SPEECH ACTS ANALYSIS OF FRANK OGODO OGBECHE'S *'HARVEST OF CORRUPTION'*

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Abstract:

This study seeks to apply speech act theory to the analysis of Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's '*Harvest of Corruption'* on the basis of a mixed method. It aims at identifying, analyzing and interpreting the different speech acts in the selected play for the purpose of decoding meanings. The results show that through representative acts the author has depicted thoroughly heinous practices that affect negatively the development of African countries. Through directive, he is inviting political authorities to look at the pitiful state of their countries. Through commissive, he is indicating how governments should commit themselves to take measures to clean up public services. Expressive acts have enabled him to express sorrow and feeling of desperation in regards to the pitiful state of African countries. Through declarative, he indicates how immediate changes can be operated by sentencing all guilty authorities to many years of imprisonment. These results have enabled the researcher to contend that the author has directly and indirectly depicted African countries in general and more specifically Nigeria as characterized by embezzlement, drug dealing, bribery and corruption, abuse of the public offices, betrayal of people's trust.

Keywords: corruption, illocutionary acts, locutionary acts, perlocutionary acts, speech act

Résumé:

Cette étude applique la théorie des actes de langage à l'analyse de *Harvest of Corruption* de Frank Ogodo Ogbeche suivant l'approche mixte. L'étude vise à identifier, analyser et interpreter les différents actes de langage dans la pièce sélectionnée dans le but de decoder des messages. Les résultats ont montré qu'à travers les actes représentatifs, l'auteur a décrit complètement les pratiques abominables qui affectent négativement le développement des pays africains. A travers les actes d'autorité, il invite les autorités politiques à regarder l'état piteux de leurs pays. A travers les actes d'engagement, il

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indique comment les gouvernements devraient s'engager à prendre des mesures pour assainir les services publics. Les actes expressifs lui ont permis d'exprimer le chagrin et le désespoir au sujet de l'état piteux des pays africains. A travers les actes déclaratifs, il indique comment des changements immédiats peuvent être opérés en condamnant toutes les autorités coupables à de lourdes peines. Ces résultats ont permis au chercheur de soutenir que l'auteur a directement et indirectement décrit les pays africains en général et de façon plus spécifique le Nigéria comme étant caractérisés par la malversation, le traffic de drogue, la corruption, l'abus des biens publics et l'abus de confiance.

Mots clés : corruption, fonction illocutoire d'acte de langage, fonction locutoire d'acte de langage, fonction perlocutoire d'acte de langage, acte de langage

1. Introduction

In their everyday life in human societies, people permanently express their needs to their peers and exchange with them their ideas or opinions about specific issues. Language is the tool that enables people to communicate. It is in Ngara (1982)'s terms: *"An exclusively human property consisting of a system of sounds, words, structures and meanings; that is a symbolic system which does not necessarily show a one-to-one correspondence between itself and the physical world it refers to… it is a social convention which changes over time and is extremely adaptable to new conditions"* (Ngara, 1982: 10). Since language is extremely adaptable to new conditions, speakers purposefully use language in particular ways. Such particular ways are made possible by the social context-dependent characteristics of language.

In this respect, interactants need to consider the context in which a speech event takes root so as to convey successfully messages. Indeed, whenever a speaker produces an utterance, he/she intends to perform an act. Such an act is known as a speech act. In other words, a speech act is the action performed by producing an utterance (Yule, 1996: 48). In the same sense, Searle (1976) views speech acts as the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication (Searle, 1976: 16).

Thus, it is highly important to apply speech act theory to the analysis of literary works or discourses so as to decode meanings. In this perspective, this study focuses on speech act analysis of Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption.* It aims at identifying, analyzing and interpreting the different speech acts in the selected play for the purpose of decoding meanings. The compelling reason that motivates the choice of this play relates to the conversational narrative style of the author and the interesting themes discussed through the play as they focus on African social realities.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Underpinning

This section accounts for some linguistic studies of language and the linguistic theory that underpins this research work.

2.1 Literature Review: Some Linguistic Studies of Language

Linguistics is a very useful tool that helps us to uncover the very deep messages conveyed through literary texts. So, there is a close relationship between language and literature. Literature highly depends on the language. Without language, literature cannot stand at all. Two female scholars, Traugott and Pratt (1980) demonstrate this relationship as follows: *"Since texts are the primary data for all literary criticism, adequate means of textual description are essential if any criticism is to be properly founded. Linguistics helps ensure a proper foundation for analysis, by enabling the critic to recognize the systematic regularities in the language of a text."* (Traugott and Pratt, 1980). It must be precised that the specific branch of linguistics that studies language use is pragmatics. Indeed, pragmatics is viewed by Mey (2001) as *"the study of the use of langage in human communication as determined by the conditions of society"* (Mey, 2001: 6). On his part, Kroeger (2018) contends that *"pragmatics is concerned with those aspects of meaning that depend on or derive from the way in which the words and sentences are used."* (Kroeger, 2018: 4) For Yule (1996), pragmatics is viewed as the study of speaker meaning, the study of contextual meaning, the study of how more gets communicated than is said (Yule, 1996: 3) or the study of invisible meaning (Yule 1996: 127). On his part, Morris (1971) simply defines pragmatics as *"the study of the relation of signs to interpreters"* (Morris 1971: 6). For Bublitz and Norrick (2011) pragmatics deals with meaning-in-context, which for analytical purposes can be viewed from different perspectives (that of the speaker, the recipient, the analyst, etc.). It bridges the gap between the system side of language and the use side, and relates both of them at the same time (Bublitz and Norrick, 2011: 18)

These definitions highlight the importance of pragmatics and how it contributes to decoding speakers' intended meanings. This leads many researchers to use pragmatic theory and more specifically speech act theory to decode meanings from literary works and political discourses.

Drawing on Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory, Dadjo (2016) investigates President Goodluck Jonathan's Concession Speech and General Muhammadu Buhari's Acceptance Speech. The study reveals a high proportion of claiming assertive speech acts in Jonathan's speech indicating thus how unity, stability and progress of Nigeria depends on Jonathan who has excellently proved this by conceding victory to his opponent Buhari. As for him, Jonathan's acts of thanking, congratulating and praising indicate not only his high degree of recognition, attachment to peace and democracy but also his magnanimity whereas those of Buhari indicate his degree of recognition. Through the use of directive, speech acts both Jonathan and Buhari have proved to be law-abiding and peaceful. Through the use of commissive speech acts Jonathan has proved to be democratic and patriotic whereas Buhari has proved to be open, cooperative and democratic. He concludes that the thoughtful performance of the different speech acts has enabled both speakers, especially Jonathan to maintain peace and stability in Nigeria.

Dadjo (2018) investigates two selected speeches by President Nana Akufo-Addo about Africa's Dependency on the West. The application of speech act theory reveals a predominance of assertive speech acts in both speeches. As for him through these speech acts President Nana Akufo- Addo demonstrates the importance of education in Africa

continent having the youngest population on the richest continent on the planet but with the worst living conditions of anybody on the planet. These acts also enable the President to indicate that Africans cannot depend on other people to finance education on the continent. Through expressive speech acts, the President expresses his gratitude to his co-chairs. These speech acts also enable him to clarify his position about the contributors to whom he is not turning back but he is rather inviting his co-chairs to discard the mindset of dependency.

In line with what has been reviewed thus far, this study focuses on speech acts analysis of Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption.* It is now important to account for the speech act theory that underpins this work.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This subsection accounts for the key concepts of the theory of speech acts, the linguistic forms of speech acts as well as the types of speech acts.

2.2.1 Speech Acts

Austin (1962) views speech act as what speakers use language to make their listeners or learners do. In other words, it is how the addresser wants his/her addressee to analyze the function of what has been conveyed. In a general consideration, speech acts are acts of interaction or acts of communication. It is successful when the addressee is able to identify meaning in accordance with the speaker's intention. It is the use of language to perform an action. It emphasizes the role of language in communicating social acts. Any speech act is really the performance of several acts once, distinguished by different aspects of the speaker's intention: there is the act of saying something, what one does in saying it, such as requesting or promising; and how one is trying to affect one's audience. We can make requests, ask questions, give orders, make promises, give thanks, offer apologies to mention just a few instances. According to Searle (1976), to understand language one must understand the speaker's intention. Since language is intentional behaviour, it should be treated as a form of action. Thus, Searle (1976) refers to statements as speech acts. The speech act is the basic unit of language used to express meaning, an utterance that expresses an intention. According to him, understanding the speaker's intention is essential to capture the meaning. Without the speaker's intention, it is impossible to understand the words as a speech act. In the same line, Yule (1997), contends that speech act is "*the act performed by a speaker with an utterance*" (Yule, 1997: 132).

2.2.2 Speech Act Types

According to Austin (1962) there are three types of speech aspects namely locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

- **Locutionary Act**

Locution is the phrase or sentence that has meaning (vocabulary) and structure (grammar). Then Locutionary act is the basic act of utterance or producing a meaningful linguistic expression. The act of saying something through an utterance with

performance. A Locutionary act is an act of how a person produces the utterance. In the other words, Locutionary act is the act of the speaker in using his/her organ of speech to produce utterance.

- **Illocutionary Act**

Locution is the inter intention of the speaker. An illocutionary act is a performance via the communicative force of an utterance. It is the intended meaning of the utterance by the speaker. In other words, it is the intended significance of an utterance as a socially valid verbal act. The concept of an illocutionary act is central to the concept of a speech act. Although there are numerous opinions regarding how to define "illocutionary act", there is some kind of acts that are widely accepted as illocutionary, as for example promising, ordering someone, and bequeathing.

Searle (1962) states that the concept of an illocutionary act is the concept of an utterance with a certain force. We have many sentences whose meanings are used to determine a particular force. According to Austin's preliminary informal description, the idea of an "illocutionary act" can be captured by emphasizing that "by saying something, *we do* something", as when someone issues an order to someone to go by saying "*Go*", or when a minister joins two people in marriage saying, *"I now pronounce you husband and wife"*. An interesting type of illocutionary speech act is that performed in the utterance of what Austin calls performative, typical instances of which are "*I nominate Jack to be your Prefect*", "*I sentence you to ten years' imprisonment*" or "*I promise to pay you back.*" In these typical, rather explicit cases of performative sentences, the action that the sentence describes (nominating, sentencing, promising) is performed by the utterance of the sentence itself. Austin distinguishes illocutionary act into five categories. Those are verdictives (in which a speaker gives a verdict), exercitives (in which a speaker exercises powers, right or influence), commisives (in which speakers commit themselves to causes or courses of action), behabitives (concerning attitudes and social behaviour) and expositive (in which, speaker clarify how their utterance fit into lines of reasoning. There are various kinds of speech acts, yet the following, classified by Searle, J. R., have received particular attention.

A. Representatives

These speech acts are assertions about a state of affairs in the world (hence they are also called assertive; Leech 1983:128) and thus carry the values "true" or "false". They commit a speaker to the truth of an exposed proposition. They include asserting, concluding, affirming, alleging; announcing, answering, attributing, claiming, classifying, concurring, confirming, conjecturing, denying disagreeing, disclosing, disputing, informing, insisting, predicting, ranking, reporting, stating, stipulating.

B. Directives

As the name says, these speech acts embody an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something, to direct him or her towards a goal. They are used by a speaker who attempts to get the addressee to carry out an action. They include requesting, questioning, advising, admonishing, asking, begging, dismissing, excusing, forbidding, instructing, ordering, permitting, requiring, suggesting, urging, and warning.

C. Commissives

They operate a change in the world by means of creating an obligation, this obligation is created in the speaker, not in the hearer. They commit a speaker to some future action. They comprise promising, threatening, offering, agreeing, guaranteeing, inviting, swearing, and volunteering.

D. Expressives

This speech act, as the word says, expressive an inner state of the speaker: the expression is essentially subjective and tells us nothing about the world. They express some sort of psychological state and can be statements of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy, or sorrow. They include greetings, thanking, apologizing, complaining, congratulating.

E. Declarations

They are those kinds of speech acts that change the world via their utterance. They affect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions. They include declaring, baptizing, resigning, firing from employment, hiring, arresting, excommunicating, christening, marrying).

The minimal units of human communication are speech acts of a type called illocutionary acts. Some examples of these are statements, questions, commands, promises, and apologies. Whenever a speaker utters a sentence in an appropriate context with certain intention, he/she performs one or more illocutionary acts. In general, an illocutionary act consists of an illocutionary force and a propositional content. For example, the two utterances "*You will wash the dishes*" and "*Wash the dishes*" have the same propositional content, namely that you will wash the dishes; but characteristically the first of these has the illocutionary force of a predication and the second has the illocutionary force of an order. Similarly, the two utterances "*Are you cooking the yam?*" and "*When will you take bath?*" both characteristically have the illocutionary force of questions but have different propositional content.

- **Perlocutionary Act**

It is the effect that results from an action. In other words, it is the execution of the locution. That is to say, the consequential effect of a verdict. This is thus; focused on the response others have to a speech act. A perlocutionary act is the actual effect of an utterance such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring or otherwise getting someone to do or realize something whether intended or not (Austin 1962).

It appears that a locutionary act tells you something that you can understand or interpret within the context of the message. It is the act of saying something, whereas an illocutionary act is what one does in saying something. The perlocutionary act is the effect of the utterance that the speaker said to the hearer.

2.2.3 Speech Act Function

Speakers need to know how to deal with their language in order to carry out an utterance. The performance of an act has different functions as illustrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: General Functions of Speech Acts

Speech Act Type	Functions	Examples: S = speaker; X = situation
Declarations	words change the world	S causes X as illustrated below: - The judge sentenced the criminal to death - The priest baptized the little boy last week
Representatives	make words fit the world	S believes X as illustrated below: - Saussure contrasted langue with parole - It is so cold today
Expressives	make words fit the world	S feels X as illustrated below: - I'm really sorry - Thank you so much!
Directives	make the world fit words	S wants X as illustrated below: - Could you bring me some water, please? - Don't clean the board
Commissives	make the world fit words	S intends X as illustrated below: - I will do that - We will electrify this village

(Adapted from Searle, 1979)

3. Methods

This study seeks to apply speech act theory to the analysis of '*Harvest of Corruption'* on the basis of a mixed method (quantitative and qualitative methods). The selected literary work is a play produced by the Nigerian writer Frank Ogodo Ogbeche. It is a contemporary African play deeply rooted in corruption depicted as a pathological and endemic danger that seriously affects the development of a country. Indeed, the honorable minister in charge of external relations, Chief Ade Amaka, represents the symbol of corruption as he is at the center of misappropriation of millions of public funds, embezzlement of billion Naira, drug traffic, bribery of everyone in his way, sleeping and impregnating female employees. The quantitative method has enabled the researcher to select two extracts from *Harvest of Corruption*. Thus, a clause by clause speech act analysis has been carried out after the process of their identification. In addition, the frequency distribution of the different speech acts has been determined in a table for each extract. A recapitulative graph has been provided to display the similarities and differences of the selected extracts in terms of the frequency distribution of the speech acts. This has helped the researcher to make qualitative discussion and interpretation of the findings.

4. Results and Discussion

This section focuses on the analysis of the different speech acts in Extracts 1 and 2 for the purpose of determining their frequency distribution on the one hand and the discussion of the findings on the other hand.

4.1 Speech Acts Identification in Extract 1
The identification of speech acts is carried out in accordance with the following keys: R = representative, D = directive, C = commissive, Dec = declaration, E = expressive.

"(R) 1-Now you can see where your Protocol job lands you. (R) 2-You will not listen to me or take my advice. (C) 3-I wish I know what's happening to me OGEYI, (E) 4-look at me. (D) 5- How can I be pushing cocaine? (D) 6- That's not what I bargained for. (R) 7-I wish I listen to you in the first place. (R) 8-Can you ever forgive me? (D) 9-I have been fool (R) 10-and like a pawn in the hands of expert chess players (R) 11-I moved from one side of the board to the other. (R) 12-Right now, I do not care for what happens to me. (E) 13-This country is bad. (R) 14-How can the judge say he discharged me for want of evidence? (D) 15-I wish to God I know what chief must have done to him. (R) 16-I am sure they are both collaborators in the same game. (R) 17-Everything was with me re-handed. (R) 18-OGEYI, can you believe that? (D) 19-That chief is a devil the very Satan himself. (R) 20-I am yet to understand what is really going on. (E) 21-I feel like a lamb being slaughtered on the altar of corruption. (E) 22-Oh! God save me. (E) 23-Ogeyi, what pains me most is that in all these drama, I am not even given a chance to choose my own role to play (R). 24-Calm dawn, Aloho, (D) 25-the world has not ended, (R) 26-you can still pick up the pieces. (D) 27-You can! Please pull yourself together (D) 28-and stop acting like a baby. (D) 29-Ogeyi, you may not understand my position. (R) 30-I was even lured into having affairs with chief. (R) 31-Ever since my detention, I have been feeling funny (R) 32-and I am pregnant. (R) 33-I think I have started the harvest of corruption, (R) 34-which you mentioned before, (R) 35-and I have the feeling that I am going to reap it in hundred folds. (R) 36-Can you understand my predicament now? (D) 37-Preg… what? (D) 38-Aloho! Are you daft? (D) 39-After all my warning to you. (R) 4O-Is this greed or what? (D) 41-What happens to your religious practices and beliefs? (D) 42-You must be crazy. (R) 43-Just under three months in Jabu and you have ruined yourself like this. (R) 44-Aloho why? (D) 45-Just why? (D) 46-So what are you going to do now? (D) 47-I think I shall abort it. (C) 48-I do not want to go back to that office any more. (R) 49-In fact, the very memory of Ochuole or chief gives me nightmare. (R) 50-You can see what I mean. (R) 51-I just can't go back there. (R) 52-This is too much for me (R) 53-and I just cannot store it up. (R) 54-But you know this is against our Christian doctrine. (R) 55-It is a sin. (R) 56-Please think twice over your decision (D). 57-I know. (Dec). 58-But I have gone beyond understanding Christian doctrine (R) 59-I feel like the black sheep of my family (R) 60-and the faith I proclaim. (R) 61-I lost my senses the very day I met Ochuole. (R) 62-I shall die or remain to dread that fateful day. (C). 63-Let me take the honourable or if you like, dishonourable way out. (D) 64-It is my harvest and my destiny (R) 65-and I shall carry it in my hands. (C) 66-Ogeyi you have been so wonderful to me (R) 67-and I shall pray for you. (C) 68-Just keep being what you have been…a good girl (D) 69-and God will bless you. (Dec) 70-I shall always pray for you. (C) 71-Ogeyi, I still remember what the scripture says (E) 72-"blessed are those who comfort (R), 73-for they shall be comforted. (C) 74-I was seeking shelter, (R) 75-you gave me a house, (R) 76-hungry, you fed me, (R) 77-anxious, you calmed my fears, (R) 78-imprisoned, you visited me. (R) 79-Oh! Ogeyi, my love will remain with you forever". (R) 80-I'm told that life is sweeter over there (R) 81-and I am tired of this life here. (R). 82-I want to go. (Dec) 83-My harvest went bad before (R) 84-I could even think of storing them. (R) 85-I do not blame anybody. (R) 86-I hope that my calamity will be a lesson to other who find themselves in my position. (C) 87-I was

desperate (R) 88-and in my desperation, I feel prey to the glamour of the world. (E) 89-Why are you talking like this. (D) 90-Please pull yourself together. (D) 91-It will be alright. (C) 92-This is a lesson (R) 93-and it is better that it is the content of the pot that spills not the pot that is broken. (R) 94-We can still make amend. (C)"

The statistics displayed in the table below recapitulate the frequency distribution of each speech act identified in Extract 1.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of the Speech Acts in Extract 1

Speech acts	Frequency	Percentage
Representative	55	58.51%
Directive	22	23.40%
Commissive	08	8.51%
Expressive	04	4.25%
Declarative	05	5.31%
Total	94	100%

Source: Dadjo 2022.

It appears in this table that representative speech acts are predominant as they represent 58.51%) followed by directive speech acts 23.40%, commissive 8.51%, declarative and expressive speech acts are very low in proportions as they represent respectively 5.31% and 4.25%

4.2 Speech Acts Identification of Extract 2

"1-Suspects at the bar, you stand convicted of fraud, embezzlement, drug dealing, bribery and corruption, abuse of the public offices, betrayal of people's trust etc.! etc. !!etc.!! (R) 2-Has any of you anything to say for yourselves (R) 3-why the court should not give you judgment according to law. 4-Please be lenient with me (D) 5-and temper justice with mercy. (D) 6-I never did all that I am being accused today. (R) 7-Think of all that I have done for this country. (R) 8-What will happen to my family? (C) 9-My entire village and local government depend on me. (E) 10-I am already advanced in age, (E) 11-please don't send me to jail. (D) 12-I shall not call or address you as chief (C) 13-because you do not deserve it. (R) 14-HonestlyMr. Minister of External Relations. (R) 15-Peoplelike you who dress in sheep clothing when actually they are wolves, (R) 16-in my opinion, they should be paraded publicly for people to see. (C) 17-The Government talks about armed robbers every day. (R) 18-Yes. But think it should begin to think seriously about prescribing firing squad (C) 19-to cub the rampant pen robbery that is going on in this country. (R) 20-You and your likes are the real robbers (R) 21-that the Jacassan people should be afraid of. (R) 22-I am beginning to believe the saying that (R) 23-the "pen is mightier than the sword" the other way round. (R) 24-The Public Service needs to be cleaned up. (R) 25-The likes of you should hide their faces in shame (R) 26-when your fate is heard beyond the four corners of this court. (R) 27-You are a disgrace to the Government (R) 28-that saddled you with a ministerial responsibility and a very sensitive portfolio of External Relations. (R) 29-

Instead of representing the Government and the people of this country, you were busy trafficking drugs and amassing ill-gotten wealth, and wallowing in corruption. (R) 30-Well, this now the harvest of corruption. (R) 31-You have been given fair trial and found guilty. (R) 32-In order to deter others from following your shameless example, (R) 33-because this is becoming rampant. (R) 34-I am strongly of the opinion that this country must be protected against unscrupulous public officers of your place (R) 35-who abuse their positions of trust, thereby betraying the confidence reposed in them. (R) 36-I must also warn criminals who go to bribe Judges in attempt (R) 37-to pervert the course of justice that the judiciary has changed its orientation (R) 38-and hence such people when caught will be dealt with according to law. (R) 39-Show mercy my lord, (D) 40-I have family p-l-e-a-s-e. (E) 41-For all the atrocities you must have perpetrated in this country under the cover of a Minister which have not been detected, I say nothing. (R) 42-But stand convicted, (C) 43-I find you guilty as charged (R) 44-and therefore sentence you to twenty-five years imprisonment with hard labour in addition, (Dec) 45-you are to refund the sum of one point two billion naira to the government. (R) 46-As for you, the commissioner of Police and the Chief Justice, all I can say, is that you are a big disgrace to our noble profession. (R) 47-Greed and avariousness have blinded you against the ethical demands of the profession (R) 48-and you have to pay for your sins (R) 49-You are both sentenced to twenty years each with hard labour. (Dec) 50-You must reap the harvest of your corruption. (D)"

The frequency distribution of the speech acts in Extract 2 is displayed in Table 3 below:

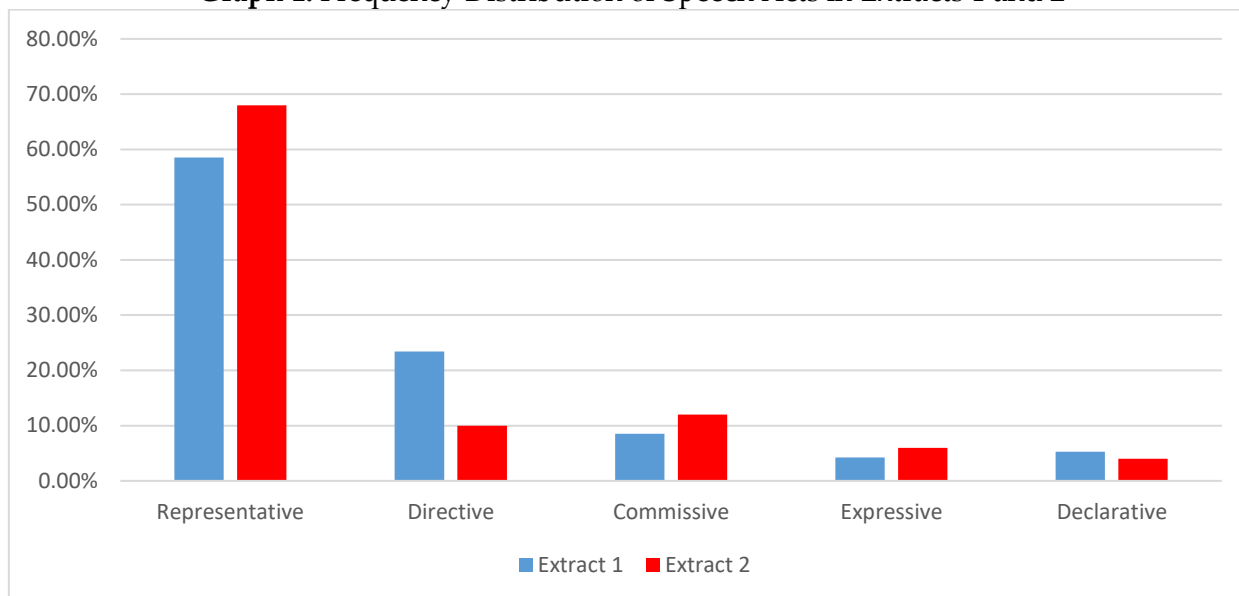**Table 3:** Frequency Distribution of the Speech Acts in Extract 2

Speech acts	Frequency	Percentage
Representative	34	68%
Directive	05	10%
Commissive	06	12%
Expressive	03	6%
Declarative	02	4%
Total	94	100%

Source: Dadjo 2022.

This table reveals a high proportion of representative speech acts 68% followed by a relatively low proportion of commissive speech acts 12% as well as directive speech acts 10%. Expressive and declarative speech acts are very low as they represent respectively 6% and 4%.

The graph below has been designed to recapitulate the frequency distribution of the different speech acts identified in Extracts 1 and 2:

Graph 1: Frequency Distribution of Speech Acts in Extracts 1 and 2

Source: Dadjo 2022.

The recapitulative graph above indicates the similarities and differences between the selected extracts in terms of the frequency distribution of the speech acts as follows:

- Representative speech acts are the highest in both Extracts,
- Directive speech acts rank second in Extract 1 but third in Extract 2,
- Commissive speech acts rank third in Extract 1 but second in Extract 2,
- Expressive speech acts rank fifth in Extract 1 but fourth in Extract 2,
- Declarative speech acts rank fourth in Extract 1 but fifth in Extract 2.

4.3 Discussion

The results of the speech acts analysis displayed in Tables 2 and 3 above indicate that representative speech acts are predominant in both extracts. They are mainly used by Ogeyi and Aloho to describe the state of corruption and bad practices in Nigeria. Indeed, Aloho and Ochuole are among the female employees recruited by Chief Ade Amaka the Honourable Minister of External Relations who uses them to perpetuate heinous acts. Aloho has been impregnated by Chief Ade Amaka. In her desperation, she attempts unsuccessfully abortion and dies after childbirth. The following representative speech acts illustrate this: "*1-Now you can see where your Protocol job lands you (R). This representative speech act has been used by Ogeyi to describe Aloho's pitiful situation as she is involved in drug traffic. On her part, Aloho uses representative speech acts to denounce corruption and its drawbacks that she is harvesting in Nigeria on the one hand and describe her own pitiful situation of desperate lady. 13-This country is bad (R) 32-and I am pregnant (R). 33-I think I have started the harvest of corruption.*"

Directive speech acts rank second and represent 23.4% in Extract 1. Some of them have been used by Aloho and Ogeyi. As a jobless university graduate desperately searching for a job, Aloho's occasional friendship with Ochuole leads her to a series of pitiful events as illustrated in these examples: "*4-look at me. (D) 5- How can I be pushing*

cocaine? (D)." On her part, Ogeyi uses directive speech acts to advise Aloho and question her to know how those problems can arrive despite her warning: *"24-Calm down, Aloho, (D) 27-You can! Please pull yourself together (D) 28-and stop acting like a baby. (D) 36-Can you understand my predicament now? (D) 41-What happens to your religious practices and beliefs? (D) 46-So what are you going to do now? (D)."*

Commissive speech acts are relatively low as they represent 8.33%. Through these acts, Ogeyi guarantees to always pray for Aloho. This instance confirms this: 70-I shall always pray for you. *"(C). On her part, through these acts, Aloho commits to abort as illustrated in this instance: 47-I think I shall abort it. (C)"* Expressive speech acts are very low in proportion as they represent 4.25%. They are mainly used by Aloho to express emotion related to her sorrow, pain, feeling of desperation, deception and betrayal/ 3-I wish I know what's happening to me OGEYI, *"(E) 88-and in my desperation, I feel prey to the glamour of the world. (E) 21-I feel like a lamb being slaughtered on the altar of corruption. (E)."* Declarative speech acts are very low as they represent 5.31%. They are used by Aloho to bless Ogeyi as she has provided good pieces of advice to her (Aloho). The following instance confirms this: *"69-and God will bless you. (Dec). 82-I want to go. (Dec) D)."*

As far as the second Extract is concerned, the proportion of representative speech acts is the highest (68%) suggesting thus that some opinions and information have been shared by interactants namely the Judge and Chief Ade Amaka. Representative speech acts are mostly used by the Judge in stating, asserting, describing, and concluding to depict the state of the corruption. The following instances illustrate this: *"1-Suspects at the bar, you stand convicted of fraud, embezzlement, drug dealing, bribery and corruption, abuse of the public offices, betrayal of people's trust etc.! etc. !!etc.!! (R) 15-People like you who dress in sheep clothing when actually they are wolves, (R) 24-The Public Service needs to be cleaned up. 27-You are a disgrace to the Government (R)."*

Directive speech acts are relatively low in proportion as they represent 10%. They are used by Chief Ade Amaka to implore the Judge's leniency, to beg for mercy. These instances confirm this: *"4-Please be lenient with me (D) 5-and temper justice with mercy. (D) 11-please don't send me to jail. (D) 39-Show mercy my lord (D)"*. Commissive speech acts represent 12% and are mainly used by the Judge to invite the government to take measures so as to clean up public services: *"16-in my opinion, they should be paraded publicly for people to see. (C)."* Chief Ade Amaka and the likes should publicly be punished so as to serve as lessons to other civil servants and all the citizens. Expressive speech acts are low and represent 6%. They are used by Chief Ade Amaka in complaining, to express his feelings as far as his personal state is concerned: *"10-I am already advanced in age, (E) 40-I have family p-l-e-a-s-e. (E)"*. Declarative speech acts are used to affect an immediate change of affairs. Here the Judge uses them to declare Chief Ade Amaka, the commissioner of Police and the Chief Justice guilty. He also uses them to pronounce the sentences: 44-and, therefore, sentence you to twenty-five years imprisonment with hard labour in addition, *"(Dec). 49-You are both sentenced to twenty years each with hard labour. (Dec)."*

On the whole, the predominance of representative speech acts reveals the author's strong determination and motivation to depict thoroughly heinous practices that affect negatively the development of African countries in general and Nigeria in particular.

Through directive speech acts, the author is inviting African political authorities to look at themselves, to look at the pitiful state of their countries characterized by heinous practices. Through commissive acts, the author is indicating how governments should commit themselves to take measures to clean up public services. Expressive speech acts have enabled the author to express sorrow, pain and feeling of desperation in regards to the depicted pitiful state of African countries. Declarative acts have helped him indicate how immediate changes can be operated by sentencing all guilty authorities to many years of imprisonment with hard labour.

This study shows that the author has directly and indirectly depicted African countries in general and more specifically Nigeria as characterized by embezzlement, drug dealing, bribery and corruption, abuse of the public offices, betrayal of people's trust. The play describes how some leaders or authorities through heinous acts and behaviors affect negatively the development of societies. Chief Ade Amaka and his collaborators as well as the commissioner of Police and the Chief Justice represent such authorities denounced by the author.

5. Conclusion

This study has attempted to apply speech act theory to two extracts from Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption* for the purpose of decoding meanings. The results show the similarities and differences between the selected extracts in terms of the frequency distribution of the speech acts as follows: representative speech acts are the highest in both Extracts, directive acts rank second in Extract 1 but third in Extract 2, commissive acts rank third in Extract 1 but second in Extract 2, expressive acts rank fifth in Extract 1 but fourth in Extract 2 whereas declarative acts rank fourth in Extract 1 but fifth in Extract 2.

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Conflict of Interest Statement
The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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