

## ABSTRACT

Discovery of performatives is a major achievement of J.L.Austin's. It is also an event of considerable importance in philosophy. Accordingly, we have considered it worthwhile to institute an essay on this particular type of utterances.

Despite elaboration, the notion of performatives, we think, has not attained sufficient clarity. What, however, has made the situation specially confusing is the attempt on the part of Austin himself to reject the notion. In this background, we have tried (a) to produce an account of the nature and importance of performatives (vide Chapters 1 and 2), (b) to summarise the main objections to this class of utterances (vide Chapter 3), and (c) to restore performatives to their original identity (vide Chapter 4).

The notion of performatives tends to throw new light on a number of basic philosophical problems, especially, the problem of knowledge and that of truth. In Chapters 5 and 7, we are respectively concerned with these two problems.

Chapter 6 which is a critique of descriptivist

account of knowledge is intended to strengthen our position in Chapter 5.

In recent years, some philosophers and linguists, who happen to realise the potentiality of performatives, have tried to fortify the notion by recasting it in terms of a number of concepts derived from the generative grammar of Chomsky. However, we have felt no need to switch over to this new framework of concepts. In fact, we are not sure whether in this new territory the original virtues of performatives will not be diluted. The framework we have confined ourselves to is substantially the same as Austin's.