
Speech Act Types and Their Illocutionary Functions in the Socotri Folktales

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Abstract

This study investigates the types and functions of speech acts in Socotri folktales, highlighting their role in reflecting cultural identity and communicative norms. Using conceptual content analysis, ten folktales comprising 10,322 words from Folktales from Socotra were examined and analyzed their illocutionary functions. The analysis revealed that representative acts were the most used, followed by directives and expressives. In terms of illocutionary functions, collaborative purposes were predominant, especially in acts such as asserting, reporting, and announcing. Competitive functions were also present, often taking the form of ordering and demanding. Conflictive functions emerged less frequently, typically involving threatening and accusing. Convivial functions appeared least often, with complimenting, thanking, and apologizing being the most notable examples. This study links pragmatic analysis with cultural narratives. It supports the preservation of Socotri's linguistic heritage and offers insights into the unique communicative practices embedded in its folklore.

Keywords: Illocutionary functions, Socotra folklore, speech acts

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Introduction

Language is not merely a tool for communication; it is a means for performing actions, building relationships, and preserving culture. Austin (1962) introduced the idea that "speaking is acting," meaning that when people speak, they are not just uttering words but also carrying out actions. Building on this, Searle (1969) explained that speech acts are essential because they show how people use language to make promises, ask questions, give orders, and more. Studies of speech acts in various linguistic and literary contexts are not a rarity. For instance, Kanwal et al. (2021) explored the use of polite strategies in Urdu and English short stories. Sintamutiani et al. (2019) analyzed the speech acts classification in the story *Beauty and the Beast*. Studies of speech acts do not only concern with the type of expression but also about their function in communication. Al-Tikriti (2011) showed that the type of speech act often depends on the writer's intention and the message they want to convey. Leech (1983) explained that language use also involves principles of politeness, and people often speak indirectly to show respect, avoid conflict, and maintain social harmony. This idea is important when studying how characters in stories use language to achieve goals or influence others.

Other studies focused on the function of speech acts in narratives. For instance, in the novel *One of Us Is Lying* (Nauman & Halia, 2022), speech acts were used to convey emotions, build suspense, and develop relationships between characters. Fabriemdani et al. (2023) found that speech acts helped characters request help, give instructions, and offer emotional support. These studies demonstrate how speech acts help move the story forward and add emotional depth. Research on the Socotri language has mainly focused on grammatical and cultural aspects. In his foundational study, the Spoken Dialect of Socotra, Al-Saqtrai (2010) laid the groundwork for understanding the linguistic structure of the Socotri dialect and its cultural significance. Al-Jazlawy (2021) compared Socotri and Arabic, focusing on grammatical categories such as gender, number, and verb conjugation. Bin-Hadi (2023) explored cultural preservation through intangible heritage, including oral traditions. Despite these contributions, not a single study, to our knowledge, has analyzed speech acts in Socotri folklore.

In this study, we contribute to Socotri linguistics by opening new horizons for researchers to investigate the Socotri language at higher linguistic features feature, i.e. pragmatics. Therefore, our study departed from the following two research questions:

1. What are the most frequent types of speech acts in the selected Socotri folktales?
2. What are the distributed functions of illocutionary acts in the selected Socotri folktales?

Literature Review

This review begins by defining pragmatics. It highlights different theories on speech acts and discusses the three main types, locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary force. Finally, the review synthesizes some previous studies that apply speech act theory in different contexts. Pragmatics is an area of linguistics that studies the connection between the context and the meaning of a given utterance. It is the study of how individuals establish social conventions (Leech & Thomas, 2002). Yule (1996) defined pragmatics as the application of language in a certain context. One's understanding of speech is similar in many ways to the comprehension of an action, and that makes it important to analyze speech acts. A central concept in pragmatics is speech act theory, first introduced by Austin (1962) and later developed by Searle (1969).

A speech act is an utterance that performs a function in communication. The aim is to convey words to action, not to convey information (Hidayat, 2016). A speech act is an expression by a person that not only shares information, but also executes an action (Arielli, 2018). For example, "I would like some apples; could you give them to me?" is regarded as a speech act as it shows the speaker's wish to have some apples while also requesting someone to hand the apples. According to Austin (1975), people use speech more than just communicating and describing reality. In (1969), Searle defines speech act as the behavior or

work that the speaker performs actions by uttering phrases, such as commands, promises, congratulations, and apologies.

The speech act is when we say something that creates an effect in the real world, helping us communicate and influence others. This theory says that when we speak, we're not just saying something, we're doing something. For instance, if someone says, "Could you pass the salt?", they're not just asking a question. They're politely asking for help. Austin (1962) explains that speech acts happen on three levels, i.e., locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. Locutionary: what is said (e.g., "The sea is blue"). Illocutionary: what the speaker means or intends (e.g., requesting, warning). Perlocutionary: what effect it has on the listener (e.g., persuading, making someone act).

Types of speech acts

Searle (1969) divides the illocutionary acts into five main types. Representatives (or assertive) are statements where the speaker expresses belief in something. Searle (1969) describes them as statements that "commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition". Directives, the second type, are used when the speaker wants the listener to do something. These include commands, requests, or suggestions. Searle (1969) calls them "attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something". An instance is "Can you give me a pen? Commissive, the third type, happens when the speaker promises to do something in the future. These include promises and offers. As Searle (1969) puts it, "Commissive commit the speaker to some future action". An example is, "I will help you I promise". Expressives, the fourth type, let the speaker show their feelings, such as thanking or apologizing. Searle (1969) explains that "expressives express the speaker's attitude toward a proposition". An example is "I feel happy." The last type is declarations which are special and responsible for changing the situation. For example, saying "I now pronounce you husband and wife" is not just talk—it's an act. Searle (1969) notes that "Declarations bring about changes in the institutional state of affairs by being uttered." An example is "I now pronounce you husband and wife". There is a small difference between directives and declaratives. In directives the listener must choose whether to accept the request or not like, asking someone to pass you the salt. On the other hand, declarative statements do not give the listener a choice.

There are several previous studies that explored the types of speech acts. Kanwal, et al. (2021) examined the cross-cultural variations in speech acts and politeness strategies in Urdu and English short stories. The study adopted Searle's (1969) speech act taxonomy to analyze the speech act types in the selected stories. The findings revealed that English short stories tend to incorporate more politeness strategies and indirect speech, reflecting a formal and distant communication style. In contrast, Urdu stories employed more direct and expressive speech acts, suggesting stronger interpersonal connections with less emphasis on formal politeness. The study highlights how cultural norms influence the perception and expression of politeness across different literary contexts.

Furthermore, Sintamutiani et al. (2019) investigated the role of speech acts in *Beauty and the Beast*, analyzing character interactions and the underlying communicative functions of their speech. The study divided speech acts into four types. The findings revealed that directives constitute 50% of the speech acts, where characters attempt to influence others. Representatives from 30% of the speech act where characters express their beliefs or factual statements. Declarations shape 10% of speech acts; they are used to create changes through language, and commissives occupy 10% of speech acts; they involve commitments or promises. On the contrary, expressive speech acts, such as apologies and gratitude, were absent from the narrative, suggesting a focus on action and obligation rather than emotional expression. The study underscores the importance of speech acts in shaping character interactions and advancing the storyline.

Mardiana et al. (2025) examined the speech acts in the rhetoric of the Commission in the Indonesian House of Representatives, specifically in discussions on educational policies. They applied Leech's (1983) politeness maxims and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to analyze how language is strategically used for persuasion, critique, and policy influence while maintaining diplomatic communication. The results showed that 86.4% of

speech acts conformed to politeness conventions, reflecting a strong emphasis on diplomatic discourse. However, 13.6% of responses involved intentional violations of cooperative principles, often through rhetorical techniques such as irony and hyperbole to emphasize criticism or dissent. The study highlights the dual function of political figures as policymakers and communicative role models, advocating for structured ethical frameworks to guide effective and cooperative political discourse.

Other studies analyzed the speech acts in literary texts, Altikriti (2011) conducted a pragmatic analysis of three short stories and identified variations in speech act distribution across different narratives. *Acme* by John Galsworthy (1867–1933), representative speech acts were the most frequent 23%, followed by directives 3%, commissives 5%, and expressives 4%. Similarly, in "Post Haste" by Colin Howard, representatives accounted for 21%, directives 10%, commissives 2.3%, and expressives 8%. Meanwhile, in "The Happy Prince" by Oscar Wilde, representatives were the dominant speech act 30%, followed by directives 7.4%, commissives 3%, and expressives 4%. These findings suggest that different narrative styles and communicative goals influence the distribution and function of speech acts in literary texts. Furthermore, Leongkamchorn (2010) explored the application of speech act theory in analyzing British and American poetry, aiming to bridge linguistic and literary interpretations. The research examined selected poems to identify speech acts and compare their felicity conditions with the literary context. The findings indicate that speech act theory enhances the accuracy of literary interpretation, providing a systematic approach to analyzing poetic language. This approach offers a more structured and objective understanding of poetry, supplementing traditional methods that often rely on subjective interpretation and imaginative analysis.

Functions of Illocutionary Acts

Leech (1983) analyzed the purpose of speech acts by scrutinizing the social function of the speaker's words in relation to the politeness principle. He proposed four illocutionary functions: competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive. Competitive acts are used when the speaker wants to get something from the listener. He competes with the speaker's politeness. Such as making a request, or asking a question, for example, "Would you lend me your notes?" (Leech, 1983). Convivial acts, the second type, are obtained when the speaker wants to be polite or friendly and keep social harmony. These encompass a variety of social expressions: thanking, offering, congratulating, inviting, and greeting. For example, "Would you like some coffee?" or "Would you like some tea?" (Leech, 1983). Collaborative acts, which are the third, share information while paying little attention to politeness. The speaker is polite or impolite referring to acts such as informing, describing, reporting, and asserting. For examples, "The meeting starts at 3 PM" or, "It's rainy today." (Leech, 1983). Conflictive acts, the fourth type, are used to express opposition or rejection, opposing what the listener said or simply does not agree with the speaker. Conflictive acts contract with the social goal of politeness. Examples are, "That's not true, and you're wrong" or "I don't agree with you". (Leech, 1983).

Some studies explored the functions of illocutionary acts in several genres. Nayoan and Hellystia (2022) examined the functions of the illocutionary act in a novel entitled 'One of Us is Lying', using Leech's theory (1983). The result indicates that from 108 instances, all the illocutionary access functions were discovered. There are competitive functions (asking, ordering, and demanding), convivial functions (offering, thanking, and greeting), collaborative functions (asserting and reporting), and conflictive functions (accusing and cursing). The findings present that collaborative function becomes the most frequent with 67 instances, especially in the form of asserting. The convivial function is second with 30 data, dominated by offering 7 instances. The conflictive function is third with 18 instances out of the total of 108 instances. The most used is cursing with 11 instances. The competitive function is last with 10 data out of the total of 108 data. Febrimadani et al. (2023) analyzed the illocutionary act uttered by the characters in the film 'Finding Dory'. They further identified the functions of these acts according to Leech's (1983) taxonom. There were ninety-two utterances found in the illocutionary act category, i.e., collaborative, competitive, and

convivial, based on the characters' utterances or dialogues. Moreover, there were also 88 utterances carried out in the category of the functions of illocutionary acts.

Several previous studies have applied speech act theory across different contexts, including literature and religious texts. Altikriti (2011) examined speech acts in short stories such as *Acme*, *Post Haste*, and *The Happy Prince*. Kanwal et al. (2021) explored cross-cultural differences in speech act usage and politeness strategies in Urdu and English short stories. Similarly, Sintamutiani et al. (2019) analyzed speech acts in *Beauty and the Beast*, investigating how language structures interact in fairy tales. Khazaleh et al. (2023) conducted a pragmatic analysis of speech supplication acts in the Holy Quran, demonstrating the application of speech act theory beyond fictional narratives. Other studies have analyzed illocutionary functions in various genres, including novels and films. Nayoan and Hellystia (2022) examined illocutionary functions in the novel *One of Us is Lying* using Leech's (1983) model. The study focused on analyzing how characters used language to achieve different communicative purposes. These studies analyzed the speech acts and their functions in different genres and fields, giving way to examine the speech acts and their functions in the Socotri folktales, as there has been no study on Socotri literature using "Speech acts" and pragmatics.

Based on this review of the literature, there is an implication for more research to examine the speech acts and their functions in under-researched contexts—the Socotri folktales stands as a working example of such unexplored contexts. There has been a dearth of research on Socotri literature using the 'speech acts' and 'pragmatics' approaches. This means there is a chance for researchers to explore these stories and understand how they help the beliefs and values of the people in Socotra Archipelago. The current research study is devoted to exploring how storytellers use different "speech acts" to capture the listeners' attention.

Method

This research employs a content analysis approach to examine speech acts in Socotri oral tales. Content analysis methodology is a systematic research tool used to understand and interpret texts or qualitative and quantitative data in an objective and organized manner (Franzosi, 2008). This methodology relies on careful data analysis to identify patterns, themes, and key concepts that appear in the content. It can be applied to written, visual, or audio texts. According to Krippendorff (2018), content analysis is "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 18). Content analysis encompasses two types: conceptual and relational (Carley, 1990). This study obtains conceptual analysis. In conceptual analysis, a specific concept is selected for scrutiny, focusing on quantifying and tallying its occurrence within the data (Krippendorff, 2018). The primary objective is to investigate how frequently chosen terms appear throughout the dataset. This methodology relies on careful data analysis to identify patterns, themes, and key concepts that appear in the content. This research paradigm is well-suited for the study as it enables an in-depth analysis of linguistic patterns and speech acts within Socotri storytelling. By analyzing excerpts from Socotri oral literature, the study aims to understand how language functions in narrative and communicative contexts.

Data Collection

The study draws upon ten tales from the book *Tuwteyatan De Şāqatrey* - Folk Tales from Socotra, edited by Almahfali et al. (2023). The corpus constitutes 10322 words. This book is a collection of folk tales from the island of Socotra, compiled and edited by a team of researchers and folklore specialists. It features a variety of stories that reflect the rich culture and unique environment of the island, including tales about poets, kings, thieves, giants, fairies, and other mythical figures. The book highlights the deep connection between the people of Socotra and their natural surroundings, showcasing the cultural and social values that have shaped the island's identity over generations. These stories were collected in the original Socotri language and translated into Arabic and English to preserve the island's oral heritage and share it with a wider audience (Table 1). A summary of each of the stories appears in the Appendix.

Table 1. A Sample of Socotri Folktales

No.	Stories	Words
1	The Tale of the Socotri Poetess	1662
2	The King Testing the Tracker	666
3	The Tracker, the King, and the Thief	1480
4	The Man Testing His Sons-In-Law	1041
5	A Tale of Ain Mosbeha	898
6	A Tale of Zabaid and the Witch-Cat	827
7	The Tracker and the Two Thieves	855
8	A Tale of the Evil Eye	986
9	A Tale of the Giant	671
10	A Tale of the Clever Young Man	1236
Total		10322

The selection of these tales was based on their thematic relevance, particularly their focus on wisdom and justice. And for its fame and circulation among people in reality. The study prioritizes narratives that prominently feature various speech acts, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of linguistic structures in Socotri storytelling. These stories were also selected for their cultural value, as they represent an oral heritage that requires documentation and study before being lost. Additionally, they provide an applied model for understanding linguistic analysis theories, particularly in the context of oral cultures.

Procedures

The research process involves the following steps: Text selection, where the ten Socotri tales were chosen based on their representation of different speech act categories. This is followed by Speech act identification: each story is analyzed using Searle's (1969) framework, categorizing utterances into representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Furthermore, the illocutionary function of speech acts was identified: each of the speech acts were reclassified according to Leech's (1983) functions: competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive (Table 1).

Table 2. Leech (1983) taxonomy of illocutionary functions and their sub-functions

Illocutionary functions and their sub-functions			
Convivial	Collaborative	Competitive	Conflictive
Offering	Asserting	Asking	Threatening
Inviting	Reporting	Ordering	Accusing
Greeting	Announcing	Demanding	Cursing
Thanking	Instructing	Begging	Reprimanding
Congratulating			
Apologizing			
Complimenting			

To evaluate the consistency of the results, the inter-rater reliability scale is used to classify the types of speech acts according to Searle's (1969) speech acts. Two researchers independently classified the 41 speech acts found in the short story "Ain Mosbeha". They agreed on 35 out of 41 speech act types. This agreement rate is calculated using a Pearson correlation coefficient. The correlation reached 0.85. for the coding instrument, exceeding the 0.70 threshold for qualitative research (Cronbach, 1951; Nunnally, 1978). This rate demonstrates methodological consistency. The strong agreement suggests this result can be reliably applied, while the robust Pearson value confirms the instrument's internal consistency for analyzing narrative discourse structures.

Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze speech acts in Socotri folklore through the lens of speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). The study seeks to answer two questions, firstly, the study calculates the predominant patterns of speech acts (representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, declaratives) in the selected Socotri folktales. The study also analyzes the distribution of the illocutionary functions (collaborative, competitive, conflictive, convivial) of these speech acts within the narrative context.

RQ1: What are the most frequent types of speech acts in the selected Socotri folktales?

Table 3. *Frequencies of speech act types in the selected Socotri folktales*

Stories	Speech Acts					
	Representatives	Directives	Expressives	Commissives	Declaratives	Total
A Tale of the Evil Eye	15	6	6	5	4	36
A Tale of the Clever Young Man	8	6	6	5	4	29
A Tale of the Giant	18	14	12	8	8	60
The Tracker and the Two Thieves	32	5	4	2	2	45
A Tale of Zabaid and the Witch-Cat	35	7	6	6	4	58
A Tale of Ain Mosbeha	20	6	6	5	4	41
The Man Testing His Sons-In-Law	36	24	5	11	2	78
The King Testing the Tracker	12	5	2	2	4	25
The Tracker, the King, and the Thief	40	9	7	5	4	65
The Tale of the Socotri Poetess	24	9	7	3	2	45
Total	240	91	61	52	38	482
%	49.7	18.8	12.6	10.7	7.8	100

According to Table 2, representative acts make up the largest share of speech acts in the Socotri folktale collection, with 241 instances, representing 49.7% of the total. This emphasizes their central role in building the narrative world and in describing characters and settings. Their frequency reflects the traditional storytelling style, which relies on rich, detailed descriptions to help listeners clearly imagine the scenes and people. A good example is *The Tracker, the King, and the Thief*, which includes 40 speech acts, such as: "He was well-known among people for his kindness." Another story, "The Man Testing His Sons-in-Law," contains 36 representative acts, including: "Their father loved them more than himself." These acts are key to creating vivid mental images and highlighting the descriptive nature of Socotri storytelling. Our findings regarding representative acts which constitute the most dominant speech acts partially agreed with Al-Tikriti (2005) who found that representative acts were the most frequent in her analysis of *Acme* by John Galsworthy (1867–1933). On the other hand, representative acts shape nearly half (49,7) of the total speech acts in the selected folktales. This percentage contradicts Al-Tikriti (2005) and Sintamotiani (2019). Al-Tikriti (2005) found that representative acts form 23%–30% in the *Acme* story. Similarly, representative acts constitute 30% of the total speech acts in Sintamotiani's (2019) analysis. This suggests that oral storytelling traditions like Socotra prioritize detailed descriptions much more than written or cinematic forms, helping create a vivid and immersive experience for listeners.

Table 2 shows that directive acts come next in frequency, with 91 examples (18.8% of the total), showing the importance of commands, requests, and appeals in driving the plot forward and shaping interactions between characters. In "The Man Testing His Sons-in-Law," there are 24 directive acts, including: "Help me in this ordeal!" Similarly, "The Tale of the Giant" contains 14 directives, such as: "Dig pits around his cave! When he falls, strike..." These examples show how directive language is used to introduce challenges, encourage cooperation, and increase narrative tension. Prior studies have linked directive acts to conflict

structures in storytelling; a pattern clearly present in these Socotri tales. Our finding regarding directive acts differs from Sintamotiani's (2019) analysis of cinematic narratives where the study reported directives to be the highest type constituting 50% of the total speech acts. Our finding disagrees with Al-Tikriti's (2011) range where directives shape 3%–10% of the speech acts. The comparison shows that Socotri tales strike a balance between narration and interaction.

Table 2 exhibits that expressive acts rank third, with 61 instances (12.6%). These acts reveal the emotions and inner states of characters, offering insight into their feelings, thoughts, and reactions. In "The Tale of the Socotri Poetess", 12 expressive acts appear, such as the heroine's lament: "Alas, I feel sorry for Socotra's separation." In The "Tale of Zabaid and the Witch-Cat", one character says: "My heart breaks in pain when I see the slaughtered sheep!" These acts add emotional depth and foster empathy, aligning with narrative theory that emphasizes the role of emotion in engaging audiences. Our finding on expressive acts is to some extent in line with Al-Tikriti's (2011) study which found that directive acts constitute 4%–8% of her analysis. On the contrary, our findings contrast with Sintamotiani's (2019) findings, which showed no expressive acts in cinematic narratives. This finding highlights the emotionally reflective and human-centred quality of Socotri storytelling, in contrast to the outward action focus of the films.

Commissive acts account for 10.7% of the total, with 52 instances. These typically involve promises, vows, or threats, and often appear at critical points in the plot. They help define character intentions and move the story forward. In "The Man Testing His Sons-in-Law", 11 commissive acts are recorded, such as: "I will pay the forty she-camels." In "The Tale of the Giant", eight speech acts include: "I swear... I will free our lands or die trying!" Our finding is in line with Sintamotiani's (2019) which found that commissive acts shape 10% of the cinematic narratives analyzed. On the other hand, we recorded a higher percentage of commissive acts than Al-Tikriti's (2011) study which recorded just 2.3%–5%. These acts are especially important in moments of decision-making and reveal the characters' sense of responsibility and commitment. These utterances show commitment and reveal the stakes of the characters' decisions, which corresponds with Searle's (1979) description of commissive speech acts.

Finally, Table 2 shows that declarative acts are the least frequent, with 38 instances (7.8%). These are usually used to make formal announcements or decisions, often signalling the resolution of events or the conclusion of a conflict. In "The Tracker, the King, and the Thief", eight declaratives are found, such as: "I declare this man guilty of theft." In "The Tale of Ain Mosbeha", symbolic declarations appear, such as: "In the name of God, I declare this land blessed forever!" Our finding partially agrees with Sintamotiani's (2019) study where declarative acts shape 10% of the total speech acts in the cinematic narratives. On the contrary, our finding contradicts Al-Tikriti's (2011) finding where declarative acts did not show any present in her analysis. This suggests that while declaratives are sometimes used for dramatic effect in film, in Socotri stories they often reflect collective values such as justice, respect, and harmony. These acts carry ritual or institutional meaning and enact change through language, as described in Levinson's (1983) pragmatic studies.

RQ2: What are the distributed functions of illocutionary acts in the selected Socotri folktales?

For analyzing the functions of illocutionary acts, Leech's (1983) model is used. It classifies the illocutionary acts into convivial, collaborative, competitive and conflictive.

Table 4. *The function of illocutionary acts in the Socotri folklore stories*

Function of Illocutionary Acts	Form	Frequency	Total
Convivial	Offering	6	30
	Inviting	1	
	Greeting	0	
	Thanking	5	
	Congratulating	2	
	Apologizing	4	

	Complimenting	12	
Collaborative	Asserting	143	263
	Reporting	75	
	Announcing	34	
	Instructing	11	
Competitive	Asking	9	76
	Ordering	46	
	Demanding	15	
	Begging	6	
Conflictive	Threatening	24	40
	Accusing	13	
	Cursing	0	
	Reprimanding	3	

Table 3 shows that among the illocutionary functions, the collaborative function was the most frequent, with 263 instances, followed by the competitive with 76 instances, conflictive acts occurred 40 times, and the convivial function appeared in 30 instances.

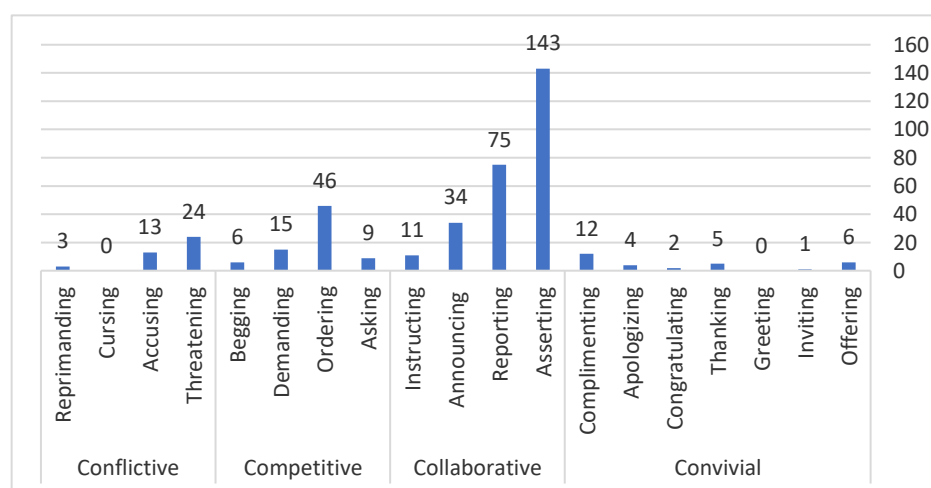


Figure 1. Distributions of illocutionary acts in the Socotri folktales

In our analysis of Socotri folktales as Table 3 shows, the collaborative function emerged as the most frequently used, with a total of 263 instances. These were distributed across various subtypes, notably asserting (143 instances), reporting (75 instances), and announcing (34 instances) (Figure 1). Such a pattern indicates a strong emphasis on conveying facts, beliefs, and turning points in the narrative structure, often through declarative and informative statements. Our findings align with Nayoan and Hellystia (2022), who found that the collaborative function also ranked highest in frequency. This suggests that while both texts value the function of expressing truth or belief, the Socotri tales utilize a broader range of collaborative acts to advance the narrative and shape the story's direction. Similarly, Febrimadani et al. (2023) found that the collaborative function appeared in 22 instances in the *Finding Dory* film, particularly through asserting and reporting. While the collaborative function ranked lower in frequency compared to the Socotri folktales, it still played a key role in supporting the characters' cooperation and progress within the plot.

Competitive function appeared the most frequently in Socotri data, with 76 examples, dominated by ordering (46 instances) and demanding (15 instances). This reflects scenarios involving urgency, authority, or directive control, often necessary in plot-driven or hierarchical interactions. Our findings contradict Nayoan and Hellystia's (2022) findings where the competitive function exhibited the lowest frequency of this function compile just 10 instances,

composed of asking (8 instances), and one each of ordering and demanding, with no instances of begging. The disparity highlights the differing communicative contexts: where Socotri tales incorporate command-driven speech to reflect power and narrative momentum, the novel features a softer, more socially mitigated tone appropriate to its youthful characters. Our results partially agreed with Febrimadani et al. (2023) who identified 25 instances of competitive function, including requesting, questioning, commanding, and refusing which served to introduce urgency and direct action within character interactions.

Table 3 shows that the conflictive function appeared in the analyzed Socotri texts with 40 instances, particularly threatening (24 instances) and accusing (13 instances). These acts typically arose during high-stakes or emotionally charged scenes, where language served as a tool for confrontation or condemnation. In comparison, the study by Nayoan and Hellystia (2022) identified 18 conflictive acts—mostly cursing (11 instances) and accusing (7 instances)—with no examples of threatening or reprimanding. This suggests that while conflict exists in both texts, it is expressed more subtly and emotionally in the novel, in line with its contemporary and youth-focused context, as opposed to the direct and often authoritative confrontation present in oral traditions. In contrast, Febrimadani et al. (2023) reported no instances of the conflictive function. This absence differs from the Socotri data and reflects the narrative's emphasis on positive and supportive communication, consistent with its general tone and target audience.

Finally, the convivial function was the least illocutionary function with 30 instances. The convivial function was most often realized through complimenting (12 instances) and thanking (5 instances), along with a few instances of apologizing (4 instances). These acts reflect the characters' ability to show appreciation and positive regard, particularly in emotionally or culturally significant moments. In contrast, Nayoan and Hellystia (2022) found a wider distribution of convivial forms in the novel, including offering (7 instances), inviting (5 instances), greeting (6 instances), thanking (3 instances), apologizing (5 instances), and complimenting (4 instances), while congratulating was absent. The diversity of convivial acts in the novel points to a more casual, socially integrative use of language suited to the everyday interpersonal dynamics of a high school setting, as opposed to the symbolic and value-laden expressions found in folklore. In alignment with this idea, Febrimadani et al. (2023) found the convivial function to be the most frequent in their data, with 41 instances, including thanking, apologizing, agreeing, and promising. This pattern underscores a communicative orientation centered on empathy, politeness, and social harmony, in contrast to the more hierarchical and directive tone of the Socotra tales.

Conclusion

This study examined the frequency patterns and functions of speech acts in Socotra folklore stories, revealing that representational verbs were the most common (49.7%), followed by directive (18.8%), expressive (12.6%), commissive (10.7%), and declarative verbs (7.8%). Declarative verbs, though least frequent, played a key role in marking narrative shifts or resolutions. In terms of illocutionary functions, collaborative acts were most prevalent (263 instances), especially asserting, reporting, and announcing. Competitive acts appeared 76 times, mainly through ordering and demanding, while convivial acts (30 instances) included complimenting and thanking, reflecting efforts to maintain social harmony. Conflictive acts, such as threatening and accusing, were the least common (40 instances), typically occurring in tense scenes. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the Socotri language, moving beyond traditional phonological or syntactic studies to explore its pragmatic dimensions. The study highlights the richness of Socotri oral tradition and encourages further research into its discourse features. Future studies are recommended to expand the dataset and apply additional frameworks, such as Leech's politeness maxims and Grice's cooperative principles, to gain a more nuanced understanding of Socotri communication.

Despite its originality, this study has limitations. It focused on only ten tales, which may not fully represent the diversity of Socotri oral literature, and while the cultural context was considered, a deeper historical and cultural analysis could enhance interpretation. Additionally, although content analysis was appropriate, it may not fully capture the

complexity of speech act dynamics. Acknowledging these limitations provides a foundation for future research to build upon, potentially leading to a more comprehensive understanding of how speech acts function, not only in Socotri folklore but in broader communicative contexts. This study thus serves as a steppingstone for linguists, researchers, and cultural scholars interested in the development and preservation of the Socotri language.

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Appendix

ترجمة ملخص الدراسة

دراسة أنواع الأفعال الكلامية ووظائفها الإنجازية في الحكايات الشعبية السقطرية

تتناولت هذه الدراسة التحليلية الأنماط التداولية للخطاب السردى في الموروث الشفاهي السقطري، من خلال رصد التكرارات الوظيفية للأفعال الكلامية وتفكيك وظائفها الإنجازية. استخدم الباحثون تحليل المحتوى كأداة لجمع البيانات، تم فيها تحليل عشر حكايات شعبية سقطرية تضم 10,322 كلمة من كتاب "حكايات من سقطري". واستخدم الباحثون نموذج سيرل لرصد التكرارات لأنواع الأفعال الكلامية وكذلك نموذج لينتش في التعرف على الوظائف الإنجازية للأفعال الكلامية. وكشف التحليل أن الأفعال التصريحية كانت الأكثر استخدامًا، تليها التوجيهية ثم التعبيرية. كما أوضحت النتائج للوظائف الإنجازية، سيادت الأغراض التعاونية، خاصة في أفعال مثل التأكيديات والإبلاغات والإعلانات. كما ظهرت الوظائف التنافسية، غالبًا في صورة الأوامر والمطالب. وبرزت الوظائف الصراعية بشكل أقل تكرارًا، تتضمن عادة التهديدات والاتهامات. بينما ظهرت الوظائف الودية بأقل معدل، مع كون المجاملة والشكر والاعتذار أبرز الأمثلة عليها. يساهم هذا البحث نظريًا من خلال ربط التحليل التداولي بالسرد الثقافي. عمليًا، يدعم الحفاظ على التراث اللغوي السقطري ويقدم رؤى حول الممارسات التواصلية الفريدة المتجذرة في فلكلوره.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أفعال الكلام، الوظائف الإنجازية، الفولكلور السقطري