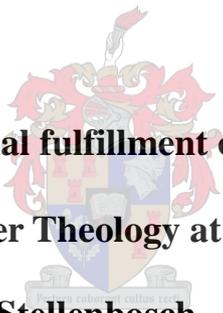


**Rethinking the movement from text to sermon in the light of
speech act theory**

By

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**Thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master Theology at the University of
Stellenbosch**

The crest of the University of Stellenbosch is centered behind the text. It features a shield with a blue and gold design, topped with a red and white crest. The shield is flanked by two red lions. Below the shield is a banner with the Latin motto 'VERITAS LIBERABIT VOS'. The entire crest is rendered in a light, semi-transparent style.

Department of Practical Theology

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, D H. KIM, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work, and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signed:

Date:

ABSTRACT

This research endeavors to make a more satisfactory connection between the text and sermon by utilizing the speech act theory (SAT). In the light of SAT, the movement from text to sermon is neither simply to be viewed as finding timeless principles, meanings, big ideas from Scripture nor to emphasize a human experience in the modern world to serve as a re-narration of the text. Rather, the homiletical bridge in SAT has to be considered as the performative action of the text itself. The essence of interpretation in preaching is therefore to recognize the illocutionary act in Scripture. In SAT, the illocutionary act creates the meaning as well as the perlocutionary action. This is the center of the effort in order to build a more satisfactory bridge between text and sermon.

Obviously, the SAT can directly serve the Reformed Confessions in which the living Triune God is still speaking through the Scripture in the present. The Spirit is the enabler of a disclosure of the autonomous and meaningful action of the Bible. The Spirit has continually enabled the Christian community to understand and to enact the Scripture in the context of the common life of the Christian community. This means that the Bible is not given to be exegeted in academic isolation, but to be performed by the people of God. Perhaps, when the preacher proclaims the re-illocutionary preaching, he/she will encounter an unexpected manner of sermon. However, this creative preaching generates unexpected reality through the Bible in which the Spirit gives the energy to accomplish this alternative reality. This should offer practical guidelines for performing individual faith and generating social capital. That event is proclaimed (performed) as the living Word of God for modern man.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsing beoog om 'n meer bevredigende konneksie te maak tussen teks en preek deur gebruik te maak van die sogenaamde “Speech Act Theory”, oftewel Spraak Handeling Teorie [SHT]. In die lig van die SHT is die beweging vanaf teks na preek nie net om klem te lê op onveranderde beginsels, opinies, waardevolle betekenis van die Woord of ondervindinge van menslike ervaring in die moderne wêreld om as 'n herskrywing van die teks te dien nie, maar eerder moet die homilitiese brug gesien word as die manifestering van die teks self. Die primêre fokus van interpretasie is hiervolgens dus om die performatiewe funksie van die Woord te herken. Volgens die SHT skep die performatiewe funksie die betekenis sowel as die performatiewe aksie. Bogenoemde uitgangspunte vorm die middelpunt van aksies wat geneem word om te verseker dat 'n aanvaarbare brug gebou word tussen prediking en teks.

Dit wil voorkom asof die SHT die Gereformeerde Belydenis kan dien, aangesien die Lewende, Drie-enige God volgens hierdie belydenis nog steeds deur die Woord praat in die teenwoordige tyd. Hiervolgens is die Gees van God 'n fasiliteerder van die onafhanklike en betekenisvolle openbaring van die Bybel. Die Gees van God het volgens hierdie belydens voortdurend die Christen gemeenskap gelei om die Woord te verstaan en om dit uit te voer in die konteks van die normale Christen gemeenskap. Dit beteken dat die Bybel nie gegee is om bloot in isolasie akademies uitgelê te word nie, maar om uit-gevoer te word deur die gemeenskap van God. Predikers wat die performatiewe boodskap van die Skrif binne die kragveld van hierdie gemeenskap preek, mag op verrassende wyses anders preek. Hierdie kreatiewe styl van prediking genereer

‘n onverwagse realiteit, in ooreenstemming met dit wat die Bybel deur die Gees van God intendeer om uit te voer (“perform”). Hierdeur word individuele geloof, maar ook die verryking van die gemeenskap gedien.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and motivation of the thesis

The move from text to sermon is a decisive event, which has been metaphorically described as the bridge in preaching's context (Cilliers 2004: 110; Craddock 1979: 54; Long 2005: 100; Ronald 1986: 46). Generally speaking, the preacher views the Bible as his/her principal source for sermonic material. Traditionally, the preacher either explores a topic or distills from the text a basic idea or proposition, which becomes the basis for the sermon (Buttrick 1994: 81). Once the preacher has grasped the text's central theme, the text itself could easily be left behind as the preacher explores this theme in the sermon (Long 2005: 101). In order to avoid this homiletical error, preachers need to develop or utilize another methodological approach to move from text to a sermon. Such a movement will traditionally assist preachers to shape a theological more valid production of a sermon in order to deliver a biblical message (cf. Bohren 1965: 83; Long 1989a: 34).

A part of this valid approach can be persuasively developed according to a method of preaching labeled as "Inductive Movement." In "*As One without Authority*", on this issue, Fred Craddock (1979: 56-57) especially argues that traditional preaching is deductive and authoritarian; it promotes passiveness in the hearers rather than participation. He rejects, this "downward" authoritarian movement of deduction in favor of the "upward" experiential movement of induction (Campbell 1997: 129). This alternative inductive type of preaching, which emphasizes contemporary human experience. In this case, the preacher seeks not primarily to convey propositional

information or to develop a logical argument, but rather to effect an experience of the gospel in its context. In fact, over the past thirty years, a number of significant homiletic studies have attempted to find and explore various elements in the context of personal experience (Long 2005: 103). Particularly, this inductive approach has led to the exploration of a certain relationship between narrative and preaching in order to examine the legitimacy of searching behind the text and distilling a message from it (Thompson 2001b: 4-7).

According to Campbell (1997: XI), preachers have tried to present the logic of induction by using several preaching styles such as “inductive preaching, story preaching, dialogue sermons, and homiletical plot” in the context of a “new homiletic.”¹ This new trend, however, did not succeed in bringing new life to the church.² Campbell (1997: 211) points out that these kinds of new homiletics have often failed to account for the nature of the biblical narrative. The misunderstanding of biblical language led to unsuitable relationship between the biblical narrative and sermon form. Consequently, these recent homiletical theories are insufficient to build more satisfactory Scripture-based bridges between text and sermon. (Campbell 1997: 147). This movement is biblically inadequate to represent the elements of the biblical story as solutions to problems within modern churches.

Mainly, Campbell’s work (1997: 204), which developed from Hays’ understanding of

¹ The term “new homiletic” is borrowed from Eslinger (1987: 13-14). It generally refers to current trend of homiletics (cf. Lowry 1997: 12).

² For more information regarding this issue, see Campbell (1997: XI-XIV) and Thompson (2001b: 9-11).

narrative substructure, explains the narrative logic in order to overcome the abuse of the biblical narrative in the preaching situation. In fact, Hays (2002: 19-20) aims to reveal a pattern of narrative elements from non-narrative texts. As regards this aspect, several studies have called attention to how Paul alludes to representing the story of God, the story of Jesus and the story of Israel.³ These story elements in a text have a certain autonomy, which is found in its performance (Dunn 2002: 222-223; cf. also Lash 1986: 37-46). This means that, story elements will instruct independently how one might perform Scripture. This might provide both constraints and guidance for the use of Scripture in preaching (Campbell 1997: 192). When the preacher performs exegesis, he/she expects something to happen: a certain divine action connected to reading the Scripture, whereby the preacher spontaneously becomes a hopeful participant of the divine event. This kind of preaching will biblically create a communal identity with its own ethical norms and mission (Campbell 2002b: 79-82; Thompson 2001b: 106). Thus, the preacher views the text as a living resource for the community of faith and not merely as a propositional object. This living resource has to become the dynamic epicenter in the movement from the text to the sermon.

Long (2005: 106) emphasizes the importance in this movement from text to sermon

³ These stories will imply the foundational story of God's vindication of his people through the Christ-event (Patte 1984: 32). For further more information of story elements in the letters of Paul, see Richard. B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983); Norman R. Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul's Narrative World* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985); Stephen Fowl, *The Story of Jesus in the Letters of Paul* (JSNTSup, 36; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992); Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1994); Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Real Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1997), pp. 177-22; Sylvia Keesmaat, *Paul and his Story: (Re)interpreting the Exodus Tradition* (JSNTSup. 181; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. 1999); and A. Katherine Grieb, *The Story of Romans* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2003); Bruce W. Longenecker (ed), *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2002).

based on the understanding that texts do not merely say something, but do something:

“Texts do all these things through words, of course, which means that they *do* things by *saying* things in certain ways. And it is here-in the interplay between saying and doing-that we find the key to building the bridge between text and sermon. The bridge must be able to bear the traffic of both word and event. The preacher should bring to the sermon both what the text says and what the text does; or, to put it another way, what the text does by its saying.”

What Long proposes might be a kind of homiletic bridge that moves neither deductively from abstract, cognitive propositions nor inductively from human experience, but rather operates as an act that is performed in the exposition of a text. He suggests that the preacher pays attention to the performative nature of Scripture. This possibility invites the preacher to acknowledge that the Bible not only says things with words, but it also does things with words. That is, the biblical texts say things that do things, and to preach is to say and do those things too. This manner will be apparent that what the preacher should bring from text to sermon. Therefore, the key question in the homiletical bridge will be how the preacher is to interpret the divine action that is performed in the Scripture.

Similarly, Campbell (1997:212) also emphasizes the significant possibility of biblical exegesis for preaching to highlight the performative nature of the Bible:

“Biblical interpretation also includes the ways in which the church’s practice of preaching itself is an interpretive *performance* of Scripture ... From this perspective, new interpretive questions arise for the preacher ... how does the performance of Scripture in preaching help to form the church’s life after the pattern of Jesus’ story?”

One of the outstanding features accentuated in the above quotation is the aspect of “an interpretive performance of Scripture”. It highlights the performative dimension of biblical interpretation. Regarding this point, Campbell can be seen to focus on biblical interpretation for preaching as living through performance (action) and not just knowledge about the Scripture. More specifically, he expounded an interpretive performance of Scripture not to mean that the preacher is retelling Jesus’ story, but that the preacher is required to react on the pattern of Jesus’ story (Campbell 1997:210). Related to this issue, is the viewpoint of Nicholas Lash (1986: 42), that a Christian interpretation of Scripture begins to deliver its full meaning only when it is performed. Particularly, according to him, the story of Jesus is such a text. Thus, the story elements will independently govern what the preacher hopes to say and do in the sermon.

In fact, the story will invite the preacher to join it in contemplating it, evaluating it, and responding to it (Pratt 1977: 136). Story can entertain and engender preacher involvement. In this case, the story is not only a repetition of sermonic material but also having a particular force (Lanser 1981: 293). This will serve a guideline in order to preach the Bible biblically.⁴ As a result of this force, the story will lead the preacher to be a disciple in which the pattern of Jesus’ storied identity is followed (Campbell 1997: 212). Therefore, this concept of biblical stories might create the possibility of an actualization of power with regard of the use of Scripture in preaching.⁵ With regard to

⁴ In the section on methodology the researcher will explain this force of story as the illocutionary act.

⁵ Since the 1960s, leading scholars in philosophical theology have argued that human existence is experienced in story terms. The same is true of philosophers of cognitive science, who progressively speak of story as the fundamental organisational principle of the mind. For further more information of nature of story, see G.W. Stroup, *The promise of Narrative Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1987); M. Turner, *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

the theological assessment of a biblical passage, therefore, it becomes crucial to ask what the text is doing (performative action), and not merely what it means (objective of the topic). To put it differently, texts have a certain momentum focusing on what the language of this text does (cf. Buttrick 1987: 301; Cilliers 2004: 103-108; Craddock 1985: 123; Long 2005: 92-98; McClure 1991: 51; Wilson 1995: 130-131)? It might indicate that the using of the passage is the performing of an action (Altieri 1981: 10; Austin 1975: 6; Botha 1991: 77; Searle 1969: 12).

To a certain extent, Buttrick (1981: 58) also addressed directly the performative purpose in order to define biblical preaching:

“The crucial matter for homiletic theory is the idea of performative purpose. The question, ‘What is the language doing?’ may translate into a craftsman’s query, ‘What must my sermon seek to do?’ Homileticians always think strategy, for they attempt to form understandings by the movement of language in consciousness. True ‘biblical preaching’ will want to be faithful not only to a message, but to an *intention*. The question, ‘What is the passage trying to do?’ may well mark the beginning of homiletical obedience.”⁶

Especially interesting in the above quotation is the possibility that the language of the biblical text may be regarded as an exponent of the performative action of the text itself. This notion of “performative” urges the preacher to question every passage focusing on what the text is doing (performative action), and not merely what it means (objective of

1996); D. Cupitt, *What is a Story?* (London: SCM Press, 1991).

⁶ *Interpretation*, 25 no. 1 Jan 1981, p 46-58. The article argues that for the past two centuries preaching has distilled topics from scripture passages and then spoke objectively of the topic. Similarly, historical-critical exegesis stops the linguistic movement of a passage, studies it objectively and then distills an “original meaning” topically. The article claims that biblical passages are “moving language” and have “intention”. New categories for interpretation are offered. Homilectic method should relate to interpretation, so the article advocates a mobile system of preaching that seeks to fulfill scriptural “intentionality”.

the topic). It allows the act of the biblical text to determine the act of the sermon (Cilliers 2004: 107).

Long, Campbell and Buttrick focused on the interpretive performance of the biblical text. In other words, the interpretive performance of Scripture might be patterns of action (cf. Buttrick 1987: 348-349; Campbell 1997: 104; Campbell 2002b: 79; Long 2005: 106). It may be interpreted as a tension between the action performed by the Scripture: “what was said and done by story element such as the story of God, the story of Jesus and the story of Israel” and the preaching performed by the preacher: “what is said and done and suffered, now, by those who seek to share His will and hope” (Lash 1986: 42).

These considerations emphasise that what the biblical text intends to say and do, governs what the preacher hopes to say and do in the sermon. That is to say, that autonomous texts do warn, promise, or covenant. The Bible is really doing something. This attitude stresses that biblical interpretation in preaching is something that the preacher is not only interpreting words and texts in order to find the abstract meaning of Scripture. Rather the imperative task in preaching is an understanding of what the text does when it says. This perspective of biblical text would cause the rethinking of the notion of “the bridge between text and sermon”. In this case, the homiletic bridge will produce an understanding that will issue an appropriate response and in a simultaneous recognition of the Scripture, its intention to do things. It aims to understand better the performative aspects related to the use the language of the Bible.

1.2. Statement of the problem.

In a certain sense, this dissertation will be written as a response to the performative action of the text itself in the context of the homiletical problem of moving from the text to sermon. This response can be explained by the following problem statement: the preaching task is not simply to be viewed as finding the timeless principles, meanings, big ideas and propositional statements from Scripture, but has to be considered as the performative action of the text itself. If this is so, the question must be asked which theological and linguistic elements are to help us to build a more satisfactory bridge between text and sermon? Furthermore, how should the preacher move from text to sermon through it?

To a certain extent, the reformed perspective also argues directly that the living Triune God is still speaking through the Scripture in the present. In this context, the Spirit is the enabler of a disclosure of the autonomous and meaningful action of the Bible. The Spirit has continually enabled the Christian community to understand and enact the Scripture in the context of the common life of the Christian community (Kelsey 1975: 29-30). This means that the key point in biblical preaching will be to focus on what should be preached, being directly dependent upon the Scripture and the Holy Spirit. In this case, the preacher, who is also part of the congregation, effectively performs the text in order to persuade an audience to participate in the divine purpose, because the Bible is not given to be exegeted in academic isolation, but to be performed by the people of God (Fowl 1991: 29).

Therefore, this study will highlight the necessity for a holistic viewpoint; the reformed

perspective and new approaches and their methodological integration in homiletic theory, which will explain the role of the Bible, the Spirit and the preacher in terms of a performative action of the text itself.

The possibility of the meaningful action in and by the text itself is explained by the concept not unprecedented of “performative” (Ricoeur 1971: 529-566). Speech act theory (SAT) concerns itself with this performative nature of language (Briggs 2001: 4).⁷ It proposes that texts/speakers are not merely uttering sounds, words or statements, but are capable of performing an action – hence the name, “Speech Act”. It was initially presented by J. L. Austin during the William James Lectures at Harvard in 1955 and was explicated in “*How to Do Things with Words*” published in 1962. His work was subsequently refined and systematized by his student J. Searle (Vanderveken 2001b: 5). Austin (1975: 6) focused on the effects of distinct kinds of utterances in conversations and other speech acts, in other words, on the performative aspect of language usage. He pointed to a type of language use which had been largely ignored by philosophers, that is, the utterance which does not describe anything, but “is, or is a part of, the doing of an action” (Austin 1975: 5).

Related to this sense, is John R. Searle’s persuasive development of Austin’s analysis of speech acts. In “*Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*”, Searle (1969: 16) proposes that:

“[t]he *unit of linguistic communication* is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the ...

⁷ For brief but useful overviews of the major developments in the history of SAT, see Briggs (2001: 31-68)

performance of the speech act[my emphasis].”

1.3. Aim of the research

The aim of this research is to allow us to make a more satisfactory connection between the text and sermon by rediscovering the essence of the textual reality as the divine activity that activates and regenerates the preaching event. This should offer practical guidelines for performing individual faith and generating social capital. That event is proclaimed (performed) as the living Word of God for modern man. This research thus endeavours to investigate the issue of practical application in two senses. Firstly, it will examine how this autonomous text helps us to create biblically the bridge between text and sermon in clear ways. Secondly, it will pay attention to the role of the Holy Spirit to help us understand the mystery that the preaching of the Word of God.

1.4. Hypothesis

The Bible is not a textual object, the text of the Bible being itself is a speech act (Wolterstorff 1995: 74). The Bible is not merely a product of being “written” but rather a unit of linguistic communication in the communicative economy of the triune God in which “the Father is revealed, the Son reveals, and the Holy Spirit is the agent of revelation’s perfection” (Vanhoozer 1994: 143-181; 1998: 217; 2003: 165). The strength of this view is that SAT might reintroduce the sovereignty of God and the necessary role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ as the homiletic consideration when the preacher might recognize the Bible as God’s authoritative speech action.

1.5 Methodology

This research will utilize Richard Osmer's practical theological methodology. In his book, *Practical theology: An introduction*, he emphasizes that practical theological interpretation involves four tasks: the descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative and pragmatic tasks, which constitute the basic structure of a practical theological methodology (Osmer 2008: X). Even though these four tasks are interpreted as connected conformance, normative and pragmatic tasks are central to practical theology as an academic discipline (Osmer 2008: 10-11). Therefore, this research will especially describe the normative and pragmatic tasks and their relevance to other tasks.

1.5.1 The descriptive-empirical task

The key question of the descriptive-empirical task is what is going on. This task produces suitable "information that helps us discern patterns and dynamic in particular episodes, situation, or contexts" (Osmer 2008: 4). This research deals with the notion of "the movement from text to sermon" in the context of current homiletics, especially in terms of the new homiletic and its effect. This information will be collected from a survey of books and articles, discussing the fields of hermeneutics and homiletics. This will indirectly explain how preachers currently build homiletic bridges in order to deliver a biblical message.

1.5.2 The interpretive task

The key question of the interpretive task is why something is taking place. This approach will draw on "theories of the arts and science to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics are occurring" (Osmer 2008: 4). Reality in a certain

context is composed of different structures, properties and complexities which are interconnected. To interpret this complex reality of a context, therefore, we need an interdisciplinary approach (Osmer 2008:118-119). Thus, for this task, this research will attempt to analyze “thick descriptions” of the performative dimension of the language of the biblical text.⁸ This will be an explanation of a speech act hermeneutical approach that is multi-dimensional (locution, illocution and perlocution) in the context of Bible-oriented preaching. This approach might manifest a reality of “the movement between text and sermon”.

1.5.3 The normative task

In this stage, this research asks the key question of what ought to be going on. To answer this question, theological concepts are used to interpret an examined context and to construct norms to guide our responses. Osmer states (2008: 163) that “practical theology as an academic field and practical theological interpretation ... are inherently cross disciplinary in nature”. To develop a constructive theological perspective, practical theology dialogues with other theological disciplines as well as with the arts and social sciences. Thus, this research will utilize a multi-methodological framework, by employing speech act theory in the context of homiletics. Through this framework, some methodological precision of the normative task will be established.

The application of speech act theory (SAT) may afford insight into how people understand the biblical passage as one of the effective communication performance

⁸ The term “thick description” is borrowed from the work of anthropologist Clifford Geertz. It understands social reality as a culture or network in which various institutions, acts, interpretations, traditions, customs, human decisions are connected (Geertz 1973: 3-32).

actions, because SAT might demonstrate that the study of the meaning of sentences and the study of speech act are not two independent studies but one study from two different viewpoints (Searle 1969: 18). Speech act theory consists of three distinct performative aspects of any linguistic information, whether oral or written. The performative aspect of language usage sharply distinguishes three categories of action when one uses the word/text, viz. (1) The locutionary act: uttering words (e.g., saying the word “Hello”); (2) The illocutionary act: what we do in saying something (e.g., greeting, warning, promising, commanding, etc.); (3) the perlocutionary act: what we bring about by saying something (e.g., deterring, persuading, surprising) (Austin 1975: 98-108). According to this terminology, by uttering a sentence, speakers characteristically perform locutionary acts: they utter words with a certain sense and reference. They also mean to perform illocutionary acts with a certain force such as assertions, promises, orders, declarations and apologies. Moreover, when their utterances have effects on the audience, speakers perform perlocutionary acts: they can, for example, convince, please, influence, amuse or embarrass the hearer. Thus, when a speaker utters a sentence in English (or any other language), he/she is performing at least two, possibly three things:

Jump into the water		
Locutionary act	Illocutionary act	Perlocutionary act
It is forming that sentence according to the rules of English of imperative mood.	It is such as warning, commanding, undertaking, utterance which have a certain conventional force.	It is such as convincing, persuading, deterring, surprising.

Furthermore, in speaker/writer attempted performance of illocutionary acts, these

propositions are expressed with forces (Searle 1969: 29).⁹ These illocutionary acts are of the form $F(P)$: they are composed of a force F and of a proposition P (Searle 1969: 31). These performative aspects of SAT are strategically useful for the interpretation of biblical passages for preaching, because authors of the Bible did not only want to inform but also to perform a “variety of speech act purposes” such as warning, promising, commanding speech act which “have not been adequately recognized by many reader of the Bible” (Macky 1987: 61). The power of biblical language, in this sense, could be understood as related to its illocutionary force.¹⁰ Similarly, characteristic illocutionary force occurs with frequency in preaching (Immink 2002:166-199). It is practically realized that the preacher is not a neutral carrier of meaning, but naturally has effects and achieves something in the Christian community. The preacher can do things with sermon/text; preachers are pragmatic, creating the sermon in real life situations with a view to persuade, to change attitudes, and to act in a specific way.¹¹ That is to say that the sermon will be a living engagement between the

⁹ Searle revised Austin’s trilogy of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts by replacing the notion of locutionary act by those of utterance and propositions with force (1969: 23).

¹⁰ For more information regarding this issue, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 272-312. See also Anthony C. Thiselton, “The Parables as Language-Event: Some Comments on Fuchs’s Hermeneutics in the Light of Linguistic Philosophy,” *SJT*23 (1970): 437-68; Thiselton, “The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings,” 283-99; Thiselton, “Communicative Action and Promise in Interdisciplinary, Biblical and Theological Hermeneutics,” in *The Promise of Hermeneutics* (ed. Roger Lundin, Clarence Walhout, and Anthony C. Thiselton; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 133-239; Walter Houston, “What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing? Speech Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old Testament,” in *The Place Is Too Small For Us: The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarships* (ed. Robert P. Gordon; Winona Lake: Eerdmans, 1995), 133-53. This is a reprint of Walter Houston, “What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing? Speech Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old Testament,” *BibInt* 1 (1993):167-88; Gordon McConville, “Divine Speech and the Book of Jeremiah,” in *Trustworthiness of God: Perspectives on the Nature of Scripture* (ed. Paul Helm and Carl R. Trueman; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

¹¹ This idea is also proposed by Searle (1979: 29), he suggest a comprehensive typology of speech act as five basic things people 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.”

preacher and the biblical language. The preacher is to think and feel his/her way into the text so that his/her preaching becomes a living illocutionary force as the message.

In addition, one illocution may entail a wide variety of locutions and perlocutions. There are two similar sentences; “Please, help me!” and “You will help me”, whose clauses are synonymous, expressed in the same contexts of an uttered illocutionary act with the same propositional content but different forces. In other words, speakers can do more than one thing with the same proposition; they can assert, question, command, or wish. The notion of the illocutionary act is crucial when one pays attention to the context within which it is performed (Botha 2007: 278). These things allow for the inclusion of non-linguistic elements such as convention, context, shared experience, community, and so on (Brummer 1981: 11).

Therefore, these aspects of SAT can be applied to debates over what particularly constitutes the relationship between the biblical passage, preaching and the congregation. Consequently, through this potential application of speech act theory to hermeneutics and homiletics, we will propose with methodological precision how the preacher is to find and utilize the illocutionary force in the biblical language. This will allow us to make a more satisfactory connection between text and sermon.

1.5.4 The pragmatic task

The pragmatic task of a practical theological methodology is to form strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable (Osmer 2008: 175-176). Thus, the hypothesis of this dissertation about the possibility of the meaningful action in the text itself will be tested to demonstrate the movement from text to sermon as the re-

illocutionary act. That is the central idea to build a Scripture-based bridge between text and sermon. This action will not only be a valuable source of knowledge, but which itself is a basic means of knowledge as doing what it asserts (Brueggemann 1997b: 165; Ricoeur 1980: 123). The re-illocutionary act will create a connection between what one says and the way things actually are. Indeed, in this case, the homiletic bridge requires a response that will result in a suitable and responsible manner in which Scripture is appreciated. The homiletical application of SAT suggests that the Scripture uses a preacher rather than a preacher using the Scripture. This is precisely what this research wishes to argue in relation to SAT in which the preacher should become the re-performer of illocutionary action in the Scripture.

1.6. The outline of the dissertation

This dissertation will comprise the following chapters: Chapter 1 will be the introduction of the thesis. Chapter 2 will explore the purpose of the movement from text to sermon and its function in the context of Buttrick, Campbell and Long's homiletical views. Furthermore, in this chapter, the researcher will emphasise the need for a new perspective on this issue. Chapter 3 will focus on the formulation of the homiletics bridge in the context of the speech act theory. Particularly, the aim of this chapter will be to provide an alternative framework for evaluating it. Chapter 4 will explore the interface hermeneutics and homiletics in light of the speech act theory. Furthermore, the chapter will rethink the normative task of the biblical preaching in context of the Christian confession. Chapter 5 will contain the summary and conclusion of the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE NOTION OF MOVEMENT FROM TEXT TO SERMON IN THREE CONTEMPORARY HOMILETICIANS' VIEWS

1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly survey the views and methods of three contemporary homiletics, namely Buttrick, Campbell, and Long. These homiletics have been chosen for three central reasons: first of all, they address directly the performative aspect of biblical language in the context of biblical preaching. According to these homiletics, this is one of the key questions of the biblical preaching (Buttrick 1981: 50-54; 1987: 348-349; Campbell 1997: 104; 2002b: 79; Long 1989b: 30; 2005: 106). This chapter will sketch the performative aspect of biblical language and how these functions create a more satisfactory bridge between text and sermon. In particular, this chapter will analyze their central questions for biblical interpretation in preaching: Buttrick (1981: 54) as is: *What does the passage want to do?*; Campbell (1997: 230): *How does a particular passage of Scripture function to "build up" the people of God in and for the world?*; Long (2005: 107): *"What does the text wish to say and what does the text wish to do through its saying?"* These questions can be applied to debates over what constitutes the relationship between the intention of the biblical language and the biblical preaching. This ensemble will indirectly emphasize the need for a new perspective of the homiletical bridge between text and sermon in order to focus and maintain the attention of divine action through the Scripture, i.e. God reconciles Himself with His people through Jesus Christ (Buttrick 1987: 452; Campbell 1997: 254; Long 2005: 17). This must be done in order to help us discover how the performative dimension of biblical language formulates the movement of text to sermon. This inquiry

will generate in the interpreter a new self-understanding or a new insight into reality with regard to the homiletic area. Therefore, the performative dimension of biblical language will provide an alternative criterion for evaluating the so called homiletic bridge. This will help the preacher to focus the preaching as execution of the text.

2. Buttrick's a phenomenological method in homiletics.

In "*Homiletic: Moves and Structures*", Buttrick (1987: 14) attempts to apply a phenomenological approach to homiletics. This homiletic theory is based upon what language is and, more importantly, what it does. Some of his other recent works (2000: 19; 2002: 4) have also focused on what Jesus did (i.e. acted) in his parable stories which were more than what he may have taught. Furthermore, he is not interested in a biblical story behind the act (as a past-tense event), which can be described by looking back through time. Rather, in homiletics, Buttrick (1987: 346) speaks of a consciousness that is "hearing the story now". Indeed, the congregation will hear the passage of Scripture in contemporary life and can be aware of the Scripture through contemporary consciousness. In this way, his method pays attention to the role of biblical language, particularly its performative effect in a contemporary communal consciousness. Note his remark in this regard:

"In the ancient world spoken language was employed in more sophisticated ways than in our crumbling linear culture. First century folk grasped language like a tool, choosing form and style and structure to shape purpose. Thus *biblical language is language designed to function in consciousness*" (Buttrick 1981: 54) [my emphasis].

Homiletically, the preacher sees that biblical language has a certain performative force

in order to have effect in the real world. Furthermore, this perspective of language will generate a foundation of biblical preaching. This radically means that the preacher will get sermonic material from a certain performative dimension of the text, rather than to convey a single idea or biblical topic. In this case, the language of preaching will be execution of performative dimension of biblical passage in order to change the congregation's perception or worldviews. (Buttrick 1994: 79). The biblical authors clearly intended their "original meaning" to do something by way of altering 1st century consciousness. This intentional action, however still has work to do in our 20th-century consciousness. The performative force of a text therefore continues to have effect across time. The recognition of this reality is a vital function of truly biblical preaching (Buttrick 1987: 374-375). When understanding the movement from text to sermon, an assessment of the intention of biblical language therefore becomes a crucial starting point.

More particularly Buttrick (1987: 308) emphasizes that there is not a direct movement from text to sermon. This means that preachers do not move directly from exegesis to sermon production. Instead, they move from exegesis to find a field of understanding, and then to the production of a sermon. This movement is strategically designed as a certain action sequence. In order to explain this process, Buttrick suggests an illustration of a visitor to an art gallery:

"The visitor stands in front of a painting—perhaps the picture of a city street scene and allows *immediate impression* to form in consciousness. Later, the visitor may sit down *at some distance and think* about the painting as an image in consciousness. Finally, the visitor may leave the gallery with a back-of-the-mind visual impression and as a result,

look at the urban world *in a new way*” (Buttrick 1987: 320) [my emphasis].

Theoretically Buttrick’s homiletic bridge can be understood as a chain reaction. This movement consists of three moments, which includes the moment of immediacy (*immediate impression*), of reflection (*at some distance and think*) and of praxis (*in a new way*). Even though each moment has its distinctiveness, the distinctions are interpreted as having a connected conglomerate of interpretative progress. That is the preacher has noticed the immediate force. This movement will be created by the passage’s intentions and has to produce a reflection on the structure of meaning produced by the performative dimension of the passage. Finally, considered situations bring a new understanding of the passage and now it renders a change in praxis. As a result of this ongoing response, the homiletic bridge is to be regarded as an execution of the intention of text. This movement focuses on recreating the intention of the text; indeed, Buttrick’s homiletic bridge has attempted to link preaching with notions of biblical language about recovering the impact of intention of text. Therefore, his homiletical contribution is not only to reorganize previous traditional elements of homiletical concern. Rather, it is to reflect indirectly on the relationship between the language of the Scripture and biblical preaching as an affair of the moving towards the consciousness.

In this regard, Buttrick’s homiletical assumption emphasizes the way that the biblical text performs efficiently in its intention of challenging human knowledge. This intention of the text can be exhibited with the biblical narratives in which the narrative sequence will demonstrate “the purposes of God” (Buttrick 1987: 297). Likewise, Buttrick (1987:

329) clearly stresses that preaching always involves some intention to do. For instance, the preacher is engaged in a peculiar intention of the text in which preachers replot plots and, to some extent, re-intend its original intentional language. In other words, the task of the biblical interpretation in preaching is to find both the original meaning and, somehow, the original intention. Only this knowledge will enable the preacher to fulfill the purpose of the text. The preacher, therefore, will get ready to respond to what is needed to raise awareness of the performative dimension of Scripture. Thereby the movement from text to sermon is to be designed to proclaim its intentional action.

In order to solve the homiletical movement of text to sermon, Buttrick's central question for biblical interpretation in preaching is, "What does the passage want to do (Buttrick 1981: 54)?"¹² His hermeneutic inquiry will become a key issue for biblical preaching as well as it is the first step to "homiletical obedience"(Buttrick 1981: 58). This terminology of biblical interpretation searches for the movement of the divine action in the intention of the text. This theological activity pays attention to the performative purposes of the Scripture in order to obey its divine intention. In this case, the fundamental rule of Buttrick's biblical interpretation is that the interpreter must be obedient to the text itself as meaningful action. That is not "What did the text mean?" but "What does the text prompt us to say now (Buttrick 1987: 273)?" The preacher must allow the texts to determine their interpretation in terms of intention in preaching. It follows that performance of preaching depends on the meaning of the text as intentional

¹² Buttrick (1981: 50-54) proposes six questions, which may lead to indirectly inform a hermeneutical framework for biblical preaching: "What is the form?", "What is the Plot, Structure or Shape?", "What is the Field of Concern"?, "What is the logic of Movement?" , "What is the Addressed World"? "What is the passage trying to do"?

action. It means homiletically that preaching will replot plots of the text and reintend intentions of the text (Buttrick 1987: 303). This attitude towards preaching still implies that there is something in the text. This is one of the determining factors in the normative preaching task. Notice his remark in this regard:

“Preaching is the ‘Word of God’ in that it *participates in God’s purpose, is initiated by Christ, and is supported by the Spirit* in the community in the world” (Buttrick(1987: 456) [my emphasis].

That is, Buttrick’s homiletical proposal is to try to participate in the Trinitarian activity in the modern world. God is forming the church and renewing creation in Christ through the Spirit. This Triune participation will support the promise of the mystery of preaching. This perspective will be helpful to structure the sequence of the sermon. The preaching form is especially disclosed in the divine activity it refers to (Buttrick 1987: 317). In this regard, biblical preaching will seek to be faithful not only to the content of a text, but also to its purpose expressed through its performative momentum. If the Scripture is an intentional action, and if the intention of action depends on the intention of its elements, it follows that the meaning of the text as an act depends on its divine original intention. Such a divine intention will be the normative task of preaching in which the preaching functions in the consciousness of its receiver, both to the “what” of the text and the way the text is told. To put this homiletical point more precisely, true preaching should be a speaking of Scripture and not about Scripture (Buttrick 1981: 46). In this perspective Long (1987: 4) emphasizes that “Buttrick returns to the theoretical ground which was abandoned by neoorthodoxy, but which served as home for homiletics from Augustine to the nineteenth century.” Namely, when preachers perform

exegesis in order to prepare a sermon, they will expect something to happen: a certain divine action in the reading the Scripture. This attitude will indirectly reorient the faith seeking textual understanding when we preach biblically. Therefore, the performative dimension of biblical text must enable the preacher to recognize the mystery of divine action from their mother tongue of faith within the Scripture. This is the miracle of preaching according to Calvin.

3. Campbell's homiletical view as the improvement of the church.

In *“Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei's Postliberal Theology”*, Campbell (1997: 222) argues that the central function of preaching is the upbuilding of the church. His homiletic view is based on Hans Frei's narrative theology, on Richard Hays's narrative substructure of the Pauline Letters, and on George Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic model of religion. This interdisciplinary approach in Campbell's homiletic theory focuses on how the preacher's task will concentrate on “building up the church” (Campbell ; 2002a: 460).

In this way, Campbell offers a persuasive critique of contemporary narrative preaching, which according to him, is basically grounded in individual experience.

According to Campbell (1997: XI), preachers have tried to use several preaching styles such as “inductive preaching, story preaching, dialogue sermons, and homiletical plot” in the context of “ narrative preaching.” These new trends, however, did not succeed in bringing new life to the church (Campbell 1997: XI-XIV). For instance, the preacher has often misunderstood the essential task of preaching as fostering the individual-experience in preaching event. The preacher is merely struggling to relate the biblical

world and the contemporary world (Campbell 1997: 120). This homiletic bridge is too simplistic, however, because this movement of the text to sermon will mainly consist in a monotonous analogy. This hermeneutical approach tends to simply weave together the biblical story and our stories within the context of general human experience (Campbell 1997: 204; 2003: 30). There has been no careful examination of the theological and hermeneutical presuppositions behind the biblical narrative and its preaching (Campbell 1997: 121). As a result of this carelessness, recent narrative preaching is biblically inadequate to communicate the element of the biblical story, namely the normative nutrition to formulate the identity of the Christian community (Thompson 2001a: 10). Consequently, recent narrative preaching is insufficient to the task of building the homiletical bridge between text and sermon.

In order to avoid this monotonous homiletic bridge, Campbell suggests new directions for homiletics. This provides an alternative framework to evaluate the movement of text to sermon in the context of the performative dimension of narrative text. His assertion:

“[N]arrative is important neither because it provides a “homiletical plot” for sermons nor because preaching should consist of telling stories. Rather, narrative is important because it is the vehicle through which the gospels *render the identity of Jesus of Nazareth*, who has been raised from the dead and seeks today *to form a people who follow his way*. Accordingly, *preaching from the gospels begins with the identity of Jesus* (Campbell 1997: 190). [my emphasis]

Especially interesting is that this comment criticizes the limited narrative appropriation in the contemporary narrative preaching method. That is, the preacher interprets merely a displayed narrative structure of a biblical passage and then moves to apply those

findings in general transmission of preaching. This simplification is precisely what a lot of narrative homileticians have done. However, Campbell's new direction stresses that the gospel narratives are the primary element of preaching, because it reveals the identity of Jesus. Furthermore, the theme of Jesus' identity orients and governs the interpretive practice at the center of preaching. In this way, the identity of Jesus of Nazareth demonstrates the way toward the identity of being Christian. More precisely, the identity of Jesus governs the sermonic behavior as well as the movement of the text to sermon. This homiletical proposition can be seen to focus on Jesus' intentional action as a significant guide to Christian preaching (Campbell 1997: 192). In this case, the preacher does not suggest that the congregation should find their stories in the biblical story. Rather, the preacher suggests that the biblical story may "re-describe" the congregation's stories. To put it simply, as the history of the meaning of the biblical text continues, we can and must tell the story differently. Thus, what Jesus did, in the biblical narrative, how he acted and governed his people in what he hopes to say and do in his narrative, which continues to have effect in modern world.

This re-describing of biblical narrative can be achieved by reflecting on the narrative substructure (Hays 2002: 15). Particularly, modern narratology is built precisely on the distinction between what is told and the way in which it is told.¹³ According Campbell (1997: 204; 2003: 34), this logic of biblical narrative has often been ignored by homileticians. This unobserved issue, however, is supported by several studies of the Pauline Letters, which reveal a significant role of narrative elements from non-narrative

¹³ For further information about these issues of "story and discourse", see the Russian formalists such as Tomachevski (1965:67) who distinguishes between *fibula* (story) and *sjuze* (discourse), Chatman (1978:19), Bal (1985: 5), Marguerat and Yvan (1998: 18-28).

text (Hays 2004: 218).¹⁴ Therefore Paul attempts to represent the story of God, the story of Jesus and the story of Israel through his letters (Meeks 1993: 196). Within this narrative framework of a biblical story, numerous different arguments are possible because the gospel story itself is “polyvalent” (Hays 2002: 224-225).

This multidimensional function of story focuses on the “logic” of the gospel narratives (Campbell 2002a: 466). This narrative approach will direct preachers not only beyond a simple recitation of the biblical story, but also beyond a simplistic narrative move from scripture to sermon. Rather, this narrative substructure of the biblical story provides the crucial connection between the sermon form and the biblical passage as a dependent “substructure” of an argument at the center of a sermon. This view challenges simplistic movements from narrative Scripture to a narrative sermon.(Campbell 2003: 34). In brief, the story is meaningful action itself and the narrative shows how the audience (reader) learns from this action when it is performed intentionally (Tomashevsky 1965: 76). For this reason, the key task in the movement from text to sermon is not the translation of the meaning or self-understanding of a biblical story into a sermonic unit. Rather, the homiletical movement includes the church’s practice of preaching itself as an interpretive performance of Scripture(Campbell 1997: 212).

In order to solve the homiletical problem of the movement of text to sermon, Campbell’s (1997: 230) central hermeneutical question for biblical interpretation in preaching is, “How does a particular passage of Scripture function to “build up” the people of God in

¹⁴ For more information regarding this issue, see Bruce W. Longenecker (ed), *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2002).

and for the world?”:

“As performance of Scripture, preaching helps to form the church’s life *after the pattern of Jesus’ identity*; it seeks to “build up” the church to enact publicly the way of peace in and for the world”(Campbell 1997: 217).[my emphasis]

To a certain extent Campbell also emphasizes the performative dimension of Scripture that highlights the relationship of the preaching and the church through the pattern of Christ’s intentional action. This biblical interpretation for preaching should include not only the narrative itself, but also the community and the history of its relationship with the narratives. That is, preachers need to think seriously about the relationship between preaching and the larger life and discipline of the church in order to nurture a rapport with his / her people (Campbell 1997: 257). Campbell can be seen, therefore, to focus on the pattern of Christ’s intentional action as a living resource and not just as knowledge about the Scripture. More specifically, he believes that an interpretive performance of Scripture does not mean that the preacher is retelling Jesus’ story, but that the preacher is required to react to the pattern of Jesus’ story in their life (Campbell 1997:210). This ongoing action will provide the pattern of action of the people of God in Jesus Christ. In this case, the most important issue in the movement from the text to sermon is not simply on what a text “means” but on how a particular passage of Scripture functions as “a communal instance of ruled behavior, ”(Campbell 1997: 233; cf. Searle 1969: 12). That is, grammar and grammatology alike are only part of the meaning of a text. Alongside questions of the performative aspect of biblical narrative must be placed questions regarding the practice of Christianity. The biblical stories are practically “rules-governed behavior” to provide training in ways of the being disciple of Jesus. In fact, the Christian interpretation of the gospel begins to deliver its full

meaning only when it is performed by Christian communities. Particularly, the story of Jesus is such a text (Lash 1986: 42) .

This attitude emphasizes the pattern of Christ's intended action as it is narrated in the Scripture. Then the church's intended action becomes a response to this biblical narrative activity (Frei 1975: 160). This autonomous action of the Scripture is performed independently to reveal the intention of God in Jesus Christ (Frei 1975: 158). The effective performance of the action can instruct the community as to how it might understand its character in Jesus Christ. From this performative action the preacher should say that God in Jesus Christ is not primarily the predicate of individual human needs or experiences. Rather, this living resource is biblically the active subject in building up a people of God to embody and witness to Jesus' presence in the modern world (Campbell 1997: 227; 2002a: 463). In this approach, the preacher should recognize the Bible as God's authoritative performative action. It will be realized that language and word are not neutral carriers of meaning, but are actually effective and achieve something (Austin 1975: 6; Searle 1969: 12). This performative aspect of biblical language refers to the mystery of divine action, which renders the truth of God in human history. In other words, the preacher will give an account of how God speaks through the Bible; how, in short, the Bible as a creation functions as the Church Builder's authoritative intention. Therefore, the movement of the text to sermon will be designed to reveal the divine action; namely, God creates, contemplates, and evaluates His community in Jesus Christ. This action is an actualization of power through the organization of the believing community.

4. Long's homiletical view as the witness of preaching.

In “*The Witness of Preaching*”, Long proposed the metaphor of “witness” to explain an explicit understanding of what it means to preach. His book pays attention to four images of the preacher: herald, pastor, storyteller, and witness. Long (2005: 46-51) argues that the image of witness will be better than the other three images together as well as witness may overcome the limitations of the other three images.¹⁵

Particularly, Long (2005: 99) argues that the verb “to witness” has two main meanings: to see and to tell; in short, “witness” in the first sense means to *perceive*; in the second sense it means to *testify*. On this ground he bases his move from text to sermon:

“When the preacher makes the turn from the exegesis of the biblical text toward the sermon itself, the preacher moves from being the first kind of witness to the second kind ... The move from text to sermon is a move from beholding to attesting, from seeing to saying, from listening to telling, from perceiving to testifying, from *being* a witness to *bearing* witness.” (Long 2005: 100).

To assist the preacher's task of bearing witness, Long (2005: 108-109) recommends the careful crafting of two aspects in sermon production: a “focus” statement that indicates what the sermon is about and a “function” statement that indicates what the sermon wants to do. Long's terminology of the focus and function statement depends on what

¹⁵ Long pictures a witness in a court of law: it contains the important element of authority that is understood in the metaphor of the preacher as herald, but it broadens the guidelines of authority to that which the preacher has seen and heard in the biblical text (2005: 45). The metaphor of witness also contains the important element of sensitivity to human needs. This is usually implied in the metaphor of the preacher as pastor. This image has a limited understanding of the relationship between the preacher and congregation. However, witness as a preacher is also member of the community so the preacher goes to Scripture in part of the community (ibid: 49). Finally, the image of the preacher as witness contains the suitable attention to the rhetorical form. That is implied in the metaphor of the preacher as storyteller without allowing form to control content. The witnesses are called to affirm the truth in a way that will best convey that which they have witnessed (ibid: 50).

the text wants to say and what it wants to do. To put this differently, biblical texts say things that do things, and this indicates that the sermon is to say and do those things (Long 2005: 106). It has to take the nature of the biblical text into consideration since texts are not intended to convey only certain religious information. Rather, the Scripture is pragmatic, created in a real life situations with a view to persuade, to change attitudes, to get people to do things and to act in specific ways (Craddock 1979: 33-34; 1985: 123). In this case, the preacher, while studying a text, is “expecting something to happen, expecting some eventful word that makes a critical difference for the life of the church” (Long 2005: 106). Then, the preacher begins to form the sermon. What the biblical text intends to say and do now becomes what the preacher hopes to say and do in the sermon. Thus, in the interpretation of the Scripture, the preacher needs to attend not only to what the Bible is saying (i.e. to the propositional content of the biblical text) but also to what the Bible intends to do by what is said.

In order to move from text to sermon, Long’s(1989b: 30) central hermeneutical question for biblical interpretation in preaching is that the question of literary genre of the text must be placed at the central question of its function; “What a text says clearly governs what it does (Long 2005: 107).” According to this proposition, all texts possess a unique and complex set of intentionalities. Preachers should pay attention to the effects that a text intends to have on its reader by assessing its literary genre, such as a psalm, proverb, narrative, parable, or epistle; this will include understanding the corresponding rhetorical devices. The preacher can then form a sermon that will “create a similar effect for hearers”(Long 1989b: 50).

Long's homiletic bridge will, therefore, engage a certain hermeneutic framework: what the Bible actually says (the form of text) as well as what it does (the intention of text). This interpretive reflection on the text is not a matter of following rules or procedures, but of acquiring skills and learning how the preacher becomes a living witness to the biblical passages. That is, the witness may afford insight into how the preacher understands the biblical language as one of the meaningful events. Further, preachers are to find their position in this divine event. The preacher can then testify, "I was there at the event and saw and experienced for myself what happened." In the sermon the preacher performs is to become the actual witness: the preacher must be apprentices of intention of text in the modern world. This hermeneutic obedience must be able to allow traffic of both word and event. The preacher gains not merely knowledge about the text, but testimony of what the text is about, of what God is already doing for us in Jesus Christ.¹⁶ In this case, preaching as testimony not only reconstructs the biblical propositional theme but also reconstructs the Christian life. This action of being the witness of the text can reconstruct the time and place of preaching as well as a time and place for the practice of imagination (Brueggemann 1997a: 32). This "reimagination of reality" is constructed by the performative dimension of the biblical language. The preacher then sees that the language of the scripture can be imagined in terms of God's ongoing action in the world and the church.¹⁷ Therefore, the re-imagination of the

¹⁶ Long is not alone in arguing the role of the testimony as Christian interpretation. The classic starting place for this issue is Paul Ricoeur's essay "the Hermeneutics of testimony". According to Ricoeur (1980: 128-130) Christian hermeneutics, or Christian interpretation is not based in facts, rather is based in testimony, which is an entirely different interpretive framework.

¹⁷This idea is also proposed by Brueggemann(1997a: 32-35), he suggest in a powerful way the creative function of imagination in the generation of meaning in preaching: "the image gives rise to a new world of possibility"; preaching as understood here aims at images arising out of the text that may give rise to a church of new obedience"

performative dimension of biblical language will establish a Christian life with God's action.

5. Summary and conclusion.

This chapter has investigated three well-known homileticians, Buttrick, Campbell and Long. In particular we have noted that their views and methods are similar insofar as they emphasize that what the biblical text intends to say and do must govern what the preacher hopes to say and do in the sermon. In this, Buttrick (1987: 308) claimed hermeneutically the homiletic bridge is a way of continual movement. It consists of immediacy, reflection and praxis; the intention of the text, intention toward the text, and intention to do given by the text. Thereby, the movement from text to sermon is to be designed through the intention of biblical language as well as its own intentional action. Campbell (1997: 239) attempted to emphasize the performative aspect of language as a sovereign subject. That is, the autonomous function of the Bible has a certain performative momentum towards building up the church. Finally, Long (2005: 106) asserted persuasively that the preacher, who acts as witness, should explicate in the sermon both what the text says and what the text does. With regard to their homiletical assessment of biblical language, therefore, it suggests an important possibility in order to formulate the movement of the text to sermon. This homiletical assumption refers to the text itself is a meaningful act; what the text is doing (performative action), and not merely what it means (objective of the topic).

This performative dimension will lead to rethinking the movement from text to sermon in two areas: first, with regard to the preaching material; second with regard to the

execution of preaching. The preacher will think the notion of the preaching material as an informative proposition. In this case, the meaning of a biblical passage through words and texts have a meaning as the “propositional content” in which the preacher produces a sermon as the “the big idea or the moralistic theme.” However, the preacher concerns the biblical word to be “action (performative)”, which refers not only to what it meant but also to the process of doing it. This performative aspect of the Scripture is a meaningful and a intentional divine action, which is understood by the logic of the God on the move in the word of text (Müller 1991: 132). This theological movement creates the Christianity which impacts on how people live in a real life situation by changing attitudes in a specific way. Similarly, Achtemeier claims (1980: 23) that “language brings reality into being for a person and orders and shapes the person’s universe”. For her, “if we want to change someone’s life ...,we must change the images-the imaginations of the heart-in short, the words by which that person lives” (ibid: 24). To put this point more precisely, God’s word is also a divine performative action. This divine action has a force to change the inner construct of reality. This perspective on God’s word enables us to distinguish between the meaning of what the Bible says and the force of what the Bible says.

In addition, the performative dimension of biblical language will cause us to rethink the execution of preaching. The preaching performance should try to discover the text’s momentum and its function in order to find the total impact when moving from text to sermon. This dimension demands from the interpreter both participation and existential decision. First of all, if interpreters have themselves been interpreted by the performative dimension of the text, the preacher then can execute its performative force.

This multiple homiletic motif may be useful to live homiletically in hermeneutical tension between the action performed by the Scripture: (“what was said and done by story elements such as the story of God, the story of Jesus and the story of Israel”) and the preaching performed by the preacher: (“what is said and done and suffered, now, by those who seek to share His will and hope”) (Lash 1986: 42). This interpretive performance of Scripture in preaching will not be only engaged on the superficial level of the grammatical or historical meaning of the text. Rather, it assesses a different level of the text in which the preacher takes up a particular stance toward the openness of the world of the text. This multidimensional concept of the biblical text should require that the preacher respects the role of the biblical text as agent. The Scripture is a doer; what is done in writing something. This conviction regarding the Scripture seems to arise in a certain sense from the illocutionary act and perlocutionary act of language.¹⁸ That is, the movement from text to sermon may be identified according to illocutionary acts in the biblical passage (what the text is doing in it is saying). From this perspective, the biblical passage will imply that the insight in illocutionary force has entered homiletic theory (Rose 1997: 68).¹⁹ To put this homiletical point more precisely, the preacher will be rethinking the notion of divine intention in terms of illocutionary act. An

¹⁸ According to speech act theory, the performative aspect of language sharply distinguishes between three categories of action when one uses the word/text, viz. (1) The locutionary act: uttering words (e.g., saying the word “Hello”); (2) The illocutionary act: what we do in saying something (e.g., greeting, warning, promising, commanding, etc.); (3) the perlocutionary act: what we bring about by saying something (e.g., deterring, persuading, surprising) (Austin 1975: 98-108).

¹⁹ This proposition is not unprecedented. In fact, Craddock already entered (1979) the speech act theory as a primary homiletical theory. Craddock stresses; “J.L. Austion has reminded us of the creative or performative power of word. Words not only report something; they do something (34). He criticizes that too often today words simply describe: they “serve only as signs pointing to the discovered or discoverable data” (33). But, Craddock emphasizes that “before they were smothered by a scientific and technological culture, words danced, sang, teased, lured, probed, wept, judged, and transformed” (34). Craddock’s conviction is that a word is “an action, something happening” (44): “words are deeds” (34). And his hope is to recover the “dynamistic and creative functions of language” (34).

illocutionary act on description in the Scripture therefore becomes the most fundamental concept in the preaching material as well as the sermonic unit. This homiletical perspective will appreciate the descriptive power of the speech act theory with regard to the link between the text and biblical preaching. For example, Tostengard (1989: 78) proposes that a sermon should seek “to *do* the text for the hearer”. Consequently, the illocutionary action in the biblical passage must generate in the interpreter a new self-understanding or new insight into reality in the movement of the text to sermon. This undeveloped homiletic prospect will help to provide an alternative criterion for evaluating the homiletic bridge. Furthermore, it will focus on how preaching is understood as the execution of the illocutionary force in the text. Therefore, the next chapter will suggest a way forward by means of an analysis and application of speech act theory. This will explore what contributions speech act theory might make to our examination of the homiletic bridge.

CHAPTER 3

THE ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR A HOMILETICS BRIDGE IN THE LIGHT OF SPEECH ACT THEORY: PREACHING IS RE-ILLOCUTION OF THE TEXT

1. Introduction

In the previous chapter we highlighted the possibility of the performative dimension of biblical language to formulate the movement of text to sermon in terms of illocutionary speech acts. This assessment seems to apply a certain new criterion in the relation between the text and the sermon. That is, the movement from text to sermon may be identified in terms of the illocutionary acts in the biblical passage. From this perspective, the performative dimension of the biblical passage implies that the insight of speech act theory (SAT) has entered homiletic theory. This leads us in this chapter to explore what contributions SAT might make to our examination of a homiletic bridge. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to briefly survey the methods and terminology in SAT, particularly Austin and his student, Searle's, work regarding this issue.²⁰ In addition, this chapter will show how their insights in SAT apply to the particular process of movement from the biblical text to the sermon. It will become crucial to ask how the preacher utilizes the illocutionary action, the constitutive rules and the direction of in order to make a homiletical bridge. Therefore, homiletical application of this SAT terminology will suggest an alternative central idea through which to build a Scripture-based bridge between text and sermon.

2. Speech act theory (SAT)

²⁰ These two linguists have been chosen for a specific reason: "If Austin is the Luther of SAT, John Searle may be considered its Melancthon, its systematic theologian" (Vanhoozer 1998: 209).

Speech act theory is a theory about the use of language. It was initially introduced by John Langshaw Austin in *“How to Do Things with Words”*(1975) and eventually systematized by his student, John Searle in *“Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language”*(1969); *“Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts”*(1979). This linguistic philosophy and theory proposes that a speaker is not merely uttering sounds, words or statements, but is performing an action, therefore, it is called the speech act theory(SAT).

2. 1. J.L.Austin: the utterance is performative.

Austin’s initial insight(1975: 4-5) is that “constatives” in language performs particular actions. Performatives are used when we say, “I do” (in a marriage ceremony), “I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth” (in christening a ship), “I give and bequeath my watch to my brother” (in a will), or “I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow” (in a bet):

“In these examples it seems clear that to utter the sentence (in, of course, the appropriate circumstance) is not to describe my doing of what I should be said in so uttering to be doing or the state that *I am doing it: it is to do it*” (Austin 1975: 6) [my emphasis].

Austin’s primary perception is mainly that the use of language employs a performative action, rather than to utter a certain informative fact. With regard to this linguistic assessment of the performative dimension, therefore it becomes crucial to ask how the expression of language performs a specific action. Austin (1975: 98-108) say that the performative utterance can be divided into three components: the locutionary, the illocutionary, and the perlocutionary act.

First, the locutionary act is the performance of an act of saying something. It expresses the content of what has been said, its topic and what the sentence is doing with that topic. From this, three distinct actions happen when people use language as a locutionary act; the phonetic act, the phatic act, and the rhetic act:

“The phonetic act is merely the act of uttering certain noises. The phatic act is the uttering of certain vocables or words, i.e. noises of certain types, belonging to and as belonging to, a certain vocabulary, conforming to and as conforming to a certain grammar. The rhetic act is the performance of an act of using those vocables with a certain more-or-less definite sense and reference.”(Austin 1975: 95)

Second, the illocutionary act is the performance of an act in saying something. It functions as the force of what we do in saying something. Third, the perlocutionary act is “what we bring about or achieve by saying something”(Austin 1975: 109). It reacts to the intended effect of what has been said:

“Saying something will often, or even normally, *produce certain consequential effects* [my emphasis] upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them; and we may then say, thinking of this, that the speaker has performed an act in the nomenclature of which reference is made either (C. *a*), only obliquely, or even (C. *b*), not at all, to the performance of the locutionary or illocutionary act. We shall call the performance of an act of this kind the performance of a ‘perlocutionary’ act”(Austin 1975: 101).

From this category of performance action, Austin points (1975: 1-5) out that too long linguists have neglected the performative dimension of language or more accurately, its illocutionary force. That is the illocution which does not describe anything but “ is a

part of the doing an action”(ibid: 5). While locution has to do with a grammar system, illocutions and perlocutions have to do with sentences, with language in action. Austin(1975: 101) provides an example showing how this distinction works in an ordinary dialogue situation:

“Act (A) or Locution:

He said to me, “Shoot her!” meaning by “shoot”, shoot and referring by “her” to her.

Act (B) or Illocution

He urged (or advised, ordered, &c.) me to shoot her.

Act (C. a) or Perlocution

He persuaded me to shoot her.

Act (C. b)

He got me to (or made me &c.) shoot her.”

Austin calls the above type (B) of saying a performative utterance in which the illocution action has a particular force; further, this force causes an effect in communication.²¹ That is, illocutionary force creates the receiver’s response (C.a /C.b). For example, the illocutionary action of advising (B) may achieve efficiently the effect of persuading or convincing; warning (C.a /C.b). In addition, this illocutionary effect of being heard and understood may also frighten, scare or alarm (C.n) (Austin 1975: 117-118). This type of action in Austin’s terms is “perlocutionary” acts. The fundamental feature of the perlocutionary act is that it refers to an effect upon the receiver achieved

²¹ Austin further divides(1975: 151) illocutionary actions into five classes: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives and expositives,viz. (1) the verdictives : giving of a verdict(e.g., to estimate, reckon or appraise; (2) the exercitives: exercising of powers, rights or influence(e.g., to appoint, vote, order, urge, advise or warn; (3) the commissives: promising, that you commit to do something; (4) the behabitives: to do with attitudes and social behavior(e.g., apologizing, congratulating, commending, condoling, cursing and challenging; (5) the expositives explain how we are using our words(e.g., “I reply,” “I argue,” “I concede,” or “I postulate.”)

by an illocutionary act. The definition of some illocutionary verbs, such as requesting, refers necessarily to the perlocutionary act associated with the receiver (the attempt to get a hearer to do something) (Austin 1975: 119). Theoretically, a complete understanding of utterance according to Austin involves an agreement on all three of these level actions (locution, illocution and perlocution) between the sender (statement/text) and the receiver (listener/reader). Furthermore, this performative dimension leads ultimately to a conclusion.

From this we see that successful communication occurs only when there is a response to the illocutionary force within an apparent action (perlocution level). To summarise, if the receiver executes the intention of the sender, the receiver gets the meaning from illocution level, not only on the locution level. From knowing this, the receivers bring an apparent perlocutionary action. It is possible to distinguish between the *meaning* of what we say and the *force* of what we say (Austin 1975: 108).²² This distinction can produce a particular hermeneutical sensitivity as well as an interpretation in biblical preaching. For example, when James writes that “You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder”; (James 2:19 NIV)²³, he not only writes to explain monotheism, but rather to warn the fake believer, namely those who do not produce good deeds in community. Even though, the audience in this text already knew an on locution level that God is one, it is not necessary to reconstruct their socio logical

²² Austin starts by proposing a difference between statements and performatives, and then explores the fact that it is impossible to draw a rigid distinction between them. His conclusion: a statement is a kind of performative too. Therefore, Austin stresses (1975: 109) that only understanding of the locution level in the statement is “roughly equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense.”

²³ I am writing the NIV is all Bible quotation

or historic structure in order to understand its locution level. However, this well-known knowledge of God doesn't make any difference to understanding "God is one" in their life, except to the demons. In order to avoid this misunderstanding, the preacher will have to involve not only the locution level, but also the illocution level. This consideration will become the fundamental hermeneutic device to find the intention of the biblical text as well as the normative task of preaching.²⁴ Therefore, one of the most important benefits of illocution action is to rethink the meaning of Scripture and the faithful response to it.

2.2. John Searle: Speech Act.

Searle develops in a persuasive way Austin's initial study of the perspective dimension which becomes the study of "speech acts theory"(SAT) in his book "*Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*,"(1969). Searle stresses that "[t]he unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the ... performance of the speech act" (ibid: 16).

From this perspective, he subsequently proposes the following hypothesis:

"the production of the sentence token under *certain conditions is the illocutionary act*, and the *illocutionary act is the minimal unit of linguistic communication*" (Searle 1971: 39) [my emphasis].

²⁴ William Alston acclaims the importance of Austin's analysis of illocutionary action: "If this is the line along which meaning should be analyzed, then the concept of an illocutionary act is the most fundamental concept in semantics and, hence, in the philosophy of language", see William P Alston 1964, 39.

His hypothesis of SAT agrees with Austin's perspective of using language as the basic unit of communication not in its "constative" dimension, but rather as performing a speech act. However, he suggests a more detailed framework within the performative aspect of language usage. There are three different type of actions when people use the word/text, viz. (1) utterance acts: to utter words (e.g., morphemes and sentences); (2) propositional acts: to refer and predicate; (3) illocutionary acts: to state, question, command, promise, and so on(Searle 1969: 29).

Particularly, Searle points out that Austin's distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts is not possible. In Searle's analysis(1968: 413), there is no utterance of a sentence with its meaning that is completely "force-neutral". A well, every literal text contains some indicators of force as part of meaning, which is to say that "every rhetic act is an illocutionary act". Searle's assessment:

"One cannot just express a proposition while doing nothing else and have thereby performed a complete speech act When a proposition is expressed it is always expressed in the performance of an illocutionary act."(Searle 1969: 29)

Searle claims clearly that the propositional act cannot stand on its own. That is, any language cannot just indicate and describe without making an assertion or asking a question or performing some other illocutionary act. The propositional acts cannot occur alone; further, it is always an illocutionary act that is simultaneously performed. This incorporation within a propositional expression and its illocutionary act means that most illocutionary acts will have propositional content. More clearly, Searle stresses (1969: 30) that what people do with a proposition is the illocutionary act: "The

illocutionary force indicator shows how the proposition is to be taken". Therefore, Searle introduces (1969: 31) that the formulation of speech act can be represented as $F(p)$ where " F " is the illocutionary force and " P " is the proposition. To put it simply, " F " creates a proposition and counts as illocutionary acts (a warning; " $W(p)$ ", blessing; " $B(p)$ ", promise; " $Pr.(p)$ ", etc), and in here, (P) stands for the propositional content and F for the stance adopted by the speaker toward it (Vanhoozer 1998: 210). That is, a proposition becomes a meaningful action by illocutionary force.

In addition, Searle (1971: 40) teaches that the use of language is also explained by these constitutive rules, further, it governs human behavior. From this, the propositional content can be understood as having certain "constitutive rules". These constitutive rules constitute and regulate activities, and often have the form: "X counts as Y in context C." (1969: 35). For example, under the constitutive rules of soccer, the soccer player kicking a soccer ball into the goal *counts as* one score. There are conventions involved in these constitutive rules, which are related to all kinds of non-linguistic criteria. Therefore, to perform illocutionary acts will be to engage in "a rule-governed form of behavior" (Searle 1979: 17).

In fact, the biblical text is itself "a rule-governed form of behavior", for it contains certain "constitutive rules" such as honour and shame, kinship, the value system of purity, or the ancient economy. The reading of Scripture clearly encounters a totally different world and it manifests itself in the discussions of the social, political and cultural dynamics of the world of Scripture. Cultural conventions involved in these constitutive rules, are related to all kinds of institutional facts. These non-linguistic

elements would help us to recognize where illocutionary action is working, whereby we may notice that the illocutionary action creates new realities. For example, “You are guilty” is an institutional fact that created a social reality within a successful performance of the relevant speech act in the court (Searle 1995: 54-55). In this way, the benefit of Searle’s formulation: “X counts as Y in context C” in SAT will call attention to the central problem of being self-evident.²⁵ Historically, Christianity has for a long time been aware of how easy it is to use Scripture to prove a particular dogma, or to justify a particular practice, only to be accused of distorting the text. Of course, one does not have to be a scholar to misread the Bible; it can happen during daily devotions as well as during preaching. Therefore, the preacher should be more concerned with textual meaning as an institutional fact, and less concerned with his or her own subjective responses to the clear fact of the text.

3. The definition of meaning in the SAT

Searle also goes further (1969: 43) to define the notion of meaning. In considering meaning in SAT, it may be useful to mention another SAT theorist, Paul Grice. His definition of meaning in the utterance: “To say that a speaker *S* meant something by *X* is to say that *S* intended the utterance of *X* to produce some effect in a hearer *H* by means of the recognition of this intention.”²⁶ This account of meaning stresses clearly that the

²⁵ In Searle’s key formula, the utterance X counts as Y in context C, have developed “institutional fact” in his book in *“The Construction of Social Reality”* (1995) whereby we may understand that this kind of “counting -as” operation creates states of affairs. For example, ‘You are guilty as charged’ is an institutional fact that creates social reality. This conceptuality is a fruitful idea for biblical scholars to explore in analyzing how the biblical world is constructed.

²⁶ This notion of meaning is proposed by Paul Grice, Some SAT theorists, like Grice, argue that meaning is to be primarily a matter of intention; others emphasize the role of conventions. The strength of Searle’s theory deals with including both factors; see more information on “Meaning” in *Philosophical*

intention produces effects on an audience. This definition seems plausible, yet it requires further examination, because it confuses illocutionary with perlocutionary acts. That is, illocutionary acts through the sender succeeds in doing what he/she is trying to do by getting the receiver to recognize what text or utterance he is trying to get across. However, the 'effect' on the hearer is not a belief or response; it consists simply in the hearer/readers' understanding the illocutionary act of the speaker/author. This effect is an illocutionary effect (*IE*)(Searle 1969: 47). Therefore, Searle proposes (ibid: 47) an alternative definition of the meaning in terms of SAT: "the speaker *S* intends to produce an illocutionary effect *IE* in the hearer *H* by means of getting *H* to recognize *S*'s intention to produce *IE*". According to his definition, the meaning is a matter specifically of illocution, not perlocution (Searle 1971: 45).

More precisely, Searle refuses to give any function of perlocutions in the foundation of meaning: "I will reject the idea that the intentions that matter for meaning are the intentions to produce effects on audiences (Searle 1983: 161) ." For example, The Bible testifies to God's force in the world, regardless of how people respond to it, but it only persuades if the people respond to its testimony with belief. Therefore, the meaning is the intention-as-expressed in the illocution action. These illocutionary points will be created by the author's intention that determines how propositional context makes relationship with the world. This display reality is a matter specifically of illocutionary action that is created by the author's intentional purpose, not by the reader's individual experience. From this aspect, biblical preaching is not identical with preaching about individual experience. When the preacher prepares a sermon using an illocutionary

Review(July 1957), pp.377-88, also see Searle1971, 44-46.

action of the text, the preacher is not merely gathering propositional information about that text. Rather, the preacher tries to demonstrate how the propositional information works together as an illocutionary act that is simultaneously performed through biblical preaching. For example, the utterance of the centurion in front of Jesus: “Surely this man was the Son of God!”, (Mk 15:39) his statement is neither simply p nor simply F but $F(p)$. More specifically it is an assertive which entails making the messianic reality in the context of the Passion of the Christ. This reality is created by the illocutionary action he or she [the author] performed. It is not created by such self-evident reading. This illocutionary force is “a living language voice in search of a hearer, a voice which seeks to break in upon us from beyond”(Tostengard 1989: 81). There is nothing for the preacher to say, until the preacher recognizes the illocutionary act. With regard to this assessment of meaning in terms of SAT, therefore, it becomes crucial to ask how people recognize the divine’s intention to produce illocutionary force. It expects God’s warning, promising, commanding, healing, etc.

4. The direction of fit between words and the world.

Searle points (1976: 3) out that the speaker’s intention creates illocutionary force in which some illocutions have a part in their purpose. This illocution point determines the kind of directedness between the propositional content and the world in order to represent how the object is in the world. It is a matter of how the propositional contents match the world through the purpose of illocutionary points. Because, as Searle clearly stresses(1969: 47), the author intends $F(p)$ both a propositional content and the energy of an illocutionary force. From this, whenever an elementary illocutionary act is satisfied in an actual context of utterance, a success of fit between language and the

world is required. (Vanderveken 2001a: 32). This necessity is called direction of fit, which plays a key role in SAT's understanding the logic of illocutionary action. (Searle 1979: 3-4).

Searle said (1979: 10-16) that there are basically five types of speech act $F(p)$ which people do with language (e.g., assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations), often, the speaker does more than one of these at once in the same utterance: (1) the assertive: utterances say how things are; (2) the directives: utterances to try to get them to do things; (3) the commissives: utterances which commit ourselves to doing things;(4) the expressive: utterances expressing our feelings and attitudes; (5) the declaration: utterances bringing about changes through our utterances.

Therefore, the classification of illocutionary acts is precisely the distinction between different illocutionary points. This distinction shows how the speaker's intentionality makes the same proposition count as an illocutionary act, such as a warning; " $W(p)$ ", blessing; " $B(p)$ ", promise; " $Pr.(p)$ ", etc(Searle 1976: 2).

In order to explain this directedness in terms of SAT, Searle uses an illustration of both a shopping list of a shopper and a detective²⁷:

"In the case of the shopper's list...*to get the world to match the words*; the man is supposed to make his actions fit the list. In the case of the detective...*to make the words match the world*; the man is supposed to make the list fit the actions of the shopper. This can be further

²⁷ Searle borrows this illustration from Anscombe 1957, see.

demonstrated by observing the role of ‘mistake’ in the two cases. If the detective gets home and suddenly realizes that the man bought pork chops instead of bacon, he can simply *erase the word ‘bacon’ and write ‘pork chops’*. But if the shopper gets home and his wife points out he has bought pork chops when he should have bought bacon he *cannot correct the mistake by erasing ‘bacon’ from the list and writing ‘pork chops’*” (Searle 1976: 3) [my emphasis].

Searle’s illustration of the shopping list shows that even though the propositional content (*p*) of the two lists will be the same, their force (*F*) will be quite different. This difference is equated with the author’s intention that determines the direction (and manner) of fit between words and world (Vanhoozer 1998: 247). For example, when James writes that “You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder”, (Jas 2:19): the proposition content “God is one” purposes an assertion point, which has a word to match the world direction of the fit. However, when Paul writes that “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”, (1Ti 2:5): its purpose intended a promises point, which has a world to match the words direction of the fit. Both biblical passages have partly the same propositional content “God is one”, however, the distinction between different directions of fit is precisely the distinction between different kinds of illocutionary points.

Based on Searle’s observation (Searle 1976: 10-16; 1979: 12-20) that each illocutionary point makes fundamentally only four possible directions of fit (word-to-world direction, world-to-word direction, double direction or empty direction): (1) Illocutionary acts with an assertive point (e.g. assertions, conjectures, predictions) have the words-to-world direction of fit. This illocutionary point is to represent how things are (It is

raining); (2) Illocutionary acts with the commissive or directive point (e.g., promises, vows, acceptance, and requests) have the world-to-words direction of fit. This illocutionary point is to have the world transformed by the future course of action of the speaker (Open the window); (3) Illocutionary acts with the declaratory illocutionary point (e.g., definitions, appellations, appointments, benedictions and condemnations) have the double direction of fit to bring about correspondence between propositional content and reality (You are fire); (4) Illocutionary acts with the expressive point (e.g., apologies, thanks, complains, boasts) have the empty direction of fit. This illocutionary point is just to express the speaker's mental state about a represented fact. In this case, in expressive utterance, speakers do not attempt to represent how things are and they do not want to change things (I am so sorry).²⁸

These differences of intentionality in the direction of fit between words and the world are important for the homiletic bridge: when the preacher has correctly identified a homiletical idea (propositional content), having thoughts and ideas of a given passage, the interpretive task is not yet complete. Important is to determine what the biblical author was intending by his or her words (more strictly, their propositional content). For many preachers, the weakness of the homiletic bridge they use, may be to urge the congregation to respond to the "how-tos" of spiritual life seen in text. In this case, they concern only (*p*), which easily transforms a dogmatic or a moralistic lesson. The preacher can too easily find the moral vision or dogmatic essence in the Scripture, but not precisely pay attention to its directions of fit. In other words, they must seriously ask the question "Is the illocutionary force *F* of this propositional content (*p*) really intended

²⁸ For more on direction of fit, see Daniel Vanderveken, 1990, 103-110

to count as a dogmatic or a moralistic message?" As Searle points (1969: 29) out, the proposition is expressed it is always expressed in the performance of an illocutionary act. That is, any moralistic theme or dogmatic idea is neither simply p nor simply F but $F(P)$ in which this propositional subject cannot stand on its own. Therefore, the sermon should pay attention to the dual nature of the text, both its illocutionary act (what the text wishes to do) and its propositional content (what the text wishes to say).

In order to achieve this, the homiletic bridge should imitate the biblical author's attention as $F(p)$. This homiletic bridge will be built when both the Scripture and the sermon concentrate on the same matter in the same manner. In fact, the purpose of Scripture is most often not merely to inform, but to do something else like to promise, to comfort, to warn, etc. True preaching thus will endeavor not only to retell the same propositional content as the text (it just makes the sermon so boring), but will rather aim at obtaining the same response as the original biblical author intended. Therefore, the homiletics bridge is largely a matter of following directions: the direction of the author's attention (e.g., to a proposition), and the direction of fit between words and world (e.g., the kind of illocution).

5. Summary and conclusion.

This chapter has investigated, on the basis of Austin's and Searle's work the term 'SAT'. This philosophy of linguistic theory makes four important contributions: firstly, speaking is to perform an act; secondly, SAT is able to distinguish between the meaning of what we say (locution), the force of what we say (illocution) and the appropriate response by saying something (perlocution). Thirdly, SAT requires constitutive rules for

it to count as an action; fourthly, SAT explains that when the proposition is expressed, it is always expressed in the performance of an illocutionary act. It is symbolized as $F(p)$. In this case, each illocutionary point has a different direct of fit, which helps us to know the author's intention that determines the direction (and manner) of fit between words and world.

In order to rethink the homiletical bridge in light of SAT, the following three questions provide a framework to our approach: (1) Which constitutive rules do govern in the biblical passage?; (2) Which kind of illocution action does it perform in the biblical passage?; (3) How does $F(p)$ in the text determine the kind of direction of fit to open up an alternative reality in the Christian life? Even though each question has its distinctiveness, the distinctions are connected in an interdependence of interpretation methodology. From this, the preaching can be understood by metaphorey of as surfing. Even though a surfer is performing on the surface of the water, this activity is completely reacting to potential impetuses from the depths of the sea water. However, before enjoying surfing, the surfer should learn to swim in the water. Similarly, the preaching in application of SAT will not be only engaged with the superficial level of the grammatical or historical meaning of the text (propositional content), but also to assess different text levels in illocutionary force. At this stage the preacher is able to distinguish between the *meaning* of what text say and the *force* of what text do. This distinction can create a particular hermeneutical sensitivity to finding the illocution in the text. This illocutionary action refreshes the preaching material, the propositional content in the biblical text having usually recognized the fixed topics. However, the illocutionary points will be demonstrating toward a basic homiletical ideas (theme,

subject purpose) as $F(p)$: a warning; “ $W(p)$ ”, blessing; “ $B(p)$ ”, promise; “ $Pr.(p)$ ”, etc), in here, (P) stands for the propositional content and F for the stance adopted by the text toward it. To put it simply, “ F ” creates a proposition biblical issue which counts as meaningful action, therefore, this meaningful action is a special determining factor in the normative preaching task. From this aspect, the preaching is re-illocution of the text.

In addition, the illocutionary act of the biblical text should be to engage the congregation in “a rule-governed form of behavior”. This constitutive rule makes concrete the particular identity that has a focus in the communal confession. This attention is used in and by particular community living at a particular time and place with particular shared beliefs, institutions and practices (MacIntyre 1988: 373). These institutions would help us to recognize the identity of the illocutionary action in the text. Furthermore, the identity of illocutionary acts is precisely connected to the distinction of direction of fit. This distinction shows how the text intentionally creates the same proposition as an illocutionary act, such as a warning; “ $W(p)$ ”, blessing; “ $B(p)$ ”, promise; “ $Pr.(p)$ ”, etc (Searle 1976: 2). In this way, the congregation realizes how the biblical text still challenges the modern world. This direction of fit is fruitful in the sense that the preacher and congregation gain new practice in Christianity. The preaching is the re-illocutionary act toward the same direction of fit within the text.

For example, if the preacher prepares the sermon using John 2:1-12; “The Wedding at Cana” perhaps, he/she can accept the miracle at Cana as ordinary preaching material for propositional information; and then to construct a sermon plainly within this proposition. This sermon may have the goal to explain that “the obedience creates the miracle” or

“how we can expect the miracle in ordinary life”. In this case, the preacher uses the illustration to clarify a certain relevant message on “Christian obedience”. Finally, before he finishes this sermon, the congregation already knows what this sermon tells us, but they still struggle to apply it in their different lives. However, if the preacher applies SAT to build a homiletical bridge in the light of three questions: (1) *Which constitutive rules do govern in the biblical passage?*; (2) *Which kind of illocution action does it perform in the biblical passage?*; (3) *How does F(p) in the text determine the kind of the direction of fit to open up alternative reality in the Christian life?* The followre outline summarizes the basic answers to questions on three different levels:

(1) *Which constitutive rules do govern in the biblical passage?*

The reading of “The Wedding at Cana”, John 2:1-12 encounters a totally different world and therefore manifests a cultural difference between an ancient and a modern wedding. Simply put, what is the meaning that someone supplies wine? Whose duty is it – the bridegroom’s side or the bride’s in the context of Jesus’ time? These constitutive rules would help the preacher recognize the identity of the illocutionary action in the text.

(2) *Which kind of illocution action does it perform in the biblical passage?*

According to this passage, when the wine supply ran out during the wedding festivities, Jesus’ mother spoke to him about the problem. At that time, Jesus said: “My time has not yet come”, (Jn 2:4). In order to clarify this utterance of Jesus in SAT, the preacher should pay attention to the intentionality of the text, which creates a proposition,

counting F (in Jesus' time) as an illocutionary act such as a warning; " $W(p)$ ", blessing; " $B(p)$ ", and promise; " $Pr.(p)$ ". Particularly, in the context of a wedding, the proposition of Jesus' time counts as a promise; " $Pr.(Jesus' time)$ ". This " $Pr.(p)$ " will give one of the important biblical messages of -Jesus as bridegroom. Therefore, preachers can do more than one thing with the same proposition; they can preach God' promise in Jesus Christ. These illocutionary points will create different effects; it can be frighten, alarm and bring hope within the congregation.

(3) How does $F(p)$ in the text determine the kind of direction of fit to open up alternative reality in the Christian life?

The preacher has identified a homiletical idea (propositional content) such as "obedience creates the miracle" in particular biblical passages. However, the preacher should pay attention to its directions of fit when he /she preaches on the subject of Christian obedience in this passage. The preacher asks seriously that this illocutionary point really gives as (p : a plot, content, and character) "obedience" as the central idea of the sermon. It is often pointed out that homiletics suggests "saying the same thing as the text". However, in SAT, homiletics suggest that "doing the same thing as the directedness of the text". Therefore, the preaching as re-illocutionary act in the text seeks the intentionality of the text in which the homiletical purpose pertains to the directedness of the illocutionary effect in the text. This association leads to the preaching succeeds to accomplish what the preacher is seeking to do to create the same the response of belief as the author anticipated in this passage.

As a result of these questions and answers, SAT manifests “the movement between text and sermon”, by refreshing the preaching material and the preaching praxis; that is, creating the homiletic bridge. In light of SAT this will provide not only a reflection on the same ideas as the text, but also aims at being faithful to the same purpose, eliciting the same response as the illocutionary force in the intention of the Scripture. To summarise: the preacher cannot build a satisfactory homiletic bridge, until the preacher is aware of the illocutionary act helping the preaching to be a re-illocution of the text. In this case, the homiletic bridge requires a response that will result in a suitable and responsible manner in which Scripture is appreciated. The homiletical application of SAT suggests that the Scripture uses a preacher rather than a preacher using the Scripture. The central idea is to build a Scripture-based bridge between text and sermon. This means that, the essence of interpretation in preaching is to recognize the illocutionary action in the Bible, because this illocutionary action creates the central idea of the sermon as well as developing a unit of the sermon content. In the next chapter we will explore how the interface of SAT and biblical studies assists the preacher to interpret the Scripture as God’s speech act.

CHAPTER 4

THE INTERFACE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES AND HOMILETICS IN THE LIGHT OF SPEECH ACT THEORY: THE PREACHER TO INTERPRET THE SCRIPTURE AS GOD'S SPEECH ACT

1. Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted the alternative framework for a homiletical bridge between text and sermon in light of speech act theory. The preacher who applies SAT to build this homiletical bridge in light of the three afore-mentioned questions should arrive at a different sermon goal, namely

- (1) Which kind of illocutionary action does this biblical passage perform?
- (2) Which constitutive rules govern this biblical passage?
- (3) For the $F(p)$ in this text, what is the direction of fit between words and world and how may this open up an alternative reality in the Christian life?

In this case, the preacher cannot build a satisfactory homiletical bridge, until the preacher is aware of the illocutionary act such as promising, hinting, arguing, blessing, condemning, announcing, evoking, praising, praying, telling, and joking. This SAT insight has a far-reaching effect on the nature of performing acts in the biblical text. The recent SAT studies painstakingly classified over 270 “performative verbs” and analyse how the text and reader are related to them, according to whether the author is declaring something, committing himself to some course of action, directing the text in some way, asserting something, or expressing some psychological state.²⁹ Once the preacher

²⁹For more information of the classifying of “performative verbs”, see Vanderveken 1990:166-219.

accepts that the illocutionary nature of biblical language is dynamic in this way, it is a first step to rethinking “what is the connotation of the preaching” in relationship between Scripture, the power of Holy Spirit, and the preacher. The re-illocution of the Scripture in biblical preaching will be the corollaries of the Bible as God’s authoritative speech act to be *F(p)*, the *Holy Spirit (Jesus)*.

Therefore, this chapter will show how SAT can help us to interpret the Bible as well as how this SAT application can serve persuasively in important homiletical issues such as “the preaching Jesus”, “the witness as preaching” and “the power of preaching.” From these, the interdisciplinary approaches within hermeneutics and homiletics in the light of SAT are neither simply utilizing the biblical text as the footnote in a sermon nor simply suggesting a magical single way in homiletic methodology as the praxis of preaching. In certain cases, for a particular illocutionary force of the text there will be the reconceiving that the preaching are the Words of God. Therefore, SAT might re-introduce the sovereignty of God and the necessary role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ as a basic homiletic confession.

2. The use of illocutionary acts in biblical interpretation in the refreshing of “the preaching Jesus.”

Thiselton’s works have frequently proposed that Biblical language can be understood as speech act in a variety of hermeutical and theological areas.³⁰ He wrote two New

³⁰ Thiselton, Anthony C, “The Parables as Language-Event: Some Comments on Fuchs’s Hermeneutics in the Light of Linguistic Philosophy.” in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* 23 (1970): 437-68; “The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings.” in *The Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1974):283-99;1992 *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan; “Speech-Act Theory and the Claim that God Speaks: Nicholas Wolterstorffs *Divine Discourse*.” in *Scottish Journal of Theology* 50 (1997): 97-110; “Communicative Action and Promise in Interdisciplinary, Biblical and Theological Hermeneutics.” in *The Promise of Hermeneutics*.1999 Edited by Roger Lundin, Clarence Walhout, and Anthony C. Thiselton. Grand Rapids:

Testament commentaries on 1st Corinthians and Hebrews in the light of SAT.³¹ One of his primary works is “The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings”(Thiselton 1974: 38). This article utilizes the notion that biblical words can be refreshed as speech acts, especially blessings and curses in the Old Testament. According to him, these biblical words are not dependent on primitive notions of word-magic. Rather the power of blessings and curses renders the nature of the speaking agent, and the illocutionary force of what is uttered, in line with the accepted convention of the situation.³²

In addition, Thiselton applies(1992: 286) SAT more concretely to Jesus’ performative utterances in the Synoptic Gospels. This work showed that the words of Jesus in his narrative texts can be demonstrated as having speech act character in the light of illocutionary point such as exercitive, directive and verdictive (Thiselton 2006: 76-81). For example, when Jesus says: “My son, your sins are [hereby] forgiven” (Mk 2:5; Mt. 9:2; Lk 5:20); “Peace! Be still” (Mk 4:35-41; Mt 8: 23-27; Lk 8:22-25), he applied especially SAT as biblical interpretation toward one of the most famous of Jesus’ utterances, the so-called “The Great Commission”:

Eerdmans, 133-239.

³¹ Thiselton, Anthony C, 2000 *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Thiselton, Anthony C, “The Epistle to the Hebrews,” in *Commentary 2000*, ed.J.D.G.Dunn and J.W.Rogerson, forthcoming.

³² See Thiselton’s assessment of this issue(2006: 62-63):“Blessing and cursing are prime examples of what J.L Austin called performative language, namely, a language-use in which ‘the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action’. It is an “illocutionary” act, i.e. performance of an act in saying something, as opposed to performance of an act of saying something... Acts of blessing in the Old Testament rest on accepted conventions; on procedures or institutions accepted within Israelite society, and usually involving conventionally accepted formulae. They are effective, in most cases, only when performed by the appropriate person in the appropriate situation.”[my emphasis]

“Go therefore and make disciples” (Matt. 28:19) constitutes an *exercitive* which appoints, commands and *assigns* an “institutional” *role*. “Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20) combines the *exercitive* and *habitative* dimensions of *authorization*. “Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” (Matt. 28:20) represents a classic illocution example of the sub-category identified by Austin, Evans, Searle, and Recanati as “*commissives*” (Thiselton 1992: 287).

From this hermeneutical application within SAT, the preacher may identify a number of other examples of illocutionary categories of Jesus’ utterances in other narrative sequence. This SAT application in biblical interpretation highlights the illocutionary point constituted in the narrative plot. This biblical approach will suggest an alternative criterion for the understanding of Jesus’ words and his works. As SAT points out, the speaker’s intention creates the illocutionary act in which the sequence of the illocutionary action in Jesus’ utterances can be ascribed to his identity. Therefore, the identity of Jesus should “govern interpretations of conventional “messianic” language, rather than that ready-made assumptions about the meaning of such language should govern an understanding of Jesus”(Thiselton 2006: 80).

If the narrative plot in the stories of Jesus can be understood as speech acts, Jesus’ utterances in biblical passages should be performing actions such as warnings, commands, invitations, judgments, promises, or pledges of love (Thiselton 2006: 78). These biblical plots can be represented as $F(p)$ where “ F ” is the illocutionary force (what Jesus intend) and “ P ” is the propositional expression(what Jesus said) (cf. Searle 1969: 31). This narrative content cannot occur alone, further, it is always an illocutionary act that is simultaneously performed. More clearly, what narrative text

expresses with a propositional context is the illocutionary action (cf. Searle 1969: 30).³³ Jesus' effective words is basic to illocutionary activity in which several of Jesus' stories also can be represented unambiguously as $F(p)$. It should be characterized in the form of a promise " $Pr(p)$ ", warning " $W(p)$ ", blessing " $B(p)$ " etc. These biblical basic narrative illocutionary activities are clearly suggesting the reality of Jesus' intention, its basic plea; hear my word, believe me and follow me. Therefore, in SAT, the biblical narrative is important not because it provides a "homiletical plot" for sermons, or because preaching should consist of telling stories. Rather its illocutionary force *reveals the identity of Jesus of Nazareth*, who has been raised from the dead and seeks today *to form a people who follow his way*. Accordingly, *preaching from the gospels begins with the re-illocutionary point of Jesus' meaningful action* (cf. Campbell 1997: 190).

Homiletically, the preaching as re-illocution of the text can serve Campbell's main argument in "*Preaching Jesus: New directions for homiletics in Hans Frei's postliberal theology*", (1997). His work tried to overcome a limited narrative appropriation in the context of contemporary narrative preaching method. In this limited appropriation, the preacher interprets merely a displayed narrative structure of its biblical passage and then moves to apply those findings in the general transmission of preaching. This simplification is precisely what a lot of narrative homileticians have done (Campbell 1997: 190). However, if the preacher uses the illocutionary point as the central theological idea of the sermon, this homiletical proposition can be seen to focus on Jesus' intentional action as a significant guide to Christian preaching (cf. Campbell

³³ The biblical narrative can have genuine illocutionary force (Lanser 1981: 293). The biblical author projects a world towards the reader. In narrative, (p) is best viewed not as propositional content but as the plot (Vanhoozer 1998: 227).

1997: 192). Here, the narrative preaching does not intend the congregation to find similar stories in the biblical narrative. Rather, the preacher stresses that Jesus' narrative must have "messianic illocutionary force". This force is not created by our contemporary stories, because, what Jesus did, in the biblical narrative, is not to be regarded as a past event, rather it will have rapport with his people - what Jesus' hopes to say and to do in the contemporary world. This illocutionary force is exactly the essential nutrition to foster contemporary communities in Jesus Christ.

For example, Jesus said on the cross; "It is finished!" (John19:30). This is neither simply p nor simply F but $F(P)$ or more specifically, an assertive action which entails the declaration of a new reality. This reality is created by the specific illocutionary action the author performed. It is not such a reader-made event because, as Searle points out(1969: 47), the speaker intends to produce an illocutionary effect. Furthermore any proposition expressed is always expressed in the performance of an illocutionary act (ibid: 29). From this, the illocutionary point of Jn19:30 should make public the identity of Jesus in which the modern Christian confession is evaluated by this illocutionary force in the context of the Passion of the Christ. This $F(p)$ as "*declaration (the Passion narrative)*" generates an alternative reality, which can correct fake confessions as well as fake biblical preaching. This correction has focused on what Jesus promised or guaranteed in the Christian life, more than how the church understand his promise in modern life.

Regarding this homiletical reality, SAT can be used to establish the new relationship between Christology and Homiletics, to be conceived as an extension with an emphasis

on the uniqueness of his illocutionary force. Because, as SAT points out(1969: 47) Jesus (the speaker) intends to produce an illocutionary effect. Therefore, this illocutionary force of Jesus' utterance will refresh a certain interpretive practice in the identity of Jesus-centered preaching. In this way, the biblical illocutionary force exhibits the purpose of preaching. More precisely, this illocutionary force governs the message of preaching. The homiletical proposition can be seen to focus on illocutionary force as a significant guide to biblical preaching. The preacher does not preach that the congregation finds their familiar experience in the biblical passage, rather, the preacher stresses that illocutionary force will impact to challenge the congregation's life. To put it simply, the Jesus' speech act: *warnings (cross)*, *commands (cross)*, *invitations (cross)*, *promises (cross)*, and *pledges (cross)*; these illocutionary acts continue to play across time through the preaching Jesus.

Preaching is more than to claim a mere past event or abstract doctrinal information. Preaching is performing acts such as His promising, His arguing, His blessing, and His condemning of the Christian community in which the modern church invites trust, obedience, surrender and devotion. This self-involving level of interpretation in preaching suggests new insights in "what the text meant" and "what the text means" in homiletical context. In fact, this distinction is inappropriate to recognize any real zealous goal of illocutionary action in the Scripture. Because, in SAT, there is no rhetic act of a propositional-historical format (what the text meant) with its meaning that is completely "force-neutral", but every proposition content is expressed as it is always expressed in the performance of an illocutionary action(Searle 1968: 413; 1969: 29). Therefore, the re-illocutionary preaching is effectively performed, when the preacher

transforms a new relationship between the Scripture and congregation, and invites the community to participate in this transformation. This preaching vision is biblically adequate to communicate the element of the illocutionary force of Scripture as the normative nourishment for the church (cf. Campbell 1997: 257). Therefore, the preaching of Jesus in SAT is no more entertainment, but rather enters into an alternative reality of the modern church.

3. The use of illocutionary acts for biblical interpretation in terms of “the witness of preaching.”

Nicholas Wolterstorff has applied SAT in biblical interpretation.³⁴ According to him, the illocutionary action offers new ways “of thinking about God speaking”(1995: 13). His argument also relies on the nature of illocutionary acts, which can distinguish between God saying and God doing acts in Scripture. In using one locutionary act to perform another illocutionary act, Wolterstorff explains(1997: 30): “I have performed one action by performing another distinct action”. Accordingly, it is possible that God’s speaking can be understood as a speech act. Here is his analysis(Wolterstorff 1995: 13):

“Once illocutionary acts are thus distinguished from locutionary acts, then it immediately occurs to one that though of course such actions as asking, asserting, commanding, and promising, can be performed by way of uttering or inscribing sentences, they can be performed in many other ways as well. One can say something by producing a blaze, or smoke, or a sequence of light-flashes. Even more interesting: one can tell somebody something by deputizing someone else to speak on one's behalf. In short, contemporary

³⁴ Wolterstorff, Nicholas. “Why Animals Don’t Speak.” *Faith and Philosophy* 4 (1987): 463-85; 1995, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks*. New York: Cambridge University Press; “True Words” in: Alan G. Padgett and Patrick R. Keifert(ed), *But Is It All True?* Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006.

speech-action theory opens up the possibility of a whole new way of thinking about God speaking: perhaps the attribution of speech to God by Jews, Christians..., should be understood as the attribution to God of illocutionary actions, leaving it open how God performs those actions.”

From this perspective, God can create an illocutionary force with or without a linguistic system. In fact, the Bible describes dynamic media such as fire, water, wind, silence and human being to perform a divine illocutionary force. As Wolterstorff further remark(*ibid*: 1995: 38):

“Actually all of us use conventional gestures of various sorts to say things: winks, nudges, shrugs, nods, and so forth. The media of divine discourse are even more diverse, or so at least the biblical writers claim. Words, yes; but beyond that, happenings of all sorts: dreams, visions, apparitions, burning bushes, illnesses, national calamities, and national deliverances, droughts - on and on. When reflecting on discourse, be it human or divine, it’s important to keep in mind this diversity of media - especially important to keep in mind that one doesn’t need words to say things.”

This diversity of “media of divine discourse” opens up the possibility that Scripture itself is SAT. That is, God can perform a speech act without having to utter sounds. From this, the preacher refreshes God being present within illocutionary acts in the Bible, because faithful preaching requires a certain attitude of hearing the living voice of God. The preacher cannot preach anything until the preacher is aware of God’s living Words. According to SAT, the basic unit of linguistic communication is not the locution level (symbol, word, and sentence) but the performance of a speech act.³⁵ There are

³⁵ Searle clearly said(1969: 16) that “[t]he unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of the speech act. ... More precisely, the production or issuance of a sentence token under certain conditions is a speech act, and

many Christian communities which read the Bible (locution level) in order to encounter God's presence (illocution level) in contemporary life. SAT is not the only bridge between speaker and audience in the synchrony dialogue situation, but in certain cases, for particular types of illocutionary force in the text, it continues to play across time here and there (Pratt 1977: 136).³⁶ This illocutionary force is in essence that of the presence of God through the text. Forth-reaching, the illocutionary force of the Scripture may suggest an alternative logic of the presence of God as His speech act (Wolterstorff 1995: 19-36).

Homiletically, God's presence as God's speech act is more than to retell a biblical statement or biblical story. Rather, His words are His speech acts in Scripture. If that is so, it becomes the central issue in the mystery of preaching, expressed in the Reformed statement that "preaching of the word of God is the Words of God." (see the second Helvetic Confession). This "is" must be understood in a pneumatological way (Immink 2002: 161). The preacher can rethink this Reformed confession in the light of SAT in which God's basic illocutionary activity in the text will serve the theological support of the mystery of preaching. Note Vanhoozer's remark in this regard:

"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

speech acts ... are the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication"

³⁶ Pratt has made a good start in applying speech act theory to texts. She points out, in "*Toward a speech act theory of literary discourse*", on this issue, the displayed text, is really doing something: "verbally *displaying* a state of affairs, inviting his addressee(s) to join him in contemplating it, evaluating it, and responding to it." (Pratt 1977: 136). The text, then, can have genuine illocutionary force.

reason that his words do not return to him empty (Isa. 55:11)” (1998: 457) [my emphasis].

If the preacher reflects on the above quotation concerning the mystery of preaching, this mystery of preaching is represented by $F(p)$ where *the Holy Spirit (a biblical content)* assists the Word of God in the preaching. This homiletical theology depends on the inner authority and witness of the Scripture and the convincing power of the Holy Spirit. To put it differently, the nature of the preaching itself could be understood as the perlocutionary action of *the Holy Spirit (a biblical content)*.

This situation leads to the following important theme in the task of preaching that the Holy Spirit illumines the preacher to bring out the illocutionary force of the biblical passage. In this view, the preacher has a vast responsibility with regard to his or her sermon. The preacher could receive the *Holy Spirit* as the perlocutor's energy in a responsible way. Therefore, if the preacher wants to share in the mystery of preaching in SAT then he/she must learn to respond faithfully to the various illocutionary actions in Scripture. The Holy Spirit illumines the preacher in order to create a Bible-oriented sermon through illocutionary force of the biblical passage. Thus, the preacher will not to be satisfied until he/she engages with both the dynamic illocution actions as well as its suitable perlocution. Effective preaching depends basically on the inner testimony of the Spirit (illocutionary force) and on the faithful reception of the preacher (perlocutionary action). This dialectic co-operative action enables the language of preaching to be re-illocutionary in which the preacher performs the execution of a divine illocutionary act. Therefore, the recognition of illocutionary force in the text restates the basic perspective of the witness of the preaching: becoming the performance of re-illocutionary action in

Scripture.

Homiletically, the image of the preacher as the performer of this re-illocutionary action can serve Long's proposition on "*The witness of preaching*", (2005). His main work tried to overcome the limited traditional image of the preacher, as a herald, a pastor or a storyteller (Long 2005: 45-51). According to him, witness is the crucial action in which the preacher has to report that a text is about something, which may be performed under certain conditions and with certain intentions (ibid:47). Note his remark in this regard:

"When the preacher makes the turn from the exegesis of the biblical text toward the sermon itself, ... The move from text to sermon is a move from beholding to attesting, from seeing to saying, from listening to telling, from perceiving to testifying, from *being* a witness to *bearing* witness." (Long 2005: 100).

This activity is obviously performed in an illocutionary act in Scripture (cf. Coady 1992: 25; Wolterstorff 2006: 38). The image of witness in preaching will not only be a valuable source of what happens in a past episode, being itself a basic means of knowledge in the present, as well as doing what it asserts in the present (Brueggemann 1997b: 165; Ricoeur 1980: 123). Indeed, witness in preaching becomes the performance of re-illocutionary action. In some way, the witness as a performer of illocutionary action has to wait on the illocutionary action in the biblical text to govern the present testimony. This re-illocutionary act will create a connection between what the text said in the past and the preaching context in the present. It is important to remember that both "what the text meant" and "what the text means" is not isolated in the context of

SAT (cf. Searle 1969: 29). The image of the witness in re-illocutionary preaching concerns the illocutionary force of the biblical text. Not only being the testimony of its original witness, but is also equally legitimate to all subsequent contemporary preachers in their present testimony.

This model of preaching is a form of testimony in the modern world referring both to what has happened to the world as it was to the new vision of what could be; to the world as it might or ought to be. Therefore, re-illocutionary preaching should pay attention to the dual nature of witness that God did something in Jesus Christ (His commands) and God will do something for the modern world in Jesus Christ (His promises). This dual aspect of witness is required of the preacher to in all the Christian Confessions. This response will result in the Christian witness in which the preacher engages with the practical, participatory, first-person nature of these confessions of faith in order to become a responsible “witness to Jesus Christ” in light of SAT (Neufeld 1994: 76).³⁷

4. The value of the illocutionary acts in biblical interpretation regarding the power of preaching.

When preachers encounter illocutionary acts in the Biblical text, they basically become dependent upon the locutionary levels to make some kind of interpretative judgment concerning the nature of the speech act. When Jesus says at the end of Matthew’s gospel, “I am with you always”, the preacher simply interprets this illocutionary act as a

³⁷ Neufeld examines SAT to bear witness to Jesus Christ in a confessional formula and especially its function in 1 John. He concludes that the biblical text exercises “power to transform the readers’ expectations, speech and conduct”(Neufeld 1994: 133). This illocutionary force in the text bears witness to Jesus Christ (ibid :76).

promise. However, there are other examples which remain complicated, for instance, when Paul said “Women should remain silent in the churches” (1Co 14:34). Even though the words of the text are clear, the question must be asked: which illocutionary point is Paul performing? The preacher should note that a variety of locutionary levels in the biblical texts do not necessarily correspond only to single illocutions. That is, speakers characteristically perform a locutionary act with a single utterance in which they utter words with a certain sense and reference. However, they also mean to perform illocutionary acts with a certain force such as assertions, promises, orders, declarations and apologies:

The notice : “Wet paint” as a		
Locutionary act	Illocutionary act	Perlocutionary act
It is a sentence according to the rules of the English imperative mood.	It is a warning, commanding, hinting or uttering something which have a certain conventional force.	It is a convincing, persuading, deterring, surprising sentence.

Therefore, when utterances have effects on audiences in which audiences have to perform perlocutionary acts, they aim at convincing, pleasing, influencing, or embarrassing. Thus, when a speaker utters a single sentence in English (or any other language), there are at least two, possibly three things going on (Austin 1975: 58-78; Searle 1979: 8-29). Hence, this nature of SAT unquestionably establishes that the biblical writings perform multiple speech acts (Wolterstorff 1995: 55). Therefore, the preacher may take the case where the Bible itself invites or requires several multi-layered, multi-directional actions. According to Thiselton, this nature of biblical language is generally agreed upon in several biblical case-studies. He notes:

“The very same word, however, combines a number of functions - they perform several multi-layered, multi-directional actions: They are sermon, creed, confession, hymn, praise, acclamation, exposition, argument, celebration. Much of the poverty of some preaching today derives from exclusive attention either to ‘teaching,’ or ‘exhortation,’ or personal anecdote, in contrast to the richly multi-layered, multi-level model of preaching...”(Thiselton 1999: 146).

Interestingly, this criticism on “the poverty of preaching” is not unprecedented. In fact, Craddock had criticized this, saying that too often today words simply describe: preachers “serve only as signs pointing to the discovered or discoverable data”(Craddock 1979: 33). In order to overcome “the poverty of preaching”, Craddock already regarded the illocutionary force as primary biblical interpretation elements in preaching (1979: 34-44). He stresses; “J.L Austin has reminded us of the creative or performative power of words. Words not only report something; they do something” (ibid: 34). Craddock’s conviction advocates the notion that preaching reconceives the biblical language to be “an action, something happening” (44): “words are deeds” (34), and his hope is to recover the “dynamistic and creative functions of language” in the context of homiletics (34).

Nevertheless, recent preaching styles have simply missed the point of Craddock’s critique of the carelessness of biblical language used in the sermon. Often preachers have tried to present several preaching styles such as “story preaching, dialogue sermons, and homiletical plot” in terms of a “new homiletic” (Campbell 1997: XI; Thompson 2001b: 9-11). Craddock emphasizes that “before they were smothered by a scientific and technological culture, words danced, sang, teased, lured, probed, wept,

judged, and transformed”(1979: 34). That is, the illocutionary action in the text itself is a divine symphony, putting breath into our dry sermons. The multiple speech actions lead to change the monotonous preaching God’s breath to the dry bones of the sermon. This is how Calvin and the Reformers understood the Spirit’s illumination: the Spirit convicts us that the Bible contains God’s dynamic illocutions and enables us to respond to them as we ought (Vanhoozer 1997: 156). Therefore, if the preacher reconsiders the Spirit’s illumination in light of illocutionary action, the multi-directional $F(p)$ through the Spirit’s illumination opens rethinking about the power of preaching.

Through this approach, the preacher is in a position to make a proposal concerning a homiletic principle. In the light of SAT, preaching depends on dynamic illocutions in the Bible, in which there is a dual divine-human agency in operation. This is what Wolterstorff terms a “double agency discourse”(Wolterstorff 1995: 38). This expresses an ordinary every-day situation found everywhere. For example, a chief executive officer might order what his or her secretary should say by dictating or indicating a message that should be said. It may even be said by the secretary knowing the intention of the CEO. In this case, the CEO empowers the secretary to write by signing the text, thereby showing that what the secretary says *counts as* the CEO’s illocutionary act. Similarly, the CEO might dispatch the secretary as a negotiator to represent the CEO. A deputized person does not necessarily receive the exact words to use, but still speaks in the name of the deputizer: “the deputy has, as it were, power of attorney”(Wolterstorff 1995: 44). Thus, the buyer is encountered not merely with locutionary acts of the negotiator, but more precisely with the negotiator’s locutionary acts which *count as* the CEO’s illocutionary acts performed by the negotiator. However, this leads to an

interesting question: permitted that the deputizer's locutionary action - the negotiator, the diplomat and the ambassador's locutionary acts - do these deputizers themselves perform illocutionary acts by way of their locutionary acts? But, is do they speak discourse in their own voice? Wolterstorffs answers thus:

“... [I]t might sometimes be the case that the very same utterings[of the deputizer] count both as the performance of speech actions by the ambassador and as the performance of speech actions by his head of state; these might be the very same speech actions, or somewhat different. Probably the most common occurrence, though, is that in the course of issuing the warning, the ambassador moves back and forth between speaking in the name of his head of state and speaking in his own voice; and sometimes part of what he does when speaking in his own voice consists of communicating a message from his head of state(Wolterstorff 1995: 45).”

This, “double agency discourse” homiletically can serve to enable us to rethink the power of preaching. It is often pointed out that the power of the sermon depends on “saying the same thing as the text”. However, in SAT, the preaching power consists of “doing the same thing as the performance of illocutionary force in the text”. It is a very important issue, because there are many boring sermons saying precisely the same thing as the Bible. Also, the preacher can easily misunderstand the issues of power in preaching, if he/she takes on the biblical passages word for word. Paul states that he demonstrated the power of preaching in Corinth: “My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.” (1Co 2:4-5). According to Paul, the basic essence of preaching is the Spirit's power through which everything is done. This power of God's word is exactly the illocutionary force in terms of SAT. It is clear in this connection that Paul's preaching in Corinth pays attention to

God's illocutionary actions. When the Spirit empowers what Paul proclaimed by preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified, his preaching authorized God's illocutionary acts in Jesus Christ. Thus the Corinthians were encountered, not merely with locutionary acts of Paul, but more precisely, with Paul's locutionary acts which *count as* illocutionary acts performed in God's power. In light of SAT, when Paul said "the power of God" it is a clear illocutionary act to authorize the power of the preaching. The power of preaching will be the medium of encounter with God's illocutionary power through Scripture. This "double agency discourse" in the preaching should aim to encompass a sense, both of the impact of what the text says and of the response to it. Therefore, truthful biblical preaching in light of SAT needs to be evaluated with reference to the affair of a non-linguistic agent (Brummer 1981: 11).

5. Summary and conclusion.

This chapter has explored the interface of SAT and biblical studies, as well as showing how this SAT application to biblical interpretation may serve persuasively to evaluate important homiletical issues such as "the preaching Jesus", "the witness of preaching" and "the power of preaching." The application of SAT in biblical interpretation makes three important contributions to each of these homiletical issues.

Firstly, "the preaching of Jesus", as represented in SAT as $F(p)$, should be clearly characterized in the form of a promise " $Pr(p)$ ", warning " $W(p)$ ", blessing " $B(p)$ " etc. This preaching is basic a re-illocutionary activity to stress the reality of Jesus' intention. Its basic: hear my word, believe me and follow me.

Secondly, in SAT “the witness of preaching” starts to perform a re-illocutionary action in some way. It requires that both “what the text meant” and “what the text means” should not simply be isolated in the context of SAT. This model of the preaching engages with the practical, participatory, first-person nature of the confession of faith in order to become a responsible “witness to Jesus Christ”.

Thirdly, in SAT “the power of preaching” makes it clear that preaching has to pay attention to God’s illocutionary action. Thereby, “the power of God” is clear that illocutionary acts authorize the power of preaching in Jesus Christ. Thereby in preaching, the congregation will be encountered, not merely with locutionary acts of the sermon, but more precisely, with locutionary acts which *count as* illocutionary acts performed by God’s power. Therefore, the preaching, as medium of the encounter with God’s power through Scripture can definitely aim to include a sense both of the impact of the linguistic levels (what the text says) and the non-linguistic level (of response to what it is).

What would be the corollaries of such a view of SAT in our conception of the interface of biblical studies and homiletics? The answer to this will have to the three normative tasks of preaching approach in the light of SAT.

Firstly, the re-illocutionary act of preaching is seen not only as interpretation of Scripture but as the agent of performance in the illocutionary action of Scripture. The preacher not only preaches concerning what the Scripture “meant (past)” or “means (present)”. Rather, the preaching is essentially the response(s) which the biblical

passages anticipates in the preacher's life; furthermore, the full meaning of the sermon when it is only performed by preachers even when they are faithful to the text is not yet complete. Therefore, the re-illocutionary preaching contains the life of the preacher as an essential part.

Secondly, the nature of the re-illocutionary act of preaching itself must be understood as a process and a progress of "Sanctification". This ongoing progress is not for a limited period, rather it is required through the whole of the preacher's life, in which the calling of the preacher is essential in his ministry of the word. During training, the illocutionary force of Scripture will have to teach the hermeneutical imperative to the preacher as the Holy Spirit empowers the preaching material in order to accomplish the divine intention in modern words, not only in the application of the sermon. Therefore, the preacher does not modify, but ministers Scripture.

Thirdly, re-illocutionary preaching pays attention to both the impact of the linguistic levels and the non-linguistic level of the utterance. The Holy Spirit instructs the preacher through the Bible in such a way that it is indeed a divine illocution as well as human locution. This is the so-called "internal witness" of the Spirit, by which the preacher confesses the Bible as the Word of God. The Spirit empowers the locution of the biblical text by impressing its illocutionary force on the preacher. Thereby the preacher sees and hears God's speech act; warnings, commands, invitations, promises, and pledges, and after that the preacher can stand on the pulpit as well as serving (under- standing) illocutionary force by the Holy Spirit.

These promising interdisciplinary approaches are neither simply utilizing the biblical text as a footnote in a sermon, nor simply suggesting a magic single way of homiletic methodology as the praxis of preaching. Rather, the particular illocutionary force of the text will be the re-conceiving that the preaching is the performance of the Words of God. Obviously, the Reformed tradition stressed that the biblical text is the foundation of the Christian life and message for the Church. In this tradition, the text is not only the “written Scripture”, but also it is the living God at work in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit. For Calvin, biblical texts were an indispensable part of the work of the Holy Spirit. After this, preaching is nothing more than a strict elaboration of the “acted text” in which Holy Spirit does not come to us as a timeless truth, but to give wisdom. This wisdom is not only to stress such the skill which a preacher gleans meaning from the text, or seeks to translate the text in the contemporary world. It is the goal so that we continuously perform God’s will in the modern world under guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Being Christian is nothing else than the performance of biblical passages in Jesus Christ. All Christian action has to be based on and activated by such performance of texts in the preaching event. In this case, the aim of preaching is not only to carry or mention some religious experience or its concept in the preaching event, rather preaching in itself becomes thereby an interpretive performance of Scripture with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, SAT must re-introduce the sovereignty of God and the necessary role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ whereby the homiletic confession gives recognition to the fact that the Bible is God’s authoritative speech act as $F(p)$; the *Holy Spirit(Jesus)*.

CHAPTER 5

General summary of previous chapters and conclusion

1 Introduction

This research began with the question of how the preacher to make a more satisfactory connection between the text and sermon by appreciation the essence of SAT. This offers practical homiletical guidelines for the application of performance of illocutionary force of the text. That is an event performed as the living Word of God for modern man. This research thus endeavored to investigate the issue of the practical application in two senses. Firstly, it examined how SAT helps us to create biblically the bridge between text and sermon in clear ways. Secondly, it paid attention to the role of illocutionary force in Scripture to help us understand the mystery that the preaching of the Word of God.

2. Summary of previous chapters

Chapter 2 investigated three well-known homileticians, Buttrick, Campbell and Long. In particular we noted that their views and methods are similar insofar as that they emphasize what the biblical text intends to say and do must govern what the preacher hopes to say and do in the sermon. In this, Buttrick (1987: 308) stressed hermeneutically that the homiletic bridge is a way of continual movement. This movement consists of immediacy, reflection and praxis; the intention of the text, intention toward the text, and intention to do given by the text. Thereby, the movement from text to sermon is designed through the intention of biblical language as well as its own intentional action. Campbell (1997: 239) attempted to emphasize the performative aspect of language as a sovereign subject. That is, the autonomous function of the Bible

has a certain performative momentum towards building up the church. Finally, Long (2005: 106) asserted persuasively that the preacher, who acts as witness, must explicate in the sermon both what the text says and what the text does. With regard to their homiletical assessment of the performative dimension of biblical language, therefore, it suggested the important possibility of formulating the movement of the text to sermon. This homiletical assumption referring to the text itself is a meaningful act; what the text is doing (performative action), and not merely what it means (objective of the topic). This homiletic motif is useful to rethink the movement from the text and sermon. The interpretive performance of Scripture in preaching is not only engaged on the superficial level of the grammatical or historical meaning of the text. Rather, it requires a different level of the text in which the preacher can take up a particular stance toward the openness of the energy of the text. This multidimensional concept of the biblical text requires that the preacher must respect the role of a certain sense from the illocutionary act of the biblical language. That is, the movement from text to sermon is identified according to speech acts in the biblical passage (what the text is doing in it is saying). From this perspective, preaching a biblical passage will imply an insight in SAT entered homiletic theory. The appreciation of SAT in the Scripture therefore is a most fundamental concept in the preaching material as well as the sermonic unit. This homiletical perspective appreciated the descriptive value of SAT with regard to the link between the text and biblical preaching.

Chapter 3 investigated on the basis of Austin's and Searle's work the term 'SAT'. The philosophy of linguistic theory makes important contributions. Particularly, there are basically five types of speech act (Searle 1979: 10-16), namely assertives, directives,

commissives, expressive and declaration. Often words do more than one of these at once in the same utterance.

- (1) The assertive: utterances which say how things are
- (2) The directives: utterances which try to get others to do things
- (3) The commissives: utterances which commit ourselves to doing things
- (4) The expressives: utterances which express our feelings and attitudes
- (5) The declaration: utterances which bring about changes through our utterances

Therefore, the classification of illocutionary acts is precisely the distinction between different illocutionary points. This distinction shows how the speaker's intentionality enables the same proposition to count as illocutionary acts such as a warning; " $W(p)$ ", blessing; " $B(p)$ ", promise; " $Pr(p)$ ", etc (Searle 1976: 2). In addition, this propositional content must be understood within certain "constitutive rules". They constitute and regulate activities and often have the form: "X counts as Y in context C." (Searle 1969: 35). The SAT argues that the use of language is explained by the constitutive rules which, furthermore, govern human behavior. For example, under the constitutive rules of soccer, when the soccer player kicks a soccer ball into the goal, it *counts as* one score. There are conventions involved in these constitutive rules, which relate all kinds of nonlinguistic criteria. Therefore, to perform illocutionary acts will be to engage in "a rule-governed form of behavior" (Searle 1979: 17).

Further SAT stressed that each illocutionary point has only four possible directions of fit,

namely word-to-world direction, world-to-word direction, double direction or empty direction (Searle 1976: 10-16; 1979: 12-20).

- (1) Illocutionary acts with an assertive point (e.g. assertions, conjectures, predictions) has the words-to-world direction of fit. This illocutionary point is to represent how things are (e.g. “It is raining”)
- (2) Illocutionary acts with the commissive or directive point (e.g., promises, vows, acceptance, and requests) have the world-to-words direction of fit. This illocutionary point is to have the world transformed by the future course of action of the speaker (e.g. “Open the window”)
- (3) Illocutionary acts with the declaratory illocutionary point (e.g., definitions, appellations, appointments, benedictions and condemnations) have the double direction of fit to bring about correspondence between propositional content and reality (e.g. “You are fired”)
- (4) Illocutionary acts with the expressive point (e.g., apologies, thanks, complaints, boasts) have the empty direction of fit. This illocutionary point is just to express the speaker’s mental state about a represented fact. In this case, in expressive utterance, speakers do not attempt to represent how things are and they do not want to change things (e.g. “I am so sorry”)

In order to rethink the homiletical bridge in the light of SAT, the following three questions provided a framework for our approach:

1. Which constitutive rules govern this biblical passage?

2. Which kind of illocutionary action does this biblical passage perform?
3. For the $F(p)$ in this text, what is the direction of fit between words and world and how may this open up an alternative reality in the Christian life?

Take for example a possible exposition of John 2:1-12, “The Wedding at Cana”. Perhaps the preacher takes as the primary propositional information the fact that this is the first public miraculous sign Jesus performs and continues to construct a sermon plan with this proposition. The goal of this sermon may be to explain how “obedience creates the miracle” or “how we should expect the miraculous in ordinary life”. The preacher may then use illustrations to elucidate certain recent understandings of “Christian obedience”. By the end the congregation already knows what this sermon tells them, but they still struggle to apply it to their different lives.

However, the preacher who applies SAT in order to build a homiletical bridge in light of the three aforementioned questions will arrive at a different sermon goal.

(1) *Which constitutive rules govern the biblical passage?*

The preacher of “The Wedding at Cana” encounter a totally different world that becomes manifest firstly in the cultural differences between ancient and modern weddings. The preacher should be asking questions like whose responsibility was it to provide wine in this context, the bridegroom or bride’s family. These institutional rules would help the preacher recognize the identity of the illocutionary action in the text as well as avoid subjective exegesis.

(2) Which kind of illocution action does it perform in the biblical passage?

According to this passage, the wine supply ran out during the wedding festivities and Jesus' mother spoke to him about the problem. At that time, Jesus said: "My time has not yet come"(John 2:4). In order to clarify Jesus' utterance in terms of SAT, the preacher must pay attention to how the intentionality of the text makes it such that the proposition ("Jesus' time") counts as an illocutionary act such as a warning; " $W(p)$ ", blessing; " $B(p)$ ", and promise; " $Pr.(p)$ ". More specifically the proposition of the Jesus' time counts as a promise; " $Pr.(Jesus' time)$ " This " $Pr.(p)$ " will highlight an important biblical theme, namely that of God/Jesus being the bridegroom of his people. The preacher should therefore preach God's promise in Jesus Christ. This illocutionary point will serve to create different effects of fright, alarm, or hope within the congregation.

(3) How does $F(p)$ in the text determines the kind of the direction of fit to open up for alternative reality in the Christian life?

The preacher has originally identified a homiletical idea (propositional content) as "obedience creates the miracle" in this particular biblical passage. However, the preacher should pay attention to the direction of fit when he/she preaches on the subject of Christian obedience from this passage. The preacher must seriously ask whether this illocutionary point really counts as (p : a plot, content, and character) the obedience message? It is often pointed out that homiletics suggests "saying the same thing as the text". However, in SAT, homiletics suggests "doing the same thing as directedness of

the text”. Therefore, preaching as re-illocutionary act in the text seeks intentionality of text in which the homiletical purpose pertains to the directedness of the illocutionary effect in the text. This association leads to the preaching *counts as* seeking to accomplish and what response the illocutionary force anticipates in this passage.

From this brief example it is clear how SAT serves to refresh both preaching material and preaching praxis in context of the movement from text to sermon. That is, the homiletical bridge in the light of SAT will not only reflect the same ideas as the text, but also aims to elicit the same response as the illocutionary force in the intention of the Scripture. To put it simply, the preacher does not modify Scripture, but rather want to ministers to it. It becomes clear therefore that the homiletical bridge requires a suitable and responsible manner in an application of the illocutionary point in biblical passages. The essence of interpretation in preaching is therefore to recognize the illocutionary act in the Bible. This is the case because the illocutionary act creates the meaning as well as the perlocutionary action.

Chapter 4 investigated the interface of SAT and biblical studies, as well as showing how this SAT application to biblical interpretation can persuasively serve to evaluate important homiletical issues such as “the preaching Jesus” of Campbell, “the witness of preaching” of Long and “the power of preaching of Buttrick.” The application of SAT in biblical interpretation makes three important contributions to each of these homiletical issues.

Firstly, “the preaching of Jesus”, as represented in SAT as $F(p)$, should be clearly

characterized in the form of a promise “*Pr(p)*”, or a warning “*W(p)*”, or a blessing “*B(p)*” etc. This re-illocutionary preaching of Jesus is to stress the reality of Jesus’ intention in modern world. Basically: hear my word, believe me and follow me. This *F(p)* generates an alternative reality in which the modern church can correct its confessions as well as its preaching.

Secondly, in SAT “the witness of preaching” established the perform of a re-illocutionary action in some way. This required that both “what the text meant” and “what the text means” should not simply be isolated in the context of SAT. This model of the preaching requires the practical, participatory, first-person nature of the confession of faith in order to become a responsible “witness to Jesus Christ”.

Thirdly, in SAT “the power of preaching” is formulating that preaching has to pay attention to God’s illocutionary action. Thereby, the preacher depends on the fact that illocutionary acts authorize the power of preaching in Jesus Christ. Thereby in preaching, the congregation will be encountered, not merely with locutionary acts of the sermon, but more precisely, with locutionary acts which *count as* illocutionary acts performed by God’s power. Therefore, the re- illocutionary preaching, as double agency discourse with God’s power through Scripture can definitely aim to include a sense both of the impact of illocution level and perlocution level in Scripture.

These contributions in the interface of hermeneutics and homiletics designated the three normative tasks of preaching approach in the light of SAT.

Firstly, the re-illocutionary act of preaching is seen not only as an interpretation of Scripture but especially as the agent of performance in the illocutionary action of Scripture. This is the case because the illocutionary force of text creates the preachable content (meaning) as well as the perlocutionary action (response). Therefore, the life of the preacher must be an essential part of preaching.

Secondly, the nature of the re-illocutionary act of preaching itself must be understood as a process in the progress of “Sanctification”. During this ongoing movement, the Holy Spirit teaches the preacher that how to minister Scripture. To put it simply, Scripture evaluates the preacher rather than the preacher assessed Scripture.

Thirdly, re-illocutionary preaching pays attention to both the impact of the linguistic levels and the non-linguistic level of the utterance. The Holy Spirit instructs the preacher through the Bible in such a way that it is indeed a divine illocution as well as human locution. Thereby the Spirit will instruct independently the how preacher can perform God’s speech act; warnings, commands, invitations, promises, and pledges, and after that the preacher can serve the church with His words.

3. Conclusion

In the light of SAT, the movement from text to sermon is neither simply to be viewed as finding the timeless principles, meanings, big ideas from Scripture nor to emphasize a human experience in modern world to serve a re-narration of the text. Rather, the homiletical bridge in SAT has to be considered as the performative action of the text itself. The essence of interpretation in preaching is therefore to recognize the

illocutionary act in Scripture. In SAT, the illocutionary act creates the meaning as well as the perlocutionary action. This is the center of matter in order to build a more satisfactory bridge between text and sermon. Obviously, the SAT can directly serve the reformed confessions in which the living Triune God is still speaking through the Scripture in the present. The Spirit is the enabler of a disclosure of the autonomous and meaningful action of the Bible. The Spirit has continually enabled the Christian community to understand and enact the Scripture in the context of the common life of the Christian community (Kelsey 1975: 29-30). This means that the Bible is not given to be exegeted in academic isolation, but to be performed by the people of God (Fowl 1991: 29). Perhaps, when the preacher proclaims the re-illocutionary preaching, he/she will encounter an unexpected manner of sermon. However, this creative preaching generates the unexpected reality through the Bible in which the Spirit gives the energy to accomplish this alternative reality. That is the destiny of the pilgrim as well as the preacher life in Christ.

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