AOSIS

Healing in the name of Jesus: A theological study of charismatic speech and ontological change

Check for updates

Author:
Anna Cho[1]

Affiliation:
[1]Department of Systematic Theology and Ecclesiology, Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa

Corresponding author:
Anna Cho,
advocateanna@naver.com

This article explored the performative utterance 'in the name of Jesus' within the framework of speech act theory, proposing the theological model E = hF(p). In this model, F represents the authoritative act, p the theological proposition and h signifies the intervention and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, with E indicating the resulting transformation or healing. Rather than treating the name of Jesus as a symbolic expression, the study presents it as a linguistic event that forms reality through the Spirit's presence. Drawing from biblical texts and pneumatological theology, the article demonstrates how divine power operates in and through performative language. It also examines the ontological and charismatic implications of such speech acts, highlighting how speech, empowered by the Spirit, creates real spiritual effects. Finally, it considers the ethical and communal responsibilities of healing discourse within charismatic and ecclesial contexts.

Contribution: This study introduces E = hF(p) as a theological model for understanding how the name of Jesus, through the Spirit, produces ontological transformation. It offers a new framework connecting speech act theory with charismatic healing practice.

Keywords: Jesus' name; charismatic language; speech act theory; ontological transformation; healing theology; pneumatology.

Introduction

Healing in Jesus' name: A speech-act theological inquiry

Statements such as 'Rise up in the name of Jesus' or 'Be healed in the name of Jesus' are common expressions in contemporary Christian healing ministry. These expressions are often understood as simple prayers or confessions of faith, but if these utterances are performance utterances that actually bring about ontological transformation, that is, a transition from illness to life, from suffering to recovery, then this is a topic that requires in-depth theorising at the level of systematic theology. This article begins with this question. Can the name of Jesus function as a central axis of theological reality construction that calls for and reconstructs reality through language, rather than a mere sign or religious symbol?

In biblical theology and pastoral practice, the name of Jesus has been regarded as a condensed utterance of redemptive power beyond the simple designation of an object of faith. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles record numerous scenes of the sick being healed and demons being driven out through the name of Jesus (Ac 3:6, Ma 5:34, etc.), and these scenes suggest that the name of Jesus was understood to have the linguistic power to bring about real change in the ancient community (Keener 2021:17–29). However, studies that interpret this phenomenon within the framework of speech act theory (hereinafter referred to as SAT) and precisely analyse its theological implications from an ontological perspective are rare. In particular, systematic theological attempts to expand the concept of SAT from a simple hermeneutical tool to a mechanism for divine authority and the formation of existence are still lacking (Thiselton 2007:105–108). Accordingly, this study aims to clarify that the 'healing utterance in the name of Jesus' is not merely a symbolic act or psychological comfort, but a performative linguistic event that constitutes the existence of believers and changes reality. This is an attempt to reveal that the name of Jesus is not simply a prayer or declaration for healing from illness, but a metaphysical utterance that summons divine reality into language. To this end, this article introduces the theoretical structure of SAT and analyses how the declaration 'Rise in the name of Jesus' operates in a way that goes beyond a simple request or declaration and involves the existence of believers and forms a new ontological order. In addition, we will explore the possibility of existential transformation of the confessing subject through Donald Evans' (1963) concept of self-involving utterance and theorise the triple

interlocking structure of language-existence-revelation based on the theological hermeneutics of Vanhoozer (2005) and Anthony Thiselton (2007).

The purpose of this study is threefold. Firstly, it argues that the command to heal in the name of Jesus is not a simple religious statement or symbolic act, but a linguistic act that induces ontological transformation. Secondly, it presents a new perspective that integrates Christian realism and language understanding by transforming the philosophical foundation of SAT, which states that utterances form reality, into theological linguistics. Thirdly, it attempts to theologise charismatic linguistic acts by exploring how the linguistic performance of the name of Jesus constitutes the presence and power of God from the perspectives of pneumatology and Christology. The core research questions are as follows: How does the proclamation 'Rise in the name of Jesus' transform the reality of the state of illness? In what SAT framework of action can the linguistic structure in which the command to heal is performed be interpreted? In what way is the charismatic utterance of the name of Jesus connected with the presence of the Holy Spirit?

Methodologically, this article is organised around the following four theoretical axes: (1) SAT regards language as an act that constitutes reality and provides a philosophical framework for analysing the therapeutic efficacy of performatives. (2) Christologically, it argues that the authority of Jesus' name contains his identity with God based on Philippians 2:9–11 and John 14:13. (3) Pneumatology clarifies the spiritual origin of the charismatic performativity that exists between the declaration of Jesus' name and the healing of the sick. (4) Existentially, it understands illness and healing in an ontological horizon and analyses how utterances rearrange the believer's existence.

The expected effects are as follows. Firstly, by systematically redefining the 'healing command in the name of Jesus', it enables the theological deepening of the discourse on new healing. Secondly, by theorising the mutual structure of language-existence-grace, it expands the intersection of charismatic theology and the philosophy of language. Thirdly, it contributes to the theological institutionalisation and ethical deliberation of healing discourse, suggesting a theoretical horizon that goes beyond the emotional-experiential understanding of new healing. The difference from existing studies is clear. Most discussions on new healing have focused on pastoral practice or psychological effects rather than theological elaboration (Fellows 2024:151–170). However, this article focuses on presenting a theological model of ontological reality composition by analysing the name of Jesus as a SAT-based performative healing structure. In this way, this study proposes an integrated theoretical framework that connects systematic theology, hermeneutics, pneumatology and healing theology and will provide a new foundation for subsequent discussions on the theology of the name of Jesus.

Healing utterances in the name of Jesus and the formation of enunciative reality: A speech-act theological interpretation of biblical texts

In the New Testament, the name of Jesus is not simply a means of confessing faith but functions as an active utterance that transforms existence and creates reality. The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles present the site of practical language in which the name of Jesus is used to heal the sick, cast out demons and raise the dead. These texts show that the utterance of the name of Jesus is not simply a form or ritual of prayer, but a theological event in which God's authority operates in language to bring about a change in reality. For example, in Acts 3:6, Peter declares, 'Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk'. This utterance is not a mere wish, but a linguistic act that forms reality, and it functions as a performative utterance that intervenes in the state of the sick person's existence and brings about an ontological transformation. This is an event that conforms to the concept of illocutionary act (meaning-bearing utterance act) of SAT (Searle 1969:55–60).

In Mark 5:34, Jesus also says, 'Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace and be healed of your disease'. This statement shows that Jesus' words are not mere consolation or statement, but declarative language that realises divine reality in the present. At the same time as the utterance, the woman's state of illness is transformed, and language itself becomes a performative event that exerts ontological efficacy. This can be understood as a revelatory moment in which divine power operates within language and intervenes in reality, beyond a simple declaration of faith. This phenomenon suggests that language can function as a metaphysical tool that constitutes and actualises reality itself, beyond a sign system that refers to reality. This theological understanding of language is further supported by the statement of the authority of Jesus' name in Philippians 2:9–11 and John 14:13. Paul says that Jesus Christ has been given 'a name that is above every name' and that 'every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth and of those under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord' (Phlp 2:10-11). Here, 'name' is not a simple designator, but a statement of being that is identified with divine existence, and it functions as a theological structure of revelation that generates cosmic obedience and performance of cognition (Bauckham 2008:180–185). In John 14:13, Jesus also declares that his name is not a mere instrument of prayer but a path of participation in divine reality, meaning that the name of Jesus functions as a theological conduit that embodies God's power and will in language. According to Vanhoozer's (2005:204–210) interpretation, the proclamation of the name of Jesus should not be regarded as a mere proposition that entails a request, but as an action in the theo-dramatic performance in which God's reign and presence are

linguistically embodied. That is, these texts show that the linguistic authority contained in the name of Jesus is not just a functional sign, but a linguistic event that manifests a reality identical to the essence of God. Thus, the name of Jesus functions as an ontologically formative statement that raises the sick and actualises redemption, and its utterance must be understood not as a mere human request, but as a theological event in which one participates as an act of God.

The early church recognised the name of Jesus not as a mere doctrinal symbol but as a real statement of God's power. Keener (2021:22–25) evaluates this by saying, 'The name of Jesus is not merely a reenactment of tradition, but an actualization of divine power, an event language closely connected to the activity of the Holy Spirit'. His analysis emphasises that the utterance of the name of Jesus is not a simple religious practice or rhetorical device, but a linguistic performance event that actually actualises the reality of God and induces existential change. This understanding soon reveals that the utterance of the name of Jesus is a mysterious field in which the presence of the Holy Spirit and the authority of Jesus are combined and operate. In other words, the healing utterance uttered in the name of Jesus is a linguistic means of participating in the action of God in the pneumatological dimension, and through this, real change and transformation of existence are possible for the sick. As a result, the proclamation of healing in the name of Jesus in the New Testament text is not a simple religious rhetoric or symbol, but a theological event in which divine reality and power are realised in language. Such utterances operate at the place where language, existence and revelation intersect in a threefold manner, and the utterance authority contained in the name of Jesus must be understood as a performative act that goes beyond a mere functional sign and manifests the same reality as the essence of God. Thus, the name of Jesus operates as an ontologically formative utterance that raises the sick and actualises redemption, and its utterance is interpreted as an event that participates in the reality of God, not a human request. Based on such biblical testimonies, this article sheds light on the theological authority and real effects of the utterance of the name of Jesus. In the following article, we will analyse how this utterance structure can be established in a philosophical and systematic theological manner within the framework of the theory of speech acts.

Healing language and performative utterances: Theoretical foundations of speech act theory

The proposition that language is not just a means of conveying information, but has the power to perform actions and shape reality, originates from J.L. Austin and John Searle's SAT. In How to Do Things with Words, Austin (1975:6–10) argued that 'words are not just descriptive sentences, but tools for performing tasks', suggesting that language can function as an action itself. According to him, sentences such as 'I bless you', 'I resign' and 'I forgive you' are not simply conveying information but actually performing specific social and ontological acts. Searle elaborates this further, dividing speech acts into three categories: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary acts are acts that produce meaning through the words that make up a sentence and their grammatical structure, while perlocutionary acts mean that the speaker performs some action through that utterance (e.g., giving a command, declaring, promising, etc.). On the other hand, perlocutionary acts are speech acts that have a follow-up effect that induces changes in the listener's feelings, attitudes and behaviours (Searle 1969:31–55).

Jesus' commands for healing, such as 'Get up', 'Be cleansed' and 'Go; your faith has saved you', can all be understood as performative utterances and are analysed in the F(p) form, one of the core structures of SAT. Here, the F(p) structure is a framework that explains the basic form of how language changes reality. F represents the 'force of the speech act', such as command, declare and bless. p refers to the proposition contained in the utterance, that is, a specific proposition such as 'you will be healed' or 'the illness will leave you' (Searle 1969:31–55). This structure is used to describe a linguistic device that combines 'force' and 'proposition' to perform actual actions rather than simply convey meaning. Therefore, F(p) is a linguistic-actual form that goes beyond a simple sentence structure and constructs or changes a specific reality while speaking.

When we apply Jesus' healing utterances to this framework, we come to understand that they are not mere wishes or doctrinal declarations, but active utterances that bring about changes in reality. Jesus' healing utterances are SAT's meaning-entraining speech acts, which contain acts and authority in themselves and at the same time function as utterance events that actualise divine reality. In particular, these utterances are connected to perlocutionary acts that actually change the state of the hearer, and as a result, the sick person does not simply receive comfort but experiences an ontological transformation. Furthermore, this linguistic structure becomes an essential theoretical basis for explaining the reality-forming power of the utterance of Jesus' name theologically. SAT is not just a tool for the philosophy of language but provides methodological insights that can analyse the performativity and ontological effectiveness of theological language. In particular, the F(p) structure in the healing utterances provides a device that can logically structure the theological language as a performative statement that constitutes reality.

The performative utterance of the name of Jesus and the transformation of being: The theological structure of linguistic energy

The statement 'I wish to be healed in the name of Jesus' or 'Be healed in the name of Jesus' is not a simple prayer, but a

creative utterance that allows one to participate in the divine reality with language and transform existence. This utterance does not simply express hope or expectation for the patient's condition, but functions as a linguistic creative act that reconstructs the patient's ontological horizon. At this time, the name of Jesus functions as a sign of authority and at the same time becomes a conduit of utterance performance that forms reality. This structure is revealed more clearly through the concept of self-involving utterance proposed by Evans. Evans (1963:22–26) viewed confession of faith and religious language as not simply technical language that states facts, but linguistic acts of participation that include and transform the speaker's existence. In other words, the statement, 'I wish you to be healed in the name of Jesus', is not simply a wish for 'I wish you to be healed', but an utterance in which the speaker existentially intervenes in the healing event. This utterance itself functions as a linguistic event that opens up existence, and at the same time as the utterance, the listener (patient) experiences entering a new order of existence.

Especially when utilising the theoretical tools of SAT, this utterance can be analysed as having the structure F(p). As discussed above, F stands for the utterance modality (force) such as 'declare', 'command' and 'bless', and p stands for the statement proposition 'you are better'. This structure of F(p) theoretically supports the fact that performative utterances are not just declarations, but active utterances that reconstruct reality (Searle 1969:54–71). For example, when Peter gives the command 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk' in Acts 3, this can be understood as an event in which God's authority penetrates the patient's existence through linguistic form through the F(p) structure. This utterance acts as an illocutionary act (an illocutionary act that carries meaning) and at the same time, as a perlocutionary effect (an illocutionary act that carries effect), it leads to the patient's actual action (rising). In other words, the utterance itself is a device that causes change, and theologically, it is the intersection where God's reality and the patient's existence meet through language. At this time, the believer is not simply a receiver who hears language, but a participant who is existentially transformed in the confession. The phrase 'I wish you to be healed in the name of Jesus' can be theologically understood as a declaration that 'God is present in this language now and is carrying out a redemptive act toward you now'. This utterance functions as a covenantal utterance that engages the hearer in responding to and participating in the divine act, creating a structure through which the divine reality is incorporated into the sick person's life through language (Wolterstorff 1995:102–104).

Thus, the statement 'I wish to be healed in the name of Jesus' or 'Be healed in the name of Jesus' is not simply a matter of comforting the sick person, but rather an act of redefining their state of existence and reviving God's creative order in the reality of illness. This suggests that the new oil is a theological event that goes beyond the level of mere physical restoration and comprehensively restores the relationship with God, communal identity and the meaning of existence

(Smith 2009:104–110). This linguistic shift leads to ontological transformation. Here, 'transformation' does not mean a simple physical recovery, but rather a relocation of the believer's existence into a new relational, semantic and identity structure. The state of illness can be understood not simply as a medical condition or physiological abnormality, but as a theological symbol that sometimes reflects the destructiveness of human existence and the consequences of the fallen order of creation. This perspective allows us to read illness as an existential symptom that reveals human finitude and the vulnerability of existence without simply reducing it to the result of individual sin or divine judgement. In other words, illness functions as a theological symbol that mediates between the 'anxiety of being' and disconnection of existential theology and the loss of original harmony of creation theology, revealing the deep theological tension between human existence and the order of creation. Paul Tillich (1951:191–203) explains this perspective with the concept of 'anxiety of being' and sees illness as an existential crisis that humans experience in a limiting situation and a state that must be reconstructed by the grace of God. However, illness does not always symbolise ontological degeneration. Stanley Hauerwas (1986:67–80) presents an ethical-theological approach to interpreting suffering by understanding illness not simply as a 'deficiency to be cured' but as a narrative structure that creates meaning within the community. This perspective allows us to understand healing not only in terms of physical healing but also in terms of restoration of the whole being and restoration of a right relationship with God. The healing command uttered in the name of Jesus is a theological creative event that dismantles the distorted order and calls forth the reality of new creation through language. Language here is not a tool of memory but a means of creation, and the name of Jesus here functions not as a simple call but as a symbolic passage that creates new existence (Ricoeur 1976:45–48).

This structure can be expressed by the following formula: E = F(p). This means that 'linguistic energy (Effect, E)' is generated through the combination of 'mode of speech (Force, F)', that is, the way of speaking and authority and 'content proposition (proposition, p)', that is, the content of speech, and it actually operates as a structural performance system that can induce changes in existence. This formula is a diagram that theorises that theological language is not just formal repetition, but a performance language that directly participates in the formation of reality. Ultimately, the healing utterance forms an ontological union structure between the speaker-listener-reality within language, and the name of Jesus becomes the divine origin and centre of this linguistic structure. E = F(p) is a theological structure that the author proposed based on the theory of speech acts and explains that the believer's confession of faith operates as energy (E) when calling the name of Jesus, and the power of the name of Jesus is realised in the believer's life (Cho 2024:5–7). Here, energy is not a simple metaphor, but a concrete way in which language functions as an act and reality. This has a similar thought structure to the $E = mc^2$

principle in physics. Just as energy is expressed as a combination of mass and velocity, so in theological language, the greater the total amount of act (F) and content (p), the greater the real transformation (E) caused by the utterance.

For example, when the proposition 'Jesus is the Saviour (p)' is uttered in conjunction with the confessional act 'I believe in him and follow him (F)', this utterance is not simply a doctrinal declaration, but is transformed into an active performative language that induces existential determination and relational participation. This act of calling out generates a personal participation structure between the believer and Jesus and forms a way of life that accompanies Jesus, rather than simply indicating Jesus. In this way, E = F(p) is not just a theoretical structure, but a theological paradigm that explains that the utterance of the name of Jesus is a theological mechanism that actually operates in the life of the believer and transforms existence. The performativity of language itself realises divine presence, and the believer who calls out the name of Jesus does not simply express faith, but participates in an ontological act that connects with the reality of God in that utterance. Therefore, the utterance of the name of Jesus functions as a linguistic energy that constitutes and transforms reality, and this can be interpreted as a theological event that induces God's existential participation and response, rather than a simple expression of faith.

Charismatic interaction of the Holy Spirit and the name of Jesus: The triple structure of language, authority and reality

If the performative utterance of the name of Jesus functions as a linguistic act that creates reality beyond mere symbolic utterance, its power cannot be explained by linguistic structure alone. This means that the effect of the utterance does not occur autonomously without the accompanying action of the Holy Spirit, and that an ontological interaction between the utterance and the Holy Spirit is essential. In this article, we name this interaction the 'charismatic interlocking structure' and theoretically illuminate how the utterance of the name of Jesus participates in the formation of reality through the presence of the Holy Spirit. In particular, we analyse how the utterance through the name of Jesus constitutes the reality of healing within the work of the Holy Spirit, focusing on the triple structure of authority (F) – power (E) – reality (p) formation.

In John 14:13, Jesus declared, 'Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it'. This utterance shows that the name of Jesus is not just a prayerful expression or a request, but a performative act that verbally embodies God's will and power. Vanhoozer interprets this as a concept of 'theo-drama' and argues that the confession of calling on the name of Jesus is a theatrical performance that summons God's rule and presence through language. Vanhoozer (2005:204–210) explains that 'language reorders the being of the participants in the theological

drama and is a conduit for the realization of God's will'. The proclamation of the name of Jesus is the moment in which the subject participates in the action of God in such a drama, and this participation cannot be realised without the work of the Holy Spirit. Keener (2021:22–25) also emphasises that this enunciation structure is transformed into a healing event through the presence of the Holy Spirit. This understanding is further supported by Pentecostal scholarship that interprets healing not only as a sign of divine intervention but also as a performative event of Spirit-filled proclamation. Scholars such as Allan Anderson (2004:195–215), Yong (2007:147–155) and Smith (2010) highlight how healing utterances in Pentecostal theology function as embodied, communal and eschatological events, deeply intertwined with the Spirit's presence and the church's participation. Keener (2021) analyses that:

> [T]he name of Jesus is not just a symbolic representation, but an event language imbued with the power of the Holy Spirit, a power structure that triggers the operation of divine reality both in ancient and modern times. (pp. 104–118)

In other words, the Holy Spirit is the active agent who ensures that when the name of Jesus is spoken, the language is transformed into a place of actual healing and restoration. The Holy Spirit is the ontological mechanism that works to transform utterances into linguistic energy that creates reality, rather than simply being spoken events.

In order to structure this spiritual interlocking more theoretically, the existing E = F(p) formula can be expressed as E = hF(p) by inserting the Holy Spirit's work as a fixed presupposition element. However, while E = hF(p) captures the performative structure of theological utterance, it should not be interpreted as a deterministic or magical guarantee of healing. The 'h' in the formula, which represents the Holy Spirit, does not function as an automatic causal mechanism but as the sovereign presence of God who acts freely and often in ways that transcend human expectations. The formula thus represents a potential structure of divine action, not a fixed law of outcome. As Rahner (1984:405–420) notes, the mystery of divine silence and suffering must be acknowledged as a central locus of theology. The Holy Spirit does not mechanically produce healing, but works in freedom and relational depth, which includes the possibility of divine withholding, delay or redirection. Here, h is a constant representing the participation and guarantee of the Holy Spirit, and this formula shows that the utterance of the name of Jesus always works with the power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, h is an ontological constant that establishes the condition for the F(p) structure to create reality (E).[1]

Here, the structure E = hF(p) is not just a theoretical summary, but a theological core diagram explaining the ontological coupling between language-Spirit-reality. In this formula, F is the performative power of the name of Jesus, which is not just a symbolic command, but an act of declaration that

1. This is a development of my E = F(p) formula, which is my theory that the power of the utterance of the name of Jesus always presupposes the working of the Holy Spirit.

carries personal authority and will. p is the theological reality that the declaration refers to, that is, the proposition of restoration, liberation, healing and salvation, and E is the existential transformation, that is, the transformation of reality, embodied by the Holy Spirit. Here, h, that is, the Holy Spirit, is the divine agent who makes this entire structure work and functions not as a mere helper or background force, but as a personal subject who facilitates the declaration to produce reality. This coupling structure also has significant implications in systematic theology. The Holy Spirit is not just an external factor that guarantees the effect of the name of Jesus, but an internal co-worker who bridges the ontological gap between language and reality. As Paul Ricoeur (2003:82–92) said, 'The world of signs creates reality when interpreted', the name of Jesus creates a reality of healing only when it is interpreted within the work of the Holy Spirit. That is, at this intersection where language is performed and reality is created, the Holy Spirit mediates between God's existence and human language and acts as a decisive mechanism that makes God's actions possible.

Moreover, this structure corresponds deeply to Vanhoozer's argument about theological drama. Vanhoozer (2005:204–210) saw all theology as an enunciative act of participation in the drama of God, and that enunciation is an eventual language that constitutes reality. According to this, the proclamation of the name of Jesus is a divine event in itself, and the Holy Spirit is the director of that event and the actualiser of its actualisation. The enunciation is performed at the same time as it is spoken, and the performance ruptures reality in the Holy Spirit. That is, the act of calling on the name of Jesus simultaneously proclaims the coming of the kingdom of God in language and becomes a scene of redemption in which the power of that kingdom is manifested by the Holy Spirit. The structure of $E = hF(p)$ is an attempt to theologically systematise this divine-linguistic drama. This can be said to be the definitive version of the ontological speech-event in that performative language goes beyond simple propositional transmission and acts as a conduit that transforms existence (Wolterstorff 1995:103–107). Ultimately, this structure cuts across pneumatology, Christology and theology of language, reinterpreting the category of miracle and transforming the theology of healing from a mere phenomenology into an ontological event of creation.

This theorem mathematically summarises the triple interlocking structure of 'language-Spirit-reality' and systematises the theological principle that the performativity of language is always accompanied by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not simply a background factor in this structure, but a prerequisite that makes E possible. In other words, no matter how elaborate the confession of F(p) is, without the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit (h), that confession cannot transform reality. At this time, h is the guarantor of divine intervention, and the linguistic declaration functions as a decisive variable that induces existential change. For example, the declaration made by Peter in Acts 3, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk', has the structure of F(p), and the fact that the utterance creates the reality (E) of the actual recovery of the sick is precisely because there was the accompaniment (h) of the Holy Spirit. Keener (2021:22–25) analyses that the work of the Holy Spirit is repeatedly confirmed in the case of the new covenant, and that the Holy Spirit is not just a passive helper, but a creative driving force that realises the divine command.

This structure is also repeatedly experienced in the actual pastoral field of the modern church. For example, when an intercessory prayer ministry proclaims, 'In the name of Jesus, the spirit of depression goes away', this is not just an external command, but appears as a pneumatological linguistic event in which the triple structure of the name of Jesus, namely authority (F), declaration (p) and realisation (E) dynamically operates. This statement goes beyond a sign and when the name of Jesus (F) as personal authority is combined with the real proposition (p) of restoration and freedom, it becomes an event in which the real presence (h) of the Holy Spirit concretely triggers reality (E), and this is explained by the actual operating structure of $E = hF(p)$. This structure should be developed beyond the experience of the new covenant as a simple ecclesiastical 'phenomenon' and become an article of pneumatological systematic theology. The performative statement of the name of Jesus functions in a way that creates reality when participating in the power of the Holy Spirit, and this theologically redefines the category of 'miracle.' Here, the miracle is no longer understood as a temporary suspension of natural law, but as a triple structure of language-spirituality-reality in which linguistic performance and the presence of the Holy Spirit are combined to transform reality. This structure is realised in the interaction between the enunciator (believer)-hearer (patient)-presence (Holy Spirit), and this enunciation is an event of existential cooperation and a moment of divine creation.

Ultimately, the proclamation of the name of Jesus is a linguistic event that forms authority and reality under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and this event existentially rearranges the believer's existence. The Holy Spirit gives historical effect to the utterance of the name of Jesus, activating it to be transformed from a simple utterance into God's creative act. The name of Jesus is the conduit of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is God's agent who guarantees the realisation of the name. $E = hF(p)$ operates as a theological formula that most concisely explains this triple structure, and God's healing work is carried out within the integrated structure of language-Holy Spirit-reality. This formula is not a simple logical expression, but a theoretical model that converges the triple concepts of theological performativity, ontological participation and reality formation in a single linguistic event. F is the power of declaration, p is the real proposition and E is the energy of change triggered by the Holy Spirit (h), and this operation means that it is not a mere literal operation but an existential means by which God's power is realised in language. That is, the utterance of the name of Jesus forms a triangular structure among the speaker

(believer), the listener (patient) and the present (Holy Spirit), and this should be understood as an event close to a 'linguistic sacrament' that operates as a real creation rather than a simple doctrinal repetition.[2]

Theological implications and ethics of healing discourse

The claim that the utterance of the name of Jesus is a theological act that creates reality in conjunction with the Holy Spirit is significant in that it goes beyond a paradigm that merely suggests the possibility of healing and instead demands an ethical response to the problems and suffering of real life. Healing occurs at the intersection of expectation and frustration, recovery and impossibility, faith and silence and its theological weight and responsibility are substantial. This article explores the responsibility and communal acceptability of theology through the lens of speech act theory, focusing on the limits of theology, the mystery of suffering and the ethical structure of healing utterance.

Firstly, emphasising the reality of healing inevitably raises the issue of theological responsibility for unhealed suffering: 'Why are some healed while others remain in pain?' Here, the performativity of theology intersects with ethical prudence and mystical theology [*theologia mystica*]. If theology is a theological reality, the fact that it does not consistently yield the same outcome suggests the need to acknowledge the transcendent gap between God and humanity, a mystery that lies between divine freedom and human limitation. Rahner (1984:405–420) regards suffering as the ultimate locus of mystery encountered in God's silence, interpreting it as a *locus theologicus* where salvation must unfold. Therefore, statements of healing must remain theological language intertwined with narratives of suffering and bear the linguistic responsibility to proclaim God's companionship and comfort, even in the absence of healing. Healing should not always be equated with 'success'; theological meaning can be realised in failure, waiting and silence. This is precisely where the theological formula $E = hF(p)$ must be qualified. While it describes the structure of how healing might occur through Spirit-empowered utterance, it does not prescribe its inevitability. The possibility of non-healing must be theologically framed within God's hiddenness and freedom, not as a failure of faith or utterance.

Secondly, such linguistic responsibility calls for the publicness and communal acceptability of healing discourse. Beyond personal faith or internal conviction, the entire community must engage in theological discernment and ethical consideration regarding the implications of these linguistic acts. The utterance 'I wish to be healed in the name of Jesus' becomes an event-statement that not only affects the listener's being but also generates theological ramifications for the whole community. This performative statement must be interpreted carefully and embraced communally within the church's public theology, worship and ministry of care.

Thirdly, from the perspective of speech act theory, utterances of faith are not merely informative but self-involving; they shape the hearer's existence and entail ethical responsibility on the part of the speaker. As Donald Evans (1963:22–26) notes, faith utterance is an 'ontological-collateral language' that includes the speaker's entire existence. It is not simply a wish, but a declarative act and ethical commitment. Healing words, therefore, must be grounded in the triple ethics of God's sovereignty, the believer's humility and communal care. In pastoral contexts especially, new believers' utterances should be handled with linguistic sensitivity and theological responsibility to avoid causing psychological or spiritual harm to others.

Fourthly, the ethics of healing discourse must extend beyond personal transformation to include practices of justice and care within the community. Providing care for the unhealed, embracing testimonies of healing and critically examining the power structures that emerge from healing claims are all part of this expanded ethical framework. Since healing discourse can imply both hope and stigma, it necessitates theological discernment and careful filtering to prevent unintended harm.

In conclusion, the declaration 'I am healed in the name of Jesus' is both a theological act of creation and a structure for ethical, communal and existential responsibility towards those in pain. Language not only forms reality but also the existence and responsibility of its users. Therefore, healing utterances must be approached with theological reflection and ethical sensitivity, both in their expression and reception. This is not solely about efficacy but concerns the deeper theological task of understanding how healing discourse is realised amid divine will and human weakness.

Conclusion
The threefold structure of the utterance, reality and existence of the name of Jesus

This article theorises, through speech act theory, that the utterance of 'healing in the name of Jesus' is not a simple expression of faith or prayer, but a theological, ontological and performative event. This study emphasises that the utterance of the name of Jesus is not a simple symbolic utterance, but a theological linguistic event that causes real change under the premise of the active participation (h) of the Holy Spirit, and presents the formula $E = hF(p)$ as a structure to explain this. In this diagram, F represents an authoritative illocutionary force, p represents the theological propositional content (proposition), h represents the accompaniment and guarantee of the Holy Spirit (Holy

2.The integrated linkage of language-Spirit-reality is structured as the theological formula $E = F(p)$. This formula is not a simple logical expression, but a theoretical model that converges the triple concepts of theological performativity, ontological participation and reality formation in a single linguistic event. F is the power of declaration, *p* is the real proposition and E is the energy of change triggered by the Holy Spirit. This operation means that it is not a mere literal operation but an existential means by which God's power is realised in language. In other words, the utterance of the name of Jesus forms a triangular structure among the enunciator (believer)-hearer (patient)-presence (Holy Spirit), and this should be understood as an event close to a 'linguistic sacrament' that operates as a real creation, not a mere doctrinal repetition.

Spirit), and E represents real change (effect). This structure proves that the utterance of the name of Jesus is a charismatic event that causes real change in existence under the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit, and that language can become a channel that mediates the presence of God.

In particular, this article theologically analysed the texts of the Gospel and Acts, showing that the name of Jesus is not just a cognitive symbol, but a linguistic act that reconstructs existence. The proclamation 'Rise in the name of Jesus' is a performative statement that rearranges the believer's existence and allows them to participate in a new creative order beyond the structure of illness and loss. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent who works to make this utterance not just a symbol but a reality, and the name of Jesus functions as a conduit of that authority. Furthermore, through ethical consideration of the discourse of theology, this article emphasises the power of theological utterance to construct reality, as well as its responsibility and prudence. Unrealised healing, the mystery of suffering and the publicness of language are all elements inherent in the practicality and ethics of the utterance of the name of Jesus. Therefore, this article clearly states that the 'healing utterance of the name of Jesus' is not just a sentence of prayer, but an existential confession, an existential participation, and a theological event that responds communally to the reign of God.

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The author declares that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Author's contribution

A.C. is the sole author of this research article.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Funding information

Data availability

The author confirms that the data supporting this study, and its findings, are available within the article.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and are the product of professional research. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency or that of the publisher. The author is responsible for this article's results, findings and content.

References

Anderson, A., 2004, *An introduction to Pentecostalism: Global charismatic Christianity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Austin, J.L., 1975, *How to do things with words*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Bauckham, R., 2008, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God crucified and other studies on the New Testament's Christology of divine identity*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.

Cho, A., 2024, 'Theological examination of the name of Jesus from a Hermeneutical approach', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 80(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9917

Evans, D., 1963, *The logic of self-involvement*, SCM Press, London.

Fellows, P., 2024, 'What a beautiful name it is: A theological & practical comparison of Glossolalia and the Jesus Prayer', *Journal of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* 5(2), 151–170.

Hauerwas, S., 1986, *Suffering presence: Theological reflections on medicine, the mentally handicapped, and the Church*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame.

Keener, C.S., 2021, *Miracles today: The supernatural work of God in the modern world*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI.

Rahner, K., 1984, *Foundations of Christian faith: An introduction to the idea of Christianity*, Crossroad, New York, NY.

Ricoeur, P., 1976, *Interpretation theory: Discourse and the surplus of meaning*, Texas Christian University Press, Fort Worth, TX.

Searle, J.R., 1969, *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Smith, J.K.A., 2009, *Desiring the kingdom: Worship, worldview, and cultural formation*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI.

Smith, J.K.A., 2010, *Thinking in tongues: Pentecostal contributions to Christian philosophy*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.

Thiselton, A.C., 2007, *The hermeneutics of doctrine*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.

Tillich, P., 1951, *Systematic theology*, vol. 1, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.

Vanhoozer, K.J., 2005, *The drama of doctrine: A canonical-linguistic approach to Christian theology*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, KY.

Wolterstorff, N., 1995, *Divine discourse: Philosophical reflections on the claim that god speaks*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Yong, A., 2007, *Theology and down syndrome: Reimagining disability in late modernity*, Baylor University Press, Waco, TX.