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# Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language

## Speech acts

AN ESSAY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE



**JOHN R. SEARLE**

*Par John R. Searle*  
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contribution to the philosophy of language. The brilliant but programmatic insights of Austin's *How to do things with words* are systematically developed and integrated with the more recent work of philosophers such as Grice, Rawls and Searle himself to produce an apparently comprehensive and certainly illuminating general theory, summarized in what Searle terms the 'main hypothesis' of the book, 'speaking a language is engaging in a rule-governed form of behaviour.' *Mind* 'The main merit of Searle's book - and it is a very substantial merit indeed - is that by attempting to construct a systematic theory of speech acts it substantially advances our knowledge of the problems that have to be solved in this fascinating field. Even if Searle himself has not yet found a wholly satisfactory way through the jungle, he has certainly established a number of clearings which will greatly facilitate subsequent explorations.' *Philosophical* 'Written in an outstanding clear and lively style, it provokes its readers to rethink issues they may have regarded as long since settled.' *The Times Literary Supplement* 'Presentation de l'auteur' 'Written in an outstandingly clear and lively style, this 1969 book provokes its readers to rethink issues they may have regarded as long since settled.'