

## **Types of Speech Acts Identified in The Novel “The Hunchback of Notre Dame” by Victor Hugo**

**Al-fath Nur Rotul Kartika Octa Putri Surono**

English Education, Faculty of Language and Art,

Universitas Negeri Semarang

alfathputri@students.unnes.ac.id

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study of pragmatics in language plays a crucial role in communication. Pragmatics helps us understand the meaning behind words, avoid misunderstandings, and adapt our speech to social contexts. In this study, the pragmatics analyzed are the types of speech acts in Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" using John Searle's speech act theory, which is classified into five categories: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. The method used is qualitative-descriptive, with primary data of dialogue excerpts. The study shows that the most dominant kind of speech act is assertive, which reflects the characters' many expressions of thoughts, inner conflicts, and social perspectives. The dominance of assertive speech acts supports the main themes of this novel, namely social judgment, human suffering, and the search for meaning. The results of this study illustrate the dynamics of high emotional intensity in the story. This study reveals the crucial role of speech acts in character formation and plot development. It concludes the importance of a pragmatic approach in examining literary works, particularly novels. The implications of this study include the use of communication strategies that authors can employ in fictional dialogue to foster interest and emotions that literary connoisseurs can feel.

**Keywords:** *Identified, Novel, Pragmatics, Speech Act, Victor Hugo*

## INTRODUCTION

Pragmatic studies in language have a crucial role in communication, where pragmatics help us understand the meaning behind words, avoid misunderstandings, and adjust how we speak according to the social context. The pragmatic functions of speech acts in literary texts go beyond communication, as they reveal the author's stylistic choices and ideological stances (Khalifa & Shaalan, 2023, p. 47). By examining the intentions behind utterance, command, question, or declaration, scholars can uncover deeper layers of meaning within a text. Pragmatics studies the meaning that is not expressed but intended by the speaker. Not only understanding what is said/written and what is meant.

One of the pragmatics studies is speech act, which explains that speaking is not just conveying words, but a form of action. Recent studies have examined speech acts in modern and classic literature, revealing their role in character development, thematic emphasis, and cultural representation. In literature, speech acts serve as tools for character interaction and as devices that shape narrative progression, reveal psychological depth, and convey socio-cultural contexts (Al-Saadi, 2020). The Theory of Speech Acts (Austin, 1962) shows that speech is not only a description, but also an action. Speech is not only descriptive but also performative. In certain situations and contexts, saying words can be interpreted as an action. J.L. Austin divides the speech act into three levels:

- (1) A locutionary act is when someone only produces sounds or sentences without considering the effect/purpose of the conversation.
- (2) An illocutionary act is the existence of a purpose or intention underlying someone's speech, such as stating something, giving orders, promising, expressing feelings, asking, suggesting, etc.
- (3) Perlocutionary act is the impact or effect caused by someone's speech on the listener or interlocutor (the response/reaction expected from the person who hears

the speech).

Many literary works are created with uniqueness and language play that become the identity of each literary work. To help readers or connoisseurs of literary works understand the hidden meaning, the author's intention, and the dynamics of communication between characters, the study of pragmatics, namely speech acts, plays a significant role. The pragmatic functions of speech acts in novels demonstrate how writers encode social criticism and cultural values within fictional dialogues (Rizwan & Malik, 2022, p. 40). The study of pragmatics is very relevant to studying literary works to understand contextual meaning, analyze speech acts in character dialogues, and recognize the author's language style. One literary work that contains a lot of dialogue between characters is the novel. The abundance of dialogue and quotations makes it vulnerable to misunderstandings in reader interpretation. This gap indicates the need for an analysis that positions Hugo's work on modern speech act classifications and interpretive practices. Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* is a classic novel rich in narrative, complex characterization, and intense dialogue. The interactions between the characters in it contain a variety of speech acts that reflect the emotions, goals, and social relationships of the characters involved. Speech act analysis in Ethiopian English fiction reveals how characters' utterances operate simultaneously at literal, social, and ideological levels (Tadesse, 2023, p. 92). This is very interesting as a target for pragmatic studies, especially in identifying and classifying the types of speech acts in the novel.

Despite the popularity of this novel, research to analyze it from a pragmatic perspective is minimal because it raises the theme of romance. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the types of speech acts used in the novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* with John Searle's classification theory. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can contribute to understanding how language functions in literary works and how character speech reflects broader social and psychological dynamics.

Based on a pragmatic perspective on the relevance of

speech acts in literary dialogue. A pragmatic perspective emphasizes practical use and applicability rather than theoretical purity, focusing on how concepts can improve real-life practices (Haavik et al., 2019, p. 480). Speech acts are essential in understanding how characters communicate, express emotions, influence, and shape the plot through language. The novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, which is rich in dramatic conflict and has psychological depth, is very suitable for speech act analysis because it can help reveal the implied meaning, power dynamics, and emotional tone depicted in each utterance. Pragmatic studies allow readers to analyze the interaction between language and context in the plot of a literary work. This can examine how linguistic choices reflect character traits, cultural norms in the scholarly setting, and narrative strategies that enrich literary interpretation.

In the field of pragmatics, this study contributes to the development of linguistics. This can improve the understanding of Searle's speech act theory, especially in applying literary works in the form of literary texts. This study can also provide examples of how pragmatics can analyze and become a tool to express deep meanings in literary works through novel texts. In practice, this study is helpful for students and researchers of linguistics and literature. This study can be a reference for analyzing speech acts in various literary works. For educators, the results of this study can be used as a learning medium in training students to apply speech act theory to novel texts. For the pragmatist educator, knowledge is not something to be transmitted but experienced, tested, and applied in real-life situations (Sharma et al., 2018, p. 1551). Readers and lovers of literary works can also feel the benefits of this study in gaining new perspectives in understanding character interactions in novels and expressing the implied meaning of the use of language in classic literary works, namely, the novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* by Victor Hugo.

The researchers investigate the research questions in this study: How are Searle's five categories of speech acts (assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, declaratives) represented in the novel "*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*" by Victor Hugo?

## METHODS

The author used a descriptive qualitative method in this study. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe and analyze the types of speech acts found in Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in Easy-to-Read Type, published by Dover Publications in New York. "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in Easy-to-Read Type was published to make classic literature more accessible to a broader audience, including those who might find traditional editions challenging to read. This "in easy-to-read type" is a reprint of the original novel by Victor Hugo, preserving the story and characters. This analysis does not use statistical calculations but instead utilizes the meaning and interpretation of the data. Descriptive qualitative methods are used to understand experiences and meanings as they are, with a focus on in-depth interpretation of data. This approach is relevant in speech act research in the novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" because analysis of the characters' dialogues also requires detailed explanations of the function of language, social context, and implied meanings in speech (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022). This design aims to generate data about experiences or events from the perspective of participants, allowing researchers to stay "close to the data" and gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon without having to focus on studying life experiences or culture or developing theories (Bradshaw et al., 2017).

The analytical method used is content analysis based on pragmatic theory, specifically Searle and Austin's speech act theory. The content analysis method was used to identify and categorize the linguistic data in this study, namely dialogues or direct quotations from Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," based on speech act theory. The findings from this qualitative descriptive study contain a straightforward and comprehensive description of the events resulting from the interaction between participants and the researcher, as well as the researcher's understanding of the meanings given by each participant to the events (Doyle et al., 2020).

In this approach, the researcher used two data sources: primary data and secondary data. The primary data for this study was Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame"

in easy-to-read type. The secondary data used in this study were an e-book by Searle and Austin discussing pragmatic linguistic theory, previous research journals, scientific articles, and other relevant academic sources on practical analysis and speech acts. Qualitative content analysis allows researchers to move beyond surface-level language descriptions to interpret communication's latent meanings and functions in context (Selvi, 2019, p. 441).

In this study, the researcher used two data collection techniques: first, the researcher read and analyzed the entire text of Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in easy-to-read type. Second, the researcher identified dialogues or quotations containing speech acts in the novel. Third, the researcher noted and marked the dialogues or quotations contained in Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Finally, the researcher grouped the dialogues or quotations based on the speech act type. If one quotation or dialogue contains two or more types of speech acts, the researcher will classify it into the most dominant speech act. In pragmatics, data collection is crucial because meaning is highly context-dependent; therefore, methods must capture what is said and the situational factors surrounding the utterance (Schneider, 2018, p. 40).

Researchers used data analysis techniques based on John Searle's Speech Act theory, which classifies speech acts into five types:

1. Assertives are expressions intended to state/convey information.
2. Directives are expressions intended to request/give commands.
3. Commissives are expressions intended to express promises/oaths.
4. Expressives are expressions intended to express feelings.
5. Declaratives are expressions intended to change status/reality.

Each category is defined by the kind of illocutionary point they perform in communication" (Searle et al., 1980, p. 288). Researchers will classify the speech acts identified based on the Speech Act theory above. After classification, researchers will

then explain the pragmatic function of each speech act found in Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in easy-to-read type. The next step is to interpret the context of the dialogue or situation within the story that underlies the use of speech acts in Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" to enhance readers' understanding of the plot.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of the dialogues and quotations selected from the novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in easy-read type by Victor Hugo, the researcher identified various speech acts used by the main characters in the novel. The classification based on Searle's theory is divided into five illocutionary act categories: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. The five types of illocutionary acts are found in the analysis of quotations or dialogues between characters in the novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" by Victor Hugo. Still, each has a different frequency of occurrence. Since the novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in easy-read type by Victor Hugo has many dialogs and interactions between characters, the researcher can explore the five categories of illocutionary acts in the novel.

The researcher obtained data totaling 100 quotations/dialogues. The researcher can see how the main characters in the novel use language to achieve their communicative goals, and how the analysis of illocutionary act types can express the intent and purpose behind the characters' speech. The many layers found in this novel also affect the results found. The internal conflict and the many interactions between characters make this novel an excellent opportunity for a complete speech act study. The following table shows the frequency of occurrence of each type of speech act found in the novel "The Hunchbac of Notre Dame" by Victor Hugo:

Table 1. Types of Speech Acts Identified in the Novel

| No. | Type of Speech Act | Frequency | Examples (Speaker Utterance) |
|-----|--------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| 1.  | Assertives         | 35        | "The Cathedral is            |

|       |              |     |  |
|-------|--------------|-----|--|
|       |              |     | beautiful. It has stood for centuries"     |
| 2.    | Directives   | 28  | "Run, Esmeralda! They're coming!"          |
| 3.    | Commissives  | 11  | "I will protect you, no matter what."      |
| 4.    | Expressives  | 22  | "Thank you... You saved me."               |
| 5.    | Declaratives | 4   | "She is sentenced to death for witchcraft" |
| Total |              | 100 |  |

From these findings, it can be explained that the results of the analysis of Searle's speech act theory, the most dominating illocutionary act category in the novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" by Victor Hugo, is the type of assertives. An illocutionary act is the purpose or intention underlying a person's speech; it can be said as doing something through the words. Examples are giving orders, requesting, suggesting, and promising. This is in line with the purpose of the study, which is to reveal the intentions and purposes of the dialog or quotations conveyed in the novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" by Victor Hugo. The illocutionary act type named assertive is the dominating type in this finding. Assertives are speech acts used to state something considered valid by the speaker, in this case, the novel's characters. Assertives are used in the novel to convey information, express statements, express opinions, and express descriptions.

The results of the research on Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* show that the five categories of speech acts according to Searle (1976), namely assertives, directives, commissives, and declarations, are presented through dialogues and quotations from the characters in the novel that illustrate the intention and purpose of their communication. The following is the representation of each category:



1. Assertives

This assertive speech act is a speech act that states something that is considered true by the speaker. In Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchbac of Notre Dame", assertiveness appears when the characters convey statements, opinions, or beliefs.

Table 2. Assertive Speech Act

| No. | Utteran<br>ces  | Context  | Representation  |
|-----|---|--|---|
| 1.  | <i>Quasim<br/>odo:<br/>"The<br/>Cathedr<br/>al is<br/>beautifu<br/>l. It has<br/>stood<br/>for<br/>centurie<br/>s."</i> | Quasimodo<br>shares his<br>thoughts on the<br>beauty and<br>majesty of<br>Notre-Dame<br>Cathedral, his<br>home and<br>workplace as<br>the bell-ringer.<br>He points out<br>the undeniable<br>truth that the<br>cathedral has<br>stood strong<br>and beautiful<br>for hundreds of<br>years. This<br>conversation<br>highlights<br>Quasimodo's<br>deep<br>appreciation<br>and emotional<br>connection to<br>the structure. | Quasimodo<br>expresses when<br>stating a fact or<br>belief about the<br>beauty of Notre-<br>Dame. Quasimodo<br>states something<br>real, showing a claim<br>about the truth. The<br>intention is not to<br>command, express<br>emotion, or promise<br>anything. The<br>speaker is<br>committing to the<br>truth of two<br>propositions, first is<br>that the cathedral<br>(Notre Dame) is<br>beautiful and second<br>that it has stood for<br>centuries. So the<br>dialog is said to be<br>assertive. Victor<br>Hugo also uses the<br>dialogue to<br>emphasize the<br>setting in the novel,<br>which is Notre-Dame<br>Cathedral. The dialog |

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|    |  | represents the image of the cathedral as an ancient, beautiful structure, which is part of the novel's historical and symbolic context.   |
| 2. | <i>Frollo: "Notre-Dame is a place of sanctuary."</i>     | Frollo, as archdeacon, conveyed the moral and religious authority of the church that Notre-Dame was not just a building, but a sacred place of refuge. Frollo conveyed the facts/social norms of the time and emphasized the reality of church law. His speech presented the sacred value of Notre Dame as a symbol of the church's power to protect the oppressed.   |
| 3. | <i>Quasimodo: "The bells call the people to prayer."</i> | Quasimodo is the hunchbacked bell-ringer of Notre Dame. For Quasimodo, bells are not just large pieces of metal that are rung, but the voice of the church and the city of Paris. For Quasimodo, bells are also a symbol of his connection to the outside world. Although he is isolated and considered This sentence indicates that church bells were used to call people to worship. Bells symbolized religious calling and social bonds among the community under the auspices of Notre-Dame. Demonstrating the role of the church as the center of spiritual life, bells served as a reminder of the congregation's duty to pray. |
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disabled,  
through the  
bells he  
“speaks” to the  
community.

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## 2. Directives

These directives are speech acts that ask or order the listener to do something. In Victor Hugo's novel “The Hunchback of Notre Dame”, directives appear when characters convey orders, requests, or advice to other characters.

*Table 3. Directives Speech Act*

| No. | Utterances  | Context   | Representation   |
|-----|---|---|--|
| 1.  | <i>Quasimodo: "Run, Esmeralda! They're coming!"</i> | Quasimodo act as a guardian by instructing Esmeralda to escape at once. Esmeralda faces danger, pursued or encircled by individuals intent on capturing or harming her. This dialogue takes place in a tense and perilous moment that demands quick response. | Expressed by Quasimodo who pleads and orders Esmeralda to run with him because there is danger threatening them. This dialog tries to make Esmeralda do something, which is to run. This dialogue can be in the form of commands, requests, advice, warnings, suggestions. "Run, Esmeralda!" is an urgent command. Quasimodo is urging Esmeralda to act quickly by running. He aims to prompt her to respond |

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|    |                                      | immediately. The phrase "They're coming!" serves as a warning, providing the reason for his urgency-it indicates that danger is near and she needs to escape.   |
| 2. | <i>Frollo: "Protect the church."</i> | Claude Frollo, as archdeacon of Notre-Dame, had a great responsibility for the church. At certain times, especially when there were riots or threats from angry mobs, Frollo gave orders to the guards or people around him to protect the church from attack. It shows the power of the church hierarchy, where Frollo, as archdeacon, has the authority to order the guards and the people to protect Notre Dame. Frollo's orders are an attempt to maintain the church as a symbol of spiritual authority. |
| 3. | <i>Quasimodo: "Do not harm her!"</i> | Quasimodo utters this line in a situation where Esmeralda is in danger. Quasimodo tries to protect Esmeralda from the violence that threatens her. Quasimodo uttered these words as a warning intended to stop any harm coming to Esmeralda. Quasimodo sought to uphold the moral code that forbade   |
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violence while  
also showing his  
affection for  
Esmeralda.

3. Commissives

These commissives are speech acts that function to promise or commit. In Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", commissives appear when the characters make promises or commitments to future actions.

Table 4. Commissive Speech Act

| No. | Utterances  | Context  | Representation  |
|-----|---|--|---|
| 1.  | <i>Quasimodo: "I will protect you, no matter what."</i> | Quasimodo makes a promise in the form of a future-oriented commitment when Esmeralda is in danger. He wants to assure Esmeralda that he will always keep her safe. This context demonstrates Quasimodo's deep emotional connection to Esmeralda. | This shows that Quasimodo made a promise to Esmeralda. Quasimodo also commits to do something in the future, which is to protect Esmeralda. Quasimodo commits to a future action by making a promise, vow, or guarantee. Therefore, the sentence "I will protect you, no matter what" is a commissive because Quasimodo is pledging to protect Esmeralda, expressing his intention and responsibility towards her. This |

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|----|--|---|
|    |  | commissive speech act expresses a function in the novel related to Quasimodo's loyalty and love for Esmeralda. It greatly contributes to the character development in the novel.  |
| 2. | <i>Quasimodo: "I will never betray you."</i>   | Quasimodo assured Esmeralda that he would never betray their relationship, no matter how difficult the circumstances. Quasimodo wanted to convince Esmeralda that he was different from the other people who had betrayed her.  |
| 3. | <i>Esmeralda: "I will never love another."</i> | Esmeralda innocently and passionately declared her loyalty to Captain Phoebus. Little did Esmeralda know that Captain Phoebus was only toying with her sincere love. Esmeralda shows Phoebus her commitment to her loyalty. She wants to emphasize that she will remain faithful forever and will never turn away from Phoebus. However, Esmeralda's love ends tragically |
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because Phoebus  
betrays her and  
causes her  
suffering.

4. Expressives

These expressives are speech acts that function to express feelings or emotions. In Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", expressives appear when Esmeralda shows gratitude to Quasimodo.

Table 5. Expressive Speech Act

| No. | Utterances                                     | Context   | Representation  |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 1.  | <i>Esmeralda: "Thank you... You saved me."</i> | Esmeralda's expression of gratitude and appreciation for Quasimodo, who successfully rescued her from a dangerous situation. In this moment, Esmeralda expresses her feelings of relief, gratitude, and emotional impact by Quasimodo's courageous actions. | This expression shows the emotions that Esmeralda feels, namely gratitude and appreciation for Quasimodo. The dialog "Thank you..." This is a typical example of an expressive utterance. The speaker is conveying gratitude-an internal emotional feeling-directed at the listener. Quote "You saved me." This sentence presents a fact or recognition, which reinforces the emotion underlying the gratitude. It clarifies the reason the speaker feels |

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| 2. | <i>Esmeralda: "May God bless you."</i> | Esmeralda expressed her gratitude to Quasimodo, who always helped and protected her from all dangers that threatened her.   | grateful.<br>Esmeralda's expression of gratitude and her constant efforts to repay others' kindness with prayers. This expression is a manifestation of gratitude in the form of prayers and positive emotions.   |
| 3. | <i>Frollo: "I despise you."</i>        | Frollo's expression to Esmeralda because of her beauty makes Frollo filled with a sense of obsession, admiration, and inner conflict that never ends as he hopes. | Expressing the dark side of Frollo's inner self, who maintains his social role as a clergyman and his personal turmoil obsessed with Esmeralda. This gives rise to strong negative expressions aimed at bringing Esmeralda down in order to vent his personal feelings. |

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5. Declarative

This declaration speech act is a speech act that functions to declare or change the status of something. In the novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" by Victor Hugo, declarations appear when the judge character makes a statement or legal authority, so that it directly changes the legal status of Esmeralda, who was originally free, to be convicted.

Table 6. *Declaratives Speech Act*

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| No. | Utterances | Context | Representation |
|-----|------------|---------|----------------|
|-----|------------|---------|----------------|

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1. *Judge:* The judge This expression  
*"She is pronounced Esmeralda's shows that the judge*  
*sentenced to death sentence expresses the*  
*death during the trial. sentence actually to*  
*for With his status of something*  
*witchcraft authority, the in the social or legal*  
*aft."* judge's world. The character  
pronouncement is a judge, which  
created a new gives them the official  
reality, power to alter  
changing Esmeralda's legal  
Esmeralda's standing. Without  
legal status this power, their  
from that of a words wouldn't carry  
defendant to the same impact.  
that of a convict. Prior to the  
The statement,  
pronouncement Esmeralda is legally  
it was made as considered "free" (or  
part of an at least not yet  
official legal sentenced).  
decision. Following the  
statement, she is  
officially deemed  
"convicted." This  
change occurs as a  
direct result of the  
statement itself,  
rather than any  
subsequent action.
  2. *Judge:* The judge's The judge's  
*"You official ruling statement as an*  
*are free on Esmeralda, authority figure who*  
*now."* who was has the right to  
considered a change a person's  
defendant on legal status. The  
charges of decision created a  
witchcraft new reality, with  
brought against Esmeralda, who was

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
|    | her.  | initially an official prisoner, now free from charges.  |
| 3. | <i>Priest: "You are husband and wife."</i>  | Revealing that the priest has the authority in the church to change the status of two individuals from unmarried to husband and wife. |
|    | The existence of wedding ceremonies influenced by church authorities, where a priest with religious authority leads the wedding ceremony. |   |

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## Discussion

A study of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* shows that assertives are the most common speech act, followed by directives and expressives, while commissives and declaratives occur less frequently. This pattern is supported by Searle (1979), who asserts that assertives are the most frequent speech act in narrative fiction, as they serve to provide information, describe events, and express beliefs. These functions are crucial for advancing the plot and establishing the historical setting of 15th-century Paris. For example, Victor Hugo frequently uses assertives through the narrator's voice to describe the magnificent architecture of Notre Dame, thus grounding the reader in the novel's cultural setting. Assertive speech acts dominate literary discourse because they allow authors to share information, describe events, and express characters' beliefs, all crucial for advancing the narrative and establishing the story's context.

Directives are primarily used by authoritative characters such as Claude Frollo, whose commands to Quasimodo demonstrate hierarchical power and personal obsession, aligning with politeness theory (Brown and Levinson, 1987) on power relations. The analysis shows that most directive speech acts are produced by characters with higher authority, such as the king and queen, who use them to control the actions and

decisions of others (Della and Sembiring, 2018, p. 25). In everyday exchanges between Esmeralda and Quasimodo, expressive speech acts communicate profound emotions such as gratitude, sadness, and love, adding emotional depth to the gothic tragedy. In particular, the scarcity of commissives and declamations may reflect the novel's themes of broken promises and society's limitations, where speech often has no power against fate. These results confirm trends in other historical novels and emphasize Hugo's deliberate use of directive speech acts to balance character portrayal with socio-political critique.

A detailed analysis of the types of speech acts used by each character demonstrates how Victor Hugo creates a unique linguistic identity. Although Quasimodo rarely speaks, his statements are primarily expressive. They often convey feelings of gratitude, devotion, or despair, reflecting his emotional isolation and deep bond with Esmeralda. His infrequent use of directives indicates his marginalized social status and hesitation to assert control over others. Claude Frollo, on the other hand, frequently uses directives and commissives, reflecting his authoritative position and manipulative nature. Esmeralda's speech acts stand out for their combination of expressive and assertive, revealing a character caught between genuine emotion and the need to maintain her innocence and dignity. The assertive speech acts in the novel are significant in shaping the characters' identities, as they reveal their beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes towards the social and political realities of their time (Nagane, 2015, p. 5). The speech act patterns associated with each character support the idea that analyzing speech acts can reveal aspects of personality, motivation, and social roles that may be less visible through thematic or plot analysis alone. By giving each character a distinctive speech act "profile," Hugo adds realism to the dialogue and uses language to represent the novel's central conflict involving love, power, and destiny.

Compared with similar studies of historical or romantic novels, the speech act patterns in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* exhibit both expected and unique characteristics. The study reveals that speech act patterns in literary narratives, especially those dealing with love and human relations, are

dominated by directives and expressives, as they best convey emotions, requests, and commitments between characters (Altikriti, 2011, p. 1380). Like other 19th-century works such as Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, the novel extensively uses assertive speech to create a vivid socio-historical setting and help readers navigate the complex plot. However, unlike Dickens's novel, which often balances assertive speech with numerous commissive speeches to highlight the characters' moral commitments, Hugo's book lacks commissive speech, underscoring the futility of promises in a world dominated by strict social hierarchies and tragic inevitability.

This absence gives the story a fatalistic tone, contrasting with the more hopeful resolutions in other contemporary novels. Furthermore, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*'s frequent use of expressive speech, particularly those expressing unrequited love or deep suffering, reflects Gothic literature's emphasis on intense emotion, making the novel comparable to works like Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* in terms of its emotional depth. Applying speech act theory to literary texts provides deeper insights into characters' intentions and interactions, thus enriching literature study through the lens of pragmatics (Altikriti, 2011, p. 1376). This comparison emphasizes how speech act analysis is valuable for studying literature across texts and uncovering individual authors' unique stylistic characteristics.

## CONCLUSION

This research revealed that assertive speech acts are the most prevalent in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, followed by directives and expressives, while commissives and declarations occur much less often. The dominance of assertives highlights the novel's focus on descriptive narration and sharing facts and beliefs to immerse readers in fifteenth-century Paris. Characters in authority, like Claude Frollo, frequently use directives to assert control, whereas expressives express strong emotions, especially in the exchanges between Quasimodo and Esmeralda. The limited presence of commissives and declarations indicates that promises, commitments, and formal acts have less influence in

a story shaped by tragedy, social inequality, and destiny. Overall, the pattern of speech acts in the novel demonstrates how Victor Hugo uses language to develop character identities, depict social hierarchies, and emphasize themes of love, power, and inevitability.

Future studies on speech acts in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* could be broadened by conducting comparative analyses with other works by Victor Hugo or nineteenth-century writers to reveal wider stylistic patterns. Additionally, investigating illocutionary force and perlocutionary effects would help understand how characters' speech impacts others within the story. A cross-linguistic study comparing the original French version with its English translations would also be beneficial for detecting changes in meaning or tone. In practical terms, these insights could improve literary translation techniques better to preserve the purpose and impact of speech acts, support literature education by aiding students in grasping how dialogue and narration shape character development and themes, and assist creative writing workshops by encouraging authors to deliberately vary speech acts, thereby enriching character interactions and narrative complexity.

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