 given: “‘And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’” (1:30a)⁸⁷⁴</p> <p>Felicitous Speech Act indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment formula: “‘And it was so.’” (1:30b)⁸⁷⁵
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⁸⁷³ Blessings 6.2 and 6.3 were not specified in God’s speech even though it was given in 1:28-39.

⁸⁷⁴ Additional blessing 6.4 was given in 1:30a to all creatures with the breath of life even though it was not specified in God’s speech.

⁸⁷⁵ And possibly Gen. 1:24b as well. Sarna seemed to suggest that the fulfillment formula (probably from Gen. 1:24b) “gives way to a thrice-repeated avowal that God created the man.” Sarna, *Genesis*, 11.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment formula of Beauty, Quality, and Will: “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.” (1:31a)
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