

# The Speech act Methodology (Sam): Translating Speech acts Through Speech Acts

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**Abstract:** A speech act refers to an utterance that has performative function in language and communication. In contemporary usage, speech acts simply refer to how we do things with words. This study is therefore based on the premise that just like an utterance, translation equally has a performative function, which is to ensure that the message is passed across to the target language audience seamlessly. The study has highlighted the paucity of analytical models for budding researchers in the field of corpus-based and literary translation studies. Moreover, the speech act theory has not been sufficiently explored in the field of translation studies as its performative function had not been exploited. This study is therefore inspired by Austin's locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts to propose a three dimensional approach to the analysis of texts. Thus, the study submits that the speech act theory has a dual significance in translation studies as it can serve both as a framework and a methodology or model for the analysis of texts.

The study uses proverbs, which are various forms of speech acts as case study. Thus, twelve proverbs in Mokpe, which were randomly selected, have been analyzed using Austin's model to show how the speech act theory can equally be used as a methodology to analyze texts for better rendering. Text criticism approaches provided theoretical support since proverbs fall within the purview of literary translation.

**KeyWords:** Translation, Speech Acts, Methodology

## I. Introduction

Speech acts are communicative units that are used to perform communicative functions, hence their performative properties. It is therefore impossible to undertake this study without delving into the concept of communication. It is worth noting that common to all conceptualization of communication is the idea of information transfer. Thus, according to Luckman (2006:6), information that originates in one part of a system is formulated into a message that is transmitted to another part of that system. He goes further to define communication in the following words:

In its most elemental form, human communication is "the process by which ideas contained within one mind are conveyed to other minds" (Luckman 2006:9).

Along the lines of the speech act theory, communication is therefore, performative. Thus, when we transmit a message "from one part of the system to another part of that system," we are performing an operation. Similarly, when we convey "ideas within one mind to other minds," we are still performing an act or operation. This is the same thing when we convey the message embedded in a text from one language (source language) to another (target language). Thus, when we convey the ideas contained in one mind to other minds, we are performing a translational activity. It therefore means that like speech acts, translation is performative.

Understanding is paramount for the performative functions of speech acts and translations to be achieved. Thus, Clarke and Brennan (1991:11) note that "understanding consists of recognizing intentions, not the words used

but rather what speakers intend those words to mean.” This is the same with translation, as a successful replication of the source language message into the target language hinges partly on the understanding of the source text author’s intention. The dialogic perspective of communication deems intentionality as being insufficient to the successful enactment of a speech act as well as the translation of a text. Thus, according to this perspective, “meaning is socially situated, deriving from the particular circumstances of the interaction – and the meaning of an utterance can be understood only in the context of these circumstance” (Brennan, 2006:9). The successful rendering of a text into another language equally depends not so much on understanding the intention of the source text author, as understanding the context of the message he is passing across. Most messages are culturally embedded. Hence, there is need to understand their cultural context for successful translation, that is, for the perlocutionary act of translation, to take place. The importance of culture in the translation of speech acts therefore becomes poignant. This importance resonates in Luckman’s (2006:9) definition of communication cited above: communication is “the process by which ideas contained within one mind are conveyed to other minds.” ‘Minds’ here refers to the collective psyche of persons belonging to the same cultural background. This explains the symbiotic relationship between translation, culture and the speech act theory. This relationship is well captured in what is referred to as “the cultural theory of translation,” which falls within the purview of what Pym (2014) calls “cultural translation.” A very important variable of the cultural theory is what researchers have termed “cultural turn.” This term was proposed by Snell-Hornby (1990) and endorsed by Lefevere and Bassnet (1990) whereby translation studies should focus on the cultural effects of translation. There is a traceable interface between translation and culture on the one hand and the speech act theory on the other hand because while “cultural translation focuses on the cultural effects of translation, speech acts or better still the speech act theory focuses on the performative functions or the “perlocutionary effects” of various forms of utterances to the interlocutors. That is why this study sets out to investigate on how the speech act theory can be used as a methodology to translate proverbs, which are considered as speech acts embedded in a cultural context. The corpus chosen for this study is proverbs in Mokpe, which constitute the source text while their English renderings constitute the target text. This is not to say that the speech act methodology (SAM) cannot be used to analyze other text types. Thus, the selected corpus for this study only serves as a case study.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Most models in the analysis of texts in corpus-based translation studies are three-dimensional. These models are used most often by students for the analysis of their data, especially when they are writing their dissertations. This is not to say that there is anything wrong with these models, which are deemed to have been tried, and very useful. Rather, this study notes that the speech act theory (which equally posits a three-dimensional approach), has not been sufficiently exploited by translation scholars who have only focused on explaining it, rather than equally proposing it as a model for the analysis of texts, given the paucity of textual analysis models in translation research.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

This study has the following research questions:

1. How can the performative function of proverbs be replicated from one language into another?
2. How can the speech act theory be used as a model or methodology for the analysis and translation of texts?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

In a bid to provide answers to the above questions, the following research objectives have been posited:

1. To explain how the performative function of proverbs can be replicated from Mokpe into English

2. To demonstrate how the speech act theory can also be used as a model or methodology for the analysis and translation of texts

## **II. Literature Review**

After having established the objectives, the study continues with a review of related literature in the domain. It begins by probing the core concepts of the study, which are translation and speech acts. It continues by attempting to establish an interface between these two concepts.

### **2.1 Translation**

Reviewing definitions of translation for this study may appear very simplistic and therefore unnecessary. However, it is necessary to highlight that contemporary researchers in the field of translation studies have attributed three paradigms to the definition of translation. They include the linguistic, cultural and social and psychological paradigms respectively. It is worth mentioning that only the latter two paradigms have been considered in this study, owing to the inextricable link they have with it. This is because proverbs, which are the subject of scientific enquiry are considered as various forms of speech acts with performative functions, which are culturally embedded.

As far as the cultural paradigm is concerned, the following definitions are worth considering:

One of the exponents of the cultural paradigm in the definition of translation is Duff. He defines translation in the following words:

As a process of communication, translation functions as the medium across the linguistic and cultural barriers in conveying the messages written in the foreign language. It functions as a bridge to carry the messages (meaning) from the source language to the receptor language (Duff 1989:5).

Duff does not only view translation from the cultural perspective but equally highlights the performative function of translation: serving as a bridge for the conveyance of messages across cultures. The words 'carry' and 'convey' effectively highlight this performative function of translation from the cultural perspective.

Another scholar, Reiss, defines translation as follows:

Interlingual translation (translating from one language to another) is a bilingual mediated process of communication, which usually aims at the production of a SL text that is functionally equivalent to a TL text. Translation is a process of communication: the objective of translating is to impart the knowledge of the original to the foreign reader (cited by Venuti 2000:160).

The term 'culture' has not been explicitly used by Reiss. However, 'culture' resonates in this definition, especially with reference to the 'foreign reader.' The definition also hints at the performative properties of translation, which is the 'production' of a ST that is 'functionally equivalent' to the TL, as well as the impartation of knowledge.

In tandem with the above definitions is what some researchers have christened 'the cultural turn.' This term was proposed by Snell-Hornby (1990) and endorsed by both Lefevere and Bassnett (1990). These scholars consider the perlocutionary aspect of translation by insisting that translation studies should focus on the cultural effects of translation. They see translation as going beyond the text as it is concerned with looking at general cultural practices rather than finite linguistic products. The proponents of the 'cultural turn' do not mince words as far as the performative function of translation is concerned, especially when they insist that translation studies should focus on 'the cultural effects of translation. It is these effects that make translation a functional activity rather than mere linguistic transfer.

Closely related to the cultural paradigm in the definition of translation is the social and psychological paradigm. The exponents of this paradigm reveal new insights about translation. They challenge the deficiencies of the

earlier definitions and propose new ones. Hence, Sherry (2006:17) defines translation as “writing that is inspired by the encounter with other tongues including the effects of creative interference.” Another social and psychologist scholar Apter defines translation as follows:

...Translation is concerned not only with our culture, society, economy, and politics, but also with our psychological conditions. It is an indispensable part of our lives. On the one hand, it reforms the organization, restructures our culture...It is a means of repositioning the subject in the world and in the history, a way of denaturalizing citizens and a significant medium for subject reformation and political change (Apter 2006:5-6).

Apter's views on translation seem to suggest that translation is far from being a marginal and minimal activity that involves mere linguistic transfer. Thus, it cuts across almost all aspects of social life ranging from culture, economics, politics, society and even psychology. Apter equally hints at the performative properties of translation by observing that it is a ‘significant medium for subject reformation and political change.’ The perlocutionary effect of translation can therefore not be gainsaid especially when one considers Apter's position. This logically leads to the next concept of the study, which is speech acts.

## **2.2 Speech Acts**

In its most simplistic form, a speech act is referred to as an utterance that has performative function in language and communication. Austin, the precursor of the speech act theory (1962) simply refers to it as “how we do things with words” The hallmark of every speech act is what researchers have termed as “intention.” Thus, Kecskes (2010) notes that in performing a speech act, a speaker certainly has an intention in his utterance. This intention is what Austin (1962) christened the “locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary effects” of speech act. For instance, by making an utterance (locution), one may perform the social act of making a promise (illocution) and as a result, convince your audience of your commitment (perlocution). One can safely say that the end-product of every utterance is the perlocutionary effect it has on the listeners, with illocution coming mid-way. In the same vein, every translation is geared towards replicating the source text message to the target language audience. Thus, drawing inspiration from Austin, this study intends to demonstrate that Austin's locution, illocution and perlocution can better serve as a model or methodology for the analysis and translation of various text types, with locution representing the text (purpose), illocution the translation techniques and strategies (process) and perlocution the target language text (product). This three-dimensional approach has not been exploited by scholars of translation studies, who have mostly viewed speech acts from a literary and theoretical rather than a methodological point of view.

Kadhim (2007) for instance, views speech acts in terms of their semantic and pragmatic meaning and notes that they are considered as a kind of pragmatic meaning. This, according to him, is due to the fact that they characterize utterances in terms of what they do (their illocution) rather than what they say (their locution). Within the same line of thinking, Adams (in Kadhim 2007) opines that the interpretation of speech acts is often governed by the fact that the speaker intends to achieve a certain effect on the listener by utilizing the social convention. He supports his thesis by distinguishing between intentional and conventional speech acts. Adams believes that most speech acts are intentional because they are communicative. For example, in making a promise, the speaker intends to oblige himself to an act in the future. Conventional acts on the other hand are greatly influenced by the circumstances in which they occur. For instance, according to Adams, we can make promises to people in different situations but we can only fire certain people under certain circumstances as in “You will be fired” and “You are fired!”

For their part, Waluyo et al (2018) regard speech acts from the point of view of politeness, arguing that speech acts have an important role to play in maintaining social relations among participants. Thus, they point out that speech acts reveal cross-cultural and social values and norms and therefore, must be performed to create harmony. The same can be said about proverbs, which is the object of this study.

These scholars seem to have been inspired by the Politeness Theory, which states that “*politeness is a form of communicative behaviour found very generally in human language and among human cultures; indeed, it has been claimed as a universal phenomenon of human society*” (Leech 2014).

Another group of scholars, Widiastuti et al (2022) have studied speech acts from the perspective of an insinuation. They have studied the use of insinuations as speech acts in the novel titled “*Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Battle of the Labyrinth*.” For them, insinuation is related to indirect speech, which is aimed at offending the interlocutor. The concept of insinuation had earlier been broached by Austin (in 1962) when he observed that “*insinuation is a speech that is not conveyed explicitly or openly through an utterance. The circumstances when the utterance was spoken were not supportive, thus giving the impression of offending the interlocutor...*”

Brown and Levinson (1988) also concur that indirect speech does not only have one meaning. There are several meanings that can be interpreted from an indirect speech, so that insinuation can be categorized as implicit speech (having implied meaning). They observe that the speech partner needs to interpret the meaning of the utterance spoken by the speaker to be able to capture the true meaning before giving a response that is in accordance with what the speaker wants to convey. So it is with translation, especially the translation of proverbial expressions. Meaning can only be adequately conveyed through an appropriate interpretation of the text to be translated.

The above analysis of scholarly literature on speech acts points to the fact that most scholars have just treated this component from a literary and theoretical perspective. This study is in sync with the above scholarly perspectives, but pushes the debate further by positing that far from only being a theory, the speech act can also be looked at from a methodological perspective.

### **2.3 Viewing Translation as a Performative Act**

Translation can be regarded as the performance of an activity that goes beyond mere linguistic transfer as the translator attempts to replicate the source text message into the target language. The message cannot be deemed as important if meaning is not embedded in it. Thus, it is the process of transferring meaning from one language and/or culture into another that makes translation not only meaningful but equally performative. Some scholars in the field of translation and cultural studies have coined the term “Performative turn” to demonstrate the fact that translation is a performative activity. And this has orchestrated a paradigm shift in translation.

One of the proponents of the performative turn is Bachmann-Medick. According to her, within the performative turn, the focus is on the expressive dimension of both action and action-based events, including stage social culture and that the practical dimension of the generation of cultural meanings and experiences has priority (2006:33-42). What can be gleaned from Bachmann-Medick’s submission is the fact that for cultural meaning to be expressed in the target language text, the translator should consider his activity as a performative one and give priority to it. This has further been expressed in the following words by Bachmann-Medick:

After all, the new direction taken by the study of culture cannot be explained solely on the basis of an increasingly theatricalized historical and social reality. Rather, it reflects a new perceptual and analytical attitude that has allowed objects, actions and cultural processes to be seen in performative terms... (2006:33-42)

The above view synchronizes with the object of this study, which views the speech act theory as a methodology that can be used for the analysis of texts, hence calling on translators to adopt ‘new perceptual and analytical attitudes’ in the performance of their tasks.

Another scholar Fischer-Lichte equally subscribes to the idea that translation is a performative activity. Thus, he views the performative turn as focusing on the:

activities of production, fabrication and creation, and on the actions, **exchange processes**, changes and dynamics of cultural actors and events which entail the dissolution of existing structures and the creation of new ones... (cited by Bachmann-Medick, 2006:33-42)

Fischer-Lichte therefore views translation as a performative activity that brings to fore all the translation techniques and strategies (what he terms exchange processes) for the 'production,' 'fabrication' and 'creation' of a functionally relevant text as the translator navigates through the iconic dimensions of language.

From the above analysis, the performative turn can be said to be the bridge between translation and performance. It marks a movement away from mere words, towards the understanding of performative processes of cultural practices. That is why this study intends to use Mokpe proverbs as case study in a bid to demonstrate how the speech act methodology can be used to analyze different text types for translation.

After having reviewed the main concepts of this study, which are translation and speech acts, as well as attempt to create an interface between them, the study continues with the theoretical framework.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

The theory that underpins this study is the **text act theory**. This theory was propounded by Morini (2012) who, in sync with the performative act of translating, observed that in translating a ST, the translator aims at "doing what the source text does in the target language..." And with all the obstacles posed by linguistic and cultural barriers, he or she must translate a 'text act' rather than a 'mere text' (2012:15). This theory was inspired by Hatim and Mason (1990) who viewed texts as communicative items. They considered the role of context and distinguished its three dimensions. In addition to the communicative dimension, they highlighted the role of the pragmatic dimension, which bring into focus, "values relating to the ability to do things with words. The pragmatic dimension is closely related to the third, the semiotic dimension of discourse, which treats a communicative item, including its pragmatic value, as 'a sign within a system of signs.'

Hatim and Mason (1990:77-78) use the term text act to shift attention from the study of individual speech acts, usually studied in relation to individual sentences, towards more complex structures. Thus, the cumulative effect of sequences of speech acts leads to perception of a text act, the predominant illocutionary force of a series of speech acts (Horner, 1975 as cited in Missikova 2019:33). Morini on the other hand, views the text act as "subsuming all the performative forces displayed by a text" (2012:34). Hatim and Mason's (1990) explanation of the text act seems to reflect the notion of the dominant function while in Morini's view, a text act can accommodate the dominant as well as other functions, including genres and other performative qualities.

The relevance of the text act theory to this study cannot be over-emphasized as it not only enhances a description of the performative dimension of the text, but is equally in sync with the speech act methodology for the analysis and translation of texts. This is not to say that the text act theory is an all-englobing theory. It should be used in tandem with other techniques, strategies, theories and approaches for the analysis and translation of texts. Thus, for the sake of this study, the literary translation theories (also known as text criticism theories or approaches) may be appropriate given their performative nature and in view of the fact that proverbs (discourse genres with a performative function) fall within the purview of literary translation.

## **III. Methodology**

The speech act methodology operates a flexible research design as it involves the collection and analysis of data. It is worth noting that though proverbs have been used as data for this study, the methodology is open to other text types ranging from literary texts to other forms of non-literary and pragmatic texts. The methodology therefore presupposes the existence of textual data that necessitates collection for rigorous analysis. It employs a



corpus-based, descriptive and analytical research design. It can even be said that the speech act methodology is modelled according to the tenets of Toury's descriptive translation studies (DTA) model for textual analysis. Thus like DTS, the Speech Act Methodology (SAM) is equally three-dimensional.

For the sake of this study, data was collected through focus group discussions. This involved contacting resource persons who have expert knowledge in the Mokpe culture and oral tradition, as well as the gift of the garb as far as usage of proverbial expressions in the local language (Mokpe) is concerned. This enabled the researcher to seek understanding about difficult concepts and the context of their usage.

The collected data was analyzed using the speech act methodology (SAM), a three-dimensional approach modelled along the lines of Toury's DTS. Thus, just like DTS (identification, description, explanation), SAM also proposes three phases (that is, locution, illocution and perlocution) inspired by Austin's (1962) speech act theory. While locution involves the performance of an utterance, illocution involves performing the social act of making a promise and perlocution convincing your audience of your commitment. This study is not so much interested in the meaning of the above three. Rather, it is opportunistic, as it is inspired by the above three to propose a methodology. This can be seen in the following analysis grid presented in a tabular form:

**Table 1: THE SAM ANALYSIS GRID**

<b>A) LOCUTION</b>	
1	ST: Provides the source language (proverbial) element
2	Gloss: For those translating from/into an indigenous language (optional)
3	Element of Interest: Highlights the element of interest within the text
4	Context of Production: Explains the circumstance under which the ST is uttered
<b>B) ILLOCUTION</b>	
5	Translation Constraints: Describes the difficulty in translating the ST element into the TL
6	Translation Technique: Presents the technique used in overcoming the constraint
7	Translation Theory: Presents the relevant theory used
8	Literary Translation Theory (In the case of literary texts)
<b>C) PERLOCUTION</b>	
9	TT: Provides the target language translation (that is, the product which is the consequence of the utterance)
10	Value Judgment: Provides an explanation of the validity and reliability of the translation techniques, theories and approaches used (Usually out of the table)

A typical analysis grid modelled along the lines of the SAM Methodology might therefore contain nine points. However, this is not a magic number, as the elements may increase or decrease depending on the study undertaken.

### 3.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents the data and analyses it following the above mentioned grid. A total of 12 (twelve) proverbs in Mokpe are the focus of rigorous analysis following the SAM Model.

**Table 2: Excerpt 1**

S/N	THE SAM	
A. LOCUTION		
1.1	Source Text	èrzàngànkòhwà à rzákúwálierzene

1.2	Goss	a) Mokpe	èrzàngàrà/kòhwà/à/rzá/kúwá/li/aerzene
		b) Linguistic	Many/calabashes/they/donnot/stop/to hit
		c) Literal	Many calabashes put together will always hit themselves
1.3	Element of Interest	èrzàngàràkòhwà	
1.4	Context of Production	Tapping Frame: The noisy clanging of the calabash in the tapper’s back is commonplace and suggests the normalcy of disagreements in every society	
B. ILLOCUTION			
1.5	Possible translation constraint	Culture specificity of the proverb may render comprehension difficult. Also, difficulty in rendering the musicality in the SL expressions ‘kohwa’ and ‘kuhwa	
1.6	Translation Technique	Paraphrase	
1.7	Translation Theory	Sociolinguistic Theory	
1.8	Literary Translation Theory	Sociological Approach	
1.9	Target Text	Disagreement is not an end to communal living	

1.10 Value Judgment: The sociological background of the noisy calabashes hitting themselves in the tapper's back has been captured by the sociolinguistic theory and sociological approach respectively, hence, overcoming the constraint related to the culture specificity of the expression. Also, paraphrase is most suitable to enhance the understanding of the target language reader

**Table 3: Excerpt 2**

S/N	THE SAM		
B. LOCUTION			
2.1	Source Text		eèyéyálítumbá è ninèyàndílininéyá, è rzákεεyá
2.2	Goss	d) Mokpe	eèyé/yá/lítumbá/è/ninèyà/ndíli/ninéyá/è/rzá/kεεyá
		e) Linguistic	Stick/of/family/it/bends/only/to/bend/it/does not/break
		f) Literal	The family tree can only bend and can never be broken
3.3	Element of Interest		<i>e'eyéyálítumbá</i>
2.4	Context of Production		The family tree frame: The family tree is considered as a symbol of peace and unity
B. ILLOCUTION			
2.5	Possible translation constraint		Difficulty in understanding the ST and situating it within the right context
2.6	Translation Technique		Paraphrase
2.7	Translation Theory		Sociolinguistic Theory
2.8	Literary Translation Theory		Sociological Approach
C. PERLOCUTION			
2.9	Target Text		<i>It is normal for blood relations to disagree; it is abnormal for them to separate</i>

1.10 Value Judgment: The family tree has been paraphrased to mean blood relations whose relationship must experience disagreement from time to time (bend) but not separation (break). The sociolinguistic theory and sociological approach are instrumental in enhancing understanding of this expression

**Table 4: Excerpt 3**

S/N	THE SAM
D. LOCUTION	



3.1	Source Text		ó hwélitè ó ñmáñjànwólò, ò rzátàtánáhwémùne
3.2	Goss	g) Mokpe	ò/hwéli/te/ó/ñmáñjà/nà/wólò/ò rzá/tàtána/hwémùne
		h) Linguistic	You/are/at/the/sea/with/canoe/donnot/angry at/waves
		i) Literal	Do not get angry with the waves while you are in the high seas
3.3	Element of Interest		The whole text
3.4	Context of Production		The fishing frame: An appeal to employ patience and tact during turbulent moments
B. ILLOCUTION			
3.5	Possible translation constraint		Difficulty of understanding the text and situating it within the right context
3.6	Translation Technique		Omission/Compression
3.7	Translation Theory		Sociolinguistic Theory
3.8	Literary Translation Theory		Sociological Approach
PERLOCUTION			
3.9	Target Text		<i>You must not sail a turbulent ocean turbulently</i>

3.10 Value Judgment: The sociological background of the fisherman sailing through the ocean has been used to capture the meaning of the expression. The technique of omission has been used effectively, to the extent that some lexical items considered superfluous have been left out without any alteration of meaning. Two words ('turbulent' and 'turbulently') particularly stand out in the rendering, hence calling on individuals to employ patience, tact and brinksmanship during 'turbulent' situations.

**Table 5: Excerpt 4**

S/N	THE SAM		
E. LOCUTION			
4.1	Source Text		líkúmbíngèngè à rzáúwákáyè
4.2	Goss	j) Mokpe	lí/kúmbí/ngèngè/à/rzá/úwá/káyè
		k) Linguistic	He/beats/chest/he/does not/meet/problem
		l) Literal	The one who beats his chest does not encounter problems
4.3	Element of Interest		líkúmbíngèngè
4.4	Context of Production		Owning up frame: the act of beating one’s chest is considered owning up by the Bakweris
B. ILLOCUTION			
4.5	Possible translation constraint		The culture-specificity of this expression may render comprehension and even translation difficult
4.6	Translation Technique		Equivalence
4.7	Translation Theory		Skopos Theory
4.8	Literary Translation Theory		Formalistic Approach
PERLOCUTION			
4.9	Target Text		<i>A fault admitted is half redressed</i>

4.10 The act of beating oneschest may be interpreted differently by different persons. Some may even consider this gesture as being confrontational or an act of bravado. For cultures like the Bakweris, it is a gesture of admitting one's fault.The existence of an appropriate target language equivalence lends credence to the employment of the formalistic approach. The skopos theory is also appropriate due to the intimation of purposeful action (admitting one's fault) and having the perlocutionary effect of improving social relations.

**Table 6: Excerpt 5**

S/N	THE SAM		
F. LOCUTION			
5.1	Source Text		mórzàúwelele ó hwánà, mórzàùkà ó hwàmbákí
5.2	Goss	m) Mokpe	mó/rzà/úwelele/te/óhwánà/mó/rzà/ùkáó/hwàmbákí
		n) Linguistic	It/does not/come/if/from/children/it/will not/reach/to/adults
		o) Literal	If it does not come from the children, it will not get to the adults
5.3	Element of Interest		The whole text
5.4	Context of Production		The procrastination frame: a situation left unattended to until it goes out of hand
B. ILLOCUTION			
5.5	Possible translation constraint		Getting an appropriate target language equivalent
5.6	Translation Technique		Equivalent
5.7	Translation Theory		Skopos Theory
5.8	Literary Translation Theory		Formalistic Approach
PERLOCUTION			
5.9	Target Text		<i>A stitch in time saves nine</i>

5.10 Value Judgment: This expression urges parties to avoid procrastination by nipping a problem in the bud before it reaches boiling point. Besides the aesthetic quality of the translation (as in ‘time’ and ‘nine’), the formalistic approach has been used appropriately to the extent that the meaning comes across seamlessly through the equivalent rendering. The skopos theory also lends credence to the perlocutionary act of avoiding procrastination and taking purposeful action (that is, “making a stitch in time...”) The equivalent rendering has also led to the omission of some lexical items that may render comprehension difficult if translated literally.

**Table 7: Excerpt 6**

S/N	THE SAM		
G. LOCUTION			
6.1	Source Text		hwétùmbàhwélitíte, hwéàrzàndí è mbúrza
6.2	Goss	p) Mokpe	hwétùmbà/hwé/lití/te/hwé/àrzà/ndí/è/mbúrza
		q) Linguistic	Logs/them/heavy/if/they/look/for/the/back
		r) Literal	When the log becomes heavy, it is carried on the back
6.3	Element of Interest		<i>hwéùmbà; lití; mbúrza</i>
6.4	Context of Production		The perseverance frame: carrying your load on your back
B. ILLOCUTION			
6.5	Possible translation constraint		Understanding the text and finding an appropriate TL equivalent
6.6	Translation Technique		Equivalence
6.7	Translation Theory		Skopos theory
6.8	Literary Translation Theory		Structuralist approach
PERLOCUTION			
6.9	Target Text		<i>When the going gets tough, the tough gets going</i>

6.10 Value Judgment: The existence of an appropriate TL equivalence necessitates the use of the equivalent technique to render this excerpt, hence creating an aesthetic appeal to the target language audience. This technique, is equally in sync with the structuralist approach that focuses on the structure of the target language text. The skopos theory is equally appropriate, as it intimates on performative action to get out of tough times.

**Table 8: Excerpt 7**

S/N	THE SAM		
H. LOCUTION			
7.1	Source Text		mbúrzàyàliwótò à rzààgbáhwá
7.2	Goss	s) Mokpe	mbúrzá/yà/liwótò/à/rza/àgbáhwá
		t) Linguistic	Back/ladder/it/cannot/be climbed
		u) Literal	You cannot climb a ladder from behind
7.3	Element of Interest		<i>mbúrzàyàliwótò</i>
7.4	Context of Production		The justice frame: not climbing the ladder from behind (or anti-clockwise)
B. ILLOCUTION			
7.5	Possible translation constraint		Difficulty in understanding the SL message
7.6	Translation Technique		Paraphrase; Explicitation
7.7	Translation Theory		Semiotic theory
7.8	Literary Translation Theory		Semiotic approach
PERLOCUTION			
7.9	Target Text		<i>You cannot pass judgment on a case after just hearing from one person</i>

7.10 Value Judgment: The difficulty in making meaning out of the ST necessitates the use of paraphrase and explication in rendering it into the target language. The image of someone climbing the ladder from the back (opposite direction) is symptomatic of impartiality: passing judgment after hearing from one party to a conflict or disagreement. Understanding of this proverb has been enhanced by the semiotic approach and semiotic theory respectively.

**Table 9: Excerpt 8**

S/N	THE SAM		
I. LOCUTION			
8.1	Source Text		móúṁmáhwí/à/rzá/túwá
8.2	Goss	v) Mokpe	móúṁmáhwí/à/rzá/túwá
		w) Linguistic	What is met/is/not/talked about
		x) Literal	What has been established cannot be questioned
8.3	Element of Interest		The whole text
8.4	Context of Production		The justice frame: not talking about or questioning the obvious
B. ILLOCUTION			
8.5	Possible translation constraint		Contextual challenge
8.6	Translation Technique		Equivalence
8.7	Translation Theory		Communicative theory
8.8	Literary Translation Theory		Formalistic approach
PERLOCUTION			
8.9	Target Text		<i>We should call a spade a spade</i>

8.10 Value Judgment: Not questioning the obvious can better be rendered as *calling a spade a spade*, hence the technique of equivalence, which bodes well with the communicative theory and the formalistic approach.

**Table 10: Excerpt 9**

S/N	THE SAM
J.	LOCUTION

9.1	Source Text	ò hwelíteérzò, ò hwelèhve è wúhwà
9.2	Gloss	a) Mokpe
		b) Linguistic
		c) Literal
9.3	Element of Interest	The whole text
9.4	Context of Production	The blame-game frame
B. ILLOCUTION		
9.5	Possible translation constraint	No constraint
9.6	Translation Technique	Literal translation
9.7	Translation Theory	Philological theory
9.8	Literary Translation Theory	Structuralist approach
PERLOCUTION		
9.9	Target Text	<i>You blame the fox, you blame the fowl</i>

9.10 Value Judgment: Meaning has been replicated in the target language while also ensuring aesthetic appeal through the structuralist approach. Also, the literal translation and philological theory have been employed to good effect as they capture the meaning and intention of the source text: perlocutionary action which involves eschewing the blame game.

**Table11: Excerpt 10**

S/N	THE SAM		
K. LOCUTION			
10.1	Source Text		mborziyàwòndòndi è gbèyàmòtò à ùlèlhwelú ó liámhá
10.2	Goss	d) Mokpe	mborzi/yà/wòndòndi/è/gbèyà/mòtò/à/ùlè/lihwelu/ó/liámhá
		e) Linguistic	Words/of/soft/it/makes/person/to/remove/kola/from/pocket
		f) Literal	Soft words can make a man to remove kola nuts from his pocket
10.3	Element of Interest		<i>mborziyàwòndòndi</i>
10.4	Context of Production		The reconciliation frame: the therapeutic nature of soft words
B. ILLOCUTION			
10.5	Possible translation constraint		Difficulty in correct interpretation and rendering
10.6	Translation Technique		Omission
10.7	Translation Theory		Communicative theory
10.8	Literary Translation Theory		Semiotic approach
PERLOCUTION			
10.9	Target Text		<i>Soft words can bring about reconciliation</i>

10.10 Value Judgment: The omission of some lexical items deemed superfluous has in no way tainted the meaning of this expression, which has been replicated in the target language, thanks to the communicative theory. Also, kola nut is a symbol of reconciliation in most African societies. This interpretation has been made possible thanks to the semiotic approach, which equally resonates a perlocutionary act: reconciliation, as noted in the target language text.

**Table 12: Excerpt 11**

S/N	THE SAM	
A. LOCUTION		
11.1	Source Text	mífumbùméhwéelíndíndòndòkì

11.2	Gloss	g) Mokpe	mĩumbũ/mé/hwéì/ndí/ndòndòkì
		h) Linguistic	Lips/they/are/just/needles
		i) Literal	Lips are needles
11.3	Element of Interest		<i>mĩumbũ; ndòndòkì</i>
11.4	Context of Production		The sewing frame: The expression urges societal beings to use their language to sew up relations rather than pierce through disdainful words characterized by hate speech
B. ILLOCUTION			
11.5	Possible translation constraint		Translating a familiar metaphor with a different meaning (understanding the SL intention)
11.6	Translation Technique		Literal translation
11.7	Translation Theory		Philological theory
11.8	Literary Translation Theory		Formalistic approach
PERLOCUTION			
11.9	Target Text		<i>Lips are needles</i>

11.10 Value Judgment: The difficulty in replicating this expression lies in understanding the SL intention. Lips are really needles due to the therapeutic nature of peaceful language, which is meant to heal and not to hurt: sewing up relationships rather than destroying them with disdainful language. This lends credence to the literal translation, philological theory and the formalistic approach used.

**Table 13: Excerpt 12**

S/N	THE SAM METHODOLOGY		
B. LOCUTION			
12.1	Source Text		málindímábuúléékì
12.2	Goss	j) Mokpe	máli/ndí/má/buúle/ékì
		k) Linguistic	Moneys/is/what/scatter/place
		l) Literal	Money is what has brought confusion
12.3	Element of Interest		<i>máli</i>
12.4	Context of Production		The conflict frame due to the lure and allure of money
B. ILLOCUTION			
12.5	Possible translation constraint		Getting an appropriate TL equivalent
12.6	Translation Technique		Equivalence
12.7	Translation Theory		Communicative theory
12.8	Literary Translation Theory		Structuralist approach
PERLOCUTION			
12.9	Target Text		<i>The love of money, is the root of all evil</i>

12.10 Value Judgment: Literariness as well as the message is enhanced thanks to the structuralist approach. The communicative theory also enhances understanding of the text. Also, the equivalent rendering is used frequently and widely understood by many. The TL expression ‘the love of...’ is conspicuously absent in the ST but it has a perlocutionary effect: enjoins people to desist from the lure and allure of money, which is the major cause of hiccups in our societies.

The above expressions are not necessarily exhaustive but are a prototype of proverbs in Mokpe that can be used as case study to illustrate the speech act methodology (SAM).

### 3.2 Presentation of Findings

Like any literal, non-literal or corpus-based study that focuses on the analysis of texts, the SAM methodology also presents findings based on the constraints as well as translation techniques, translation theories and literary translation or text criticism approaches used. The findings of this study focuses on the last three.

The findings have been presented through descriptive statistics, in view of the frequency of occurrence of the different translation techniques, translation theories and text criticism approaches used. They are presented in the tables below:

**Table 14: Frequency and Percentage of Translation Techniques**

S/N	TRANSLATION TECHNIQUE	FREQUENCY/12	PERCENTAGE
1	Equivalent	5	41.6
2	Paraphrase	3	25
3	Literal Translation	2	16.7
4	Omission	2	16.7
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

The micro-textual analysis reveals that the technique of equivalence is the most likely translation technique to be used when translating the selected proverbs from Mokpe into English, owing to the existence of target language equivalents of these expressions. The onus is for the translator to dig through the resources of the TL to get the right expressions, which will bring out the perlocutionary effect of his rendering. Most of the expressions are difficult to understand and therefore necessitate paraphrase in the target language. For those that can easily be understood, literal translation is necessary to maintain the local colour. Finally, omission is equally an appropriate translation technique whereby lexical items considered as superfluous in the target language are left out to make the message clearer and more vivid.

**Table 15: Frequency and Percentage of Translation Theory**

S/N	TRANSLATION THEORY	FREQUENCY/12	PERCENTAGE
1	Communicative theory	3	25
2	Sociolinguistic theory	3	25
3	Skopos theory	3	25
4	Philological theory	2	16.7
5	Semiotic theory	1	8.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

An analysis of the frequency of occurrence and the percentages on the table above reveals a parity (25%) between the communicative, sociolinguistic and skopos theories in the translation of proverbs from Mokpe into English. This is proof of the fact that meaning is paramount in order to bring out the perlocutionary effect of proverbial expressions in the target language text. This meaning can only be possible if the sociological and cultural contexts as well as the intention of the proverbs are taken into consideration. Some of the proverbs should rather be translated literally to preserve their local colour, while others have signs and signification. This explains the use of the philological and semiotic theories as well.

**Table16: Frequency and Percentage of Literary Translation Theory/Text Criticism Approach**

S/N	LITERARY TRANSLATION THEORY	FREQUENCY/12	PERCENTAGE
1	Formalistic approach	4	33.3
2	Structuralist approach	3	25



3	Sociological approach	3	25
4	Semiotic approach	2	16.7
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

From the statistics above, it is very possible to maintain the literariness and the style (that is, form and structure) of the source language text while also transferring the message or meaning of the selected proverbial expressions into the target language. This explains the predominance of the formalistic and structuralist approaches (58.3%) in the translation of proverbs from Mokpe into English. Preserving the source language style should equally be accompanied by a mastery of the sociocultural contexts as well as the signs and significations of the proverbs, to achieve perlocutionary effect in the target language.

#### IV. Conclusion

The above study has been an attempt to propose another methodology – the speech act methodology (SAM) for the analysis of texts prior to their translation from one language into another. Without criticizing the other existing models, it is rather aimed at complementing them. Thus, the study is modelled along the same lines with the descriptive translation studies (DTS) methodology for textual analysis. Both of them share a similarity in that they are three-dimensional. Thus, while the DTS model focuses on the identification, description and explanation as approaches for textual analysis, the SAM methodology is inspired by Austin's (1962) speech act theory, which talks about 'how to do things with words,' hence, looking at utterances from their locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions. Using the above three as inspiration, this study views 'locution' as representing the source language text, 'illocution' as representing the various translation techniques, strategies, theories and approaches used in rendering the text into the target language, and 'perlocution' as representing the target language text.

The study is therefore a case study. The selected excerpts are thus, supposed to be a means to an end rather than an end in themselves, as they are meant to show how the speech act methodology can be used for the analysis of different text types ranging from literary, non-literary and even pragmatic texts. The findings can therefore be said to be replicable as they are intended to serve as a compass in corpus-based translation studies. It will therefore not be misleading to observe that apart from being a case study, this study is also opportunistic as it has explored Austin's speech act theory to come up with a model for the analysis of texts, the Speech Act Methodology (SAM).

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