

## FROM WORDS TO ACTS: SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENTIAL CONCESSIONS IN GHANA

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### ABSTRACT

When people communicate via language, the listeners obtain a comprehension of the speaker's intentions. The purpose of this study was to examine the many sorts of illocutionary behaviours observed in concession speeches. The data was the concession speech of the two presidential candidates which were retrieved online. The study was a qualitative study backed by quantitative methodology. The data was analysed by categorising it using Searle's categorization of speech activities. Each category was thoroughly observed to find the illocutionary act and the illocutionary force associated with the utterance. It was realized that Nana Akufo Addo's assertives accounted for 31%, while John Mahama's assertives accounted for 46%. In terms of directives, Nana Akufo Addo delivered more directive act than John Mahama. Nana Akkufo Addo performed one commissive act, accounting for 3% of the total. Meanwhile, John Mahama performed 2 (5%) commissive acts. This act was the least common of the five acts. Expressive act accounted for the most illocutionary act in Nana Akufo Addo's speech, while it accounted for the second most in John Mahama's speech. Nana Akufo Addo made 4 declarative, while John Mahama made 2. The study is significant to theory and practice.

**Keyword:** Speech Act, Pragmatics, Concession Speech, Illocutionary Act

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Various researchers in domains such as linguistics, stylistics, discourse analysis, and pragmatics, to name a few, have been deeply concerned with the description, analysis, and interpretation of language use in human civilizations. People, as social beings, are continuously looking for opportunities to connect with other people. They want to be aware of their surroundings and interact with them. When humans engage with their surroundings, they need language to communicate. Language is, above all, an instrument for communication. Communication is always conducted within a social environment and is inextricably linked to our perceptions of who we are on both the personal and societal levels.

Language, according to Wardhaugh (2010), is a system of verbal symbols utilised for human communication. Language enables us to express our unique thoughts as well as the cultural beliefs and practices of the communities in which we live: our families, social groups, and other relationships. It is a way for two people to communicate with one another. Speech is a

type of public speaking action in which a person expresses his or her opinion or provides an overview of an item or event. We require pragmatics competency to understand the meaning of some speeches (Mufiah & Rahman, 2018).

Language and pragmatics are intrinsically intertwined given that pragmatics studies how sentences and linguistic context can be related to one another (Hudri, 2019). The study of meaning as it is transmitted by a speaker or writer and understood by a listener or reader is the subject of pragmatics. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as the study of a speaker's meaning. This form of research necessitates the interpretation of what types of individuals mean in a specific context and how the context effects what is said. Austin (1975) observes that utterances entail action. This means that every utterance is used to perform some kind of activity.

The function of language in politics and political speeches has recently sparked the interest of researchers (Akinwotu, 2013, Waya & Ogechukwu, 2013). A political speech is believed to be a highly controlled

type of discourse when compared to a commercial speech. Its controlled form is owing to the expressive nature and relevance of its expressive nature (Okoye, & Mmadike, 2016). Politicians use speeches to convey information and viewpoints to their audiences. Professional speech writers frequently create these political speeches ahead of time for political figures. They are written such that they might be uttered as if they were not written. Political addresses have been researched from a variety of perspectives as part of political discourse. Political discourse, without a question, has long been a prominent sector of language use that has piqued the interest of researchers. This is because political speech is a complex human activity that deserves critical examination, particularly given its fundamental role in the organisation and management of society.

Akinwotu (2013) pointed out that political communication focuses on meaning, which is essentially a result of reading the illocutionary force of a speaker's speech. A concession speech is a type of political discourse. Politically, a concession

is a situation in which a losing candidate in an election publicly yields to a victorious candidate after the election, when the final results are evident. Typically, the losing candidate's concession comes before the winner's acceptance speech. Concession speeches are not mandatory, and a candidate can decline to acknowledge loss. Many politicians refuse to acknowledge loss following an election result, and those that do, do so primarily for the sake of their constituents. Some politicians believe that conceding defeat after losing to a candidate is a sign of weakness. Others tag their speeches as congratulations messages, but they are not. Language is a mirror of the mind, reflecting what is inside even if the interactant tries to hide it.

This study attempts to critically uncover the speech act that are present in the concession speech of Nana Addo Danquah Akkufo Addo and John Dramani Mahama after the outcome of the 2012 and 2016 general election in Ghana. Although numerous studies have been conducted using the speech act theory. Not much studies have been conducted concerning the speech act employed by two Ghanaian

presidential candidates who lost in the general elections. It is therefore expedient that this study is conducted to unravel the illocutionary act employed by losing Ghanaian presidential candidates in their concession speech.

The purpose of this research is to:

1. find out what speech acts were used by the losing Ghanaian presidential candidates in their concession speech.
2. to identify the illocutionary force used for each speech act.

As a guide for the study, the following research questions were used to back the study:

1. What speech acts are employed by the losing Ghanaian presidential candidates in their concession speech?
2. How are the illocutionary forces manifested in the concession speech delivered Ghanaian president?

## 1.2 Significance of the Study

Essentially, this work goes beyond the current political landscape and has significant implications for democratic

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processes, political communication, and the larger linguistics community. It provides a framework for upcoming investigations into the relationship between language, politics, and democracy. By examining concession speeches, the research adds to our understanding of political communication and illuminates the linguistic techniques used by public leaders in times of compromise. By looking at how leaders accept electoral results and give up loss with grace, the research sheds light on the democratic process and promotes political maturity.

## 1.3 Theoretical Framework

The study's theoretical basis is the speech act theory, which was proposed by Austin (1962) and expanded by J. R Searle (1969, 1975, 1976). Saeed (2007) summarises Austin's work as a reaction to some attitudes towards language as follows: The basic sentence type in the language is declarative (that is, statement or assertion); the major use of language is to explain states of affairs through statements, and the meaning of an utterance can be characterised in terms of its truth or falsity. Speech acts refer to actions carried out

using utterances. These actions frequently go by more precise names like "apology," "complaint," "invitation," "promise," or "request." Using a three-fold distinction, speech act analysis is devoted to the study of utterances on the behaviour of speaker and hearer.

Osisanwo (2003:60) proposes that speech acts is:

A process in which a person uses an utterance to perform an act such as stating a fact, stating an opinion, confirming or denying something, making a prediction or a request, asking a question, issuing an order, giving a permission, giving a piece of advice, making an offer, making a promise, thanking somebody or condoling somebody.

Yule (1997) defines Speech Acts as 'the act performed by a speaker with an utterance' (Yule, 1997: 132). Austin's posthumous work 'How to Do Things with Words' (1962) is the origin of speech act theory. In his book, Austin distinguished between constative and performative. He considers constatives to be statements that can be evaluated along a truth dimension, whereas performatives are utterances that cannot be

classified as true or untrue but may be evaluated along a felicity dimension.

Austin divided linguistic act into three categories: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. The definition of locutionary act is "the act of saying something" (Leech, 1983: 199). Nordquist (2015) defines it as "the act of making meaningful utterance". Perlocutionary act is defined as "doing an act by saying something" (Leech, 1983: 199). Nordquist (2015) sees it as "an action or state of mind caused by, or resulting from, speaking something". The definition of an illocutionary act is "the act of saying anything" (Leech, 1983: 199) In other terms, the illocutionary act refers to a speaker's purpose in making an utterance or the type of illocutionary act. Crystal (1997) presented several types of speech acts. Austin (1992) estimated the illocutions categorization number to be between 1,000 and 9,999.

According to Austin, speaking acts can be divided into a number of broad categories based on their illocutionary force. He lists the subsequent categories:

- i. Verdictives, such as judgement, prognosis, reckoning, or evaluation.

- ii. Exersitives, such as voting, issuing orders, pleading, advising etc.
- iii. Commissives, such as making promises or vows, etc.
- iv. Behavitives such as apologising, congratulating, praising, expressing sympathy, etc.
- v. Expositives, such as arguments.

Searle (1969) expanded on Austin's notion of speech acts and suggested a methodical framework for integrating speech acts into linguistic theory. The "principle of expressibility" Searle (1969), state that the statement that can be meant can be stated helps to integrate speech act theory into linguistic theory. According to this theory, the "speech act is the fundamental unit of communication." This principle indicates that it is theoretically conceivable for speakers to develop the ability to express themselves clearly by either deepening their understanding of the language or by enlarging the language. There are a number of analytic ties between the concept of speech acts, what the speaker implies and what the phrase (or other linguistic parts) said signifies, what the speaker wants, what the hearer knows, and what the rules

controlling the linguistic elements are (1969:21).

A further observation made by Searle is that "using a language is engaged in a behaviour that is governed by rules" (1969). However, Searle refers to a particular class of rules as "constitutive" rules, which are what are in charge of speech acts. Constitutive rules, as opposed to regulative norms, "define or establish new kinds of behaviour" (1969). In addition to using context and content, Searle's rules and conditions for speech acts enhance intentions and other psychological situations that enable a speech act by labelling them with their types of rule. Depending on how necessary they were for the act, Searle also categorised conditions and guidelines. As a result, Searle (1969) classified the illocutionary acts into five groups:

- I. Assertive: Commit speakers to the veracity of the conveyed proposition, such as stating, claiming, reporting, or announcing.
- II. Directives: These are assertions that compel or cause another person to act in accordance with the propositional aspect. It is typically

used to issue directives, give instructions, or offer advice in order to elicit a certain response from the hearer.

- III. Commissives: Commit speakers to future activities, such as promising, offering, swearing, or doing something.
- IV. Expressives: Count as an expression of a psychological state, such as [-thanking, apologising, congratulating, etc.].
- V. Declarative: These utterances are used to say something and make it happen, such as convicting someone, quitting, dismissing, accepting, declaring war, and so on.

Searle (1979), improved on this classification. The two groupings are not particularly different from one other, other than a minor label change. For him, in representatives, the speaker is committed to the truth of a claim in differing degrees that is, affirming, believing, concluding, denying, reporting. Searle renamed this group assertives in 1979. This group includes truth statements, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions. In directives, the individual speaking tries to get the

listener to do something e.g. ask, challenge, command, insist, request, beg, etc. Searle's (1979) classification retains this nomenclature. Commissives permit the speaker to express varied degrees of commitment to a specific course of action. The person uses the expression to commit to some future activities, such as guarantees, pledges, promises, swearing, threats, refusals, and so on. Expressives assist the speaker in expressing an attitude towards a current situation. That is, he expresses how he feels about something. It expresses psychological feelings such as happiness, anguish, preferences, distaste, excitement, or despair. In declarations, the speaker changes the external status of a circumstance just by making the utterance. Searle retained the name in 1979.

Crystal (1997) believes that speech acts are successful only if they meet various requirements known as felicity conditions. The preparation, sincere, content, general and the essential condition are the five categories into which these requirements fall. The general condition assumes that the writer or speaker, depending on the situation, is not behaving or making

senseless statements. Put another way, the author displays a fair amount of gravity that is free of clowning or play-acting. The content condition refers to the substance of a speaker's speech that can bring about the actuality of his utterance, which can be current or future events.

Preparatory condition is a type of condition that refers to prepared comments that can serve as a warning of a future occurrence. The sincerity condition plays emphasis on the speaker's genuineness during the speaking act. It also reveals that the speaker is not acting. It demonstrates that the speaker is serious and devoted. For essential condition, it is realized that this type of condition describes the necessity to confirm specific imperatives in order for a future event to occur. It gives the relevant information about an upcoming event. Ignoring this criterion is a breach of commitment.

Speech acts can be conducted either explicitly or implicitly. The expression performed in a speech act indirectly via another act is characterised as implicitness (Asher and Lascarides, 2006). While the line I invite you to my birthday celebration

tomorrow is an explicit performative, the expression I will be very glad if you come to my birthday party tomorrow is an implicit performative. In the second situation, the mood of happiness serves as an implicit invitation.

#### **1.4 Studies on Political Speech Act**

Several studies focusing on speech act have been conducted focusing mainly the discourse of political. Akinwotu (2013) explores speech acts contained in Chief Awolowo's and Chief Abiola's acceptance speeches. In the research, acceptance speeches were marked by illocutionary acts which were mostly employed to persuade the audience. The study again states that a majority of forceful, commissive acts and expressive act are mostly utilised as mobilisation methods, during political campaigns when politicians must persuade. Waya & Ogechukwu (2013) employs the speech act theory in his examination of President Goodluck Jonathan's victory and inaugural speeches. For them, political speeches are mostly made up of aggressive sentences. They claims that political speeches demonstrate that political leaders



engage in a variety of speech actions through their speeches.

In addition, Adetunji (2009), in Akinwotu (2013), investigated the speech acts and rhetorics featured in Nigerian President Obasanjo's and American President Bush's second inauguration speeches, combining speech acts and rhetorics. The discovery highlights that two speeches from the same discourse genre can have different illocutionary force and rhetoric. In his study, Hakansson (2012) investigates the use of personal pronouns in state of the union speeches delivered by two American presidents and concludes that the presidents' pronominal choices do not differ considerably. Furthermore, according to the study, the pronoun 'I' is used when the speaker wants to communicate as an individual rather than as a representative of a group. Additionally, Hakansson feels that the pronoun 'they' is used to identify oneself from others, whereas 'we' is used to convey a sense of belonging and responsibility.

Other study findings reveal that these usages differ depending on the context of the speech. Babatunde and Odepidan (2009) in Akinwotu (2013) investigate the roles of

pragmatics and rhetoric in effective political and governance communication. The research investigates the influence of context, intention, and global knowledge on the choice of acts conducted in the data using selected speeches of President Olusegun Obasanjo as data.

From this it could be realized that, numerous studies have been conducted using the speech act theory. However, not much studies have been conducted concerning the speech act employed by two Ghanaian presidential candidates who lost the general election. It is therefore expedient that this study is conducted to unravel the illocutionary act employed by losing Ghanaian presidential candidates in their concession speech.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This is a qualitative study. According to Kaswan and Suprijadi (2016:15), qualitative research design focuses on studying small samples, rather than attempting to control contextual factors, and instead seeks to understand things from the informants' perspectives, resulting in a rich and in-depth picture of the phenomena under investigation. The researcher applies

the speech act theory to the concession speeches of some losing Ghanaian presidential candidates. Two concession speeches were purposively selected for the study. The concession speeches of Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo and John Dramani Mahama, respectively was selected for the study. The choice of these two addresses is as a result of, primarily, the presence of the linguistic elements that informs this research, and, secondarily, an attempt to conduct a study being perceived as a comparative study between the two political polarities in present Ghana. This research adopt Searle's classification for the purpose of analysis of the concession speeches of Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo after the 2012 general election and John Dramani Mahama after the 2016 general election.

These speeches were selected because both losing candidates subjected to the law court for a redress of the electoral process since they thought at that time that the winning political party didn't wins the election on a free and fair account. Searle's five key categories of speech acts is used to evaluate and interpret the subject under examination (commissive, assertive,

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directive, declarative and expressive). The information provided in both Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo and John Mahama's speech were broken into statements/ sentences/ utterances and analyzed. The researcher examined the concession address before compiling the report in accordance with the speech acts highlighted in it. The data is analyzed by classifying/numbering the suitable utterances with the relevant illocutionary acts and illocutionary force coming after it. The study will also be supported by some quantitative methodology like frequencies and percentages. The concession speeches from both participant was downloaded online from [https:// www. premiumtimesng. com/news/top-news/217572-ghanas-president-johnmahamas-concession-speech.html](https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/217572-ghanas-president-johnmahamas-concession-speech.html) and [https:// www. Myjoyonline.com/throwback-akufo-addos-speech-after-losing-2012-election-petition/](https://www.Myjoyonline.com/throwback-akufo-addos-speech-after-losing-2012-election-petition/) respectfully. The complete speeches are presented for the analysis.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

#### **Speech Act Analysis of Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo concession speech**

1. I have called President John Dramani Mahama and I have now

- congratulated him on being elected the fourth president of the Fourth Republic of our country. **(Expressive, congratulating)**
2. The Supreme Court of our nation has spoken and the result of the December 2012 presidential election has been confirmed as having been won by the candidate of the NDC, President Mahama. **(Assertive, Admitting)**
  3. As I said earlier, whilst I disagree with the Court's decision, I accept it. **(Declarative, Accepting)**
  4. I accept that what the Court says brings finality to the election dispute. **(Declarative, Accepting)**
  5. We shall not be asking for a review of the verdict so we can all move on in the interest of our nation. **(Commissive, Promising)**
  6. Everything in my bones, in my upbringing and in what I have done with my life thus far makes it imperative that I accept a decision made by the highest court of the land, however much I dislike or disagree with it. **(Expressive, Lamentation)**
  7. I am saddened by the verdict and I know that many of our supporters are saddened too. **(Expressive, Lamentation)**
  8. However, for the sake and love of our country, we must embark on a path that builds, rather than destroys, to deal with our disappointment. **(Assertive, Stating)**
  9. I appeal to all members and supporters of our party, the NPP in particular to accept the verdict of the court. **(Directive, Request)**
  10. Even in our disappointment we can take pride in the way we have conducted ourselves. **(Directive, Encouraging)**
  11. Even in our disappointment we can take pride that the NPP has again led the way in deepening Ghana's democracy. **(Directive, Encouraging)**
  12. To quote one of the Supreme court judges, "After this case, elections in Ghana will not be the same." **(Assertive, Stating)**
  13. In other words, we might not have been given the ruling we sought, but

thanks to our efforts, we can hopefully look forward to an improved electoral process in our country. **(Expressive, Hoping)**

14. I am grateful to my co-petitioners, Jake Obetsebi Lamptey and Dr Mahamudu Bawumia for their hard work, dedication and their commitment as we pursued the legal options available to us. **(Expressive, Appreciating)**

15. My gratitude goes also to the Lawyers and the technical team for their unbelievable hard work and sacrifices. **(Expressive, Thanking)**

16. I am grateful to all the volunteers who spent days and nights working on pink sheets, entering data, photocopying documents, and labeling exhibits for the Petition. **(Expressive, Appreciating)**

17. I am grateful to all the well-wishers for their prayers. **(Expressive, Appreciating)**

18. I must also thank my party the NPP, the officials, the foot-soldiers and supporters for their unflinching support and belief in me. The National Council of the party,

having taken the decision to go to court, has been unwavering in its support. **(Expressive, Thanking)**

19. I also want to thank my daughters and my wife, Rebecca, for their love and extraordinary support. **(Expressive, Thanking)**

20. There have been friends who have made unbelievable sacrifices of time, energy, ideas, money and a listening ear. I am grateful to all of them. **(Expressive, Appreciating)**

21. I am sure there are many people wondering what I envisage for my political future. **(Assertive, Stating)**

22. I intend to take some time out of the hurly burly of politics, get some rest, reflect and then announce whatever decision I come to in the not too distant future. **(Assertive, Stating)**

23. In Ghana's 56 year history, this is the first time a presidential election petition of this kind has been filed and pursued through the courts. **(Assertive, Reporting)**

24. The whole world has watched us in wonder and admiration. **(Assertive, Stating)**

25. Our reaction to this judgment will be watched keenly in Africa and beyond and will set a precedent for generations to follow. (**Assertive, Stating**)
26. It is now up to all of us Ghanaians to put the dispute behind us and come together to iron out our differences, ease the tensions among us, and come together to build our country. (**Directive, Entreating**)
27. There are myriads of problems facing us as a people. (**Assertive, Stating**)
28. This is the time for us all to come together and work to find solutions to the challenges that confront our people. (**Directive, Entreating**)
29. To my party, the NPP, I say we have a lot to be proud of; there are more than three years left in this political cycle to be a worthy opposition, and also position ourselves for the battle of 2016. (**Assertive, Concluding**)
30. Today, let us wish our President well and thank the Almighty for His mercies to our nation. (**Directive, request**)
31. The battle continues to be that of the Lord's. (**Declarative, Declaring**)

32. God bless Ghana.”

(Declarative, Blessing)

**Table 1: speech acts present in Nana**

speech act consist of assertives, commissives, expressives, directives and declaratives. The data revealed that

No.	Illocutionary Acts	No.	Illocutionary Force	Frequencies	Percentages
1	Assertives	10	Stating Admitting Reporting Concluding	7 1 1 1	31%
2.	Directives	6	Request Encouraging Entreating	2 2 2	19%
3	Commissives	1	Promising	1	3%
4	Expressives	11	Thanking Congratulating Appreciating Hoping Lamentation	3 1 4 1 2	34%
5	Declaratives	4	Declaring Blessing Accepting	2 1 1	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Addo Danquah Akufo Addo’s concession speech**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the table above, the researcher found 32 speech acts used in concession speech of Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo. The

expressive speech acts accounted for the highest proportion of speech act with 34% of the illocutionary acts performed in the data. Nana Akufo Addo used this act in thanking those who helped him during the election process. He also used the act to congratulate the newly elected president

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and also in appreciating friends and party faithful who made unbelievable sacrifices of time, energy, ideas during the election. He also used the act to hope to have an improved electoral process and lamented on losing the election.

Next to this are assertives accounting for 31% of the utterances. Assertive act was used by the presidential candidate to give general statement about the elections. He also used the act to admit the winning of the election by John Dramani Mahama and reported on an issue which has happened in Ghana's 56 year history, this is the first time a presidential election petition has been pursued through the court. Directive and declarative acts account for 19% and 13% respectively. The directive act was used by the presidential candidate as a request, encouragement and entreaties. Declarative act was used by the presidential candidate to bless the nation, declaring that the battle is the Lord' and in accepting the election result. Least on the table is commissive acts which accounted for the lowest percentage of the speech act which is 3%. This act was used by the presidential candidate to promise Ghanaians that they would not be

asking for a review of the verdict of the election result.

### **Speech Act Analysis of John Dramani Mahama's concession speech after the 2016 election**

1. My fellow Ghanaians, (**Assertive, stating**)
2. My Brothers and Sisters, (**Assertive, stating**)
3. A while ago, I phoned Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and offered him my congratulations for emerging the winner of the 2016 presidential elections. (**Assertive, reporting**)
4. Every election is a hard-fought battle, and this one was no exception. For those of us who choose to be contenders and go into electoral contests, we go about it as a win-lose proposition. (**Assertive, stating**)
5. We believe that only one person can emerge as the winner. And while it is true that only one person can be elected President, in reality, and certainly in a democracy such as ours, every election is an opportunity for the people of this

nation to express their will, to have their say in who will lead them in the shaping of Ghana's future.

**(Assertive, stating)**

6. In this way, each victory belongs to the people. And the true winner is always Ghana. **(Assertive, conclusion)**
7. It is precisely on account of my belief in Ghana and its future that notwithstanding the irregularities associated with this election, I have decided at this stage to congratulate the President-elect. **(Expressive, congratulating)**
8. With this understanding, I would like to assure the people of Ghana of my commitment to the sustenance of our country's democracy and would work to ensure a smooth and peaceful transition to the incoming administration. **(Commissive, promising)**
9. I remain committed to the unity and stability of our great nation. **(Commissive, promising)**
10. I am profoundly grateful to the almighty God and the people of Ghana for the opportunity to serve

in the high office of President.  
**(Expressive, Appreciating)**

11. As President, I have done my bit and made a contribution to the political, social and economic development of our country. **(Assertive, informing)**
12. I would have cherished an opportunity to do even more, but I respect the will of the Ghanaian people. **(Expressive, wishing)**
13. I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to the individuals who have made this journey with me. **(Expressive, thanking)**
14. I wish to thank all of the people who worked on my campaign for their dedication and tireless efforts. **(Expressive thanking)**
15. I wish to thank the leadership of the NDC, all of our members, foot soldiers and sympathizers for their belief in the principles of social democracy and their commitment to the vision. **(Expressive, thanking)**
16. Likewise, I would like to thank the members of my administration for their diligent service and for bringing to fruition many of the



plans we set out to accomplish—the numerous programs that have been implemented and the infrastructural projects that have been completed and ongoing. **(Expressive, thanking)**

17. I wish to thank my able Vice President Kwesi Amissah Arthur for his unflinching support and loyalty during our period in office. **(Expressive, thanking)**

18. To the service commanders and men and women in uniform, I wish to extend my profound gratitude to you for your selfless service to Ghana. **(Expressive, Appreciating)**

19. I thoroughly enjoyed working with you to ensure the internal and external security of our country. **(Assertive, stating)**

20. I am very proud of you. **(Declarative, declaring)**

21. To organised labour, the civil and public services, traditional rulers, the clergy, workers, youth groups and all identifiable bodies, I am immensely appreciative of your contributions to the development of

our country in the last four years. **(Expressives, Appreciating)**

22. I wish to thank my family: my children, my brothers, and sisters, and especially my wife, Lordina, for standing as firmly with me through the times of challenge and difficulty as they have through the times of achievement and promise. **(Expressive, thanking)**

23. Most importantly, I am grateful to the almighty God who has sustained us through the implementation of the Agenda for Transformation. I am eternally grateful. **(Expressive, Appreciating)**

24. Ghana, this land that we all call home, is a powerful nation with a history of taking the improbable and making it possible. **(Assertive, stating)**

25. We have been a leader on so many fronts, not just on this continent but also in the world—from our attainment of independence, to our development of a democracy that maintains at its core a pledge of stability and a respect for the rule of law, to our formation of much-

- needed peacekeeping and other humanitarian missions for other nations in need. (**Assertive, reporting**)
26. And we have been able to do all of these things because we have always functioned as one nation, one people. (**Assertive, reporting**)
27. Notwithstanding our diversity, religious faiths, ethnic groups and political affiliations, we have always recognized that we are all, ultimately, on the same side—the side of Ghana and its progress. (**Assertive, stating**)
28. We see all throughout the world in countries that are much older than ours the devastation that division and intolerance bring. (**Assertive, reporting**)
29. So I pray that as we move forward, even as we voice our differences and possibly even disagree on agendas and decisions and other details of governance, we always keep in mind the fact of our shared destiny and the undeniable possibilities of power that exist in our unity. (**Assertive, stating**)
30. It has been, without a doubt, one of the most tremendous privileges of my life to serve this great nation as President and to work on behalf of all Ghanaians. (**Assertive, stating**)
31. I will leave it to history to be the judge of my time and contributions while in that highest office. (**Assertive, Stating**)
32. To all of the people who cheered us on, who gathered at rallies to show their support, and who queued in long lines to vote for me, I know that this is not the outcome that we wanted and hoped for, but I say to you that this day should not mark the defeat of your role in this nation’s political process. (**Directive, Request**)
33. We must do our part to ensure that the progress of all our past governments, from the very first one led by our nation’s founder, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah to this most recent one that I have led, continues because progress does not happen all at once; it takes time and dedication. (**Assertive, Stating**)

34. In the words of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, “Forward ever, backward never.” (**Assertive, Stating**)

35. At this point let me commend the electoral Commission for living up to its constitutional duty in successfully conducting the 2016 elections. (**Expressive, Praising**)

36. My thanks also goes to the media and all stakeholders for their role in the election. (**Expressive, Thanking**)

37. Again, allow me to offer my sincere congratulations to the President-elect, Nana Akufo-Addo. (**Expressive, Congratulating**)

38. I thank you for your kind attention. (**Expressive, Thanking**)

39. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our homeland Ghana. (**Declarative, Blessing**)

## Results and Discussion

**Table 2: speech acts present in John Dramani Mahama’s concession speech**

No.	Illocutionary Acts	No.	Illocutionary Force
1	Assertives		Stating Conclusion

		18	Reporting Informing	3 1
2.	Directives	1	Request	1
3	Commissives	2	Promising	2
4	Expressives	16	Thanking Congratulating Wishing Appreciating Praising	8 2 1 4 1
5	Declaratives	2	Declaring Blessing	1 1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>39</b>

The table above shows the illocutionary acts found in the concession speech of John Dramani Mahama. The act consist of assertives, commissives, expressives, directives and declaratives. Assertives have the highest frequency of occurrence 18 (46%). The president used the assertive speech act to give general statement about elections. He also used the act to report some incident about the election, used the act to make some conclusions and also used to give general information about the election. Expressives acts is second highest 16 (41%). The presidential candidate used this act to thank and congratulate people

who have helped him in a way and also used the act to wish for the opportunity to have done more for the nation. He also used the act to praise and appreciate the effort of some dedicated friends and party faithfuls. Declaratives 2(5%) and commissives 2(5%) follows in of frequency of occurrences. The declarative act was used by the president to bless the people of the nation and also to declare the good works of some party members. The commissive was used to promise Ghanaians of his commitment to the sustenance the country's democracy and working to ensure a smooth and peaceful transition to the incoming administration. Directives occurred only once in the concession speech constituting a total of 3%. It was used to make a request to the party member to keep pressing on regardless their defeat and that they should maintain their role in this nation's political process.

Furthermore, the types of assertives present are statement, reporting, informing and conclusion. The types of directives consist of request. Commissives had the illocutionary force of promising and the expressives act involved thanking, congratulating and wishing. The last,

declaratives involves declaring, and blessing.

**Table 3: Frequency distribution of Speech Acts for both presidential candidates**

Speech Act	Speech 1 Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo		Speech 2 John Dramani Mahama	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	Assertives	10	31%	18
Directives	6	19%	1	3%
Commissives	1	3%	2	5%
Expressives	11	34%	16	41%
Declaratives	4	13%	2	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

In both Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo's concession speech and John Dramani Mahama's concession speech, there are the use of assertive acts. Nana Akufo Addo's made 10 assertives, representing 31% of the total 32 acts, while John Mahama made 18 assertives, representing 46% of the total 39 acts. It can thus be concluded that John Mahama made more assertive act than Nana Akufo Addo. In regards to directives, again Nana Akufo Addo made more directive speech act than John Mahama. It was realized that, Nana Akufo Addo made 6 (19%) and John Mahama made only one

directive speech act 1 (3%) which is the least among the five acts. With commissive acts, Nana Akufo Addo and John Mahama inspire the confidence of the Ghanaian citizens in given out some some promises. Nana Akufo Addo made 1 commissive act which constitutes 3%. Meanwhile John Mahama made 2 (5%) commissive act. It could be said that although John Mahama made more commisive act than Nana Akufo Addo, the margin is relatively close. It could also be said that this act is the least occurring act among the five speech act. Concerning their expressive acts, both presidential candidates intended to show

gratitude, appreciation and to thank their friends and well-wishers for their support. Expressive act accounted for the highest illocutionary act in Nana Akufo Addo's speech with 11 (34%) whereas in John Mahama's speech it accounted for the second highest illocutionary act with 16 (41%). With declaratives, it could be noticed that, Nana Akufo Addo's made 4 declarative constituting 13% and John Mahama made 2 which also constitutes 5%. The following hierarchy of frequency is clear in Ghanaian concession speeches in a descending order: assertives, expressives, directives, declarative and commissives. Across the two concession speech, there are 77% assertives, 75% expressives, 22% directives, 18% declaratives and 8% commissives.

## CONCLUSION

This research is concerned with the pragmatic analysis of the types of illocutionary acts in reference to the Searle's categorization of speech acts. The researcher focused on analyzing the types of illocutionary acts in Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo's concession to John Dramani Mahama's in the 2012 election and John

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Dramani Mahama's concession to Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo in 2016 elections. The study found five types of illocutionary acts in Nana Akufo Addo's speech. They are expressives occurring 11 times and assertives occurring 10 times. It was followed by directives (6), declaratives (4) and, commissives, which occurred in only 1 instance. So, the total of data have 39 types of illocutionary acts founds in Nana Akufo Addo's concession to John Dramani Mahama. Moreover, concerning the concession speech of John Mahama, a total of 32 illocutionary acts was performed. Assertives had the highest occurrence 18 (46%). Expressives acts was second highest with 16 (41%) occurrence. Declaratives 2(5%) and commissives 2(5%) follows. Directives occurred only once in the concession speech constituting a total of 3%.

Both concession speeches uses five illocutionary act as postulated by Searle. Nana Akkufo Addo's made 10 assertives, representing 31% of the total 32 acts, while John Mahama made 18 assertives, representing 46% of the total 39 acts. Thus John Mahama used more assertives than Nana Akkufo Addo. In regards to directives,

Nana Akkufo Addo made more directive speech act than John Mahama. Nana Akkufo Addo made 6 (19%) and John Mahama made only one directive speech act 1 (3%) which is the least among the five acts. With commissive acts, Nana Akkufo Addo and John Mahama inspire the confidence of the Ghanaian citizens in given out some promises. Nana Akkufo Addo made 1 commissive act which constitutes 3%. Meanwhile John Mahama made 2 (5%) commissive act. It could be said that although John Mahama made more commissive act than Nana Akkufo Addo, the margin is relatively close. It could also be said that this act is the least occurring act among the five speech act.

Concerning their expressive acts, both presidential candidates intended to show gratitude, appreciation and to thank their friends and well-wishers for their support. Expressive act accounted for the highest illocutionary act in Nana Akkufo Addo's speech whereas in John Mahama's speech it accounted for the second highest. With declaratives, Nana Akkufo Addo's made 4 declarative constituting and John Mahama made 2. The following hierarchy of frequency is clear in Ghanaian concession speeches in a descending order: assertives, expressives, directives, declarative and commissives. Across the two concession speech, there are 77% assertives, 75% expressives, 22% directives, 18% declaratives and 8% commissives.

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