



The performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel

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DECLARATION

I, Risimati Synod Hobyane, a candidate for Doctoral Degree in New Testament Studies in the Faculty of Theology, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, hereby declare that except for the quotations specifically indicated in this Research Project and such help as I have acknowledged, this is solely my own original work and has not been submitted at any institution for the fulfilment of any other degree.

I further confirm that I am also fully aware that plagiarism is a serious academic misconduct.

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the Theological School Potchefstroom (NWU) of the Reformed Churches in South Africa, the institution that shaped me as both a Minister of the Word and an academic.

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the study is to present an analysis of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel from a narratological-pragmatic perspective. This means that the text of the Fourth Gospel is approached as a story. The impetus behind this analysis is to demonstrate the performative nature of the literary devices employed by the implied author to invite the implied reader's participation as they read the Fourth Gospel. The study approaches the text of the Fourth Gospel using some aspects of speech act theory (Chapters 2–5) and focalisation (Chapter 6) as analytical tools or methods of analysis. Regarding Chapters 2–5, the study concedes that it does not intend to comprehensively apply all aspects of speech act theory in analysing the text but some aspects of it as discussed in Chapter 1.

The study's point of departure is from an already established finding that the Fourth Gospel's purpose is stated in performative terms (Van der Watt, 2010), i.e., that the Gospel is written so that the reader may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him the reader may have life in his name. It is convincingly clear, from this purpose, that the implied author of the Fourth Gospel intends to achieve something in the life of the reader through the text. Following the stated purpose of the Gospel, the central question that this study attempts to address is: How does the implied author of the Fourth Gospel ensure that the purpose of the Gospel is achievable?

The study proposes that the Gospel's implied author employs literary devices such as misunderstanding, irony, forensic dialogues, asides, and repetition to augment the achievability of the Gospel's purpose. Therefore, this thesis demonstrates that these literary devices are performative in nature.

The thesis consists of seven chapters, namely: Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study; Chapter 2 presents the study of the performative nature of misunderstanding; Chapter 3 focuses on the performative nature of irony; Chapter 4 deals with the performative nature of forensic dialogue; Chapter 5 demonstrates the performative nature of asides and repetition; Chapter 6 delves into the performative nature of focalisation as an analytical tool; and finally, Chapter 7 summarises the findings and indicates the contribution of the study.

Key Words: Fourth Gospel, literary devices, focalisation, performative nature, speech act theory, narrator, implied reader, implied author.

OPSOMMING

Die studie bied 'n analise van die gebruik van literêre tegnieke in die Vierde Evangelie vanuit 'n narratologies-pragmatiese perspektief. Dit beteken dat die Vierde Evangelie benader word as 'n narratief. Die doelwit is om die performatiewe aard van die literêre tegnieke soos dit deur die geïmpliseerde outeur gebruik word om die geïmpliseerde leser se deelname te ontlok, te demonstreeer. Die studie benader die teks van die Vierde Evangelie met behulp van sekere aspekte van die spraakaksieteorie (Hoofstukke 2–5) en fokalisasie (Hoofstuk 6) as analitiese instrumente of metodes van analise. Die studie gee toe dat dit nie alle aspekte van die spraakaksieteorie in die analise van die teks in Hoofstukke 2 tot 5 breedvoerig kan toepas nie, en sekere aspekte daarvan word in Hoofstuk 1 uitgelig en geïdentifiseer vir verdere gebruik.

Die studie se vertrekpunt is die gevestigde bevinding dat die doel van die Vierde Evangelie in performatiewe terme gestel word (Van der Watt, 2010), naamlik dat die evangelie so geskryf is dat die leser kan glo dat Jesus die Christus is, die Seun van God, en sodat hy/sy deur te glo, in sy Naam die lewe kan he. Dit is duidelik, as die doel van die teks so gesien word, dat die geïmpliseerde outeur van die Vierde Evangelie poog om iets in die lewens van die lesers deur middel van die teks te bereik. Na aanleiding van hierdie doelwit, ontstaan die sentrale vraag wat hierdie studie aanspreek: Hoe verseker die geïmpliseerde outeur van die Vierde Evangelie dat die doel van die Evangelie bereik word?

Die studie voer aan dat die Evangelie se geïmpliseerde outeur literêre tegnieke soos misverstand, ironie, forensiese dialoë, terloopse opmerkings en herhaling gebruik om die bereikbaarheid van die Evangelie se doelwit te versterk. Die tesis demonstreeer dus dat hierdie literêre tegnieke performatief van aard is.

Die tesis bestaan uit sewe hoofstukke. Hoofstuk 1 dien as inleiding tot die studie; Hoofstuk 2 bespreek die performatiewe aard van misverstande. Hoofstuk 3 fokus op die performatiewe aard van ironie. Hoofstuk 4 ondersoek die performatiewe aard van forensiese dialoog. Hoofstuk 5 demonstreeer die performatiewe aard van terloopse opmerkings en herhaling, en Hoofstuk 6 hanteer die performatiewe aard van fokalisasie as analitiese metode.

Sleutelwoorde: Vierde Evangelie, literêre tegnieke, fokalisasie, performatiewe aard, spraak-opvoer teorie, verteller, geïmpliseerde leser, geïmpliseerde outeur.

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1.1 Orientation

The investigation of the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel aims to approach and/or analyse the text of the Fourth Gospel¹ as a story. This research project aligns itself with the field of narrative analysis,² seeking to identify and examine the narrative elements present within the text. Consequently, the study will adopt a narratological perspective to investigate the aforementioned elements.³

¹ The term “Fourth Gospel” will be used to refer to the Gospel of John in the New Testament canon. The study takes the view that the book is written by John the Son of Zebedee, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. Regarding the authorship of the book, this study acknowledges that there are varying viewpoints on this matter. However, the current study adopts the view and clarification by F. Bruce (1983:1; cf. Barrett, 1978:4; Culpepper, 1998:36-39; Van der Watt, 2007:110) who states that, “The title ‘According to John’ is a label attached to it when the four Gospels were gathered together and began to circulate as one collection, in order to distinguish it from its three companions.” Bruce further points out that “As early as the ascription of this Gospel to ‘John’ can be traced back, it regularly assumed that the John in question was John the son of Zebedee, one of the twelve. There is indeed positive evidence for another ‘disciple of the Lord’ called John, living (probably) in the Roman province of Asia to which John the son of Zebedee, according to tradition, migrated from Palestine in the later part of the first century, but no one in antiquity, as far as we can tell, ascribed the fourth Gospel to this other John rather than to the son of Zebedee.”

Amongst other views on the authorship of the Fourth Gospel are suggestions that attribute it to figures such as John the Elder, The Beloved Disciple, John Mark, Lazarus, and even Paul (cf. Lindars, 1972:28-34 for a detailed discussion on these views).

² Narrative analysis is concerned with the structure, content, and function of stories in written and oral communication (Bamberg, 2012).

³ Tolmie (1991:273) states, “This approach may be summarised by saying that the *text* is read as a ‘story’, or, in other words, it will be analysed by means of a theoretical framework which was developed for the analysis of narrative texts. This means that we have moved into the domain of another discipline, namely Theory of Literature, and specifically the discipline called narratology.” He continues to mention that “In Theory of Literature a variety of different approaches to narrative texts exists, such as deconstructive readings of a text, feminist readings, psychological readings and Marxist readings” (:273). According to Jeong (2018:14), scholars who analyse biblical narratives typically borrow Seymour Chatman’s model. Chatman gives a detailed account of a narrative text as follows: Each narrative has two parts: (i) a story (*histoire*), which encompasses the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), and the existents (characters and settings); and (ii) a discourse (*discours*), which refers to the expression, the means by which the content is communicated. Put simply, the story represents the “what” in a narrative – what is depicted – while the discourse represents the “how” (cf. Chatman, 1978:19; Phelan, 1996:8; Marguerat & Bourquin, 1999:7; Tolmie, 1999:4; Bal, 2009:5).

The Fourth Gospel has attracted several research contributions from various scholars within the New Testament field or Johannine research. Many contributions came forward in the form of commentaries (e.g., Barrett, 1978; Bruce, 1983; Lindars, 1972, Brown, 2003, etc.), books (Culpepper, 1983; Duke, 1985; Van der Watt, 2007; Köstenberger, 2009, etc.), and countless scholarly articles (Leroy, 1966; Carson, 1982a; Born, 1988; Van der Watt, 2010; Pope, 2017; Reynolds, 2000, etc.). All these contributions present full analyses of passages, key terms, and major motifs inherent in the Fourth Gospel (Neyrey, 2007:i). Categorising and referencing all the scholarly works conducted on the Fourth Gospel exceeds the scope of this study. Nonetheless, a few studies closely aligned with the aim of this study will be mentioned, highlighting the existing research gap and the contribution that the current study aspires to make.

The current study's interest rests on the persuasive way in which the text of the Fourth Gospel is presented to the reader (real or implied⁴) by the narrator⁵ as arranged by the implied author.⁶ The

⁴ Van der Watt (2009:88; cf. Jeong, 2018:18-19) defines the "implied reader" as follows: "The *implied reader* is the inner-textual (personified) construction that systematically discovers what the implied author presents. The implied reader as inner-textual construct knows nothing at the beginning of the narrative but is indeed constructed as the narrative develops. As the narrative unfolds, the implied reader is informed by everything the narrative has to offer and the knowledge of the implied reader increases proportionally. Within the framework of the growing knowledge, the implied reader will have to make sense of every piece of new evidence and integrate it into the existing body of knowledge this reader already has. New information will constantly be considered and interpreted in the light of existing information up to that point in the narrative. Stylistic issues like creating or easing tensions, redefining, and expanding existing definitions of concepts, interrelating information, et cetera will in this way be developed and enriched within the construct of the implied reader." As stated above, whenever this study talks about the term "reader," it will be referring to the "implied reader," unless specified that it refers to the real reader (the original intended reader). Culpepper (1983:208) calls this reader an "ideal narrative audience," as opposed to "actual audience who is the 'real' flesh and blood reader – may be either the historical (first century) readers or contemporary readers."

⁵ When one reads the text, one listens to someone's voice telling the story. This voice is the narrator of the story. Jeong (2018:16) says, "The narrator's presence can be inferred from the fact that someone is telling the story in the text. This is the Reporter of the events in the story." The narrator reports the events and takes the implied reader from one scene to another and clarifying the time and the activities of the characters in the story. The narrator, therefore, should not be confused with the implied author of the story. Gunn and Fewell (1993:53; cf. Conroy, 1978:24, Resseguie, 2001:23) suggest that the "narrator is a character who tells the story while other characters enact it."

⁶ The *implied author* can be broadly described as an inner-textual construction (personified) that knows everything that happens and is supposed to happen in the narrative. He/she is the planner of the narrative, and systematically unfolds the different events of the narrative, implying that all the tensions, rhetorical strategies, the movement of the narrative, et cetera, are consciously planned. By gradually leading the implied reader through the narrative to the point he wants to make, he will provide the implied reader with the necessary information, creating tension, systematically and strategically making information available. In suggesting such a conscious force of construction behind the narrative, it allows the interpreter to assume that what is presented should have some rationale and strategy behind it (Van der Watt, 2009:88; cf. Moloney, 1997:219). He further asserts that the narratological distinction between the implied author and implied reader provides a theoretical

exploration will focus on the implied author's communicative strategy of the message of the Gospel. After carefully examining the text of the of the Fourth Gospel and reconsidering the author's communicative strategy, this study asserts that the exploration of this aspect remains vital and warrants further investigation. Therefore, the rationale here is to embark on a study of the nature of literary devices that the implied author employs in communicating the Gospel message and their performative power/nature. While commenting on the literary nature of the Fourth Gospel, Van der Watt (2007:1) acknowledges that "reading the text of John brings both exciting and challenging questions, particularly when one focuses on the narrative style or the communicative strategy of the Gospel." This study draws its motivation from Van der Watt's acknowledgement and assertion, where he emphasises that "the reader is challenged not only by the complexities of the text, but also by the wide range of possible interpretations and approaches to it."

1.1.2 Problem Statement

The overarching focus of this study is on the exploration of the nature and effect of the literary devices in the Fourth Gospel to the implied reader. The study of the performative nature of all the widely recognised literary/rhetorical techniques remains one of the most significant features of the Fourth Gospel yet to be explored comprehensively by scholars. As the researcher embarked on reading and re-reading the text of the Fourth Gospel with this perspective in mind, it sparked enthusiasm to engage in this kind of study.

As alluded to above, the motivation for investigating the Fourth Gospel's literary devices in this way emanates from the work of Van der Watt (2010)⁷ entitled: *'Ethics Through the Power of Language: Some Explorations in the Gospel According to John.'* In his exploration of the ethical dynamics in the Fourth Gospel, particularly chapter 8, he asserts that the Fourth Gospel's central purpose (20:30-31) is formulated in performative terms, namely, to bring the implied reader to faith or to strengthen their faith through the words written in his Gospel. However, he continues to caution that in studying the central purpose of the Gospel, 20:30-31 should be read *and studied* in context with the preceding verses (Van der Watt, 2010:142; cf. Van der Watt, 2003:90-91). His assertion is significant for this study; he says:

framework within which the performative power of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel may be considered (cf. Tolmie, 1999:5ff; Marguerat & Bourquin, 1999:7; Booth, 1983:74-75).

⁷ See also his extend work on the theme of ethics in Van der Watt (2019).

The presence of the divine and resurrected Jesus led to Thomas' climactic confession (20:28): 'my Lord and my God', changing his status from that of an unbeliever to that of a believer (καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός – 20:27; cf. 20:25). Henceforth people will not be in the privileged position of Thomas to see the risen Jesus physically; they will come to faith without the 'assistance' of the physical presence of the resurrected Jesus (20:29). How will this happen? Through the written Gospel, people will 'meet' Jesus and come to faith (verse 29).⁸

While the current study applauds this insightful contribution, it takes the argument further by asking the question: How does the implied author ensure that the implied reader 'meets' Jesus in the written words of the Gospel? While this study agrees with Van der Watt's observation on the performative nature of the Gospel's purpose (20:31), the observation here is that the investigation of the possible performative role of literary devices (such as: misunderstanding, irony, forensic dialogues, asides, and repetition) in the Fourth Gospel can advance the research on the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel.

Given the absence of any other notable studies, to the best of my knowledge, since Van der Watt's work in 2010, that have delved into further research on this particular topic, the current study maintains its relevance and attempts to expand on this topic. This study firmly believes that this topic remains largely unexplored in scholarly research. While individual instances of these devices have been acknowledged in commentaries, there has been limited scholarly exploration regarding their combined effects. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap and shed light on the overall significance and implications of these literary devices when considered collectively.

In view of this, the current study attempts to advance this research field by answering the central research question:

“What is the current state of research on the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel and how it accounts for new investigations?”

The study will proceed attempting to answer this main research question by looking at the following subordinate questions:

⁸ Van der Watt (2002:92) adds, “Rhetorically the author of the Gospel wants to take his readers by the hand, guide them through the narrative of the Gospel with the purpose that they will “see” or meet Jesus, confess Him as Christ and receive eternal life. Instead of hearing the words from the mouth of Jesus himself or seeing Him doing signs, the reader is confronted with these actions of Jesus through the text.”

- Does the study of misunderstanding contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?
- Does the study of irony contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?
- Does the study of forensic arguments contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?
- Does the study of asides and repetition contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?
- Does the study of focalisation⁹ contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?
- What new contribution did the application of speech act theory and focalisation bring to the study of the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's literary devices?

1.1.3 Motivation for Research Questions and Main Research Gap

Literary devices in the Fourth Gospel are widely acknowledged features and are believed to have been used in the construction of the text. This study contends that these devices are intentionally employed to strengthen the overall purpose of the Gospel. Wead (1970:v) indicates that these literary devices bring the author's thought patterns to the reader's attention.

While other scholars have done significantly well in identifying, describing, and/or defining the rhetorical/literary devices in the Fourth Gospel (Cullmann, 1948; Culpepper, 1983:152-199; Carson, 1982; Dolan, 1987, etc.), this study intends to go further and demonstrates their cumulative performative nature or the possible effect they may have on the implied reader as they read the text.

This study contends that the essence of the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel rests with the implied author's communicative strategy, part of which is his use of literary devices, throughout the Gospel.

⁹ In this thesis, focalisation will be explored as an independent approach or methodology to the text rather than being treated merely as a literary device. This distinction will be further clarified in the subsequent sections of the study.

In the construction of the Gospel, the implied author employs literary devices to stimulate the implied reader's interest and, consequently, invites him/her to adopt the author's point of view. In this way, the reader (real and implied) is brought to faith in Jesus Christ as pointed out in 20:30-31.

It is, therefore, believed that this type of analysis will contribute to how the text of the Fourth Gospel should be read and interpreted. This will be done by demonstrating how these literary devices engage the implied reader, and consequently ensures that the central purpose of the Gospel is achievable.

1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 Aim

As already hinted above, the primary aim of this study is to identify various literary devices in the Fourth Gospel and to do a literary analysis to establish/or demonstrate their performative nature/role to the implied reader.

1.2.2 Objectives

To achieve the above aim, the following main objective was formulated:

- To establish the current state of research on the performative nature of the literary devices in the Fourth Gospel and how it provides an opportunity for a new or further exploration within the Johannine research.¹⁰

In alignment with the primary objective stated above, the following subsidiary objectives were pursued:

¹⁰ For practical reasons it is not possible to conduct a literature review of each literary device and point out the research gap on each of them in this chapter. Instead, this study intends to conduct an extensive literature study of each literary device individually and highlight the corresponding research gap in the respective chapters dedicated to specific devices. For example, Chapter 2 of the thesis will focus on the performative nature of misunderstanding as a literary device, providing a detailed literature review thereof and identifying opportunities for further research. However, the current chapter provides a brief discussion (route map to the whole study) of existing studies on related topics similar to this one in the Fourth Gospel, i.e., the study of the performative nature of literary devices in general. Furthermore, it compares and contrasts these prior studies with the current research (cf. Section 1.7 below).

- To establish and/or demonstrate the performative nature of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.
- To establish and/or demonstrate the performative nature of irony in the Fourth Gospel.
- To establish and/or demonstrate the performative nature of forensic dialogue in the Fourth Gospel.
- To establish/or demonstrate the performative nature of asides and repetition in the Fourth Gospel.
- To establish/or demonstrate the performative nature of focalisation in the Fourth Gospel.
- To draw an overall conclusion of the new contribution which the application of speech act theory and focalisation brought to the study of the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's literary devices.

The following sub-section will continue to state the central theoretical argument of the study.

1.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

This study believes that the communicative strategy by the author of the Fourth Gospel is highly decorated with literary devices that are intended to fulfil a performative role to the implied reader.¹¹

The hypothesis of this study posits that the Fourth Gospel is formulated in performative terms (cf. Van der Watt, 2007:10; Labahn, 1999:202-203), wherein the author employs various literary devices, such as irony, misunderstanding, forensic dialogue, and repetition,¹² to actively engage the reader and elicit a specific response or action. The language employed by the author and the technique of reporting are not neutral in their intent; rather, the text is styled and presented with

¹¹ Culpepper (1983:152) also acknowledges that the Gospel's author uses literary techniques to communicate with the reader of the Gospel.

¹² This thesis will provide the definitions of all these literary devices and how they are created in the text in the specific chapters where they will be treated. It is intended to briefly state the central theoretical argument of each chapter to clearly mark its focus and its place in the whole study. Regarding the study of focalisation, this phenomenon is not necessarily a literary device like irony and misunderstanding, etc., as already indicated, but a method of reading the text. One of the chapters in this thesis will focus on this phenomenon and also explore its performative nature.

the purpose of stimulating the interest of the implied reader and ultimately persuade them to act upon its purpose (20:30-31).

Suggit (1993:164) points out that a literary text “has the power to challenge its readers in ways in which its author may never have contemplated.” Building upon this notion, the study puts forward an additional hypothesis that the ancient authors, through their deliberate formulation of the text, demonstrated their awareness of its performative power (cf. Olsson, 1999:143).¹³ The prevalent use of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel is indicative of this awareness, and is an intentional communicative strategy used to enforce/enhance the performative intent of the whole Gospel. This hypothesis necessitates focused scholarly attention and is thought to align with the stated overall purpose of the Gospel in John 20:30-31.

The section that follows will briefly discuss the methodological approach that will be employed in the exploration of all literary devices and their performative function in the Gospel.

1.4 METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION¹⁴

1.4.1 Rhetoric and Speech Act Theory: A Synopsis

1.4.1.1 Introduction

The current study can be broadly classified within the family of rhetoric as it endeavours to investigate the persuasive elements within the Fourth Gospel.¹⁵ However, while acknowledging its rhetorical nature, the study falls more into pragmatics, as it aims at investigating the performative nature of literary devices in the text. The rhetorical approach to literary texts posits that the persuasive power of a text resides not solely in “what” the text says but on “how” it is presented. As Ryken (1993:367; cf. Van der Watt, 2019:32; Resseguie, 2005:41) correctly points out, “We cannot fully comprehend the ‘what’ of New Testament writings (their religious content)

¹³ While discussing this point, Van der Watt (2010:144; cf. Nightingale, 2006:43; Olbricht, 2003:371-389) arrives at two conclusions, namely: “(1) ancient authors were intensely aware of the performative nature of a text and used language to reach their communicative goal; (2) After studying Olbricht’s work, he further concludes that the performative nature of the text should not be restricted; this implies that as readers (and re-readers) of an ancient text like the Gospel of John we should be sensitive to possible rhetorical features that could function performatively.”

¹⁴ This is a stated approach of analysis that this study will follow to analyse the performative nature of all the identified literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. This entails the angle at which the study will look at the text of the Fourth Gospel.

¹⁵ It has been mentioned earlier that the Gospel of John will be read as a narrative. This means that the Fourth Gospel will be studied as a story that contains persuasive devices in it.

without first paying attention to the 'how' (the literary modes in which the content is embodied). Odiam (1989:4) adds that rhetoric does not only aim at persuading people but also at moving the audience to act in a particular manner.¹⁶

The exploration of the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel also focuses on how the text is presented and its possible consequential effects on the implied reader. When commenting on the historical development of rhetoric, Lausberg (1998:20) highlights that its origin can be traced back to the poet Homer (the Greek poet 800 – 750 BC).¹⁷ Aune (1987:160) further observes that by the first century BC, rhetoric had gained influence over the composition of letters, particularly among the educated. Their letters, Aune continues, functioned not only as a means of communication but also as sophisticated instruments of persuasion and media for displaying literary skills. Historians were often more concerned with convincing their readers that their account of events was more reliable than that of others – a purpose similar to that of legal and advisory oratory (Aune, 1987:160). Aune further contends that Hellenistic historians endeavoured to influence the attitude and behaviour of readers by depicting individuals as examples of virtue or vice. He concludes by asserting that this task was essentially one of persuasion. When doing a New Testament study or research, one cannot be ignorant of the fact that these writings emerged from this context. Agreeing with the assertion of Aune (1987:160), this study is of the view that the Gospel of John is also constructed in such a way that it persuades the reader to make decisions as they read it.

The rhetorical elements here will refer to what Anderson (1996:22) calls “textual rhetoric,” that is, the main concern rests not with the form of the text or genre and its formal division into parts but with analysing stylistics and the progression and analysis of argumentation. As already alluded to above, the investigation locates the study more in the field of pragmatics than traditional rhetorical analysis.¹⁸ Therefore, the study will attempt the exploration of literary devices from a speech act

¹⁶ Odiam (1989:18; cf. Resseguie, 2005:30) helpfully points out that “there is a difference between the questions ‘what does a text mean?’ and ‘what does a text do?’” He further indicates that “the substance of rhetoric concerns situation and issues of human life and behaviour. Arguments are presented in such a way as to confront the hearers with ethical choices that demand reasoned responses of decision and action.”

¹⁷ For a detailed discussion on this, see Lausberg (1998:20ff).

¹⁸ While discussing the broadness of the field of rhetoric, Tolmie (2004:13) observes that the term “rhetorical” is one of those terms that can be used to indicate almost any form of literary criticism nowadays. He indicates that one must clarify what they mean when using it. It is therefore necessary for this study to also outline what it means by “rhetorical.” In line with the author’s position, the term “rhetorical” in this study is employed in a narrower sense, specifically referring to an approach that aims to analyse how a text is used to persuade its readers.

interpretive angle. In the field of pragmatics, the central contention is that narratives (ancient or modern) do not only exist to provide the reader with historical information (informative) but are also intended to invite the reader to participate in them (performative).¹⁹ Therefore, in order for this study to make an intelligible contribution on the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel, it seems appropriate and necessary to take the speech-act route as an interpretive model to biblical texts.

1.4.1.2 Speech act theory – An outline

Speech act theory²⁰ is a theory of language use and its impact on the reader (Botha, 2009:486; Adams, 2006:18-22). Botha (2009:486) further asserts that speech act theory developed and found its niche in the field of pragmatics, and biblical scholars, looking at a variety of literary theories to supplement their exegetical programmes,²¹ turned their attention to speech act theory as well. He continues to indicate that in the arena of pragmatics, speech act theory is a very useful tool to enable interpreters to focus on the performative aspects of a language.²² Already almost two decades ago, Tovey (1997:68) observed that:

In the recent decades there has been a movement away from understanding narrative primarily as an artefact, towards seeing it as an act of communication between an author and a reader. In the same way, the use of language may be understood as a performance, or an activity by which meaning is made by what words do as much as in what they are. Thus, words are not simply entities within which meaning resides; they are also tools with which a speaker may perform certain actions and achieve certain effects.

¹⁹ See Van der Watt (2010:166-167) and Motyer (1997:107) for further discussion on this theme.

²⁰ When defining this approach of analysis, Briggs (2001:3) indicates that “Speech act theory is the name given to a type of inquiry brought into focus by the work of J.L. Austin in his 1975 William James lectures at Harvard, and later published as *How to do things with words*.” See also Tovey (1997:70).

²¹ Briggs (2001:4) also indicates that more recently there has been a growing body of literature focusing on the use of speech act theory in biblical and theological studies. However, he cautions that there remains a considerable confusion concerning what may or may not be expected of speech act theory and its insights in biblical and theological studies. For a further discussion of the hermeneutical implications of the speech act theory, see Briggs (2001:5-17).

²² Van der Watt (2010:145) mentions that speech act theory tries to address multiple features in the text. This study believes that one of the features that this method can help to explore is the performative function of literary devices in the text. Briggs (2001:3) also clarifies that “At heart, speech act theory concerns itself with the performative nature of language: with the topic of how language ‘utterances’ are operative and have effects whether they occur in face-to-face personal conversation or in any communicative action.”

The assertion by Tovey (1997:68) is important in the field of biblical literary studies also. It seems that this is the aim of the implied author of the Fourth Gospel. He crafted the Gospel with the purpose of persuading the reader to do something about their relationship with the protagonist, that is, Jesus Christ.

As highlighted earlier, this study does not intend to apply the whole speech act theory,²³ but only seeks to borrow some elements of it, e.g., the study of utterances (various speech acts) and their possible effects on the implied reader. In some cases, where necessary, the study will provide cursory comments on the rules of communication (the study of maxims), as formulated in the speech act theory.

The study observes that utterances, along with how, where, and when they are made, creates various literary devices in the text. What literary scholars recognise as an artistry in the text, came into being as spoken utterances. Therefore, to explore, for example, an ironic situation in the story or the misunderstanding in the dialogue, one must pay attention to the utterance that caused it. Botha (2009:487-488) points out that in any utterance, there are three acts that are performed:²⁴

- *Locutionary act* – is basically the production of an intelligible and recognisable combination of words which usually constitute a sentence.
- *Illocutionary act*²⁵ – is an act the speaker performs when making a specific utterance. For example, by making a specific kind of utterance, a speaker can be stating, warning, requesting, commanding, representing, and threatening, and so on. In short, the illocutionary force of an utterance is “the impact which an illocutionary act is intended to have on its

²³ For example, see the work of Ito (2015), ‘The Speech act reading of John 9.’

²⁴ When providing a summary of Austin’s assertion on these acts, Briggs (2001:40) also says, “*Locutionary act* is the normal sense of ‘saying something’; and the term *Illocutionary act* is the performance of an act in saying something as opposed to performance of an act of saying something and the *perlocutionary act* is an act performed in such a way that it has consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker or other person.” See also Tovey (1997:70-71) and Austin (1975) for a similar discussion.

²⁵ Briggs (2001:31) calls it “a major analytical tool of Speech act theory.”

hearers.²⁶ Here are some of the types of illocutions, namely: *Informatives*,²⁷ *Assertives*, *Directives*, *Commissives*, *Expressives*, and *Declarations*.²⁸

- A *perlocution or perlocutionary act* – is the intended effect inherent in an utterance. But this intended effect can be vastly different from the actual effect. The speaker has no control over the actual effect on an utterance, and it is the hearer who reacts to the utterance in his/her own way.²⁹

To successfully investigate the performative nature of literary devices in their various occurrences in the Fourth Gospel, this study approaches the text in the following way:

- Reading and identification: The text (both the Greek and English versions) is carefully examined to identify and demarcate narratives and discourses where the literary device occurs.
- Discussion of the setting:³⁰ Briefly delving into the story's setting, the study focuses on the characters, time, and place. In this regard, the study suggests that the setting of the story plays a role in the production of utterances by characters.
- Analysis of illocutionary force: The illocutionary force of a particular utterance and how it contributes to the creation of literary devices in that given setting in the story is discussed. The study also pays attention to the semantics of the text; the focus here is on the meaning of the passage (what the passage is all about). On this level of analysis, attention is also given

²⁶ Cf. Tovey (1997:71) and Thiselton (1992:21-298) for similar elaboration.

²⁷ Cf. Ito (2015:141).

²⁸ For a detailed discussion on the complete schema of these utterances, see Botha (2009:488) and Bach and Harnish (1979:42).

²⁹ Van der Watt (2010:148) indicates that it is obviously not possible to predict how a reader would respond to any specific text. By reading the text closely, it becomes possible to at least give clear indications on the direction the text encourages the reader to take. The broad ideological thrust as well as the smaller linguistic features of the text will work together in determining the "encouragement" of the text. In our case, we will try to determine how the text tries to involve the reader to make a particular decision.

³⁰ In the study of the story's setting, this research aligns with Ito (2015:60) who writes, "As for these appropriateness conditions, I would like to remind my reader again that my speech act approach recognises the importance of contexts, namely historical, social, cultural, religious, linguistic, literary, and so on, because the contexts for a specific speech situation play an important role in interpretation, especially in determining the meaning of a certain utterance, passage or section."

to the contextual meaning of key words (words that contribute to the occurrence of a particular literary device) in the passage.

- Discussion of the perlocutionary force³¹ and the performative nature of the literary device: In this section, the study explores the perlocutionary force and the performative nature of the identified literary device. Attention is also given to the establishment, or the recognition of the communicative strategy employed by the implied author and how it contributes to achieving the central purpose of the Gospel.

It is anticipated that this approach to the text will not only help this investigation to deal with the morphological aspect of the text but will also assist in uncovering significant aspects, such as:

- As already alluded to above, the approach will assist in the effort to identify literary devices employed by the implied author as his communicative strategy to persuade the implied reader.
- Determining the unacceptable practices or ideologies that the author wishes to expose and/or disprove in the mind of the reader (real and implied), particularly their view or attitude about Christ in the Fourth Gospel.
- Identifying and analysing the way the text presents and/or uses specific characters as performative role players to the implied reader.
- Determining and establishing new acceptable ideological practices and/or propositions that the implied author wishes to communicate to the reader (real and implied).

The thesis aims at following the above-outlined and established³² approach in investigating the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel.

1.5 RECENT RESEARCH ON THE PERFORMATIVE NATURE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

The study of the recent Johannine scholarship serves to acknowledge the works already done by other scholars and to identify the existing research gaps in the field. This section of the study

³¹ Van der Watt (2010:148) indicates that it is obviously not possible to predict how a reader would respond to any specific text. By reading the text closely, it becomes possible to at least give clear indications on the direction the text encourages the reader to take. The broad ideological thrust as well as the smaller linguistic features of the text will work together in determining the “encouragement” of the text. In our case, we will try to determine how the text tries to involve the reader to make a particular decision.

³² Cf. Hobyane (2020:2-3) and (2021:52-54).

further helps to contextualise the current study, while relating it to existing research on the subject, and making a meaningful contribution to the field. In this regard, there are few contributions that deserves some acknowledgement and are related to this current study.

The first study is the doctoral dissertation by D. Wead titled 'The Literary Devices in John's Gospel' (1970). Significantly, the introduction acknowledges that the author of the Gospel of John used several distinctive literary devices in constructing his Gospel. He further highlights that these literary tools are an important part of any serious study of the Gospel, and intriguingly, some of them were not new to the ancient reader (Wead, 1970).

As already noted above, Wead (1970) asserts that these literary tools have also been employed by Homer, the Greek poets, and Aristotle, in their literary works. In the same breath, it can be pointed out that, in reference to the Fourth Gospel, it seems that literary devices were employed by the implied author with the purpose to convert non-believers and to strengthen those who already believe in Christ. In his study, Wead (1970) looks at literary devices, e.g., double meaning (pp. 30-46), irony (pp. 47-68), and misunderstanding (pp. 69-70).

Wead's exploration of the literary devices in the Fourth Gospel is insightful; however, the study does not comprehensively address the possible effects (performative nature/power) of these literary devices on the implied reader. Therefore, while the current study will make use of some of the findings from Wead, it will proceed to demonstrate how these literary devices stimulate the implied reader to participate in the text and further shows how they enforce the attainability of the primary purpose of the Gospel.

The second contribution is the book titled *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* by Culpepper (1983). Many Johannine researchers have given due accolade to the work of Culpepper in this publication. The most valuable contribution of his work, related to the current study, is his description of the distinction between the narrator's explicit and implicit commentary.

Regarding the explicit commentary, Culpepper (1983:6-7) asserts that the narrator communicates through character development, events, settings, and narrative asides, which he calls: the obvious features in the text. In contrast to the explicit commentary, Culpepper argues that implicit commentary is information conveyed through literary features such as misunderstanding, irony, and symbolism. Although he did not use the term "performative," as this study, Culpepper does successfully give attention to the effects of these devices on the reader.

In his conclusion of the implicit commentary, he says "symbols, just like the misunderstandings and irony are a form of a silent communication between the author and the reader" (Culpepper,

1983:202; cf. Resseguie, 2001:28-50). Through these, the author and reader are drawn together in a shared perception of meaning and reverence before mystery. To this he makes a conclusive proposition, that if the Gospel is read in the way in which it calls for itself to be experienced, then the author and the reader will be united in the transformation effected by an experience of encounter with transcendent mystery.

While acknowledging the contribution of Culpepper's study, particularly the so-called implicit commentary, this study observes that the application of the speech act theory to literary devices such as misunderstandings, irony, forensic dialogues, asides, and repetition remains an open area for exploration. Doing so has the potential to bring a fresh and renewed perspective, enriching our understanding of the performative power of the Fourth Gospel.

The third contribution that deserves some mention is the article titled 'Ethics Through the Power of Language: Some Exploration in the Gospel According to John' by Jan G. van der Watt (2010). However, the study only focused on the ethical dimension in the text of John 8.

When discussing the theme of ethics, which he argues is regarded as a major theme, or even the prominent theme in John, Van der Watt's point of departure is the proposition that the central purpose of the Gospel of John (20:30-31) is formulated in performative terms.³³ He maintains that this is substantiated by the fact that the author wants to do or achieve something in the life of the reader. In his findings he proposes that the decision for Christ is the basic ethical action according to the Gospel. He further states that the performative language is aimed at bringing about such an ethical decision from the reader.

The study by Van der Watt is crucial in clarifying the research lacunae that the current study seeks to fill. As already mentioned, the two studies use the same claim as their point of departure, i.e., the Fourth Gospel is formulated in performative terms. However, the current study goes further proposing that the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel is also noticeable in how the whole Gospel is communicated. The observation here is that the author employs literary devices to make the purpose of the Gospel achievable to/by the reader.

Therefore, while agreeing with Van der Watt, this study aims to test the performative nature of all the widely acknowledged literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. The study hopes to reach a conclusive proof that the implied author of the Gospel intentionally employed these literary

³³ For further discussion on this topic, see Van der Watt (2007:10).

devices with the purpose of enhancing the central purpose of the Gospel, that is, to bring the reader (real and implied) to faith in Jesus Christ so that they may have eternal life.

This study concedes that there are many other various discussions/studies of the Johannine literary devices in books, commentaries, and scholarly articles not mentioned here. As already mentioned in section 1.4 (footnote 7), this study will endeavour to explore recent scholarly work on each literary device in their respective chapters. Additionally, the study will identify and highlight specific research gaps that warrant further investigation.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

This study consists of the following seven chapters:

Chapter 1, the introductory chapter precedes the study of the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. The chapter provides the contextualisation and the overall rationale behind the study. In conjunction with this, the central theoretical statement (hypothesis), research aims, and objectives are stipulated. Furthermore, details of preliminary studies on John, particularly on the field of rhetoric and pragmatics, are briefly discussed. The possible or expected contribution of this study is pointed out. Finally, an outline of the methodological orientation is provided.

Chapter 2 delves into the performative nature of misunderstanding as a literary device in the Fourth Gospel. It directs its attention first to the setting of the story (exploring the characters involved, place, and time of the story) where the misunderstanding occurs. Subsequently, the chapter proceeds to establish the type of locutions by studying the nature of utterances, as informed by speech act theory, and the possible effects (performative power) they may have on the reader.

Chapter 3 explores the performative nature of irony in the Fourth Gospel. The point of contest here is that the occurrence of irony, as a literary device in the Fourth Gospel, is not accidental but has performative intent towards the reader. The primary goal is to identify passages where irony occurs (as already widely acknowledged by other scholars), and thoroughly discuss aspects of the text, including the setting of the story and semantics. In the pragmatic analyses, the chapter demonstrates how irony fulfils its performative role in the text.

Chapter 4 investigates the performative nature of forensic arguments/language as a literary device in the Fourth Gospel. This chapter extensively explores the locutions used in trials or court proceedings in the Fourth Gospel, examining their performative power and impact on the reader.

Chapter 5 unpacks the performative nature of asides and repetition in the Fourth Gospel. As with the previous chapters, this study briefly discusses the settings of the narratives where these asides and repetitions occur. The chapter then proceeds to demonstrate the performative nature of the literary devices.

Chapter 6 shifts its focus to the study of focalisation and its various facets, exploring their performative power on the reader. Unlike the preceding chapters, this section takes a different approach. This study considers focalisation, not as a literary device, but as a methodology in its handling of texts. Therefore, focalisation is utilised as an interpretive angle or an analytical approach to the Fourth Gospel. Consequently, the chapter combines focalisation and cursory comments from the speech act theory to investigate the Fourth Gospel.

Chapter 7 presents a summary of the results derived from the entire study. It discusses the contribution of the research, highlighting its significance in advancing the understanding of the Fourth Gospel. Furthermore, the chapter offers recommendations or suggestions for potential future investigations in related fields.

1.7 SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION TO INDICATE CORRELATION

Table 1: Schematic Representation to show correlation between problem statement, aims and objectives and method.

Problem Statement	Aims and Objectives	Approach and Method
What is the current state of research on the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's literary devices and how it accounts for new investigations?	To establish the current state of research on the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's literary devices and how it accounts for new investigations.	Conduct a survey/literature review to compile documentation on the current state of research on the Fourth Gospel's performative nature.
Does the study of <i>misunderstanding</i> contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?	To establish the performative role of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.	Use speech act theory to demonstrate the performative nature of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.
Does the study of <i>irony</i> contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?	To establish the performative role of irony in the Fourth Gospel.	Use speech act theory to demonstrate the performative nature of irony in the Fourth Gospel.
Does the study of <i>forensic arguments</i> contribute towards understanding the	To establish the performative role of forensic dialogue in the Fourth Gospel.	Use speech act theory to demonstrate the performative

Problem Statement	Aims and Objectives	Approach and Method
performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?		nature of forensic dialogues in the Fourth Gospel.
Does the study of <i>asides and repetition</i> contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?	To establish the performative role of asides and repetition in the Fourth Gospel.	Use speech act theory to demonstrate the performative nature of asides and repetition in the Fourth Gospel.
Does the study of <i>focalisation</i> contribute towards understanding the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel?	To establish the performative role of focalisation in the Fourth Gospel.	Use focalisation as an analytical tool to demonstrate the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's narratives.
What new contribution did the application of speech act theory and focalisation bring to the study of the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's literary devices.	To draw an overall conclusion of the new contribution which the application of speech act theory and focalisation brought to the study of the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's literary devices.	Use the results from speech act analysis and focalisation to determine the new contribution to the study of the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel's literary devices and narratives.

1.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter was devoted solely to discussing and laying out the general introduction of the whole study of the performative nature of literary devices in the Gospel of John. As stated in the outline of the structure of the study, the following chapter focuses on the analysis of the performative nature of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.

The next chapter will continue with the analysis of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.

Chapter 2 The Performative Nature of Misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel

2.1 INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL SURVEY AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

2.1.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how *misunderstanding*, as a literary device, fulfils its performative task in its various occurrences in the Fourth Gospel. The chapter explores the performative nature of misunderstanding from a speech act interpretive angle as proposed in Chapter 1 (section 1.5). Misunderstanding as a literary device in the Fourth Gospel has been widely recognised and extensively explored by numerous scholars.³⁴ Brown (2003:288) observes that this literary device has been the subject of much scholarly discussions. This study also acknowledges that the exploration of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel dates back as early as 1948, with Cullmann being among the scholars who delved into this aspect.³⁵ Brown (2003:288; cf. Resseguie, 2005:64) briefly mentions Gingrich, Bultmann, Clavier and Cullmann as scholars who have pursued a study of misunderstanding. A concise overview of these contributions is presented below.

The Gospel of John, similar to the other three Gospels, falls within the textual type known as “gospel” and is classified as narrative literature. When commenting on the nature of the Fourth Gospel as a narrative literature, Du Toit (1993:3) asserts that one characteristic of the Fourth Gospel is that the historical material concerning Jesus’ words and actions is narrated in such a way that the readers may become involved with its message. The contention here is that one of the ways in which the implied reader gets involved in the narratives of the Fourth Gospel is misunderstanding.

³⁴ Thatcher (2009:357) calls it “Riddle”, defining it as “An ‘ambiguous’ statement which could reasonably refer to two or more frames of reference depending on one’s interpretation of the term.” When describing it, Brown (2003:288) notes that “because of double meaning or symbolic usage, language used in John may be misunderstood or not understood at all” (cf. Culpepper, 1983:152; Resseguie, 2001:51-52).

³⁵ To mention a few of those scholars: O. Cullmann. (1948), “De Johanneische Gebrauch doppeldeutigen Ausdrücke als Schlüssel zum Verständnis des vierten Evangeliums.” *Theologische Zeitschrift* 4, 360–372. See also H. Leroy. (1966). *Ratsel und Missverständnis: Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums*. Bonn: Peter Hanstein Verlag; and D.A. Carson (1982a). “Understanding Misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.” *Tyndale Bulletin* 33, 59–91.

The Fourth Gospel has proven to be a fertile ground for the exploration of the performative nature of literary devices like misunderstanding. The following sub-section provides a brief historical survey of the study of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.

2.1.2 Historical Survey of Misunderstanding and the Research Gap

It is not within the scope of this chapter to discuss in detail all the works that have been done on this theme, but to cite few that are closely related to the focus of this chapter in order to get an impression of the nature of the debate.

The first recent³⁶ study of misunderstanding came to the field in 1948 by Cullmann titled: *“De Johanneische Gebrauch doppeldeutigen Ausdrücke als Schlüssel zum Verständnis des vierten Evangeliums”*.

While commenting on this study, Carson (1982a:60) mentions that Cullmann’s publication is a perceptive article in which he points out how many words in the Fourth Gospel have a double or at least ambiguous meaning (*double entendre*). He further indicates that Cullmann sees this literary device as a key which opens the Gospel.

H. Leroy wrote *“Ratsel und Missverständnis: Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums”* in 1966.³⁷ Carson (1982a:61) indicates that Leroy’s work was a full monograph about misunderstanding. The study was primarily form critical in approach. Leroy’s endeavour was to identify the occurrences of misunderstandings in the Fourth Gospel and attempt to reconstruct the Johannine community which produced such literature.

In his study, Leroy argues that in all the misunderstandings, Jesus represents the Johannine Christian community (the Insiders), and the Jews are marked as “outsiders” who usually do not understand him. Leroy concludes that it must be a Gnosticising group (the insiders) which believes that they are living in the eschatological times of salvation and possess an exclusive understanding of revelation (Carson, 1982a:61).

³⁶ Within the last 80 years.

³⁷ As quoted by Carson (1982a).

The third work to be acknowledged is the work of Carson as quoted above. His article titled '*Understanding Misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel*,' published in 1982, deserves some mention here. When summarising the scope of his work, Carson (1982a:60) puts it as follows:

I shall begin by describing the most important literature³⁸ on misunderstandings in John. Then I shall offer a brief critique, followed by a number of positive observations which, I hope, shed a little light not only on John's 'literary device' of misunderstanding, but on his entire Gospel.

Carson rounds off his article by compiling a chart where he categorises all the occurrences of misunderstandings, according to his literature study.

The epoch-making publication titled *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, by Culpepper appeared in 1983. In this study, Culpepper discusses the Johannine narrative style. Culpepper's main contribution rests on his description of the distinction between the narrator's explicit and implicit commentary. He asserts that the narrator communicates explicitly through character development, events, settings, and narrative aside – and these are obvious features in the text. In contrast, implicit commentary is information conveyed "between the line" through such literary features as multiple allusions, misunderstandings, irony, and symbolism (Culpepper, 1983:6-7; cf. Born, 1988:4).

Two more literary works that are close to the aim of this study are the scholarly articles of Bryan J. Born (1988) titled, '*Literary Features in the Gospel of John*'; and Kellis S. O'Brien (2005) titled, '*Written That You May Believe: John 20 and Narrative Rhetoric*.' First, in his article, Born briefly discusses the occurrence of literary techniques in the Fourth Gospel and how they challenge the reader. However, he narrows the focus of his study only to the analysis of John 3:1-21 (the narrative of Jesus and Nicodemus). Even though he does not use the term "performative" in his study, his article seems to be mindful of the effect that literary devices have on the reader.

Second, even though he does not deal primarily with literary devices in the Fourth Gospel, O'Brien (2005) makes a critical observation on the purpose of the Gospel. He mentions that: "[T]his verse (20:31) is the direct address to the reader, explicitly expressing an intent to change the reader." He further indicates that this direct address is somewhat rare in both ancient and modern texts.

³⁸ In his survey, Carson (1982a:62ff) applauds the works of: Cullmann (1948); Leroy (1966); D.W. Wead (1970). "The Literary Devices of John's Gospel"; C.H. Giblin (1979/80). "Suggestion, Negative Response, and Positive Action in St John's Portrayal of Jesus"; K.E. Dewey (1980). "*Paroimiai* in the Gospel of John"; and M. De Jonge (1970). "Nicodemus and Jesus: Some Observations on Misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel."

This study concedes that there might be many other contributions on the study of Johannine misunderstandings in various commentaries and scholarly articles not mentioned here (see the names Carson mentioned, for instance). The aforementioned references were cited to recognise and demonstrate the overall progress in the research field, while also highlighting the distinctive contribution that this study aims to make. The observation of the current study regarding the history of research on Johannine misunderstanding is that this specific research field was dominated by studies that focused on identifying the occurrences of misunderstanding in the text and attempting to describe it, e.g., the studies of Cullmann (1948), Leroy (1966), Wead (1970), and Carson (1982a) may be classified in this group. However, another observation here is that the development of the study of this literary device has been a shift from its identification and description to a more focused exploration of how misunderstanding affects the reader of the text. In this group are the studies of Culpepper (1983), Born (1988), O'Brien (2005), and Van der Watt (2010), for example.

This chapter falls into the latter group, i.e., the exploration of the effects of misunderstanding on the reader as they read the text. Therefore, it remains a contention here that a comprehensive study of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel can still bring a unique contribution to the field of research.

As already highlighted, listeners in the Fourth Gospel often misunderstand Jesus' utterances. When they misunderstand, Jesus gets an opportunity to correct their misunderstanding by revealing the truth. In most cases the text is presented in such a way that the implicit reader is aware of the truth and could correct the misunderstanding. Culpepper (1983:152) also observes that "One of the distinctive features of the Gospel of John is the frequency with which its secondary characters misunderstand Jesus." O'Brien (2005:287; Resseguie, 2005:66) also acknowledges that misunderstanding is a key feature of the Gospel of John. If the reader willingly chooses to ignore this literary artistry in their study of the Fourth Gospel, it will be, *de facto*, willingly choosing to misunderstand the Fourth Gospel entirely.

The current study values the observation by both Culpepper and O'Brien cited above, hence it aspires to explore this literary device and its performative nature.

2.2 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT OF THE CHAPTER

The author of the Fourth Gospel strategically employs misunderstandings as a means to captivate the reader's attention and then encourages them to embrace the author's perspective. Through this unique approach in conveying the Gospel, the author effectively leads the reader to place their faith in Jesus Christ, aligning with the central purpose of the Gospel (20:30-31). Therefore,

this study holds the view that misunderstanding is one of the literary devices that forms part of the implied author's intentional communicative strategies used with the goal of transforming the life of the reader. The primary argument put forth here is that a comprehensive reading and/or study of the Fourth Gospel should lead the reader to recognise that misunderstanding serves a performative function for the reader. The following section proceeds with the analysis of the performative nature of misunderstanding in its various occurrences in the Fourth Gospel.

2.3 MISUNDERSTANDING AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE: PRELUDE

Cullmann (1948) published a perceptive article in which he points out how many words in John have a double or at least ambiguous meaning that causes other characters to misunderstand Jesus (See also Carson, 1982a:60). After reading the text of the Fourth Gospel for the purpose of this analysis, this study also established the following occurrences of words or utterances that are misunderstood by Jesus' hearers as he engages with them.

These words are: ὁ ναός (2:19-22), ἄνωθεν (3:3, 7), ὑψώω (3:14; 8:28; 12:32-34), ὕδωρ ζῶν (4:10), ὑπάγω (8:21; 13:33), τοῦ ὕπνου (11:13) and βασιλεὺς (19:14-15, 19, and 21). This study concedes that other scholars might have identified some other occurrences of words/utterances in the Fourth Gospel in addition to the ones identified here. However, for the purpose of demonstrating their performative nature, this study will concentrate solely on the analysis of the above-identified occurrences.

As highlighted in the discussion of the methodology (section 1.4), this study intends to study all these occurrences while being attentive to the setting in which they occur in the narrative.

2.4 Misunderstanding and its Performative Nature in John 2:18-22

The following section comprises the analysis of the performative nature of misunderstanding occurring in various identified narrative units of the Fourth Gospel. The analysis will be preceded by a discussion of the story's setting.

2.4.1 Setting of the Story

The analysis of misunderstanding here focuses on verses 19-22 of the passage mentioned above. Regarding the setting of the story, the narrator in 2:1-12 reports the events of the story of Jesus' first miracle (according to the Fourth Gospel's arrangement) in Cana of Galilee. The next episode (2:13-25) is the narrator's report of the story of Jesus' first Passover and the cleansing of the

temple.³⁹ Concerning this event, Bruce (1983:73) comments that “this event was a Passover commemorating Israel’s deliverance from Egypt and was celebrated annually on the anniversary of that deliverance, 14 Nisan and was followed immediately by the week-long festival of unleavened Bread (15-22 Nisan).” The Synoptic Gospels recorded this event as taking place almost at the end of Jesus’ ministry (Matt 21:12-17; Mk 11:15-18; Lk 19:45-46). However, it is noted that the event is reported at the beginning of the Fourth Gospel.⁴⁰ The narrator reports in 2:12 that after performing his first miracle, Jesus travelled from Capernaum to Jerusalem. Capernaum was where Jesus chose to live during his Galilean ministry. Guthrie (1994:1030) highlights that the brief stay of Jesus in Galilee indicates how close the Passover was.

From 2:13ff the focus of the narrative shifts from family matters to national and religious ones. The setting of the story is in Jerusalem at the temple court (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ). The characters involved are Jesus, his disciples (in 2:17 – οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ), and the Jewish opponents (in 2:18 – οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι).⁴¹

It is reasonable to assume that many people in attendance are Jewish opponents, since the event is reported as the Jewish Passover (ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων). It should also be borne in mind that this part of the Fourth Gospel generally reports the story of Jesus’ ministry to the world or to

³⁹ Carson (1991:177-178; cf. Barrett, 1978:195.) says, “Some scholars argue that Jesus cleansed the temple twice, once at the beginning and once at the end of his ministry.” However, Kanagaraj (2005:105) indicates that now there is a consensus that the event took place only once, in the latter part of Jesus’ ministry, and that John places it at the beginning in order to make a theological point.

⁴⁰ The author of John may not have been intending to do a chronological report of the life and ministry of Jesus but to use a thematic approach to report the work of Christ.

⁴¹ This study is aware of the current translation debate regarding the identity of “Jews.” The word οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι here would be used to refer to “textual Jews” or the hearers of Jesus (who emerge as the opponents of Jesus) without any connotative force, as Sheridan (2013:673) also warns. Motyer (2008:150; cf. Motyer, 1997:33-34) rightly states “that sometimes they are identified with the leaders (9:22; 18:14) but also separate from them (7:32-35; 12:9-11), linked with the Pharisees (1:19, 24; 3:1; 9:13-18) but also distinguished from them (11:45-46). They are found in Judea (7:11; 11:7-8) but also in Galilee (6:41, 52); they are integrated into the crowd (6:41; 12:19) but also stand apart from the crowd (7:1, 20).” While conceding that in some places Ἰουδαῖοι takes on broader ethnic and religious connotations (4:9; 5:1; 18:20), Motyer argues that the term has a more “precise usage” where “the Jews” are distinguished from other Jews; in these places Ἰουδαῖοι take on particular characteristics: they, paraphrasing Motyer, are devoted to the Torah, the temple, and to notions of purity, and are mostly associated with Judea. Richards and Richards (1987:726) hold a similar view, expressing that “This designation is used often in the Gospel of John. John used it in a technical sense. He did *not* mean Israel, or the Jewish people as a whole. When John said, ‘the Jews’ he, unlike other Gospel writers, meant the religious leaders of the people who chose to oppose Jesus, and who represented a distortion of historic Old Testament faith.”

non-believers (Van der Watt, 2010:9). This is crucial to the reader to take note so that he/she can understand the nature and depth of the misunderstanding to be analysed.

2.4.2 The Illocutionary Act

The analysis of the illocutionary act focuses on the utterance by Jesus' opponents in 2:20 in the story. Before commenting on 2:19-22, it is important to first discuss verses 13-15. The text begins with the narrator's voice informing the reader about some information around the setting of the event (τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων – *Jewish Passover*). It is noted that most of the verbs used (e.g., ἀνέβη, εἶπεν, ἐξέβαλεν, etc.) in this report are aorist active indicatives, denoting that the narrator is reporting simple completed statements made with certainty. Ito (2015:105) also makes a similar observation, correctly pointing out that most of the verbs used in the conversation are in the present tense, whereas all the verbs used to describe the events are in the aorist tense. This fact suggests that when the author portrays the events, he treats them as having definitely happened in the past (factual). This manner of reporting a story is undoubtedly intended to help the reader build a relationship of trust with the narrator. The narrator's utterance serves as an intentional act to inform the reader about the background of the story. The report acts as a guide, aiding the reader to have a better understanding of what is happening in the story. The narrator takes his time to orientate the reader around the proceedings of the story. These observations, around the role of the narrator, suggest that the speech act in 2:13-17 is an illocutionary act belonging to the category of *informatives*.⁴² Information is crucial, it enables the reader to successfully grasp all the dynamics of the story including the nature and significance of the misunderstanding under discussion.

In 2:18-20, the narrator reports the exchange between Jesus and his opponents. The text reports that after driving the animals and the money changers⁴³ out of the temple court,⁴⁴ the Jewish opponents challenge him by asking for a sign (σημεῖον), as a proof of the implied claim of being a Messiah.⁴⁵ Jesus challenges the Jewish opponents to destroy the temple (Λύσατε τὸν ναὸν

⁴² Ito (2015:141) calls it a global speech act.

⁴³ Keener (1993:269) opines that "The sheep and doves (and, to a lesser extent, the cattle; cf. Lev 1:3–9; 4:2–21; 8:2; 22:21) were necessary for the people's sacrifices; moneychangers were needed to standardize foreign and Galilean currencies into coinage useful to the sellers of the sacrificial animals." (cf. Richards & Richards, 1987:715).

⁴⁴ The action which Morris (1971:197) refers to as "a messianic action" (cf. Hakola, 2005:87-88).

⁴⁵ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:130) mention, "Though the *act* and the *words* of Christ, taken together, were sign enough, they were unconvinced: yet they were *awed*, and though at His very next appearance at Jerusalem they 'sought to kill Him' for speaking of 'His Father' just as He did now (Jn 5:18), they, at

τοῦτον [*destroy this temple*]) and he will raise it in three days. Primarily, the aorist imperative would denote a once off command or a request. However, the context in which this imperative is used also highlights Jesus' attitude as he challenges his opponents.⁴⁶ In challenging his opponents, Jesus does it with confidence and total commitment to doing what he promises to do, i.e., in 2:19b (καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτόν [*and I will raise it in three days*]).⁴⁷ Jesus' utterance is therefore an *illocutionary act* belonging to the category of *commissives*. While Jesus challenges and invites the Jewish opponents to destroy the temple, he confidently makes a commitment that he will raise it in three days.

To this challenge, the Jewish opponents respond as follows in 2:20:

Τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ἕξ ἔτεσιν οἰκοδομήθη ὁ ναὸς οὗτος, καὶ σὺ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερεῖς αὐτόν (it has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?)

The utterance by the opponents here is obviously a response to the challenge that Jesus issued. The utterance can be classified as a *question speech act*; however, it must be acknowledged that they are not just responding to his question but are disputing the claim in a derogatory way. The utterance, therefore, is a *disputive speech act*. The expression by the Jewish opponents is intended to challenge Jesus on the matter of raising the temple in three days. It must be noted, however, that their utterance reveals a huge misunderstanding of what Jesus means (Keener, 2003:530; cf. Brown, 2003:290). In fact, this study observes that two phrases create misunderstanding on the side of the opponents. First, the phrase “ὁ ναὸς οὗτος” (*this temple*), the Jewish opponents understood the phrase to refer to Herod's temple, from which the animals and

this early stage, only ask a sign.” Bruce (1983:76) also says “their request for [a] ‘sign’ was misguided; what sign could have been more eloquent than that which they have just witnessed?” (cf. Lindars, 1972:141). See also Morris (1971:197); Barrett (1978:199); Hakola (2005:87-88).

⁴⁶ Ito (2015:277) provides a valuable guideline in this regard by correctly highlighting that speech act theory provides a way of talking about utterances not only in terms of their surface grammatical properties but also in terms of the context in which they are made; the intentions, attitudes, and expectations of the participants; the relationships existing between participants; and generally, the unspoken rules and conventions that are understood to be in play when an utterance is made and received.

⁴⁷ Barrett (1978:166) also makes a valuable contribution, saying, “[T]he construction is that in which an imperative is used to express a condition: If you destroy...I will build.” He further indicates that “the use of the word λύειν is quite regularly used for the destruction of a building; cf. e.g., *Iliad* xvi and in the New Testament, Eph. 2:14. It is clearly intended by John that the primary (though not the only) reference of this verse should be to the destruction of the Temple buildings.” Regarding the raising of the temple, Van der Watt (2007:13) points out that “clearly this story is not about the temple which will be broken down, but about the temple that will be raised in three days, the body of Jesus” (cf. Keener, 2003:530).

money changers were driven out. Secondly, the verb “ἐγερῆς αὐτόν” (*I will raise it*) is understood as a reference to rebuilding/reconstructing Herod’s temple in three days, whereas Jesus meant something else, that is, the temple of his body (O’Brien, 2005:287; cf. Brown, 2003:288).⁴⁸ Many scholars,⁴⁹ as highlighted earlier, have correctly identified this misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel.⁵⁰ What could be the possible effects of this misunderstanding on the reader? The following analyses the possible effects of this misunderstanding on the reader of the Fourth Gospel.

2.4.3 Perlocutionary Act

In the first place, regarding the perlocutionary force of the *informative* (the narrator’s voice) in 2:13-17, the study observes that it has the power to draw the reader near to the narrator. It has already been indicated that information is necessary for the reader to understand the dynamics of the story and all that the story has to offer. Both the reader and narrator build a relationship of trust in the process of reporting and listening (or reading) the story. The reader is invited to receive the information as credible and trustworthy. Having accepted the narrator’s information, the reader can now follow the story with ease and be able to understand the nature and the depth of the misunderstanding created.

From the performative point of view, it can further be argued that the *informative* (2:13-17) is inherent of the narrator’s intention to keep the reader sensitised about the development of the story and anticipating the climax of the story. Cognitively, the reader is involved in the unfolding of the story because they have information.

Secondly, *the perlocutionary force of the commissive established in 2:19* (Jesus’ utterance) does have the power to invite the believing reader to share in the confidence expressed by Jesus as

⁴⁸ Carson (2014:515) adds, “Jesus’ words are an outworking of what is already anticipated in the Prologue: Jesus is the true tabernacle (1:14, ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν). The tabernacle/temple was the place where God met with his people. It signified God’s presence, established through the God ordained sacrifices that were offered there. If we were left with John 1:14 only, we might infer that Jesus constitutes the true tabernacle/temple by virtue of his incarnation alone: the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. In other words, Jesus is constituted the temple, the place where sinners meet with God and God makes his presence known, not by virtue of the incarnation alone but by virtue of his death and resurrection.”

⁴⁹ Carson (1982a:60); cf. Brown (2003:288); Keener (2003:530); and Barrett (1978:199).

⁵⁰ Brown (2003:288) explains it as “the hearers wrongly think of the Jerusalem temple building as the temple sanctuary to be destroyed and raised up.” In alignment with Brown and the observations made by other scholars, this study adds that “to think wrongly” about something essentially means that “one does not understand it or misunderstands it.”

he challenges the Jewish opponents to destroy the temple. It must be indicated that the reader of the Gospel already has some knowledge (cognitive awareness) about the origin and identity of Jesus. Jesus comes from God (1:1-18) and consequently his utterance may be valued by the reader as credible and incontrovertible. He has the power to perform great deeds and wonders (2:1-11). The reader has already experienced these great wonders performed by Jesus in the text. Jesus' words, in this case, have the potential to evoke this feeling from the reader.

Thirdly, the *disputive* (misunderstanding) by the Jewish opponents in 2:20 is viewed as surprising and amusing to the reader. The Jewish opponents lack knowledge, or wrongly understand Jesus' utterance about the raising of the temple in three days. The dramatic exchange between Jesus and his opponents possesses the capacity to captivate the reader, keeping them glued to the text/story. It is also worth noting that even Jesus' disciples did not fully comprehend what he meant. At this point, the study suggests that the implied reader might not have grasped the intended meaning either, possibly considering that Jesus could achieve such feats through divine power. This is most probably also a revelation to the implied reader who now realises who Jesus is – the real temple, as he is also the real bridegroom in 2:1ff. This shows that misunderstanding is a rhetorical tool to reveal who Jesus is (cf. 20:31), thereby enhancing the reader's comprehension and enabling them to better understand subsequent references to the temple.

As already alluded to, the misunderstanding is primarily based on the opponents' lack of knowledge about the temple Jesus is referring to, hence they dispute his commitment and ability to raise the temple in three days as he said. As highlighted above, the misunderstanding, with reference to the opponents, lies in the fact that they understand the word τὸν ναὸν as referring to Herod's temple.

However, it is noted that amid this misunderstanding, the narrator made a special provision for the reader through an aside. As highlighted above, if it wasn't for this aside, the implied reader would also remain in the dark. The aside spares the reader from being a victim of misunderstanding.⁵¹ The aside in 2:21 informs the reader, that "...δὲ ἔλεγεν περὶ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ

⁵¹ Wiersbe (1997:214) points out that, in this case, the opponents (Jews) were ignorant of their own Messiah, as John the Baptist indicated in 1:26: "μέσος ὑμῶν ἔστηκεν ὃν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε" (there stands One among you whom you do not know). Barrett (1978:166-167) also comments, saying: "The Jews take the superficial meaning of the words and naturally remark their absurdity: so great a building could not be erected in so short time. Such misunderstandings are very characteristic of John and are often, as here, more than a literary trick employed by the writer given to irony. They represent in miniature the total reaction of Judaism to Christ; the Jews perceived only what was superficially visible in Jesus and naturally rejected as absurd the suggestion that he should be the Son of God; if they had penetrated beneath the surface, they have seen its truth."

σώματος αὐτοῦ [*But he was speaking about the temple of his body*].” It seems that this aside is the narrator’s commitment to present the other side of the matter to the reader. The aside, therefore, guides and encourages the reader on how he/she should understand the words of Jesus. Textually, it also releases tension in the reader’s mind, providing a sense of relief and aligning the reader’s knowledge with that of the narrator. This textual gesture by the narrator is performative in nature, empowering the reader with essential knowledge to comprehend Jesus’ utterance fully. Unlike the Jewish opponents in the story, the reader realises the misunderstanding and is invited to marvel at the ignorance of Jesus’ opponents. Their comprehension of Jesus’ utterance is one dimensional, whereas the reader is presented with more than one way of understanding the story. The aside, *inter alia*, shows that the narrator is mindful of the position of the reader. The reader is carefully guided towards the Johannine teaching of Jesus as the new temple, while awarded with the opportunity to disappointingly marvel at the ignorance of the Jewish opponents.

Therefore, this misunderstanding elevates the reader’s cognitive awareness higher than that of the Jewish opponents in the story (and even the disciples at that stage). It thus makes it possible for the reader not to feel like a passive spectator in the story but a full participant as the story unfolds.

It is observed here that the implied author obviously utilises misunderstanding as a communicative strategy to reveal, inform, and persuade the reader. Blum (1985:280) further suggests that even Jesus’ own disciples did not understand his enigmatic saying at first. It took the light of the resurrection to illuminate it. On the contrary, the text does not say anything about the Jewish opponents after the resurrection. The narrator leaves them in their state of ignorance or rejection of Jesus’ identity and origin. This should be viewed as a silent warning to the reader. The reader is persuaded not to emulate the conduct of the Jewish opponents. It can be asserted that the author’s desired goal regarding the reader is successfully covered by the aside in 2:22:

καὶ ἐπίστευσαν τῇ γραφῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ ὃν εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς (and they believed the Scripture and the words which Jesus said).

The argument put forth is that the implied author employs this communicative strategy to enable the reader to attain a deeper understanding and make well-informed decisions concerning Christ’s sovereignty and the new dispensation he signifies in the conversation.

This study asserts that misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel (2:19-22) is performative in nature and is therefore consistent with the central purpose of the Gospel as stated in 20:30-31. The misunderstanding points the reader to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, while the Jewish

opponents struggle to understand him. The reader is carefully guided towards seeing Jesus for who he is in the text. The text successfully invites the reader to awareness of the inanity of Jesus' opponents and their eventual rejection of him. It can thus be concluded that the nature of misunderstanding in 2:18-22 enables the reader to see the identity of Christ. As a result, the reader is invited and persuaded to identify themselves with Jesus rather than with the Jewish opponents in the story.

2.5 MISUNDERSTANDING AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 3:3-4

2.5.1 Setting of the Story

The story of Jesus and Nicodemus probably contains the most well-known misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel. The story is reported in 3:1-21 and falls within the section of Jesus' public ministry (1:19-12:50). Nicodemus pays Jesus a visit at night,⁵² and the purpose of the visit is not explicitly mentioned. Kanagaraj (2005:115) comments that after previously focusing on Jesus' ministry to the masses, John now shifts the focus of his ministry to individuals, e.g., Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman (4:1-42), and the βασιλικὸς (4:46). The analysis here will only focus on vs. 3 and 4. In this story, Jesus explains the plan of salvation to Nicodemus, the Jewish ruler. The passage begins by the narrator's voice, as can be expected in a historical narrative, introducing the two characters and the time of the story.⁵³ The text introduces them as follows:

Ἦν δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων, Νικόδημος ὄνομα αὐτῷ, ἀρχὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων· οὗτος ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτὸν νυκτὸς (There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night).⁵⁴

⁵² Bruce (1983:81) comments that, "It is best to take the statement that Nicodemus's visit was paid at night as a simple factual reminiscence, without giving it an allegorical interpretation, as though the darkness without reflected the darkness of Nicodemus's understanding, which required to be illuminated." Lindars (1972:149; cf. Barrett, 1978:204) holds a similar view when he says, "Thus Nicodemus' nocturnal visit is a search for truth in which he himself will be exposed. It is a detail which only becomes meaningful when the whole piece has been read."

⁵³ Greimas and Courtes calls these aspects: characterisation or actorilisation, temporalisation (tells the reader more about the time of the story and spacialisation – the place in which the story takes place (Greimas & Courtes, 1979:337; cf. Martin & Ringham, 2000:8; Everaert-Desmedt, 2007:30).

⁵⁴ In this introduction, Barrett (1978:169) comments that "Nicodemus appears before Jesus but never even states the purpose of his coming."

The characters here are Jesus and Nicodemus (a Jewish ruler).⁵⁵ And the setting of the story is in Judea (Kanagaraj, 2005:115). It is believed that Nicodemus might have initially been drawn to Jesus by the miracles he performed (τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίει) as reported in 2:23-25. This report by the narrator forms a critical connection between 2:23-25 and 3:1, while also offering the reader essential context within which the conversation is taking place, as Vande Vrede (2014:715) also observes.⁵⁶ It seems that Nicodemus desired to know more about Jesus, his teachings, his origin, and the miracles he was performing.

2.5.2 Illocutionary Act

As established in the previous analysis, the narrator's voice is important. It introduces and orientates the reader to the story. In this story the narrator's voice plays a critical role in the narrative schema of characterisation and temporalisation. The reader meets the characters involved (Jesus and Nicodemus) and the time of the event through the narrator's voice. The speech act in 3:1 and 3:2a is therefore an *informative speech act*, done with the intention to inform the reader about these crucial aspects of the narrative. The exchange between Jesus and Nicodemus in 3:3-4 is the focus of this analysis. Nicodemus' comment about Jesus' origin and the miracles⁵⁷ he is performing sparked the exchange, when he says,

Ῥαββί, οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας διδάσκαλος· οὐδεὶς γὰρ δύναται ταῦτα τὰ σημεῖα ποιεῖν ἢ σὺ ποιεῖς, ἐὰν μὴ ᾗ ὁ θεὸς μετ' αὐτοῦ (Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher who come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him).

⁵⁵ Henry (1996:1927; cf. Bruce, 1983:81) adds that this was a *man of the Pharisees*, well-educated, and a knowledgeable scholar. He was a *ruler of the Jews*, a respected member of the great Sanhedrin, a senator, a privy-counsellor, a person of authority in Jerusalem.

⁵⁶ The narrative transitions with 2:23-25, stating that many people believed in Jesus after seeing the signs he was doing (τὰ σημεῖα ἐποίει) is crucial. Scholars point out that the application of ἄνθρωπος to Nicodemus (3:1) connects him firmly to this transition, for he also tells Jesus that, "no one can do these signs that you do" (οὐδεὶς γὰρ δύναται ταῦτα τὰ σημεῖα ποιεῖν).

⁵⁷ When commenting on Nicodemus' assertion, Henry (1996:1928) asserts that it provides assurance of the authenticity of Christ's miracles, confirming that they were genuine and not counterfeit. Nicodemus, being a discerning, thoughtful, and curious individual, had ample reason and opportunity to scrutinise these miracles. His complete satisfaction in their authenticity led him to defy his own interests and the opinions of his fellow Pharisees who were biased against Christ.

The utterance is an *assertive speech act*, done with the intention to state or clarify Nicodemus' pre-existing knowledge⁵⁸ about Jesus. In response to this assertion, Jesus points out or states that,

λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ (I say to you, unless one is born again [or from above], he cannot see the kingdom of God).

A grammatical observation suggests that the story is reported in the way that makes it sounds vivid and fascinating to the reader,⁵⁹ since mainly the present tense, e.g., “λέγω σοι” (I tell you), “οὐ δύναται” (he is not able) is used in the utterance. In his utterance, Jesus clearly states (λέγω σοι) what Nicodemus needs to do to see the kingdom of God.⁶⁰ The utterance can be classified as an illocutionary act belonging to the category of *assertives*, since Jesus is simply stating the fact about seeing/entering the kingdom of God.

The study takes note that within this *assertive*, particularly the word ἄνωθεν in the conditional clause of the sentence, is wrongly interpreted by Nicodemus, and thus creates a misunderstanding in the story. The misunderstanding is primarily based on Nicodemus' interpretation of the word. Carson (1982a:60) points out that Nicodemus interprets the clause with pedantic literalness.⁶¹ The essence of the misunderstanding here is on the contextual meaning⁶² of the word “ἄνωθεν.” The translation provided above suggests that the word has two meanings, namely: “again” and “from above.” The word ἄνωθεν in this particular context primarily refers to a complete change in one's way of life, implying a return to a former state or relation. It conveys the idea of being born again, experiencing a new birth or rebirth (Louw & Nida, 1996:509; cf.

⁵⁸ Lindars (1972:149; cf. Phillips, 2014:188) says, “Nicodemus begins politely by acknowledging Jesus' position as a teacher who come from God, even though he does not hold an officially authorized position.”

⁵⁹ In his study, ‘Speech act reading of John 9’, Ito (2015:105) elucidates that when the narrator records the utterances in the present tense, the words of the characters come alive as if they are speaking right now. Granted that the use of the present tense is a conventional way to record utterances, it does cause their conversations to be displayed very vividly, creating more fascination.

⁶⁰ Bruner (2012:169) comments, “Jesus' remark seems to presuppose that ‘to see the kingdom of God’ is the highest human aspiration, or that it should be. To ‘see the kingdom of God’ is Jesus' different enough description of the universal human longing for life that it can give us pause.”

⁶¹ The puzzle of Nicodemus shows (δεύτερον, verse 4) that he took it as “again,” a second birth from the womb (Robertson, 1933:45). Louw and Nida (1996:635) add that Nicodemus understood ἄνωθεν as meaning “again” in a sense of a subsequent point of time involving repetition.

⁶² Wuest (1997) explains that when a Greek word has more than one meaning, the context decides as to what meaning is to be used in any particular instance.

Hendriksen, 1961:133).⁶³ The consequent implication of Nicodemus' understanding of the word ἀνωθεν would mean a physical birth for the second time. To what extent does this misunderstanding affect the reader of the Gospel? The following section delves into the possible effects or the performative nature of this misunderstanding on the reader.

2.5.3 Perlocutionary Act

With reference to 3:1-2a, the perlocutionary force of the *informatives* has the power to enrich the reader with knowledge, creating a sense of anticipation for further developments and the climax of the story. The information in 3:1-2a is no exception to this claim or observation. The reader is encouraged to accept the information as provided by the narrator so that he/she can understand the dynamics of the story. The study observes that through *informatives*, the narrator keeps his reader attached to the text. While acknowledging the effects that the *informative* may have on the reader, it should be indicated that it is encouraging to the believing reader to realise that at least Nicodemus (Jewish ruler) recognises Jesus as a teacher who comes from God, even though the reader knows that Jesus is more than that (1:29-34).

The *assertive* established in Jesus' utterance in 3:3 compels the reader to take note and perhaps accept it. However, this utterance holds deeper layers of meaning within the dialogue, yet Nicodemus completely misunderstands it. The question here, is: what is the effect of this misunderstanding on the reader?

When discussing misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel, Culpepper (1983:164-165) delineates some effects of this literary device on the reader. Firstly, Culpepper highlights that when misunderstanding occurs, it often results in a widening of the gap between the "insiders" and the "outsiders." In this story, Jesus represents the "insiders" and Nicodemus the "outsiders." The misunderstanding in this story clearly reveals the "spiritual gap" between the two characters (cf. Resseguie, 2001:58-59).

Secondly, very close to the first point mentioned above, is the fact that misunderstanding provides the narrator (sometimes through characters in the story) with a valuable opportunity to convey additional theological truths to the reader (See also Carson, 1982a:60). This elaboration is intended for the greater advantage of the reader and is considered performative in its intent. The

⁶³ Hendriksen (1961:133) asserts that in essence the word ἀνωθεν here means that "in order to see the kingdom it is necessary that a person be born from above, i.e., that the Spirit must implant in his heart the life that has its origin not on earth but in heaven." He further cautions that "let not Nicodemus imagine that earthly or nationalistic distinctions qualify one for entrance into this realm."

reader gets an opportunity to expand their knowledge about Christ as these theological truths are elaborated. Subsequently, the reader is persuaded to establish if not strengthen the relationship with Jesus in the text.

The theological truths are communicated to the reader either through an *informative speech* or through direct interaction between characters. In this case, it is through the interaction between the two characters, as seen in 3:5-8. Since Nicodemus wrongly understands Jesus' utterance, Jesus, as a character, is granted a textual space to clarify the meaning of the word "ἄνωθεν" to the "outsider" Nicodemus.

Subsequently, the reader is empowered with the truth that the implied author carefully desired/planned to bring through the story.⁶⁴ From the performative point of view, the elaboration of theological truth sensitises the reader's interest toward the protagonist (Jesus) in the story.

From another angle of looking at the text, when the reader realises the gap between the two characters, he/she is *de facto* given a platform to undermine the spiritually blind Nicodemus in the text.⁶⁵ In this case, the text is performative since it persuades the reader to make choices/decisions.

Thirdly, misunderstanding also provides the reader with an opportunity to feel superior in terms of their knowledge of Christ and what he brings into the world, compared to the obviously less intelligent character in the story. The portrayal of Nicodemus as someone lacking a comprehensive understanding of rebirth presents the reader with an opportunity to be judgmental towards him, viewing him as an outsider who misunderstands Jesus. In his elaboration, Jesus further exposes Nicodemus' ignorance in 3:10, when he says:

Σὺ εἶ ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ταῦτα οὐ γινώσκεις (Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?)

⁶⁴ Lindars (1990:78) summarises Nicodemus' discourse of chapter 3 as follows: "[I]t makes the basic point that the act of salvation depends on the initiative of God, and therefore the agent of salvation himself must originate from God. As God's agent to fulfil his own plan of salvation he was God's Son given to the world (3.16)."

⁶⁵ Farelly (2013:35) comments, saying: "Though he comes to Jesus seeking to engage his teaching in a positive manner, his perception remains fleshly."

Consequently, on the one hand, this persuades the reader to undermine the outsider, Nicodemus. On the other hand, it encourages her/him to associate him/herself with the “insider,” that is, the implied author and Jesus in the story.

Lastly, based on the above quoted utterance (3:10), it is observed that misunderstanding gives way to the vilification⁶⁶ of bad characters in the story. Vilification, like in other narratives of the Fourth Gospel, e.g., Chapter 8, also plays an important role here. It supports the thrust in the narrative to persuade the reader to establish (or strengthen) a relationship with Jesus and his ideology and to reject the alternative (Nicodemus).⁶⁷ Van der Watt (2010:157) points out that rhetorically this technique aims at discrediting people by dishonouring them.⁶⁸ In this way it encourages the reader to disassociate him/herself with particular characters in the story.⁶⁹

Furthermore, it is also interesting that the Nicodemus episode turns into a monologue by Jesus. The implication is that the reader is led more and more to realising who Jesus is (3:11-12). The reader is perceptive of what he says, because they know who he is – he is from above and tells the truth.

The study of the performative nature of misunderstanding here reveals that this literary device functions to coax the reader to make choices as they read the story. In the story of Jesus and Nicodemus, the reader’s interest is sensitised towards Jesus and his message of rebirth or salvation. The reader is invited to associate him/herself with Jesus and this seems to be the implied author’s goal with the story.

⁶⁶ Vilification is not a stylistic technique but a rhetorical one. Different stylistic techniques (can) work together in order to discredit characters in a text (Van der Watt, 2010:151).

⁶⁷ In his study, Van der Watt (2010:157) puts forward a similar argument when doing a study on ethics in John 8.

⁶⁸ Du Toit (1994:403-412), Lausberg (1960:55, 61; 131-138; 205-206; 542), and Malina and Neyrey (1991:100) remark: “Negative labels, in fact, are accusations of *deviance*. Behaviour is deviant when it violates the sense of order or the set of classification which people perceive to structure their world.” Cf. Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:33).

⁶⁹ See also Du Toit (1994:404), Johnson (1989:419-441), and Van der Watt (2010:157).

2.6 MISUNDERSTANDING AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 4:10-11

2.6.1 Setting of the Story

The story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman presents Jesus overcoming two Jewish preconceptions: engaging in a conversation with a Samaritan⁷⁰ and conversing with a woman.⁷¹ These two preconceptions speak volumes regarding the setting of this story and set a tone regarding the tension that the reader is going to experience as the story continues. The story portrays Jesus skilfully breaking the barrier of prejudice and engaging in a meaningful conversation with a woman (Kanagaraj, 2005:141; cf. Richards, 1991:681, Bultmann, 1971:178). Furthermore, the story unfolds within the backdrop of an entrenched animosity between the Samaritans and the Jews. The context reveals a longstanding history of hatred and intense dislike between these two ethnic groups (Wiersbe, 1996:299).⁷²

⁷⁰ Thomaskutty (2014:157; cf. Kermode, 1987:450-451, Bultmann, 1971:181) suggests that the content, form, and function of Jesus' dialogue with the Samaritan woman can properly be understood only when we analyse the episode in comparison to the Nicodemus episode. To summarise the comparison, he observes that, "*first*, Nicodemus' conversation at night vs. woman's conversation at noon; *second*, Nicodemus as an Israelite vs. woman as a Samaritan; *third*, Nicodemus being male vs. the woman being female; *fourth*, Nicodemus' noble heritage vs. the woman's shameful past; *fifth*, Nicodemus as a religious teacher vs. the woman as a Samaritan religious devotee, and *sixth*, Nicodemus as impervious to learning vs. the woman's progressive learning." He adds: "The role of Jesus in the two stories can be contrasted in the following way: Jesus as a teacher from above in the discourse with Nicodemus vs. Jesus as a prophet and Messiah in the Samaritan woman's discourse."

⁷¹ Keener (2003:596) points out that "according to Jewish sages, Jewish men were to avoid unnecessary conversation with women. Thus, among six activities listed as unbecoming for a scholar is conversation with a woman and in theory the strict opined that a wife could be divorced without her marriage settlement if she spoke with a man in the street. The oldest tradition especially attributed this custom to the dangers of sexually ambiguous situations that could lead to further sin (Sir 9:9; 42:12)."

⁷² To understand the background of these prejudices, Theophylact (2007:63-64) explains at length saying, "Ambri, a king of Israel, bought the mountain Semeron from its owner, Semer, and built a city on it which he named Samaria (cf. 3 Kings 16:23-25). At first, Israelites, not Samaritans, lived in this city. Later, when they sinned against God, these Israelites were chastised at the hands of the Assyrians on various occasions (cf. 4 Kings 17:6-7). Finally, the Assyrian king (Tiglath-Pileser III) attacked them as they were plotting a rebellion, took them captive, and to forestall future revolts exiled them to the country of the Babylonians and Medes. He settled their former home with Gentiles brought from various places in his realm. After this God showed the barbarians that He had delivered the Jews into their hands, not because he was unable to defend His people, but because the Israelites had sinned. At His command, Lions attacked the Gentiles of Samaria, devouring many. When the king learned of this, he sent for certain elders of the Jews in captivity and asked them what could be done to prevent further attacks by the Lions. The elders explained that the God of Israel watched over the place and would allow anyone ignorant of His laws to dwell there. Therefore, if the King was concerned about the settlers, he should send Jewish priests to teach them the Laws of God, and thus the Lord would be appeased. The king did as they suggested and sent a Hebrew priest to Samaria to teach the new inhabitants the Law of God (4 Kings 17: 24-28). However, they did not accept all the divine books, but only the first five of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Neither did they at first completely renounce impiety; but later they did give up their idols and worshipped God alone."

The story takes place in the city of Samaria called Sychar, near Jacob's well. The characters are Jesus, his disciples (who had gone to buy food in the city during the conversation), the Samaritan community, and a Samaritan woman.

The woman's questions directed to Jesus dominate the story as she grapples with the essence of their dialogue. This lack of understanding on her part is expected, given that in this part of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is still ministering to the non-believing world. According to Neyrey (2007:89), this encounter is referred to as the story of the Samaritan woman's enlightenment, comprising two distinct scenes. In the first scene (4:7-15), the Samaritan woman frequently misunderstands Jesus, and her speech primarily consists of questioning. However, in the second scene (4:16-26), her utterance takes on a declarative form, demonstrating that she clearly understands Jesus' message. Neyrey (2007:89; cf. Du Rand, 1996:67) further indicates that this story narrates her transformation from a Samaritan outsider who knows little and misunderstands much to that of a privileged insider who comes to know important secrets and revelations.⁷³ This background is significant for one to grasp the performative nature of misunderstanding to be discussed.

2.6.2 Illocutionary Act

The story begins with the narrator's voice in 4:1- 6, informing the reader about Jesus' journey to Galilee. In this report the reader is informed about Jesus' reason for leaving Judea; namely:⁷⁴

After the Jews returned from captivity, they were always suspicious of the newcomers, considering them to be Assyrian by race and called them 'Samaritans' after the mountain, Semeron. But the Samaritans reckoned themselves descendants of Abraham and Jacob: for Abraham was from Chaldea, as were they; and Jacob they considered to be their own from because they possessed his well. To the Jews, then the Samaritans were an abomination, as were Gentiles."

⁷³ Farmer (1996:366) acknowledges that, "During the long conversation between the Samaritan woman and Jesus, Chrysostom repeatedly emphasizes the great respect and patience which she showed to a man who was not only unknown to her, but also a foreigner. Schnackenburg (1968:475) sees this story as the Evangelist's presentation of Samaritans as representatives of the non-Jewish world, with their confession of the "Saviour of the world."

⁷⁴ Kanagaraj (2005:139) comments: "Jesus knew that the Pharisees would try to hinder his ministry and disrupt his plans for his journey to the cross (compare 7:47-47)." Thomaskutty (2014:153) also points out that "The Pharisees learn of the extraordinary success of Jesus in his preaching and baptizing ministry. This causes Jesus to withdraw from Judea to Galilee, presumably to avoid a conflict which could lead to a premature end of his ministry." On this move, other scholars have suggested that Jesus was "under the law of the hour" which the Father has fixed for him (cf. Beasley-Murray, 1987:59; Keener, 2003:587-588; Culpepper, 1983:22; Brown, 1966:115-116).

Ὡς οὖν ἔγνω ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤκουσαν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ὅτι Ἰησοῦς πλείονας μαθητὰς ποιεῖ καὶ βαπτίζει ἢ Ἰωάννης (the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John).

The narrator further informs the reader about the arrival of Jesus in a Samaritan city of Sychar, at the well of Jacob (4:3-6) on his way to Galilee. This report informs the reader primarily of the setting of the story (the characterisation, specialisation, and temporalisation).

It can be deduced that the speech act of 4:1-7a is a basic *informative speech act*. The importance of this speech act has been highlighted in the previous analysis, that is, to provide the reader with information about the story.

The report of Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman begins in 4:7b. The focus of the analysis here is on 4:10-11. Alone at the well, for his disciples went into the city to buy food, Jesus starts a dialogue with a Samaritan woman who came to draw water at the well.

Jesus opens the conversation by an utterance in verse 7b “δός μοι πειν” (*give me to drink*). The utterance sparked an interesting dialogue between the two characters in the story. To this *directive* or request, the Samaritan woman wondered, as she pondered about denying Jesus' request, why a Jew⁷⁵ would come up with such a request to a Samaritan (v. 9).

In verse 10, the text records Jesus' answer to the Samaritan woman as follows:

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· εἰ ἤδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων σοι· δός μοι πειν, σὺ ἂν ἤτησας αὐτὸν καὶ ἔδωκεν ἅν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν (If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water).

Generally, Jesus' utterance can be categorised as a *responsive speech act*, uttered with the intention to answer, or clarify the woman's doubts on the request he made in 4:7b. Basically, Jesus is responding to the woman's utterance as can be seen in the phrase, “ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ” (*And Jesus answered and said to her*). However, his response is more of an

⁷⁵ Lindars (1972:180) says, “[N]o hint is given how the woman knew that Jesus was not a Samaritan. We might rather expect her to recognize him as a Galilean. But as the Galileans sided with the Jews against the Samaritans, this would amount to the same thing. Out of courtesy she gives him the opportunity to weigh up whether to insist on his request or to avoid possible subsequent embarrassment on account of ceremonial defilement.”

assertion than just an answer to the woman.⁷⁶ This caused the conversation to develop from physical to spiritual matters.⁷⁷

Based on the observation made above, Jesus' utterance can be categorised under assertives. The woman's response to Jesus' assertion in 4:11 reveals some misunderstanding.⁷⁸ The woman does not understand what Jesus is talking about when he refers to "living waters." In her response she uses phrases like: "οὔτε ἄντλημα ἔχεις" (*you have nothing to draw with*) and "καὶ τὸ φρέαρ ἐστὶν βαθύ" (*and the well is deep*). Her response clearly reveals that her focus is on the physical well of Jacob and its water, and not on the living water that Jesus is talking about. It is essential to recognise that the term "living water" could also refer to running water, as we commonly understand it. However, the woman's understanding of this term differed significantly from that of Jesus.⁷⁹

As noted earlier, the author is consistent in using the present indicative verbs when the characters interact. This makes the story vivid and appealing to the reader. The focus in the following section shifts to the discussion of the perlocutionary force and the performative nature of the misunderstanding established during the dialogue.

2.6.3 Perlocutionary Act

In the first place, the perlocutionary force of the informative has been discussed several times in this chapter. In the current story, the effects of the perlocutionary force are no different. It can

⁷⁶ Guthrie (1994:1033) makes the same observation by indicating that Jesus must have anticipated her perplexity for he used it to deepen the conversation. The idea of drink for physical needs led naturally to the comment about the gift of God (v. 10), which turned it into a spiritual issue. The woman was thinking of Jesus as a typical Jew, but Jesus took her up on this. If she had known his identity, she would have asked for living water.

⁷⁷ Morris (1971:259) correctly observes that, by speaking of God's gift and seeking "living water," Jesus lifted the conversation to a higher plane. He further elucidates that his word for "gift" (here in the Gospels) stresses the freeness of it all (cf. Lindars, 1972:182). Lindars (1990:78) opines that the discourse with the Samaritan woman in chapter 4 presupposes that Jesus is the agent of salvation but expresses it in different terms.

⁷⁸ See also Bultmann (1971:175), Guthrie (1994:1033); Barrett (1978:233); and Bruce (1983:104-105) who take note of this literary device of double entendre and misunderstanding.

⁷⁹ Hunter (1965:45) advances that "on the theological level, we should note that both at the beginning and the end of Christ's conversation with the woman there is a contrast between the Old Order and the New. First, water from Jacob's well is not to be compared with the water which Jesus gives. Second, both the Jewish worship at Jerusalem and the Samaritan Gerizim are to be replaced by truly catholic worship".

therefore be indicated that the informative about the characters and the setting of the story leaves the reader well-informed and eagerly anticipating the climax as the story unfolds. Secondly, Jesus' utterance (an assertive speech act in 4:10) has the potential to invite the reader to consider the offer Jesus is putting before the woman. It should be noted that at this stage the believing reader of the Fourth Gospel knows who Jesus is (1:14, 2:11, 3:16, etc.). It was highlighted that the utterance of Jesus created misunderstanding in the text. The misunderstanding rests on the failure by the woman to understand what Jesus meant by "ὕδωρ ζῶν" (*living water*). The woman's thinking is still on the water in the well. However, to the reader it is clear that the context within which the "ὕδωρ ζῶν" (*living water*) is used cannot be referring to the water in the well, since it is associated with words or phrases such as "τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ" (*the gift of God*),⁸⁰ and "τίς ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων σοι" (*who it is speaking to you*) in the passage.

The study of the contextual meaning of "ὕδωρ ζῶν" (*living water*) helps the reader to realise the sharp contrast between drinking from the well of Jacob and drinking the living water – the gift (τὴν δωρεὰν) that originates from God (τοῦ θεοῦ). The reader, therefore, realises that Jesus refers to something higher and more valuable than the woman's comprehension, and the "gap" between these two characters is clearly noticed. The implied reader is by now aware of the symbolic/figurative references to Jesus (i.e., he is the spiritual temple, or bridegroom)

The reader realises that Jesus' words cannot be understood in an earthly context, which Carson (1982a:66) also asserts. Carson (1982a:66) further explains that misunderstanding, in essence, is not based on a false understanding of a word, but on an earthly understanding of a word (cf. Lindars, 1972:181-182). This realisation of the gap in understanding between the two characters is performative in the sense that it invites the reader to assess the understanding of the two characters and the credibility of their arguments. The reader is highly likely to accept the convincing argument. In this way, misunderstanding offers the reader an opportunity to make her/his own choices as they listen to the two characters in the dialogue.

As has already been established, misunderstanding gives the characters and/or the narrator an opportunity to clarify and expand the theological truths in the story (Born, 1988:5).⁸¹ It is also revelatory – the implicit reader, although he/she knows who Jesus is, learns even more about

⁸⁰ Barrett (1978:233) says, "[T]his phrase is perhaps not a technical term but at least it has important associations. Within Judaism 'gift of God' *par excellence* is the Torah."

⁸¹ Neyrey (2007:78) holds a similar view in this regard. He indicates that "when Jesus engages in catechetical instruction, he tolerates initial misunderstanding in order to produce an enlightened climax."

Jesus, and thus confirms their conviction. Jesus does this in 4:13-14, explaining the contrast between the “living water” and the water in Jacob’s well. Barrett (1978:234) correctly points out that Jesus begins to clear up the misunderstanding (v. 10). He is not speaking of ordinary water, ‘this’ water, which must be drunk day by day (Bruce, 1983:104). From the performative point of view, it can be asserted that the expansion and the clarification of truth is not only aimed at assisting the woman but is also for the benefit of the reader. It engages the reader cognitively. It deepens their understanding and knowledge about who Jesus is and what he can offer to those who have faith in him. The text, in this case, is formulated in such a way that the reader cannot escape this theological truth aimed at bringing them to Christ. As noted in the story, the expansion of theological truth also led the Samaritan woman to commit herself to asking for the “living water” as reported in 4:15. The performative power of the utterance in 4:15 is such that it also challenges the reader to make similar considerations regarding their relationship with Christ in the story.

Looking back at the whole dialogue in 4:10-15, it can be indicated that misunderstanding has the power to elevate the reader above the ignorant/less informed character. The reader realises that Jesus’ words are spiritual and are to be heard on a higher level (See also Born, 1988:8). It can be shown that through misunderstanding, the reader is successfully drawn into the text and is persuaded to give attention to Jesus, the giver of “living water.” As suggested by Barrett (1978:234), those who embrace Jesus and his gifts find themselves abundantly provided for, and their needs are inwardly met (cf. Keener, 2003:601).

Consequently, through misunderstanding, the reader is persuaded to associate him/herself with Jesus “the insider” in the story. In this way, as alluded to above, the utterance in 4:10 also functions to summon the reader to align him/herself with the teaching or the ideology of the leading figure in the story, Jesus Christ (Du Toit, 1993:1-3).⁸²

Furthermore, O’Brien (2005:288) indicates that misunderstanding does not only help the reader to associate him/herself with the “perfect character” in the story but also affords the reader an opportunity to correct their way of seeing things. As characters misunderstand and eventually correct their mistakes (what we normally call: character development in the story), so does the reader. Like the characters in the narrative, readers must learn from their mistakes and re-

⁸² The Fourth Gospel’s persuasive narrative communicates to the reader that its leading character – Jesus, the Son of God – brings life through his words and actions, thus summoning the reader to accept him in faith (Du Toit, 1993:1-3; cf. Willmington, 1999).

evaluate both Jesus and the world (O'Brien, 2005:288). This is exactly what 20:31 says – learn who Jesus is, accept Him, and receive life through faith.

Based on the analysis presented, it can be inferred that the author employs misunderstanding as a literary device, skilfully using it as a communicative strategy to profoundly impact the reader's life. This persuasive approach effectively engages the reader, transforming them into a participating character in the story. The reader is also invited to accept the gift of God (salvation) and establish a relationship with Jesus. Through the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman and the misunderstanding thereof, the implied author has not yet divulged his goal of writing the Gospel. The reader is successfully persuaded to believe in Jesus Christ so that they may have eternal life (20:30-31).

2.7 MISUNDERSTANDING AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 6:51 (CF. 6:25B, 28, 30-31, 34, 42)

2.7.1 Setting of the Story

The encounter between Jesus and the Jews in Capernaum still falls under the section of Jesus' public ministry. It is worth noting that many of the misunderstandings discussed so far (or generally in the Fourth Gospel) occur during Jesus' public ministry. This should come as no surprise, considering that the audiences he encountered often held different ideological/religious convictions compared to those of Jesus and his disciples. In 2:16-19, it is the Jews who misunderstand him; in 3:3-4, it is Nicodemus, the Pharisee and Jewish leader; and in 4:10-11, it is the Samaritan woman. The section under scrutiny here (vv. 22-59) flows from the preceding story of 6:1-14 (the miracle of the loaves) and 6:15-21 (Jesus walks on the sea in the stormy night). The essence of the misunderstanding here rests on the failure of the Jewish opponents to understand what Jesus meant by the bread that came from heaven (v. 51).⁸³ The opening phrase "Τῆ ἑπαύριον" (*in the next day*) in 6:22 can be regarded as a thematic connection between the three preceding events, that is 6:1-14, 6:15-21, and 6:22-59 (Jamieson *et al.* 1997:133). As

⁸³ Moloney (1998:209-10; cf. Barrett, 1978:282; Thomaskutty, 2014:272) summarises the story as follows: "As the Passover approaches (cf. vv. 4, 22) Jesus teaches that there will be a gift of God, made available through the Son of Man (v. 29), that surpasses all human nourishment (v. 26). Labouring for the possession of this nourishment (vv. 28-29), believing in the one whom God has sent (v. 29) will produce eternal life (v. 27)."

already highlighted above, the characters are Jesus⁸⁴ and the Jewish opponents.⁸⁵ The story takes place in Capernaum at the synagogue (6:59). Again, the narrator's voice plays a critical role in providing the reader with this information from 6:22-25ff.

2.7.2 Illocutionary Act

Firstly, the role of the voice of the narrator (6:22-25ff) is acknowledged and appreciated by the reader. As already argued before, the narrator's voice is a speech act belonging to the category of *informatives*. Here the narrator's intention is clear, that is, to provide the reader with necessary background information regarding the revelation of Jesus as the true bread from heaven. This is important since the story cannot continue successfully unless the reader is empowered with this information, particularly the revelation of the person of Jesus. Secondly, the utterance that calls for interpretation, which constitutes a misunderstanding in the story, is the statement of Jesus to his opponents in 6:51.

ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς· ἐάν τις φάγη ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου ζήσκει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ ἄρτος δὲ ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω ἡ σὰρξ μου ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς (I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world).

In this utterance, Jesus reveals his person and nature.⁸⁶ Jesus' utterance here is an announcement of a new dispensation and its consequential effects on the Jewish opponents, as Tovey (1977:72) puts it: "We bring about changes in the world through our declaratives."

The utterance above, therefore, can be classified under an illocutionary act belonging to the category of *declaratives*. By uttering it, Jesus declares what his coming to the world means to those who believe in him. Through this *declarative*, he clarifies his origin (ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ

⁸⁴ It is noted that the narrator reports nothing about the presence of his disciples during the conversation with the crowd or the Jews. However, upon reaching verses 6:60, 61 and 67, it becomes evident that the disciples were indeed present.

⁸⁵ The characters here were initially introduced as the people/crowd (ὁ ὄχλος) in 6:24 and later the narrator specified them as Jews (6:41 and 52).

⁸⁶ Wiersbe (1992:227) comments that "This is a bold claim that He is the very Son of God! The Bread of God is a Person from heaven (v. 33), and He gives life, not just to the Jews (as Moses did) but to the whole world!" (cf. Barrett, 1978:282-283). Lindars (1990:79; cf. Keener, 2003: 680; Wiersbe, 1992:227; Wead, 1970:83) opines that "*The Bread of Life discourse* of chapter 6 clearly builds on the wisdom theme of the nourishment of the soul. The argument is based on the manna miracle of Exd. 16."

καταβάς [he came down from heaven]) and the essence of his coming down from heaven (to give life to those who believe in him).

The study notes that this utterance raises some concerns and grumbling from his opponents. Jesus makes a similar *declarative* to the audience in verses 53-56 where he, in a way, invites the hearers to eat his flesh and drink his blood so that they may have life. Braaten (2014:69) goes even further to suggest that the utterance is the most controversial, raising difficulties for both its original hearers and present-day audiences, which is why the people grumble at this difficult teaching. These utterances were not well-received by the opponents, and they constitute the misunderstanding in the story (cf. vv. 25b, 28, 30-31, 34 and 42).⁸⁷ The opponents' misunderstanding is summarised in their question in verse 52:

πῶς δύναται οὗτος ἡμῖν δοῦναι τὴν σάρκα [αὐτοῦ] φαγεῖν (How can this man give us his flesh to eat?)

The utterance is clearly a question speech act, intended to solicit a response from Jesus.⁸⁸ It is also noted that the utterance carries a disputive tone (cf. Lindars, 1972:267; Barrett, 1978:299). Jesus' opponents are not merely seeking information by asking a question; they are disputing or challenging his declarative and self-revelatory statement. As already indicated, the question highlights their misunderstanding of Jesus' words. How does this misunderstanding draw the reader to Christ? The following sub-section will continue with the discussion of the perlocutionary act and the performative nature of this misunderstanding.

2.7.3 Perlocutionary Act

In the first place, the narrator's *informative speech* in 6:22-25ff is important to the reader. In this narration, the reader experiences the transition from the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand to the revelation of Jesus as the true bread that came from heaven. This *informative speech act*

⁸⁷ When elaborating on the impact of the misunderstanding created, Wiersbe (1992:228; cf. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007:1749; Richards & Richards, 1987:724; Lindars, 1972:267; Thomaskutty, 2014:272) says, "The Jews revolted at this (v. 52) because eating human flesh was contrary to Jewish law. Like Nicodemus, they confused the physical with the spiritual."

⁸⁸ Barrett (1978:283; cf. Thomaskutty, 2014:273; Harrill, 2008:133-158) says, "Once more the Jews, shocked by the word "flesh" ask the question, how? Once more the question is met, not by explanation, but by a reassertion and addition of blood. This lays further emphasis upon the death of Jesus and makes allusion to the Eucharist." Thomaskutty (2014:273; cf. Painter, 1993:280; Dodd, 1960:335-36; Blomberg, 2001:126) opines that "this dialogue helps the reader understand the Eucharistic perspective of the Johannine community."

seems to be the application or the significance of the preceding miracle (6:1-15).⁸⁹ Through this speech act, the narrator provides the reader with a bridge to understanding the significance of the miracle. On the narration level, the speech act serves to strengthen the relationship between the narrator and the reader, particularly in terms of trust and reliability. In this case, *informatives* are important in the narration of the story, and they have proven to have performative power towards the reader. In one way or another, the reader's awareness and interest are sensitised towards the unfolding of the story. Subsequently, the *informative* has the power to keep the reader involved and interested to the story. The reader is also invited to give due attention to the revelation of who Jesus is, particularly with the context of the approaching Passover (cf. Thomaskutty, 2014:271; Asiedu-Peprah, 2001:45).

Secondly, Jesus' *declarative* in 6:51ff is not neutral in its persuasive intent. The utterance also challenges the reader to see and accept Christ the way he declares himself to be. He is the bread of life (or the living bread)⁹⁰ which came down from heaven, and the reader is also invited to eat of him – that is, to become united with him – by believing in his death (the sacrifice of his flesh) and resurrection (cf. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007:1749).⁹¹

It has been observed that these words were not heartily welcomed by Jesus' opponents, as Schnackenburg (1968:60) also observes. He points out that, "The opponents are scandalized at Jesus' promise to give them bread *and drink* which is his flesh *and blood*." The opponents' shock and reaction towards Jesus' words is clear in verse 52 as briefly discussed above.

⁸⁹ Guthrie (1994:1038) rightly summarises it as follows: "The people were baffled how Jesus had reached the other side of the lake (25), and their question shows the purely human level on which they were thinking. Jesus' answer to their question goes deeper. He pointed out their failure to realize the significance of the *signs*; they saw only food, not the real meaning of Jesus' act." When elucidating the significance of the miracle of the feeding of five thousand, Stibbe (1993:88; cf. Culpepper, 1983:91-92; Beasley-Murray, 1987:91; Carson, 1991:283-289) states that: "In John 6, there stands among the Jews one who is far greater than Moses, Jesus of Nazareth. This Jesus has bread to offer which is far more precious than manna which God gave to Moses, for is a life-giving bread of his own body."

⁹⁰ Lindars (1972:266) says that "Living bread recalls the living water in 4:10. There it could be taken quite simply as running water, but later (in 4:14) it transpired that it really meant the water of life. So here the phrase, which obviously can have no comparable literal meaning, is equivalent to 'bread of life' in verse 33."

⁹¹ Guthrie (1994:1039; cf. Keener, 2003:683; Lindars, 1972:266-267) points out that "The superiority of the heavenly bread over the manna is that the former leads to life whereas the latter could not prevent death (49-50). In the important statement of Jesus in v 51, he claimed to be the *living bread*, which although synonymous with *bread of life* brings out more vividly the contrast with the manna."

A similar reaction can be inferred regarding the invitation to drink Jesus' blood. Here the misunderstanding is centred on the alleged unthinkable invitation to eat and drink Jesus' flesh and blood. The text reveals the opponents' inability to understand Jesus' words, as it was also the case earlier in 6:42b when they reacted to his statement about his origin, stating:

καὶ ἔλεγον, Οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ, οὗ ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα; πῶς νῦν λέγει ὅτι Ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβέβηκα (And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven?'").

Schnackenburg (1968:60; cf. Hunter, 1965:72) makes an invaluable observation, noting that Jesus did not directly or *literally* refer to eating his flesh or *drinking his blood*. Instead, the opponents take the word of revelation in an external materialistic sense, which is a common pattern in Johannine misunderstandings. Jamieson *et al.* (1997:139) further point out that in this high discourse, Jesus explicitly introduces his sacrificial *death* for the first time. Only rationalists could doubt its significance not only as what defines him as the bread of life for humanity but also as the very essence within him that possesses life-giving virtue.

From the performative point of view, it can be indicated that the reader is given an opportunity to realise the gap between Jesus (who represent the Insiders) and the opponents (outsiders).⁹²

While the reader is aware that consumption of blood and eating (living) flesh was strictly forbidden within the Jewish religious culture (Lev 3:17; Dt 12:23), he/she (the reader) gets a sense that Jesus' words cannot, by any means, be understood or taken literally.⁹³ By virtue of cognitive awareness or pre-knowledge of Jewish religious culture, the reader is, therefore, spared from being a victim of misunderstanding regarding the Jewish religious culture.

The misunderstanding certainly exposes the gap between Jesus and the opponents, and consequently puts the reader in a privileged circle of those who understand the significance of Jesus' words, the "insiders" (Born, 1988:5).

The performative nature of the misunderstanding rests in the fact that the reader is invited to at least associate him/herself with the insiders than the spiritually blind "outsiders." Having gained

⁹² Cf. Carson (1982a:61; Lindars, 1972:266) and the previous discussion on this study for similar observation/argumentation.

⁹³ Wead (1972:86; cf. Thomaskutty, 2014:271; Keener, 2003:691) says that "the sub-slot (v. 22-59) comprises of the characteristic feature of Jesus' talk-movement between the literal and the figurative."

knowledge about the nature of Christ so far in the Fourth Gospel, the reader is highly likely to trust Jesus' declarative than the opponents, and thus can associate him/herself with his teachings that lead to faith in him.

There is little doubt that the potential for misunderstanding here can effectively guide or persuade the reader towards establishing (or strengthening) a relationship with Jesus. This is recognised as the author's intentional communicative strategy within the Gospel. As the Jewish opponents continue to interpret the words of Jesus literally or in a physical sense, the reader gets to understand the spiritual sense of it all. It can be indicated, as observed by many other scholars (cf. Keener, 2003:697; Lindars, 1972:267), that the text is clearly not promoting any form of cannibalistic behaviour to the reader, as the opponents literally understand it. As alluded to earlier, the essence of Jesus' *declarative* is about accepting him into one's life and becoming united with him.⁹⁴ Through misunderstanding, the reader is subsequently invited to participate in the text and also challenged to make a decision to seek a relationship with the main character in the story, Jesus Christ. The implied author seems to make this proposition to the reader and the text is formulated in such a way that the reader cannot miss this invitation.

2.8 MISUNDERSTANDING AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 7:33-35 (CF. JOHN 8:21 AND JOHN 13:33)

2.8.1 The Setting of the Story

The story of Jesus and the religious leaders in 7:33-35, and the encounter between him and the Pharisees in 8:21, still fall in Jesus' public ministry in the Fourth Gospel (1:19–12:50). This is always crucial to take note of since it assists the reader to understand the attitude/reaction of Jesus' audience and opponents. It further assists the reader to understand the depth of the misunderstanding to be discussed. In 7:32ff, after hearing the crowd murmuring about Jesus,⁹⁵ the Pharisees and chief priests dispatch officers to arrest him. However, their mission eventually

⁹⁴ Barrett (1978:299) says that "the flesh and blood of Christ are truly food and drink to those who receive them because by means of them a complete and reciprocal indwelling of Christ and the believer is attained."

⁹⁵ Guthrie (1994:1041) says, "The action of the Pharisees and chief priests gives a more official stamp on the desire to arrest Jesus than that seen in v 30. John's comment in v 32 suggests that an informal meeting of the Sanhedrin had been held. But he delays until v 45 to tell us the outcome of attempts by the temple guards to arrest Jesus."

proves futile.⁹⁶ The study notes that Jesus then uses the same utterance, which he used with the religious leaders and the Pharisees, with his own disciples in 13:33, when he says:

τεκνία, ἔτι μικρὸν μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι· ζητήσετέ με, καὶ καθὼς εἶπον τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι Ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν, καὶ ὑμῖν λέγω ἄρτι (Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come', so now I say to you).

This utterance will be discussed in detail a little later in this analysis. As noted above in 13:33, Jesus is addressing his own followers. It is worth mentioning that in all three occasions (7:35, 8:21, and 13:33), Jesus is misunderstood by his hearers, including by his own disciples. However, the reactions by Jesus' hearers are different, as will be shown later.

The characters involved in this dialogue are Jesus, religious leaders, and the Pharisees. The utterance in 13:33 also reveals that Jesus' disciples were involved in the story.

2.8.2 Illocutionary Acts

Jesus' response to the Jewish opponents in 7:33-34, is recorded as follows:

εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι καὶ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με. ³⁴ζητήσετέ με καὶ οὐχ εὐρήσετέ [με], καὶ ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν. εἶπον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς, Ποῦ οὗτος μέλλει πορεύεσθαι ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐχ εὐρήσομεν αὐτόν; μὴ εἰς τὴν διασπορὰν τῶν Ἑλλήνων μέλλει πορεύεσθαι καὶ διδάσκειν τοὺς Ἕλληνας (Then Jesus said to them, "I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me. ³⁴You will seek me and not find me, and where I am you cannot come." Then the Jews said among themselves, "Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?") (NKJV).

The narrator reports the utterance in the present indicative (e.g., ὑπάγω, οὐ δύνασθε, etc.) and in simple future tense (ζητήσετέ, εὐρήσετέ, etc.) to make the dialogue lively, and appealing. In this utterance, Jesus simply announces his itinerary to his hearers. He mentions that soon he will depart and go to Him (the Father) who sent him. This utterance can be classified as an *assertive*

⁹⁶ Tyndale House Publishers (2007:1753; cf. Bruce, 1983:184; Lindars, 1972:295, 303) gives a valuable comment regarding this mission, saying: "Although the Roman ruled Palestine, they gave the Jewish religious leader authority over minor civil and religious affairs. The religious leaders supervised their own temple guards and gave the officers power to arrest anyone causing a disturbance or breaking any of their ceremonial laws. Because these leaders have developed hundreds of trivial laws, it was almost impossible for anyone, even the leaders themselves, not to break, neglect, or ignore at least a few of them some of the time. But these temple guards couldn't find one reason to arrest Jesus. And they listened to Jesus to try to find evidence, they couldn't help hearing the wonderful words he said."

speech act since Jesus' intention is simply announcing or telling his hearers what is going to happen or what he is going to do.

In 8:21-22, Jesus makes a similar announcement (an *assertive* speech act again) to the Jewish opponents (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι), saying:

Ἐγὼ ὑπάγω καὶ ζητήσετέ με, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν ἀποθανεῖσθε· ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε εἰσελθεῖν (I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come).

Again, the utterance here is more of an announcement than anything. In this announcement, Jesus informs his hearers that he will depart, and where he is going, they will not be able to come. Hence, the speech act is argued to be an *assertive speech act*. Jesus' response proves too difficult to comprehend by the opponents (v. 35). They fail to understand what he means.⁹⁷ The use of the word “ὑπάγω” (*I depart*) in Jesus' utterance creates misunderstanding among his hearers.⁹⁸ The following section continues the exploration of the illocutionary force of the speech acts that have been established and the performative aspect of the misunderstanding that has been created.

2.8.3 Perlocutionary Act

The perlocutionary force of the *informative* or the narration in 7:32ff urges the reader to accept the background/context within which the dialogue takes place. It also assists the reader to understand the context within which the misunderstanding under investigation occurs. The reader gets to know about the spiritual itinerary of Jesus, that he will depart to the One who sent him (his Father). Without this background, the reader cannot understand the essence and nature of the misunderstanding. Therefore, this narration assists the reader to accept the way in which the story is about to start, because this is the starting point of the event (cf. Ito, 2015:108). As noted, Jesus' utterance (an *assertive* speech act) in 7:33-34 and 8:21-22 creates misunderstanding in the story, particularly the use of the word “ὑπάγω” (*I depart or I move away*). The story reports that the Jewish opponents, after discussing it among themselves (*πρὸς ἑαυτούς*), could only conclude

⁹⁷ Tasker (1999:106) makes a similar observation regarding the creation of misunderstanding in the story.

⁹⁸ Moloney (1998:250) opines that the word “ὑπάγω” is a favourite Johannine word to express Jesus' active return to the Father.

(vv. 35-36) that he was speaking about leaving Judaea and going to teach among their brethren dispersed throughout the Hellenistic world.

The misunderstanding here is based on a wrong understanding of Jesus' spiritual language and spiritual itinerary. They understand his words, particularly the word ὑπάγω, in the context of diaspora, which is an earthly understanding of the word.⁹⁹ As so often in this Gospel, and has been noted in this study, the words of Jesus are misunderstood because they are interpreted too literally. The perplexity of the Jews is understandable (35-36) but shows their incapacity to think in spiritual terms. Their minds went to the dispersion, that is, Jews scattered among the Greeks (Guthrie, 1994:1039; cf. Carson, 1982a:65). They thought Jesus' departure is only a change of geographical location. In the discussion among themselves, they wonder where he is intending to go (πορεύεσθαι [to travel or walk]). In 8:21, Jesus performs the same illocution (an assertive) to the Pharisees, saying, "...ἐγὼ ὑπάγω καὶ ζητήσετέ με" (I depart, and you will seek me). To this assertive, the Pharisees' reaction is even more alarming than that of the religious leaders in 7:35. The Pharisees in 8:22 wonder if Jesus was intending to kill himself so that they will not be able to reach him.¹⁰⁰ Jesus' spiritual language proves to be difficult for them to comprehend.

Regarding the misunderstanding in 13:33, it is noted that the disciples are also perplexed by Jesus' assertive speech, where he announces his departure. Richards and Richards (1987:741) correctly observe that in response to the utterance in 13:33, Peter immediately pledges his commitment to follow Jesus even unto death. In 14:5, Thomas expresses his uncertainty about where Jesus is going, and consequently claims that he does not know the way to that place. He is puzzled about Jesus' intended destination and uncertain about how they would find their way there. Richards and Richards (1987:741) correctly conclude that none of the disciples caught the

⁹⁹ While commenting on the usage of the word "ὑπάγω", Barrett (1978:451; cf. Bruce, 1983:180; Lindars, 1972:295) says: "The word is relatively much more common in the last discourses than in the rest of the gospel (in ch. 17 it naturally gives place to ἔρχεσθαι). There can be no doubt that it is intended to cover both the departure of Jesus in death and his ascent to the glory of the Father. The use of the word arises out of John's characteristic thinking about the death of Jesus, not from translation or imitation of the Semitic root לָאָה though it is true that this root is much more frequently used with the meaning 'to depart out of this life (to die) than is ὑπάγειν in Greek."

¹⁰⁰ Many scholars have also noted and commented about the irony of the disciples' statement. When commenting on their utterance, Van der Watt (2010:150-151; cf. Brown, 2003:290; Duke, 1985:74, 85-86) indicates that "here the opponents talk without understanding what they are truly saying". He further asserts that in 8:22 "the opponents wonder whether Jesus is going to kill himself. This remark is usually seen as ironic." Van der Watt avers that "what the opponents say (that Jesus is going to "kill himself") is true, but not in the sense they thought. He is going away, and this is best interpreted in the light of 10:17-18 where Jesus lays down his own life. The opponents are not only unaware of their role in Jesus' death (cf. 8:20, 59) but also that he would indeed lay down his life voluntarily (10:17-18). An explanation is given for the ironic expression based on a lack of knowledge."

implications of death and resurrection that we (*the readers – both real and implied*) can see so clearly in this utterance.¹⁰¹

Contrary to the reaction of both the religious leaders and the Pharisees, the disciples, even though they misunderstand, at least have a desire to be with Jesus wherever he might be intending to go.¹⁰²

From the performative point of view, it can be pointed out, in the first place, that Jesus' *assertive* has the power to encourage the reader, particularly with the help of the aside in 8:27. The narrator, in 8:27,¹⁰³ ensures that the reader is well-informed and safely kept away from misunderstanding Jesus.

By virtue of misunderstanding, the reader is exposed to the spiritual itinerary of Jesus. By making the reader realise the limited understanding of Jesus' hearers and how they lack spiritual insight to comprehend his utterances (language), the reader is actively persuaded to choose the other side of the story, that is, follow the Protagonist. While Jesus' opponents interpreted His words in a worldly or geographical sense, the reader is skilfully guided to perceive the spiritual significance underlying His utterances. As a result, the reader is persuaded to adopt the implied author's point of view about Jesus.

Once again, the author's communicative strategy is evident in the deliberate use of misunderstanding. Both the Jews and the disciples display ignorance or limited understanding about Jesus, creating a captivating textual play for the reader. The characters serve as rhetorical role players, guiding the reader to meet Jesus in the text. The story is formulated in such a way

¹⁰¹ Barrett (1978:451; cf. Lindars, 1972:295) remarks: "The words [of Jesus] plainly in their present context look forward to the departure of Christ in death, but they are equally applicable to his departure in the ascension. The disciples cannot yet share either the death or the glory of Jesus."

¹⁰² However, Wiersbe (1997:247) comments that Peter's boast showed his lack of understanding of his own heart also. Keener (2003:923) adds that "the disciples could not yet follow Jesus because they are not yet prepared to die; but they would follow him in death later (13:36-38; cf. 21:18-19). Jesus had been 'with' them for a time (12:8, 35; 14:9; 16:4); in contrast to his enemies, however, who would never find him, his disciples would find him in a new way when he returned – that is, he would be with them in a new way."

¹⁰³ The narrator comments that "οὐκ ἔγνωσαν ὅτι τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῖς ἔλεγεν" (they did not understand that he spoke to them of the Father). Morris (1971:445; cf. Blum, 1985:304) comments, saying: "[T]he words are *indeed* mysterious, but we need not doubt that Jesus is referring to his departure to be with the Father." While commenting on the response of the opponents in this regard, Robertson (1933:147) says: "they were preoccupied with thoughts of an earthly deliverer and prejudiced against recognizing Jesus as the one sent from God."

that diminishes the reader's inclination to associate him/herself with the ignorant Jewish opponents.

This manner of constructing texts has already been acknowledged as not neutral in its persuasive intent. It assists the reader to differentiate the spiritual language used in the Fourth Gospel from the earthly language, something that proved to be difficult for the characters. The reader is usually coaxed to make choices. By means of narrative notes (asides amid the misunderstanding), she/he is persuaded to associate her/himself with the spiritual (heavenly) language used by Christ. The reader is subsequently persuaded to establish or strengthen their relationship with the protagonist, Jesus Christ in the story.

2.9 MISUNDERSTANDING AND THE PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 9:39-41

2.9.1 The Setting of the Story

Guthrie (1994:1046; cf. Phillips, 2014:605-613) says: "The story of the healing of the man born blind underlines the antitheses—non-seeing and seeing, seeing and becoming blind—which is one of the characteristic features of John's gospel".¹⁰⁴ Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:169) opine that this story parallels the previous healing of the lame man in chapter 5 of the Fourth Gospel.

This narrative takes place during Jesus' public ministry and underlines one of the biggest challenges that Jesus confronted when dealing with the opponents, namely, spiritual blindness. The setting of the story is in Jerusalem since the text in 9:7 reports that Jesus sends the blind man to the local pool called Siloam¹⁰⁵ (Neyrey, 2007:168; cf. Keener, 2003:782). The characters involved are Jesus, the man born blind, and Jewish opponents (Jesus's accusers and the Pharisees).

¹⁰⁴ Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:169) opine that this story parallels the previous healing of the lame man in chapter 5 of the Fourth Gospel.

¹⁰⁵ While elaborating on the historical background of the pool of Siloam, Schnackenburg (1968:243) states that, "The pool of Siloach (in Greek Siloam or Siloa), on the southwestern slope of the old city hill, was fed by the spring of Gichon. King Hezekiah had a tunnel dug from there to the pool of Siloach and channelled the water of the spring to the pool by an underground route (2 Chr. 32: 30). So far it has not been possible to provide definite archaeological evidence for the existence of a pool in the time of Jesus; all that excavations have found are the remains of a later construction, probably from the reign of Hadrian. Now, however, the existence of the bathing basin of the springs of Siloach is attested by a reference on the Copper Roll of Qumran (3 Q 15: X, 15-16)."

2.9.2 Illocutionary Act

This study consistently recognises and values the significance of the narrator' voice, as can be heard in 9:1ff. The theory of speech act effectively categorises the narrator's utterance in 9:1ff as an *informative* speech act.¹⁰⁶ The primary purpose of the speech act is to empower the reader with essential information regarding the forthcoming story. The reader is encouraged to embrace the way the story begins and accept the information provided by the narrator. This information includes the time of the story, the characters involved, and the spaces within which the action takes place. The reader is expected to view the narrator as wholly reliable (Ito, 2015:111). This emphasises the very goal or purpose of why the Gospel has been written; it was written to be read, so that the reader may get information that will lead him/her to have faith in Christ.

Neyrey (2007:176) notes that 9:35-41 marks the conclusion of an extensive forensic process dramatically portrayed throughout the entirety of Chapter 9.¹⁰⁷ The content of these closing verses is Jesus' utterance or the announcement of the purpose of his mission to the world (Ito, 2015:422; cf. Tasker, 1999:118). In 9:39, the text records:

Εἰς κρίμα ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον ἦλθον, ἵνα οἱ μὴ βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ οἱ βλέποντες τυφλοὶ γένωνται (and Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind").

Jesus clarifies his role as a judge¹⁰⁸ to the Pharisees. This statement not only reflects Jesus' perspective but also sheds light on the purpose and significance of the miracle in the eyes of his opponents. It text appears to emphasises to the Pharisees that this is who Jesus is and what he came into world for. Although his immediate purpose was not to judge the world, his mere presence and actions in the world inherently bring about judgement, as they compel men and women to take a stance, either for or against him, as they align themselves on one side or the

¹⁰⁶ Ito (2015:111) in his detailed observation indicates that the narrator employs the Cooperative Principle and various Maxims to introduce this intriguing story effectively to the reader.

¹⁰⁷ This study will provide a detailed forensic analysis and its performative nature in the following chapter. The current analysis as proposed, focuses on the analysis of misunderstanding.

¹⁰⁸ While Barrett (1978:365) sees a superficial contraction between this verse and 3:17, Blum (1985:309; cf. Lindars, 1972:351) provides a clarification, saying: "Does this verse contradict 3:17? According to that verse (and 12:47) Jesus was *not* sent 'to condemn the world.' But here Jesus said, for judgment I have come into this world. Jesus meant He came to pronounce decisions on the ungodly, like a judge (cf. 5:22, 27)." Hughes and Laney (2001:475; cf. Bruce, 1983:220) correctly add that, "Jesus did not come into the world for the purpose of condemnatory judgment (cf. 3:17), but his coming represented a judgment since the people who met him had to decide how to respond to his person (9:39)."

other (Bruce, 1983:220). Based on the observation here, Jesus' utterance can be classified as an *assertive* speech act. As can be expected from the opponents (Pharisees), this *assertive* is misunderstood. The analysis of its performative power will be discussed a little later. The second part of the *assertive* seems to be the one that invites the attention of the Pharisees and thus constitutes the core of the misunderstanding in the story. Jesus mentions that:

οἱ μὴ βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ οἱ βλέποντες τυφλοὶ γίνωνται (those who do not see may see and those who see may be made blind).

Tasker (1999:128; cf. Bruce, 1983:220-221) points out that “οἱ μὴ βλέποντες” (*those who do not see*) refer to those who have no spiritual vision but are conscious of their need for it, and “οἱ βλέποντες” (*those who see*) refer to those who wrongly suppose that they already possess spiritual vision.

To this *assertive*, the Pharisees are baffled; they show and expose their spiritual blindness. Schnackenburg (1971:256) opines that the opponents ask Jesus a dull question regarding their own nature or state of sight: “καὶ ἡμεῖς τυφλοὶ ἐσμὲν” (*are we blind also?*).¹⁰⁹

This question reveals their fundamental lack of understanding of what Jesus is talking about. Guthrie (1994:1046) suggests that this question underlines their incredulity. He goes on to emphasise that the Pharisees may have had natural sight and thought they possessed spiritual sight, yet their response to Jesus demonstrated their true blindness. It was in this sense that his coming had brought judgement. Jesus' reply to their question in 9:41 further reveals that he does not speak about physical blindness but spiritual blindness.

The utterance “Εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε” (*if you were blind*), has some declarative tone in it. Therefore, the utterance can be classified as a *declarative* speech act or a verdict,¹¹⁰ and can be understood in two ways. It could mean, ‘If you were really conscious of your blindness’, i.e., in a spiritual sense, for if they were, they would desire illumination which they clearly did not (Guthrie, 1994:1047). In this sense, the following words, “οὐκ ἂν εἶχτε ἀμαρτίαν” (*You would not have sinned*), as Newman and Nida (1980:319) translate it, would mean they would then have been open to the redemptive mission of Jesus. This further intensifies the level of spiritual language that Jesus is using and would more likely suppose that Jesus meant ‘*if you were really blind you would be guiltless*

¹⁰⁹ Blum (1985:309; cf. Keener, 2003:796) comments: “They expected a negative answer because they assumed that certainly they, of all men, possessed spiritual perception. Sin constantly deceives people so they live in falsehood.”

¹¹⁰ Cf. Ito (2015:441) for a similar observation.

because you would be unable to see.' Unfortunately, the text concludes the narrative without giving the accusers an opportunity for further engagement with Jesus. This study views the choice of ending the dialogue as biased in this regard. It is therefore viewed as an intentional literary artistry by the implied author to end the dialogue without giving the opponents a chance to deliberate further. It is believed that this choice of concluding a story has a performative element in it. This aspect will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 3, that is, on the study of the performative nature of forensic dialogue in the Fourth Gospel.

2.9.3 Perlocutionary Act

The task here is to demonstrate the perlocutionary force of the utterances discussed above and the performative nature of the misunderstanding established by Jesus' *assertive* to the reader.

Firstly, as mentioned earlier, the performative power of the *informative* in 9:1ff has been highlighted, presenting information to ensure that the reader is well-informed about the story's context. The information provided is of utmost importance as it encourages active engagement and participation in the narrative. Without this vital information, the reader would remain passive in the story.

Secondly, by presenting as established *assertive* in 9:39a and a *declarative* in 9:41, the text has the potential to challenge the reader to become a knowledgeable insider in the story. This is contrary to the "outsiders," who are the spiritually blind Pharisees.

The final remark prompts reflection on the entire story, raising questions about who the truly blind individuals were. It challenges the reader to consider who had misunderstood God's truth and who had the ability to see and acknowledge Jesus' true identity.

From the performative point of view, first, it is observed that misunderstanding, in this regard, creates an ironic situation for the reader. The opponents (Pharisees), who are religious leaders of the people, do not know their own spiritual state (cf. Ito, 2015:434). This is ironic for the believing reader who is cognitively aware of how Christ executes his religious (spiritual) leadership to his people. By virtue of misunderstanding, the reader is invited to re-evaluate the "outsiders" (the Pharisees), since they cannot understand Jesus' two levels of language in the narrative. As the Pharisees discern Jesus' *assertive* literally,¹¹¹ the reader realises that Jesus' language is

¹¹¹ It should be borne in mind that the Pharisees were not given a chance to respond to Jesus' *declarative* or verdict in 9:41.

immensely spiritual. As the misunderstanding unfolds, the reader is awarded an opportunity to judge the spiritually blind Pharisees, while at the same time, the reader is also silently warned of the consequences of failing to recognise these two levels of language. Through misunderstanding, the text awards the reader an opportunity to make a choice whether they want to associate themselves with the spiritually blind characters or to associate themselves with Jesus (and probably the healed man also), who will eventually judge the spiritually blind who are not willing to acknowledge their blindness. In one way or another, the misunderstanding has the power to engage or invite the reader to decide whether to align themselves or to have a relationship with Christ or reject him altogether.

2.10 MISUNDERSTANDING AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 11:11-13

2.10.1 Setting of the Story

The story of the raising of Lazarus has no parallel in the Synoptic Gospels, leading some scholars to question its historicity¹¹² (Kanagaraj, 2005:355). The objections raised against this account are twofold: its extraordinary nature and the absence of any mention in the other gospels.¹¹³ Regardless of the apparent objections to the story, this study accepts the story as part of canonical writings and will proceed to explore the performative nature of misunderstanding in it, as provided by the implied author, and narrated by the narrator. At first glance, when examining the opening of the story (11:1-3ff), the reader encounters an authentic *informative* speech act¹¹⁴ delivered by the narrator, saying:

¹¹² The current study is a text immanent approach. The focus here is to work with the narrative as provided by the (implied) author, without venturing into the historicity debate. It is acknowledged, however that, this narrative is related to the real (historical) world, as it narrates events to historical (implied) readers.

¹¹³ Keener (2003:835) comments, “[M]any are sceptical of pre-Johannine tradition in the narrative about Lazarus’s raising, because the story seems too central to Jesus’ ministry to have been known to the Synoptic writers and if, known, not mentioned by them. Some have even proposed that John composed the story by weaving together various elements of Lukan tradition. To be sure the story has much symbolic significance for the author of the fourth Gospel, proposed external corroborations for the story are weak.” Keener further asserts that “in John’s schema, the story is the climactic and most miraculous episode in the series of signs he presents.” While clarifying these objections, Guthrie (1994:1048) comments that “its extraordinary character can be a valid objection only if it is supposed that miracles do not happen. Moreover, in face of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ it cannot be said that the resurrection of Lazarus is incredible. Although the synoptic gospels do not record this miracle, there is no sound reason to dispute the historical character of this account.” For further reading on this debate, see also Duke (1985:118).

¹¹⁴ This is important for the narrator to do since the story cannot continue without the reader’s acceptance. The Gospel is being narrated or told so that the reader may believe. Bach and Harnish (1979:42)

Ἦν δέ τις ἀσθενῶν, Λάζαρος ἀπὸ Βηθανίας (Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany).

This *informative* speech does not only introduce the reader to the character of Lazarus but also gives the reader a sense that he is a character around whom the story will revolve. The setting of the story, which is in the town of Bethany (being mentioned for first time in John), is also introduced (Bruce, 1983:239). The voice of the narrator mentions that Jesus and his disciples moved to Bethany from the place where they were (ἔμεινεν ἐν ᾧ ἦν τόπω” [*in the place in which he was*]).¹¹⁵ The characters involved in the story are: Lazarus (who has been dead for four days),¹¹⁶ Mary (11:1), Martha (11:1), Jesus (11:4), the disciples of Jesus (11:7), and the Jews (11:31).¹¹⁷

Moloney (1994:471) notes that the reader also meets some of the major themes of the Fourth Gospel, namely: illness and death (11:1, 4).¹¹⁸ Van der Watt (2007:14) asserts that the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead is part of the narration (Ch. 5-12) in which Jesus reveals himself as the giver of life in abundance although not everybody accepted it.¹¹⁹ He further mentions that in this part of the Fourth Gospel Jesus demonstrates that by following him, his disciples will have a Good Shepherd who will not only give his life for them, but also has the power to give life to them, as illustrated by the raising of Lazarus (11-12).

present the complete schema of informatives as follows: advice, announce, apprise, disclose, inform, insist, notify, point out, report, reveal, tell, and testify).

¹¹⁵ Most probably, the place he was last located is mentioned in 10:40, that is “He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed.”

¹¹⁶ Köstenberger (1999:131; cf. Bruce, 1983:240) adds that upon his arrival, he finds that Lazarus has already been in the tomb for four days, one day past the period of three days after which the Jews believed that a deceased person’s spirit left his body.

¹¹⁷ While it is true that “the Jews” in verses 11, 8, 19, 31, 33, 36, 45, and 54 do not play the negative role which has marked their appearance in the story thus far, the reader comes to John 11 with their overall negative response well established. However benign they may be to other characters in the story (v. 31, e.g., Martha and Mary), “the Jews” will continue to be divided by the presence of Jesus, and reject him (Moloney, 1994:471).

¹¹⁸ Neyrey (2007:194) further notes that this particular account or miracle serves as the definitive “sign” that unveils, more clearly than any other, the profound significance of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

¹¹⁹ Hughes and Laney (2001:476; cf. Lindars, 1972:383; Barrett, 1978:388) opine that, “This sign of Lazarus’s return to life is a fitting climax for the seven signs recorded by the apostle John. They all relate to the central truth of Jesus: that he is eternal life.”

2.10.2 Illocutionary Act

The *informative* speech act in 11:1-3ff by the narrator is critical in that it presents the story as a credible historical account to the reader. The intention of this speech act is to provide the reader with the information and facts about the story.

In determining the illocutionary act in this passage, the study must take a closer look at the utterance made by Jesus in 11:11. This is certainly after Lazarus' sickness had been reported to Jesus, and later, his death. His reaction to the report is recorded as follows:

Λάζαρος ὁ φίλος ἡμῶν κεκοίμηται.¹²⁰ ἀλλὰ πορεύομαι ἵνα ἐξυπνίσω αὐτόν” (Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go so that I may wake him up).

It is crucial to emphasise the unwavering confidence with which Jesus makes the utterance or responds to the news of Lazarus' death to his disciples. The reader can immediately sense that Jesus is above the situation. He makes the utterance with determination and belief that indeed Lazarus is dead,¹²¹ yet this situation is not beyond his power. Jesus does not report the situation as death but as sleep (κεκοίμηται).¹²² He further indicates to his disciples that he is going ἵνα (so that) he might wake him up. The present middle indicative (ἀλλὰ πορεύομαι [*but I go*]) would denote an emphatic determination, particularly from the side of Jesus. His journey to Lazarus' house was a purposeful one, that is, so that he may wake him up. The utterance is presented with a commitment that what the speaker is promising to do, he will do. In the light of this grammatical observation, the utterance here may be classified as an illocutionary act belonging to the category of 'commissives.' The utterance entails that Jesus commits himself to go to Bethany with the specific purpose of raising Lazarus from the dead.

¹²⁰ Lindars (1972:391) notes that “the Greek word from which the word for cemetery is derived.”

¹²¹ Tasker (1999:137; cf. Bruce, 1983:242) mentions that the other Gospels record two examples of how Jesus used his divine power to restore the dead to life, e.g., the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mk 5:22-43) and the raising of the Widow's son at Nain (Lk 7:11-17). He makes it clear that the reader of the other Gospels might incorrectly assume that the daughter of Jairus and the widow's son were not really dead but only merely in a sleep comma. However, the “death” in each case had recently occurred, and the sleep from which Lazarus was awakened could not by any stretch of the imagination be regarded as a temporary sleep. It was the sleep of a man who had been dead for four days, a situation that could evoke a sense of hopelessness for the reader.

¹²² Keener (2003:840) says “that Jesus speaks of Lazarus being asleep need not have confused the disciples. ‘Sleep’ usually meant literal sleep, but the sleep of death was a common usage in the LXX.”

Botha (2009:488) contends that the speaker is committing himself to doing/performing something in the future. The study notes that this *commissive* speech act creates misunderstanding¹²³ in the story as reported in 9:12 and 13. The disciples wrongly assumed that Jesus meant that Lazarus had not died but was taking rest in sleep and was on his way to recovery, as they explicitly state in 11:13. Hence, they respond by suggesting that “If he sleeps, he will get better” (11:12). What is the significance of this misunderstanding to the reader’s interpretation of the Gospel? The following section proceeds with the discussion of the performative power of this misunderstanding in the story.

2.10.3 Perlocutionary Act

The perlocutionary force of the informative speech by the narrator gives the reader the information necessary for them to proceed with the reading of the story. One of the critical pieces of information provided by the narrator in this part is the close relationship that Jesus had with this particular family in Bethany, especially Lazarus (11:3). The story’s formulation involves emotional dynamics in that Lazarus is described as “the one Jesus loves,” who had fallen sick and later died. Again in 11:11, Jesus refers to him as “our friend Lazarus” (Λάζαρος ὁ φίλος ἡμῶν). This narration carries an emotional appeal to the reader as they read the story.¹²⁴ The reader is, however, encouraged to accept this information as a true historical account and be assured that it is factual and reliable, regardless of the apparent questions around its historicity. These dynamics are important for the reader to grasp since the narrator cannot continue with the story without the reader’s cognitive consent. Since the Gospel is written so that the reader may believe in Christ, this fundamental goal of the Gospel cannot be realised if the reader is not on board.

Jesus’ *commissive* in 11:11 has the power to evoke the reader’s confidence. The reader is assured of the fact that Jesus possesses power over the situation. The *commissive* reveals the nature of Jesus to the reader, that is, he is above death. He is the giver of life. The reader should also take note of the emotional dynamic, briefly discussed above, within which the utterance is

¹²³ Bruce (1983:242; cf. Barrett, 1978:392; Morris, 1971:543) opines that “the use of sleep as a metaphor for death became, and remains, a common Christian locution, so common, indeed, that we may think that the disciples were unusually obtuse not to grasp what Jesus meant. But perhaps the locution was not so familiar to them; we may recall the bystanders’ incredulous scorn when Jesus said that Jairus’ daughter was not dead but asleep (Mark 5:39).”

¹²⁴ Richards (1987:734) points out that “During Jesus’ public ministry Christ had been very close to Mary and Martha and their brother, Lazarus.” Bruce (1983:239) also adds that “This family in Bethany, though unmentioned earlier in this Gospel, was evidently well known to Jesus and well loved by him.” While Barrett (1978:390; Morris, 1971:538) adds that “there is in these verses little ground for the view that Lazarus was the beloved disciple.”

made. The reader is somehow encouraged to believe that Jesus is in control (or at least will take care) of the situation around Lazarus' death.

From the performative perspective, it can be argued that the implied author makes an appeal to the reader to perceive Jesus as someone with great power and reliability in times of trouble and hardship. The reader is also cautioned against adopting the same misconception initially displayed by the disciples. As it is mostly the case and actually a communicative strategy in the Fourth Gospel, the reader is, firstly, exposed to the misunderstanding, but later, carefully spared from it by an aside (11:13) from the narrator.

The goal has always been to put the reader in a better position to understand what is meant by the utterance. Misunderstanding, therefore, succeeds in drawing the reader into the text as he watches the disciples wrongly understand Jesus' utterance. The reader is successfully guided towards being a well-informed insider, even better than the disciples. The disciples do not grasp Jesus' *commissive*, but the reader understands it well. The reader understands the situation around Lazarus' sickness/death better than the disciples in relation to the power that Jesus has over the situation.

This suggests that the reader remains at the centre of the narrator's focus. The narrative, as carefully planned by the implied author, does appeal to the reader's commitment to establish a relationship with Jesus. The text possesses the potential to extend an invitation to the reader to develop a deep admiration for establishing a friendship with Jesus (cf. 15:13-14). Jesus is portrayed as one who never forsakes his friends and those whom he loves; instead, he grants them life. He is the source of resurrection and life to those who embrace him (cf. Van der Watt, 2007:16).¹²⁵

It has been noted earlier that the theme of illness and death runs through this story. Horrible and scary as it can be, the way Jesus talks about death and sickness, certainly encourages the reader not to fear it when they believe in him. While, from the reader's common knowledge, death is terrifying, Jesus refers to it as a sleep. To him, someone who is dead is just sleeping. He has the power to raise them, or should it be put thus: "He has power to wake them up." Misunderstanding in this regard helps the reader to view death and sickness differently. The text does have the

¹²⁵ Tyndale House Publishers (2007:1760; cf. Lindars, 1990:86-87; Beasley-Murray, 1991:3-4) indicates that "Jesus has the power over life and death as well as power to forgive sins. This is because he is the Creator of life. He who is life can surely restore life. Whoever believes in Christ has a spiritual life that death cannot conquer or diminish in any way."

power to sensitise the reader towards making a commitment to believe in Jesus. By believing in Christ, the reader can be assured that those who are friends with Jesus Christ (through faith) do not die but fall asleep and will be woken up by Christ to eternal life with him. This privilege is exclusively reserved for those who believe in him. This invitation is duly extended to the reader of the Fourth Gospel.

As established in other analyses, the formulation and presentation of the story, aided by misunderstanding, contributes greatly to achieving the central purpose of the Gospel.

2.11 MISUNDERSTANDING AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 13:1-8 AND 34-35

2.11.1 Setting of the Story

The demarcated passages report the story of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples (13:1-8).¹²⁶ Van der Watt (2007:16-17; cf. Kanagaraj, 2005:428) indicates that while the narrative of the first major section of the Gospel (chapters 1-12) covers three years of Jesus' public ministry in the world, the second major section (13-17) describes events that took place during a single evening when Jesus gathered with his disciples for supper. In 13:1 the narrator presents his version of this gathering; the last supper, the meal during which Jesus delivers a farewell speech to his disciples (cf. Morris, 1971:612). As noted in 13:1, this meal was eaten "Πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα (*before the feast of the Passover*)."¹²⁷ It should be borne in mind that the Fourth Gospel is not particularly concerned with the chronological order of reporting the story of the life and ministry of Jesus but is more concerned with reporting the flow of events in a systematic way that underscores the theological truths it wants to present to the reader. Therefore, the debate on the exact time of the event is not necessary.

¹²⁶ Bruce (1983:278; cf. Lindars, 1972:448) explains the significance of the event as "On them (disciples) he had set his love in special degree, and in the ministry of the upper room that love is poured out in action and word, as in the sequel it is poured out in suffering and death."

¹²⁷ Scholars hold different views regarding the actual time of this event. Regarding the nature of this meal, Barrett (1978:363) maintains that "the meal was not the Passover meal, nor any identifiable in the Jewish calendar." Kanagaraj (2005:428) summarises the views as follows: "[S]ome scholars argue that John has the correct date, maintaining that the meal Jesus ate with his disciples the day before Passover has a characteristics so similar to the Passover meal that the Synoptists assumed that it was actually eaten on the day of the Passover. Others assert that the Synoptists are correct, and that John modified the date so that he could present Jesus as the Passover lamb. Still others argue, rather less than convincingly, that the contradiction is more apparent than real, and that both John and the Synoptists present Jesus as eating a Passover meal on the 15th Nisan."

The setting of the story is in Jerusalem as mentioned earlier in 12:12: “... ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα (... Jesus was coming to Jerusalem). The characters involved are Jesus and his disciples (13:5).

2.11.2 Illocutionary Act

The story in 13:1-6 opens with the narrator’s voice. As briefly discussed above, the narrator provides the reader with the information regarding the circumstances building up to the washing of the feet of the disciples. Very critical to note is the report of the time of the event and what Jesus did to his disciples.¹²⁸ The narrator reports that it is just “Πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα” (*before the feast of the Passover*), and Jesus bent down “νίπτειν τοὺς πόδας τῶν μαθητῶν” (*to wash the disciples’ feet*).¹²⁹ The speech act applied in 13:1-6 is an *informative*. With this speech act, the narrator intends to furnish the reader with necessary information regarding the ministry of Jesus to his disciples in the upper room. The study notes that the thrust behind this *informative* speech is the fact that Jesus “εἰδὼς ὅτι πάντα ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ” (*having known that the Father had given all things into His hands*).¹³⁰ In the light of this foreknowledge, it can be argued that Jesus’ action of washing the disciples’ feet was a consequential action based on the foreknowledge of the power that has been given to him by the Father. From a grammatical point of view, it is observed that the report is also dominated by aorist verbs: ἦλθεν – *it (the hour) came* (v. 1); ἠγάπησεν – *he loved* (v. 1); ἔδωκεν – *he gave* (v. 3); ἐξῆλθεν – *he came out* (v. 3); διέζωσεν – *he belted* (v. 4). The significance of the usage of these verb tenses, is to ensure that the reader receives the story as historically factual. However, it is further observed that the narrator uses the

¹²⁸ Lindars (1990:30; cf. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007:1767; Theophylact, 2007:210; MacArthur, 2008:60) advances that, “Jesus’ washing of the disciples’ feet is an act of service which signifies cleansing in a deeper sense, the total cleansing which is effected by the saving death of Jesus and appropriated in baptism (briefly and allusively indicated in Jesus’ answer to Peter in 13.10).” Moreover, Wiersbe (1992:246) adds, “In Middle Eastern countries, it was the slaves who washed the feet of guests; here Christ took the place of a slave. He makes this clear to His disciples in vv. 13–16: if their Lord and Teacher has washed their feet, then they should wash one another’s feet and serve each other in humility.” Keener (2003:899) calls Jesus’ act “the ultimate model for love and service.”

¹²⁹ When summarising 13:1-5, Wiersbe (1996:344) opines that, “The emphasis in John 13:1–3 is on what our Lord knew, and in John 13:4–5 on what our Lord did. Jesus knew that ‘His hour was come.’ More than any of the Gospel writers, John emphasised the fact that Jesus lived on a ‘heavenly timetable’ as He did the Father’s will.”

¹³⁰ When commenting about this, Keener (2003:900) makes a valuable observation, pointing out that John also highlights the role of Judas in the beginning of this scene (13:2), framing the scene immediately preceding the Farewell Discourse with the report of Jesus’ betrayal (13:21-30) as well as Satan’s activity (13:2, 27). Finally, John prefaces the scene by emphasising Jesus’ authority, source, and destination, which heightens the significance of his service to the disciples that immediately follows (13:3).

present active indicative (βάλλει – *he throws*) to describe the action of the pouring of water in 13:5. This makes the report vivid and appealing to the reader.

The action of Jesus towards his disciples, as reported by the narrator in 13:6, sparked a debate that is key to the study of misunderstanding that this section wants to analyse. First, Peter seems to misunderstand Jesus' gesture of washing the feet of the disciples. When his turn to be washed came, he asks Jesus, "Κύριε, σύ μου νίπτεις τοὺς πόδας (*Lord, are you washing my feet?*).¹³¹

This utterance highlights Peter's dissatisfaction with Jesus' action. Peter's utterance here is clearly a *question* speech act, uttered with the intention to protest Jesus' action, as emphatically repeated in 13:8. This *question speech act* signals the beginning of the process of clarity seeking regarding Jesus' action, since he does not understand what it means. Jesus, knowing that the disciples do not understand or know the meaning of his actions, responds to Peter's question in 13:7, saying,

Ὁ ἐγὼ ποιῶ σὺ οὐκ οἶδας ἄρτι, γνώση δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα (*What I am doing you do not know now, but you will know after this*).

This utterance is a *responsive* speech act since Jesus' intention is to respond to Peter's protest and dissatisfaction on feet washing. However, it can be indicated that within this *responsive* speech act, there is also an *assertive* (a proverbial saying or parable) (Lindars, 1972:451). Moreover, in his response, Jesus states that Peter would not understand or know the essence of the act. It is observed, however, that Jesus' response is not an answer that probably was expected by Peter, but an assurance that Peter will not understand the meaning of the action now but will understand it later (Moloney, 1998:374).

In 13:9, the text further records Peter's utterance, as follows:

Κύριε, μὴ τοὺς πόδας μου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν (*Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!*).

¹³¹ On Peter's objection, Bruce (1983:281; cf. Keener, 2003:908-909) puts forward that "it was bad enough to see his master washing the feet of the others, but he could not allow him to wash his." Morris (1971:6160) rightly observes that "there is no mention of nay comment until Jesus came to Peter. Apparently, there was dead silence. But Peter expostulates." Lindars (1972:450) adds that "to John Peter is one who does not understand the necessity of the passion. He represents faith without understanding."

In this utterance, Peter's misunderstanding of the action of Jesus is explicit.¹³² Peter expresses that he now desires to have his hands and head washed. Barrett (1978:441) indicates that if washing is to be the only way to have fellowship with Christ, Peter would be washed entirely, no part of him being left unwashed.

The utterance here can be classified as an *expressive speech act*. Peter expresses his feeling and wish regarding Jesus' service to him. According to him or at least his understanding, Jesus should also wash his hands and head. In this way, the washing would be complete. Peter's *expressive* speech continues to reveal his misunderstanding of the whole act of Jesus. Peter does not understand an action of Jesus washing only the feet of the disciples (Brown, 2003:289).

The following section will continue to discuss the perlocutionary force of all the illocutions established and their possible performative effect on the reader.

2.11.3 Perlocutionary Act

The perlocutionary force of the *informative*, as established in 13:1-6, has the power to influence the reader, since the *informative* speech empowers the reader with the knowledge about the story. The *informative* has the power to influence the reader's view of Jesus. The *informative* reveals the sovereignty of Christ and his close relationship with the Father. No one controls or influences his timetable, except the father from whom he comes. In 13:1, the narration helps the reader to confirm their knowledge about the incarnation of Christ, as learnt in 1:14. Jesus comes from the Father and now his time to go back to the Father has come. Furthermore, the information about the evening meal together with his disciples and the narration of his love for them, is encouraging and has an emotional dynamic toward the reader, particularly with the report of his departure having arrived. The narrator further shares the information about the character of Judas Iscariot and his betrayal prophecy to Jesus. The reader is therefore cognitively prepared to look out for such a behaviour from Judas. Subsequently, the *informative speech act* reports the foot washing event, an act expressing the love and humility of Christ towards his disciples. The reader is provided with all this information in 13:1-5 so that they may continue reading the story with necessary insight. Unless the reader has this information, the story cannot continue successfully;

¹³² Hughes and Laney (2001:478) explain, "At first Peter rejected Jesus' humble service of foot washing (13:6-11), which pointed toward Jesus' humble cleansing work on the cross. But when Peter saw that this foot washing was symbolic of cleansing from sin, he wanted to be washed from head to foot. Peter had discovered the spiritual aspect of the foot-washing ceremony but would need to think about the more literal aspects of service. He misunderstood Jesus the Messiah's servant role and therefore his own role as disciple."

it will be fruitless for the narrator to continue telling the story. Therefore, the cognitive influence on the reader is crucial and cannot be ignored if we are to understand the performative dynamics of the narrative. The subsequent interchange between Jesus and Peter in 13:6-11 is characterised by questions and responses. In his responses, Jesus also makes statements that aim to clarify his actions towards Peter and the other disciples, even though they are not understanding it fully.

The perlocutionary force of the *question-responsive* speech acts in 13:6-11 has the power to sensitise the reader's interest towards the story. The reader (real or implied), having been empowered with necessary information in 13:1-5, is cognitively engaged in the dialogue. The actions of Jesus towards the disciples have the potential to heighten the tension, anticipation, and surprise in the mind of the reader, as the drama of the Son of God washing the feet of his disciples unfolds. It can be argued that even though the disciples are not understanding the meaning of the action, the act itself already has an impact on the reader.

It has already been highlighted that there is more in this dialogue than meets the eye. Peter's questions and protests against Jesus' actions reveal that he does not fully comprehend what Jesus is doing.¹³³

The essence of the misunderstanding lies in the fact that Peter refuses Jesus' offer to wash his feet (13:6-8) but Jesus explains to him that if he does not accept this illustration of love, he would remain unclean and not belong to the circle of love (13:34-35) (Van der Walt, 2010:19).¹³⁴

Peter's humorous plea with Jesus to wash his hands and head further exposes his lack of understanding regarding the essence and significance of Christ's feet-washing act.

From the performative point of view, it is believed that the general *responsive speech act* by Jesus (13:7) is not neutral in its persuasive intent. Firstly, it has the power to create expectation in the mind of the reader, as noted by Moloney (1998:374). When saying something will happen

¹³³ Moloney (1998:375) and Brown (2003:288) have similar observations in this regard.

¹³⁴ Barrett (1978:367) points out that, "Peter for all apparent devotion to Jesus is in danger of taking the wrong side. His objection to receiving Jesus' love and service is in fact satanic pride. If Peter is not washed, he will have no share in the benefits of Jesus' passion and no place among his people." He further asserts that "the practice of Christian baptism, the regular gateway into the Church, is at once suggested. Apparently, John conceived the feet-washing as in some sense equivalent to baptism, though this equivalence must not be taken too rigidly."

between the “now” and the “afterward”, the reader suspects that “the hour” of Jesus’ loving his own will be part of the intervening events.

The reader is, therefore, encouraged and enticed to continue reading the narrative of Jesus until the end so that they can finally witness the revelation and clarification of the misunderstanding.

Moloney (1998:374) further opines that the reader’s suspicion is guided by the account of Jesus’ purification of the Temple (2:13-22) and his entry into Jerusalem. On both these occasions, the disciples did not understand Jesus’ words and action. But after he was raised from the dead (2:22) and glorified (12:16), they remembered, believed, and understood.

Secondly, misunderstanding gives Jesus an opportunity to continue bringing theological truths to the reader (13:10-11). In some ways, this theological truth highlights the information that the implied author desires to impart to the reader through the narrative. In his expansion of the theological truths, Jesus mentions two critical matters, namely: the significance of the foot washing,¹³⁵ and the fact that he is aware of Judas’ betrayal (cf. Tasker, 1999:155).

Misunderstanding, as a literary device, plays a critical role in assisting the reader to receive these theological truths. The reader is persuaded to accept the teaching about the humility of Christ, servant leadership, and the love he has for his own disciples. As Peter lacks spiritual insight to grasp the meaning of the action of Jesus, the reader observes and understands it better. Through the use of misunderstanding, the implied author is able to reach out to the reader with a strong lesson regarding the nature and the character of Christ. The text also persuades the reader to demonstrate a similar kind of love for others, along with a willingness to demonstrate servant leadership and humility towards fellow believers.

2.12 SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The primary aim of the chapter was to conduct a literary analysis of the performative nature of misunderstanding as a literary device, from the speech act interpretive angle. The speech act theory was limited to only establishing the kind of utterances in the selected narratives of the

¹³⁵ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:154; cf. Bruce, 1983:282; Tasker, 1999:156) opine that “Of the two cleansings, the one points to that which takes place at the commencement of the Christian life, embracing complete absolution from sin as a guilty state, and entire deliverance from it as a polluted life (Rev 1:5; 1 Co 6:11)—or, in the language of theology, Justification and Regeneration. This cleansing is effected once for all and is never repeated. The other cleansing, described as that of ‘the feet,’ is such as one walking from a bath quite cleansed still needs, in consequence of his contact with the earth. It is the daily cleansing which we are taught to seek, when in the spirit of adoption we say, ‘Our Father which art in heaven ... forgive us our debts’ (Mt 6:9, 12).”

Fourth Gospel and how these utterances create misunderstanding between the characters, particularly the hearers of Jesus. The analysis involved identifying the passages or narrative units where these misunderstandings occur.

As highlighted above, the study continued to establish the kind of locutions (utterances) that create misunderstanding, focusing also on basic semantics of the words that are used.

It was not the intention of this study to just categorise misunderstandings in the Fourth Gospel as Leroy (1966) and Carson (1982a) did, but to go beyond and demonstrate how this literary device invites the reader to participate in the text (performative aspect).

Firstly, in all the occurrences discussed, this study has observed that the implied author does indeed utilise misunderstanding as a communicative strategy to persuade the reader (real and implied) to establish (or to strengthen) a relationship with Jesus. A key performative dynamic of the communicative strategy is that the reader is exposed to misunderstanding but was never a victim of it. This is done by means of narrative comments (asides).

Consequently, the reader gains an understanding of the meaning and intention behind a particular utterance or action, avoiding the misconception displayed by the “outsiders” who misunderstand Jesus in the story. Misunderstanding is revelatory in nature. The chapter has acknowledged that this manner of reporting the story places the reader in a better position to see and understand what characters cannot comprehend. In this way, the implied author proves to be mindful of the life of the reader. The reader feels well-guided and supported by the implied author, fostering a sense of trust and assurance. Consequently, they are persuaded to establish (or strengthen) their relationship with Jesus. This persuasive nature of misunderstanding was established in all the analyses, namely, in 2:19-21 (the narrative of the cleansing of the temple); 7:35 (The narrative of Jesus and the religious leaders), 8:21 (the encounter between him and the Pharisees), 11:11-13 (the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead); and 13:33 (the misunderstanding that arose from Jesus’ assertive, “*ὑπάγω*” [*I depart*]).

Secondly, following Culpepper’s findings on the effects of misunderstanding on the reader, it was observed that some characters sound and appear less intelligent to attract the reader. The narrative is narrated in such a way that the reader is silently discouraged to associate him/herself with such kind of characters. In this way, misunderstanding serves to elevate the reader above such characters in the story. The reader feels superior over a less intelligent character. The analysis of the account between Jesus and Nicodemus (3:3, 7), the healing of the man born blind (9:39-41), and the washing of the disciples’ feet (13:1-8, 34-35), are good examples in this regard.

The manner of reporting the text is performative in its intent since it invites the reader to make the decision to associate themselves with the “insider,” that is, Jesus Christ in the story.

It was also established that sometimes the characters who misunderstand are the very disciples of Jesus (e.g., 13:1-8 – the washing of the disciples’ feet, and 11:11 – the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead). Consequently, they assume the status of “outsiders” since they do not represent, at that moment, the values that the implied author desires to promote. In these cases, Jesus gets an opportunity to educate them (13:10-19). The reader is also invited to re-evaluate their knowledge and understanding of the person of Christ. Misunderstanding, as a literary device, in this case was needed to bring the reader up to par.

Thirdly, it was noted that another performative element of the text towards the reader, is when they do not only associate themselves with the “perfect character” or the “insider” in the story but also associate themselves with characters who have made mistakes and later changed. The appropriate example of this phenomenon is the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman. The misunderstanding in this narrative differs from that of Nicodemus in that the reader gets to know instantly how her life was transformed or impacted. She immediately becomes the witness of Jesus Christ to her own people in the city. They all come out to meet and hear Jesus because of her invitation. The reader is invited to admire such kind of character development. Contrary to this, the Nicodemus narrative is an open-ended dialogue.¹³⁶ The reader does not get to know immediately whether Nicodemus’ life remained neutral, or transformed, or not, well, not until 7:50 and 19:39.

Reading and analysing the Fourth Gospel’s misunderstanding has proved to be yet another insightful way of looking at the implied author’s communicative strategy of the Gospel. Therefore, it can be firmly asserted that the prevalence of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel is not a random occurrence but a deliberate and noteworthy persuasive strategy. The primary aim is to actively invite the implied reader to engage and participate in the text. The reader is persuaded to make decisions that are in line with the implied author’s point of view, i.e., establishing (or strengthening) a relationship with Jesus. This manner of formulating the text is indicative of the author’s intention to radically impact and transform the life of the reader (real and implied) and is

¹³⁶ This study will focus on this aspect in Chapter 5. The phenomenon is called ‘focalisation’. It primarily focuses on how the narrator selects information for the reader. The conclusion here (in Chapter 2) is limited to the study of misunderstanding.

consistent with the overall purpose of the Fourth Gospel as mentioned in 20:30-31. Attention now shifts in the following chapter to irony as a literary device.

Chapter 3 The Performative Nature of Irony in the Fourth Gospel

3.1 INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL SURVEY AND RESEARCH GAP

Irony in the Fourth Gospel has been widely recognised and explored by various scholars in the field of New Testament research.¹³⁷ The focus of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive historical survey and critical reflection of the study of irony in the Fourth Gospel. Through this historical survey, the chapter will identify any existing research gaps and highlight the unique contribution it aims to make to the field.

The prevalence of irony, or ironic utterances/instances, and its significance in the Fourth Gospel is too prominent to be ignored by anyone who reads the Gospel. It has been generally observed that the Fourth Gospel is well-known for its persuasive use of irony as a literary device (See also Van der Watt, 2010:149). A general survey and observation show that this literary device has attracted the attention of scholars since the early 1900s (MacRae, 1993:103-113).¹³⁸ In the development of its research, this chapter acknowledges that there have been varying views regarding a suitable name and definition of irony as a literary device (See also Van der Watt, 2010:149-150). Firstly, regarding its name, for example, Brown (2003:290) calls it a “form of misunderstanding”¹³⁹; O’Day (1986:31) calls it a “a mode of revelatory language”; and Muecke and Booth (as cited by Culpepper, 1983:166) describe it as a “two-story” phenomenon. Secondly, various scholars have submitted diverse definitions of this literary device. Van der Watt (2010:149-150) also acknowledges that irony is widely used but remains challenging to define. He indicates that Duke (1985:11-12) and Muecke (1969) have already pointed out that there is

¹³⁷ To mention a few: Culpepper. (1983). *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*; Duke. (1985). *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*; O’Day. (1986). *Revelation in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Mode and Theological Claim*; Thatcher. (2000). ‘The Sabbath Trick: Unstable Irony in the Fourth Gospel’; Brown. (2003). *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*; Bell. (2014). *The Midwife of Truth: The Nature of Irony and a Rationale for its Prevalence in the Gospel of John*; MacRae. (1993). ‘Theology and Irony in the Fourth Gospel,’ etc.

¹³⁸ He indicates that H. Clavier has dealt with the theme of irony in a series of articles from 1929 to 1959 (cf. ‘L’ironie dans le quatrieme Evangile,’ *Studia Evangelica* I, 261-276 [with references to earlier articles]).

¹³⁹ Lincoln (2000:19) also locates irony in the frequent misunderstanding. Cf. Van der Watt (2010:150) for further discussion on this observation.

no watertight, comprehensive definition of irony. Nonetheless, Van der Watt (2010:150; cf. Duke, 1985:13-17) suggests the following definition, which this study adopts:

Irony as a literary device is a double-levelled literary phenomenon in which two tiers of meaning stand in some opposition to each other and in which some degree of unawareness is expressed or implied.

In this chapter, the results of the reading survey indicate that, on the character level, irony can be understood as the phenomenon where characters, without being aware or intending to do so, utter statements that turn out to be true (in the mind of the implied reader) as the story unfolds. In other words, what the character says (though it is the truth) is not what they mean or at least what they would want to see happening. King (2015:706) also explains irony as “When opponents make derogatory statements which are true in a sense which they cannot realise.”

Van der Watt (2010:150; cf. Culpepper, 1983:165-166; Duke, 1985:17) makes a critical observation in the definition of irony and how it works when he says:

Basic to the description of irony is the fact that the reader (implicit or real) shares some knowledge with the implicit author. The character who utters these particular words, however, is not aware of this additional knowledge that will shed a different light on what is said. In a certain sense, what is said is true, but not in the sense that it is meant or intended by the speaker.

Regardless of its varying definitions, this study observes that Irony contributes massively to how the Fourth Gospel should be read and interpreted. Any reading of the Fourth Gospel that neglects to acknowledge the significant role of irony will inevitably result in a superficial understanding, leading to a failure to grasp the key theological truths conveyed in the Gospel.

Culpepper (1983:166; cf. Dolan, 1987:3) points out that “the fourth evangelist has been characterised repeatedly as a master of irony.” Bell (2014:8) also acknowledges that one of the more engaging rhetorical devices, and a major contributor to the Gospel’s enigmatic reputation, is its extensive use of irony. Regarding the Gospel’s reception to the first readers with its ironic nature, Keener (2003:223) opines that the Gospel’s earliest readers would have been well-attuned to its many ironies since irony was a common rhetorical and literary device in Graeco-Roman culture.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ See Bell (2014:8) for similar argumentation on this point.

With regard to the history of research on this literary device in the Fourth Gospel, this chapter agrees with Bell, that the last major scholarly contribution to the topic was by Paul Duke (1985) in *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (See also Culpepper, 1983:166).¹⁴¹ In his exploration of the Fourth Gospel's irony, Duke (1985: 8-13) points out that irony was known and effectively used in ancient times, both among the Greeks and Jews. In essence, Duke's work contributes hugely in that it attempts to clarify what irony is (Duke, 1985:14-27). Furthermore, Duke's work provides an account or analysis of how Johannine irony works through his analysis of local, extended, and sustained ironies.¹⁴² While this chapter applauds the insightful contribution made by Duke, the contention here is that the exploration of the performative nature of literary devices (in this case, irony) in the Fourth Gospel is still wide open for further exploration. Very critical and related to the quest of this chapter is Duke's acknowledgement (when discussing the function of irony) that irony exercises a peculiar power to those who perceive it (Duke, 1985:38). This assertion is key to pointing out the contribution that this chapter intends to make, i.e., to demonstrate the performative power/nature of irony to the implied reader.

Bell's dissertation, *'The midwife of truth: The nature of irony and a rationale for its prevalence in the Gospel of John,'* as already mentioned above, is yet another recent significant contribution to the study of the Fourth Gospel's use of irony. Bell's work contributes by proposing that the use of irony in the Fourth Gospel is intrinsically linked to a predominant Johannine theme of *alētheia* (truth). He points out that the conceptual link between irony and truth is a deliberate literary strategy employed by the author to entice the reader to seek certain propositional truths within the narrative. This finding is also important in that it explores the function of irony for the reader as they read the text. The current chapter, as already stated, aspires to continue with a demonstration of how irony achieves this (Bell's finding) as the reader reads the text.

While Duke's contribution on this topic has been applauded, Van der Watt (2010:150) cautions that the appearance of Duke's study on Johannine irony only gave the debate a new impetus, although this was by no way the first work on this topic. He mentions that Duke was stimulated by Culpepper's (1983) work, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*. In his treatment of what he calls "implicit commentary" in the Fourth Gospel, Culpepper indicates his intention, saying: "My intention, is to indicate the ways in which the Evangelist uses this means (implicit commentary)

¹⁴¹ Culpepper (1983) was acknowledging Duke's dissertation before it was developed into a book which was published in 1985.

¹⁴² Anderson (2008:268) also concurs, noting that "Paul Duke's *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (1985) poses a full treatment of how local and extended irony function in John's narrative."

to communicate with the reader and suggest the principal themes of this communication (e.g., the rejection of Jesus, the origin of Jesus, Jesus' identity, Jesus' ministry, Jesus' death and discipleship) and its effects upon one's reading experience." In this work, Culpepper (1983:166, 168) asserts that irony in the Fourth Gospel is a subtle form of communication between the author and the reader, remaining stable and usually covert. In covert irony, he argues, meaning is hidden rather than explained, but when the meanings of stable ironies are reconstructed by the perceived reader, "they are firm as a rock" (See also Booth, 1961:23). Culpepper makes a critical observation that John's use of irony in the Fourth Gospel is not only a form of communication but also serves a corrective purpose. Through irony, one perspective presented in the text contradicts, exposes, and invalidates another (cf. Muecke, 1969:235). Culpepper (1983:168) posits that the norms attributed to the implied author in the Fourth Gospel are ostensibly derived from Jesus himself and revealed by him (Culpepper, 1983:168). Culpepper's contribution on this topic is also applauded. Of significant importance in Culpepper's work is the thorough exploration of the potential impacts of implicit commentary, such as irony and other literary devices, on one's reading experience. The current chapter finds its place in Culpepper's description of irony as "a silent communication between the reader and author". The intention is to contribute by exploring the performative nature of this kind of communication between the implied author and the implied reader.

Apart from the scholarly contributions discussed above, irony as a literary device has received countless cursory comments in various scholarly articles/chapters¹⁴³ and commentaries.¹⁴⁴ In one of the commentaries, Brown (2003:290) helpfully asserts that irony, in the Fourth Gospel, is related to misunderstanding. Irony in the Fourth Gospel manifests when Jesus' opponents make statements about him that are derogatory, sarcastic, or at least inadequate in the sense they intend. Paradoxically, through the use of irony, these very statements often hold an unintended truth or possess a deeper meaning that the opponents fail to grasp. The evangelist simply presents such statements and leaves them unanswered (or leaves them answered with eloquent silence), for he is certain that his believing readers will see the deeper truth (Brown, 2003:290). Duke (1985:63) previously made a similar observation, referring to it as "typical Johannine irony". He notes that this irony is evident in the responses of non-believers, particularly when Jesus' opponents speak. While intending to criticise or challenge Jesus, these opponents end up

¹⁴³ See, for example: Dolan (1987); Ito (2000:373-387); Van der Watt (2010:150ff), etc.

¹⁴⁴ See, for example: Bruce (1983:168); Barrett (1978:228, 258); Lindars (1990:31, 51), etc.

unwittingly conveying deeper truths, unintentionally providing a wealth of information beyond their initial intentions.

Duke (1985:63) further states that:

They (the opponents) intend to question him, to mock him, to discredit him, and finally to destroy him; but the words they choose and the steps they take inevitably have the reverse effect ...they never know, of course. But the author and readers exchange glances as these respondents speak and move upon the stage.

According to Dolan (1987:2), the study of literary forms, such as irony, has significantly enriched our knowledge and understanding of the Gospels. In the context of Johannine irony, Dolan (1987:7) notes that certain characters remain exempt from becoming victims of irony,¹⁴⁵ e.g., the Beloved Disciple, Lazarus, and John the Baptist (Dolan, 1987:7). They are depicted in a manner that shields them from ironic situations. Conversely, there are characters who consistently find themselves on the receiving end of Johannine irony. For them, their role seems to be merely vehicles for the expression of an ironic utterance, e.g., Simon Peter (13:36-38), Mary Magdalene (20:14-15), the Samaritan woman (4:12), and occasionally the disciples (7:3-4). Furthermore, some characters become cruel victims of their own blindness, e.g., the Jewish opponents (2:18-20), Judas Iscariot (12:4-6), and Pilate (18:33-19:22).

As already alluded to, Duke (1985:95-104) organises these occurrences into three categories, namely: Local irony,¹⁴⁶ extended irony,¹⁴⁷ and sustained narrative irony.¹⁴⁸ Numerous identifications have been brought forward by scholars in the Fourth Gospel. For example, Thatcher (2000:210-211) identifies four types of riddles, of which one type, called 'dramatic riddles', is directly related to irony. He argues that such occurrences build dramatic or ironic tension in the narrative, e.g., 6:5; 11:11, 23; 13:10, 21; 21:18, 22.

¹⁴⁵ Culpepper (1983:179) cautions that the reader is never the victim of irony. (See also Thatcher [1999:54] and Dolan [1987:7] who highlight that in the Fourth Gospel Jesus may be the object but never the victim of irony, for in John Jesus is always in control). On this point, he further indicates that the object of the irony is the person by or through whom the irony is announced, while the victim is the one whose ignorance or blindness is revealed.

¹⁴⁶ In this category, Duke includes false claims to knowledge, false assumptions and accusations, suggestions of belief, and unconscious prophecy and testimony.

¹⁴⁷ These include ironic characterisation, irony of identity, irony of imagery, and irony of the Gospel (Duke, 1985:95-104).

¹⁴⁸ Here, Duke (1985:117) refers to the story of the healing of a man born blind (John 9) and the trial of Jesus (18:28-19:16; 19:22).

Dolan (1987:3) has observed that the Fourth Gospel has been more than generous in its use of ironic device. This study shares a similar observation. Consequently, it would go beyond the scope of this study to discuss all the commentaries of irony in the Fourth Gospel. This study aims at identifying and selecting several ironic occurrences from each category as classified by Duke (1985). By conducting an in-depth analysis, the study aims to showcase their performative nature i.e., how irony contributes to enforcing and achieving the purpose of the Gospel (20:30-31). The occurrences that will be analysed include: 2:16-20, 4:12, 7:42, 9:29, 11:50, 12:4-6, 19:19-22, and 20:13-15. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that there is a possibility that other scholars might have identified additional occurrences of irony within the text that may not have been covered in this particular study.

Having outlined a few major contributions on the Fourth Gospel's study of irony, one can describe the development as a shift from studies that sought to describe what irony is to studying the function and impact/effects of irony to the reader as they read the text. In the historical survey and reflection of the study of irony in the Fourth Gospel, Culpepper (1983:166) noted that earlier scholars¹⁴⁹ primarily focused on describing irony without delving into its function in inviting the reader to share the narrator's point of view. This observation holds significant importance for this study. As already mentioned in Chapter 1, Van der Watt, to my mind, is the only scholar who specifically explored the theme regarding performative language/elements in the Fourth Gospel. Therefore, this chapter underscores the need for the exploration of the performative nature of irony in the Fourth Gospel. Having outlined the historical survey, reflection, and pointing out the research gap, the following section is devoted to discussing the central theoretical argument of the chapter.

3.2 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The Fourth Gospel employs irony (ironic utterances/situations) as a communicative strategy to sensitise the implied reader's interests to the text and eventually persuades him/her to adopt the implied author's point of view.¹⁵⁰ In essence, the study hypothesises that irony is a deliberate communicative tool utilised with a performative intent in the Fourth Gospel. Through irony, the author

¹⁴⁹ Scholars like Clavier (1959), Booth (1961), Thompson (1948), and Jónsson (1965), etc.

¹⁵⁰ On this point, Culpepper (1983:4) asserts that "primarily [the Gospel] it is the literary creation of the evangelist, which is crafted with the purpose of leading the reader to "see" the world as the evangelist sees it so that in reading the Gospel they will be forced to test their perceptions and beliefs about the "real" world against the evangelist's perspective on the world they have encountered in the Gospel." Cf. Brown (1979:17) for similar argumentation.

reinforces the message of the Gospel and ensures that the purpose of the Gospel is realised in the life of the reader (real or implied), i.e., the reader is brought to faith in Jesus Christ as stated in 20:30-31.

As already suggested in Chapter 2 (in the study of misunderstanding), the primary argument here is that a thorough reading and/or study of the Fourth Gospel should leave the reader understanding that irony was employed with a performative intent in the Gospel of John. The focus here is to demonstrate how irony fulfils this role in its various occurrences in the text.

The following section proceeds with the exploration of the performative nature of irony in its various occurrences in the Fourth Gospel.

3.3 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 2:16-20

3.3.1 The Setting of the Story

Chapter 2:1-12 of the Fourth Gospel reports the story of Jesus' first miracle in Cana of Galilee.¹⁵¹ From this report, the narrator continues with the story of Jesus' first Passover and the cleansing of the temple. It is noted that 2:12 forms a connecting link between the incident of the temple cleansing and the sign of turning water into wine. The text reports that Jesus went from Capernaum to Jerusalem.¹⁵² Capernaum was where Jesus chose to live during his Galilean ministry. The fact that he only stayed there for a few days shows how close the Passover was (Carson, 1994:1030).

The focus of the narrative now shifts from family matters to national and religious issues with reference to Jesus.¹⁵³ Kanagaraj (2005:105; cf. Lindars, 1972:135-136) correctly observes that John describes Jesus' cleansing of the temple as if it is taking place at an early stage in his ministry, but in the Synoptic Gospels this event is recorded as taking place almost at the end of

¹⁵¹ Carson (1994:1029) remarks: "In this gospel there are a number of signs, and the turning of water into wine is the first. Most of the signs mentioned by John lead into a discourse on a related theme. These signs are clearly an integral part of the structure of the gospel. As a result of the first, John specially mentions that the glory of Christ was seen, and this points the way for an understanding of the rest."

¹⁵² Barrett (1978:194) notes, "At Passover time Jesus made the customary pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Exocl. 12.14--20,43---9; Lev. 23.4-8; Deut. 16.1-8; Josephus, Bel.11, 10)."

¹⁵³ Thomaskutty (2014:97) shares a similar observation by indicating that in John 2:13-22, the dialogue moves suddenly from the domestic village located in Galilee to the national religio-political headquarters, the temple in Jerusalem. For further discussion on the temple of Jerusalem, see Meyers (1992:350-369), Wise (1992:811-817), Beasley-Murray (1987:38-42), and Riesner (1992:41).

his ministry (Matt 21:12-17; Mk 11:15-18; Lk 19:45-46).¹⁵⁴ The setting is in Jerusalem at the temple court (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ). The characters involved are Jesus, his disciples, and the Jewish opponents.

It can be expected that many people in attendance are the Jewish opponents, since it is a Jewish Passover (ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων). It should also be kept in mind that this part of the Fourth Gospel generally reports the story of Jesus' ministry to the world or to non-believers (Van der Watt, 2010:9). This is important for the reader to remember so that he/she can understand the depth and the value of the ironic utterance to be discussed.

3.3.2 Illocutionary Act

The investigation here focuses, *inter alia*, on the utterance made by the Jewish opponents in 2:20, after Jesus drove the money changers and their livestock out of the temple court in 2:13-17.¹⁵⁵

Before analysing the utterance in 2:20, it is important to briefly discuss verses 13-15. The story begins with the narrator's voice informing the implied reader of the occasion around the setting of the event, that is, the Passover of the Jews was at hand (Καὶ ἐγγύς ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων). The study observes that most of the verbs used in this report are aorist active (e.g., ἀνέβη εἶπεν ἐξέβαλεν), denoting that the narrator is stating simple completed actions with certainty. This way of reporting a story is important, since it builds a relationship of trust between the narrator and the implied reader (Ito, 2015:107). At this stage, it can be indicated that the speech act utilised in the

¹⁵⁴ Keener (2003:518) mentions, "Unless Jesus cleansed the temple twice, which is unlikely, it is impossible to harmonize John's chronology for cleansing the temple with that of the Synoptics, as some early interpreters recognized. One might suggest that John depends on a separate tradition or that Mark, followed by Matthew and Luke, dischronologized the cleansing due to his emphasis on the passion. But more likely John adapts the more familiar chronology of the passion tradition to make an important point" (cf. also Kanagaraj, 2005:105). On this point, Barrett (1978:195) further suggests, "It is improbable that there were two cleansings, one at the beginning and one at the end of the ministry; this is both unlikely in itself and also quite without evidence if the literary connection between John and Mark is accepted. We may suppose either that John was in possession of an independent chronological tradition which he rated more highly than that of Mark, or that this placing of the incident was dictated by reasons theological rather than chronological." Tasker (1999:61-62) insightfully remarks: "John is here concerned. As always, with the light thrown by this event upon the Person of Jesus and the nature of his work. In narrating it in the manner he does he suggests to the reader that the first visit of Jesus to Jerusalem after his earthly ministry began was made in the spirit of Malachi's prophecy, though he does not actually quote it (Malachi 3:1-3)."

¹⁵⁵ Commenting on the status of the temple at this stage, Thomaskutty (2014:98) mentions that the reader of the story can view a large number of sellers (τοὺς πωλοῦντας), cattle (βόας), sheep (πρόβατα), doves (περιστερὰς), and the tables of money changers (τοὺς κερματιστὰς) as a backdrop of the story. The changed status of the temple (τῷ ἱερῷ) into a marketplace (ἐμπορίον) is vividly described in the setting, see Newman and Nida (1980:66-67).

report is an illocutionary act belonging to the category of *informatives*. The narrator's intention is to inform the implied reader about the confrontation between Jesus and the money changers in the temple.

In verses 16-19, the narrator reports the exchange between Jesus and the Jewish opponents. After driving the animals and the money changers out of the temple courts, the Jewish opponents ask Jesus for a sign/proof of the outstanding authority which alone could justify what he had done.¹⁵⁶ Jesus tells (challenges) the Jewish opponents to destroy the temple and he will raise it in three days (Λύσατε τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον [*destroy this temple*]).¹⁵⁷ The aorist imperative denotes a once-off command, the essence of which is a conditional imperative to express confidence¹⁵⁸ in what the speaker is saying or promising to do (cf. Thomaskutty, 2014:101).¹⁵⁹ This utterance by Jesus can be classified as an *illocutionary act* belonging to the category of *assertives*. In uttering it, Jesus challenges his opponents to destroy “this” (τοῦτον) temple with a confident expression that he will raise it in three days. To this challenge, the Jewish opponents respond, saying,

Τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ἑξ ἔτεσιν οἰκοδομήθη ὁ ναὸς οὗτος, καὶ σὺ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερεῖς αὐτόν (it has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?)

This utterance by the Jewish opponents is primarily and understandably a response (not necessarily an answer) to the challenge that Jesus issued to them. The utterance can basically be classified as a *question speech act*, however, it must be acknowledged that the Jewish opponents are not just asking but disputing (*disputive*) the claim of Jesus in a derogatory way.

¹⁵⁶ The *sign* requested in verse 18 is a different kind from the one mentioned in verse 11. The Jews were probably looking for some spectacular miracle. Barus (2006:139) points out that, “Although the sign mentioned in 2:23 do[es] not necessarily refer to 2:18, it is clear that the sign point[s] to Jesus’ words and deeds. Thus, the deeds of Jesus in the court of the Gentiles and his resurrection are viewed as ‘signs.’” See also Thomaskutty (2014:101).

¹⁵⁷ Barrett (1978:162) comments, “[T]he answer was a dark saying which the Jews misunderstood and the disciples understood only after the resurrection, to which event, in convert fashion, it referred.” He further indicates that “by this reply, Jesus in fact refused a sign; yet v. 23 implies that signs had taken place in Jerusalem, and that they had led to a superficial faith on the part of many beholders.”

¹⁵⁸ Smith (1999:89) correctly asserts, “Jesus has just previously performed his first sign in Cana; we have not yet been told of signs in Jerusalem. This demand is the Johannine counterpart of the question of authority posed by the chief priests, scribes and elders in the synoptics (Mark 11:27-33).”

¹⁵⁹ Wallace (1996:490, 688) clarifies saying: “The sense of the imperative here is minimally, ‘If you destroy...’ But if Λύσατε follows the normal semantic pattern of conditional imperatives, the force is even stronger: ‘If you destroy this temple- and I command you to- in three days I will raise it up.’”

Their utterance reveals a huge misunderstanding which creates an ironic situation for the implied reader. The possible effects of this utterance on the implied reader are discussed below.

3.3.3 Perlocutionary Act

The *Perlocutionary force* of the first *illocution (informative)* is evidently to get the implied reader to accept the information provided to him by the narrator. The implied reader gets to establish a relationship of trust with the narrator regarding the credibility of the report of the event and everything else that is going to take place. The information shared helps the implied reader to understand the context better and the nature of the occasion. The process of sharing information is also not neutral in its persuasive intent. While it empowers the implied reader with knowledge, it also carries a rhetorical power to persuade the implied reader, particularly when one considers the dramatic way the story is narrated.¹⁶⁰ In other words, the cognitive level of the implied reader is no longer the same as before reading the text. In this way it can be deduced that, through the informative speech, the implied reader is introduced and invited to participate in the tension that begins to build between Jesus and the Jewish opponents in the story.

It can be argued that the *perlocutionary force* of the *assertive* in verse 19 has the potential to invite the believing reader to share in the confidence expressed by Jesus as he challenges the Jewish opponents. In uttering “*destroy this temple and I will raise it in three days,*” the implied reader is called to marvel at Jesus’ confidence and the demonstration of authority. It must be indicated that, at this stage of the Gospel, the implied reader has gathered enough knowledge (cognitive awareness) about the origin and identity of Christ (1:14, 29 and 2:11) and what he can do. However, the Jewish opponents do not know (or at least they know but do not want to acknowledge his power), and this is where the irony is created. Due to their lack of understanding or their misunderstanding, their response to Jesus is clearly based on a literal interpretation of his statement.¹⁶¹ In verse 21, the narrator issues an aside to assist the implied reader to understand the depth of the irony. The implied reader is informed that Jesus was talking “*about the temple of his body*” (*περὶ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ*). The aside functions to ensure that the implied reader does not become the victim of the irony in the story. The narrator in verse 22 further indicates that only later did the disciples also understand. Clearly Jesus was speaking of himself

¹⁶⁰ For a further discussion of the rhetorical power of utterance forms and literary devices, refer to Carson (1991:175-183), Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:72-79), and Painter (1993:192-195).

¹⁶¹ Thomaskutty (2014:101) rightly observes that the response of the Jewish opponents portrays their lack of understanding.

(his body) as the *temple*,¹⁶² a new kind of temple which the Jews did not know (Köstenberger, 2009:310; cf. Barrett, 1978:196).

From a performative point of view, the *disputive by the Jewish opponents* has a persuasive power toward the reader. By virtue of an aside in verse 21, the implied reader is able to note the irony. The ironic situation happens between the narrator and the implied reader. The narrator winks and raises his eyebrows at the implied reader as they both watch in amusement the ignorance and lack of understanding of the Jewish opponents in the story (cf. Culpepper, 1983:165). The irony here is based on the fact that the reader has superior knowledge about the identity of Jesus and the prophecy of his resurrection from the dead compared to the Jewish opponents in the story. Cognitively, the implied reader is sensitised and invited to share the same point of view with the narrator regarding the death and resurrection of Christ in the Fourth Gospel.

The study observes that the author's communicative strategy regarding the death of Christ is clearly through irony and is performative in nature. The study highlights the Jewish opponents' function as rhetorical role players in the story. Their ignorance desensitises the implied reader from focusing on their point of view or following their bad example. In this way, irony functions to encourage and persuade the reader to make choices or decisions about what they have come to know regarding Jesus Christ, his death, and resurrection. His death and resurrection introduce/bring a new order of worship to which the implied reader is invited by means irony (cf. Barrett, 1978:196).

3.4 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 4:12

3.4.1 The Setting of the Story

The story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman presents yet another opportunity to demonstrate the performative nature of irony in the Fourth Gospel. Chapter 2 of this study has already discussed the crucial aspects regarding the setting of the story. The most important aspect that must be kept in mind is the report of Jesus overcoming two Jewish prejudices, namely: a conversation with a Samaritan, and a conversation with a woman. As indicated in Chapter 2, these two

¹⁶² The study observes that the demonstrative τοῦτου leaves the reader wondering whether Jesus was referring to Herod's temple or was he gesturing toward his own self (body) as he spoke? Regarding the remembrance of the disciples, Hoskins (2006:111-112; See also Brown, 1966:123) points out that "After Jesus' resurrection, the disciples remember Jesus' saying (2:19), understand it correctly (2:21), and accept it as true (2:22). Thus, they understand that when Jesus says, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days' (2:19), he is actually referring to his body as the Temple and not to the Jerusalem temple at all."

prejudices play a critical role in helping the reader grasp the essence of the irony discussed in this chapter. Additionally, it is essential not to overlook another aspect concerning the setting of the story: it is part of the narration of Jesus continuing to minister to the non-believing world. With this setting in mind, the implied reader can anticipate ironic utterances between the two characters, particularly from the Samaritan woman.

3.4.2 Illocutionary Act

As highlighted above, the utterance in 4:12 forms part of Jesus' dialogue with the Samaritan woman at the well.¹⁶³ The story begins with the voice of the narrator informing the reader about the scene where the conversation takes place (4:1-7a). The analysis in the previous chapter has already acknowledged the function and significance of the informative *speech act* in 4:1-7a. The current analysis centres on the first scene, as suggested earlier by Neyrey (2007:89), which is found in 4:7-15. This particular scene highlights a series of questions and misunderstandings by the woman.

Jesus asks the woman to give him some water. The request is conveyed in a direct speech in 4:7 "δός μοι πειν – *give me to drink.*" This speech evidently ignites the interchange that led to misunderstandings between the two characters in the story.¹⁶⁴ It is observed that the use of the aorist active imperative of *δίδωμι* and second aorist active infinitive would signify an utterance as a polite request by Jesus (Robertson, 1933).

It can be argued, on the one hand, that by this speech act, the narrator's basic intention is to inform the reader about Jesus' request to the woman. On the other hand, the speech act can be seen as a means to start up a dialogue that will lead to the transformation of the unbelieving Samaritan woman. Jesus' utterance can be categorised as an *illocutionary act* belonging to the *directives*. According to Botha (2009:488), this is an act with which the speaker (Jesus) intends to make the hearer (Samaritan woman) do something, not in the form of an aggressive command but rather a polite request.

¹⁶³ Lindars (1972:179) observes that "though the patriarchal narratives of Genesis tell of the digging of many wells, this one is not mentioned. But it is certainly very ancient, and being in Jacob's land would obviously have a traditional connection with him."

¹⁶⁴ Keener (2003:597) opines, "[T]o be sure, asking a member of the other gender for a drink was not necessarily viewed as promiscuous in all situations; requesting water from strangers was expected if one's need was urgent. In pagan stories one goddess weary with thirst asked for and received a drink at a hut; another, wearied from her journey, the sun's heat, and thirst sought a drink but was repulsed, then turned the cruel people into frogs."

This *directive* triggered the woman to ask more questions and wondering at who this man (Jesus) is. It is noted that at least she recognises him as a Jew. First, she is puzzled by why a Jew can ask water from her, a Samaritan? Jesus' response touches on two matters¹⁶⁵, namely: "τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ" (*the gift of God*), and his nature or identity – τίς ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων σοι (*who is speaking to you*). Jesus suggests to the woman that he is the giver of "τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ζῶν" (*the living water*).

In verse 12, the woman relates all that Jesus mentioned to her venerated father Jacob.¹⁶⁶ Jesus, having revealed himself as the giver of living waters, seemed to have begun a contest in the mind of the woman. The dialogue causes the Samaritan woman to question Jesus' status: "μὴ σὺ μείζων εἶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰακώβ" (*are you greater than our father Jacob?*)¹⁶⁷

The woman's utterance is evidently a question asked with an intention to elicit an answer from Jesus (a negative answer – look at μὴ σὺ μείζων εἶ). Wondering about what Jesus promises to offer her, the woman wants to know more about Jesus' status and identity. The essence of her utterance, designated as a *question speech act* above, seeks to know: "Is Jesus greater than her venerated father Jacob?" The woman's speech is sincere and essential in that it intends to draw the information from Jesus about his status. This study therefore refers to this utterance as a *question speech act*.¹⁶⁸ What follows after her question is a response by Jesus. Based on this observation, verses 13 and 14 become a *responsive speech act*, in that Jesus provides an answer to the posed questions.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ This study sees the τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ (*the gift of God*) as referring to Jesus Christ himself who has been given by the Father for the atonement of sins of the world (Jn 3:16).

¹⁶⁶ Hendricksen (1976:162) asserts that "through Joseph, the Samaritan traced their descent to Jacob, conveniently forgetting their mixed ancestry."

¹⁶⁷ Hendricksen (1976:162) points out that "though the question anticipates a negative answer, yet the woman shows that she is beginning to ponder the greatness of this stranger." Vincent (1887:114) also mentions that in the phrase "Art thou greater" (μὴ σὺ μείζων), the interrogative particle indicates that a negative answer is expected: *Surely, thou art not*. The σὺ, *thou*, first in the sentence, is emphatic, and possibly with a shade of contempt. When commenting about the woman's response, Jamieson *et al.* (1997:133) say, "not altogether refusing yet wondering at so unusual a request from a Jew, as His dress and dialect would at once discover Him to be, to a Samaritan." However, Hutcheson (1972:60) opines that it is a notable injury done unto Christ to plead any antiquity or succession to it in prejudice of him or his truth or cry up any above him; for it was her fault to cry up Jacob, and her interest in him, that she might slight him and his offer.

¹⁶⁸ See Ito (2015:114) for a detailed discussion of the scheme of the necessary and sufficient conditions for the speech act of question.

¹⁶⁹ Bach and Harnish (1979:43) present the schema of *responsives* as follows: answer, reply, respond, and retort.

At this stage, the study notes that the woman's utterance in 4:20 about the status of Jesus is ironic to the implied reader. The implied reader is in some sense also obliged to give attention to the woman's question: "Is Jesus greater than Jacob?" This ironic situation and its performative power are discussed in the following sub-section.

3.4.3 Perlocutionary Act

The focus of this section is to demonstrate the perlocutionary force or the possible effects of the established illocutionary acts. First, the study pays attention to the perlocutionary *force* of the *question speech act* by the woman (v. 12). As already mentioned above, the woman's utterance creates an ironic situation¹⁷⁰ for the implied reader. The reader's cognitive awareness (superior knowledge) plays a critical role in understanding the nature of the irony. At this stage, the implied reader has already gathered enough knowledge regarding the status and identity of Jesus in the text, e.g., Jesus is the Messiah (1:41; 3:28),¹⁷¹ the Son of God, and the King of Israel (1:49); he performs signs (2:1-12); he is the new temple (2:13-25); and the teacher who comes from God (3:2). This superior knowledge enables the implied reader to grasp the irony of the woman's utterance and is evidently not neutral in its performative function (cf. Duke, 1985:70). As the Samaritan woman asks the stranger, who is Jesus: "Are you greater than our father Jacob?", the implied reader is cognitively invited/challenged to participate in the story by attempting to answer the question as well. Based on his knowledge about Jesus, the reader can answer the question successfully, i.e., Yes, Jesus is greater/superior to Jacob. Jesus provides water that is greater than that of Jacob and greater than Samaritan holy sites (Keener, 2003:601).¹⁷² In this sense, the text is formulated in such a way that it invites and sensitises the implied reader to participate in it by giving answers and also ridiculing the character whose knowledge about Christ is poor.

¹⁷⁰ Lindars (1972:182) correctly observes that the question is sarcastic, but ironically it is perfectly true. Moreover, by mentioning the cattle (and Jacob had vast flocks and herds – Gen 31-3), the woman hints that it must be a very copious supply of water. He further mentions that this makes Jesus' claim seem even more impossible, but takes the irony further, for in fact his waters are inexhaustible.

¹⁷¹ Keener (2003:482) succinctly states that by announcing to Nathanael that Jesus is the one of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, Philip utters a confession identical in sense to that of Andrew: "we have found the Messiah."

¹⁷² The elaboration of this point by Keener (2003:601) is helpful. He says, "Jesus' superiority to Jacob is central to this story. When the Samaritan woman asks whether Jesus can be greater than Jacob, it is possible that the tone is mocking; in any case, she recognises that to provide water the way he claims, Jesus would have to be greater than Jacob who once provided water (according to the later Jewish and perhaps Samaritan tradition, miraculously). Nevertheless, the informed reader, knowing the true answer, catches John's irony, a technique the author also applies elsewhere (7:2; 11:50; 18:38; 19:2-3)."

The woman's utterance does not only sensitise the reader cognitively but also emotionally. The woman's elaboration of what Jacob has provided the entire family signifies her confidence and egotism to defend the gains of her family heritage. This study suggests that this is an emotional language. Jacob provided the well from which he, along with his sons and livestock, drank (*ὅς ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν τὸ φρέαρ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἔπιεν καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ θρέμματα αὐτοῦ*). Duke (1985:70) suggests that the woman's utterance can be rephrased as follows: "You aren't greater than such provider, are you?"¹⁷³

The believing reader of the Gospel already knows that Jesus can do more than what Jacob has done for his entire family. It has been pointed out that at this stage of the Gospel narrative the implied reader has already experienced the first sign done by Jesus in Cana of Galilee (2:1-10) and in Jerusalem during the Passover (2:23). Jesus has already revealed his power to the implied reader. In his/her mind, the believing reader might be itching with the question, "hasn't she heard; doesn't she know?"¹⁷⁴ The essence of the irony rests on the fact that the implied reader knows and has already experienced the superiority of Jesus in the text.

The author's communicative strategy is evidently through irony, and it is formulated and presented in such a way that it engages and challenges the implied reader to ask questions and eventually make decisions when reading the text. The formulation of the story is in such a way that the implied reader is provided, in his/her hand, missing pieces to the ironic puzzle created by the Samaritan woman's question. Through the use of irony, the narrator invites the reader to piece together the missing puzzles, effectively making them a participating character in the story. The irony also gives the reader an opportunity to align him/herself with the overall plan of the implied author with the narrative. It encourages the implied reader to join the narrator and mock¹⁷⁵ the character (woman) who is not realising that she is talking to someone who is actually greater than Jacob (cf. Duke, 1985:40). Cognitively and emotionally the implied reader is challenged to answer the question and consequently invited to adopt the implied author's point of view in the story. This manner of constructing the text is performative in nature and it does play a significant role in

¹⁷³ Moloney (1998:122) also adds that, according to the woman, it is unthinkable that anyone could be greater than Jacob.

¹⁷⁴ While commenting on this irony, Duke (1985:70) points out that the reference of Jacob as "our father" will shortly be undercut by the reminder of another Father who calls his children to move beyond this venerated site and all others to the realm of spirit and truth.

¹⁷⁵ See Duke (1985:40).

ensuring that the Gospel's central purpose is enforced, i.e., Jesus is the Son of God and is therefore greater than Jacob, and by believing in him you may have eternal life.

3.5 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 7:42

3.5.1 The Setting of the Story

This section is a narration of the debate over Jesus' messiahship. The chapter begins by giving the reason why Jesus spent more of his time in Galilee than in Judea (v. 1), which was because the Jewish opponents, and the people in Judea and Jerusalem, sought to kill him (7:1, for healing the impotent man on a Sabbath (Henry, 1996:1957; cf. Painter, 1993:287-289; Thomaskutty, 2014:296). The focus verse of the analysis here takes place when Jesus was at the Feast of Tabernacles¹⁷⁶ in Jerusalem, the event he secretly attended (7:10).¹⁷⁷ The characters in the story are Jesus, his brothers, the Pharisees, and the Jewish opponents. Jesus' public teaching in 7:14 (ἐδίδασκεν)¹⁷⁸ in the last day, also called *the great day* (Ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ μεγάλῃ) of the feast, created the tension among his hearers. The text reports that many from the crowd, when they heard his teaching, marvelled¹⁷⁹ and said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee?"

¹⁷⁶ This Feast was the last of the three annual festivals, celebrated on the fifteenth of the seventh month (See Lev 23:33 and Deut 16:13). Regarding this Feast, Lindars (1972:282; cf. Köstenberger, 2009:311; Morris, 1995:371-372) says, "This was the autumn feast and the most popular pilgrimage feasts while the Temple was still standing. The main feature was the custom of bivouacking in huts of wood and greenery, derived from the old vintage customs, but interpreted as a recapturing of the days of dwelling in tents in the wilderness period. The feast lasted a week, plus an octave day in post-Exilic times. So much may be gathered from the OT (Lev: 23.39:1-3)."

¹⁷⁷ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:141) clarify that "in a manner secretly; perhaps by some other route, and in a way not to attract notice." Barrett (1978:313) is of the opinion that, "Undoubtedly, John's contrast of a concealed with a manifest departure and entry is theologically motivated: Jesus can be manifested as Son of God only to his own; no publicity can declare the truth about him."

¹⁷⁸ Keener (2003:712) explains, "Jesus was a teacher (3:2; 7:28, 35; 8:20) and like many other teachers he used the temple courts to instruct the people. He further explains that Jesus' teaching, however, is quite different from that of his contemporaries. Jamieson *et al.* (1997:141) highlight, "This word denotes formal and continuous teaching, as distinguished from mere casual sayings. This was probably the first time that He did so thus openly in Jerusalem. He had kept back till the feast was half through, to let the stir about Him subside, and entering the city unexpectedly, had begun His "teaching" at the temple, and created a certain awe, before the wrath of the rulers had time to break it." Blum (1985:300) comments that "His teaching was learned and spiritually penetrating." For a further discussion on Jesus' teaching, see Lindars (1972:286).

¹⁷⁹ Lindars (1972:287) remarks that "though we are not told what he has been saying."

Borchert (1996:292) explains that there was growing frustration amongst the people as a result of their popular theories concerning the expected Messiah's origin. Some were convinced by his words that he was the one anticipated as "the prophet" (7:40).¹⁸⁰ Others argued that he must be "the Christ," the Messiah (7:41). Still others rejected both ideas because of his association with Galilee (7:41). The analysis of the performative nature of irony in this story focuses on the group that rejected Jesus based on his origin. As will be elaborated on a bit later, the irony is based on the superior knowledge of the implied reader regarding the identity and origin of Jesus. The following sub-section provides such an exploration.

3.5.2 Illocutionary Act

The text begins with the narrator's voice informing the implied reader about the events building up to the Feast of Tabernacles (7:1-2). The opening phrase "Καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα" (*after these things*), is seen as a thematic connection between the previous events (that is, all that is recorded after 5:18). The narrator continues to report the story, also allowing the characters to express themselves with direct speeches, e.g., Jesus (in 7:6-8, 16-19, 21-24, 28-29, 33-34, 36, and 37-38); his brothers (7:3-4), and the Jewish opponents (7:11-12, 20, 25-27, 35 and 42). Based on this observation, the general speech act utilised is an illocutionary act belonging to the *informatives*. The *informative* in this case is essential since it empowers the implied reader with information; they need to continue reading the story with the necessary understanding. The intention of the narrator is never to lose the attention of the implied reader and to leave him/her uninformed. It was established in the discussion of the setting of the story that after Jesus' public teaching, the crowd was divided on the matter of the Messiah's origin. The utterance in 7:42 is important and is recorded as follows:

Οὐχ ἡ γραφή εἶπεν ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ καὶ ἀπὸ Βηθλέεμ τῆς κώμης ὅπου ἦν Δαυὶδ ἔρχεται ὁ Χριστός (Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?)

This utterance by the group only referred to as "οἱ" (*some*)¹⁸¹ is a basic question that needs an answer. The question seeks some clarity regarding the origin of the Messiah.¹⁸² Thus, this study

¹⁸⁰ Robertson (1933:132) points out that "The one promised to Moses (Deut. 18:15) and long expected."

¹⁸¹ Borchert (1996:292) refers to this group as those who rejected Jesus based on the question of origin.

¹⁸² Lindars (1972:303) suggests that the primary reference of the utterance must be to Micah 5:2, which alone asserts that the future king will be born in Bethlehem. See also Bruce (1983:183) for a similar suggestion. Robertson (1933:132) concurs, saying: "The reference is to Micah 5:2, the very passage quoted by the chief priests and scribes in response to Herod's inquiry (Matt. 2:6)."

recognises this utterance as a *question speech act*. However, it should be noted that the intended recipient of this question is not immediately clear. Neither does the narrator provide the implied reader with a footnote (asides)¹⁸³ to the answer. Nevertheless, this *question speech act* creates an ironic situation in the story, as Duke (1985:66) also observes. He mentions that for those who have ears to hear, the reverberating irony *in the question* is thunderous. Robertson (1933:132-133) indicates that the ignorance about Bethlehem as Jesus's place of birth belongs to the Jews, not to John the author of the Gospel. Duke (1985:64) classifies this type of irony under local irony (false claims to knowledge).¹⁸⁴

The essence of the irony here lies on the ignorance of the Jews versus the superior knowledge of the implied reader. To this, Jamieson *et al.* (1997:142) comment, "We accept this spontaneous testimony to our David-descended, Bethlehem-born Savior. Had those who gave it made the inquiry which the case demanded, they would have found that Jesus 'came out of Galilee' (7:41) and 'out of Bethlehem' both, alike in fulfilment of prophecy as in point of fact (Mt 2:23; 4:13-16)."¹⁸⁵ Bruce (1983:182) correctly observes, "Here we have a signal instance of Johannine irony." Having noted this ironic situation, the following section continues to discuss the perlocutionary force (the performative nature) of the *question speech act* established.

3.5.3 Perlocutionary Act

Since the utterance by the group in 7:42 is a *question speech act* (with no clarity as to who must give an answer), this study suggests that the question is also directed to the implied reader of the Gospel. Again, the implied reader is drawn to the text to deal with the irony created by the utterance. The irony is an invitation to the implied reader to enter into a silent communication with the narrator (cf. Culpepper, 1983:166). The nature of irony invites the implied reader to feel the need to provide an answer on behalf of the ignorant Jewish opponents. From a performative point of view, the *question speech act* challenges the implied reader's superior knowledge regarding the origin of Jesus. By now, the implied reader knows too well what the Jewish opponents seem

¹⁸³ See Neyrey (2007:148) for a detailed use of footnotes or asides. Cf. Borchert (1996:292-293) on the similar comment.

¹⁸⁴ Under this group, Duke (1985:64) includes 6:42; 7:27; 7:52 and 9:29.

¹⁸⁵ Tasker (1999:106) also comments on the ignorance of the third group in the crowd about the birth of Christ in the royal town of Bethlehem and of Christ's legal descent from David.

to be struggling about in the story, that is, the identity and origin of Christ. By virtue of irony, the implied reader is cognitively engaged and challenged to participate in the story.

In this instance, the silence of the narrator, regarding the answer, deserves further comment. Borchert (1996:292) contends that certain readers of John might find it troubling that the evangelist did not include an aside (footnote) to correct the false opinion of the people, clarifying that they were unaware that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Borchert further mentions that John often did not counter the false opinions of the opponents (e.g., Jesus, the son of Joseph, 6:42). John simply left the ideas out there to indicate the irony of their false perception of Jesus' origin.¹⁸⁶ Even though the narrator, this time, is not smiling and winking at the reader, John knew well enough and so did many of his readers that Jesus was indeed born of the seed of David according to the flesh and that Judean Bethlehem, not Galilean Nazareth, was his birthplace (Bruce, 1983:182).

Based on the comments above, it is evident that the silence of the narrator serves to enhance the irony in the story and is performative in nature since the reader is not given any room to ignore it. Therefore, irony is evidently a communicative strategy by the author, and it does challenge the reader to participate in the text. The narrator, though silent, has cognitively persuaded the implied reader to stand up and testify, based on their knowledge about the identity and origin of Christ (1:29, 41, 49; 4:42; 6:59). Therefore, the text is formulated in such a way that the implied reader is drawn into the text to share in the author's point of view regarding the Messiahship of Jesus. The irony is performative since it calls the implied reader to provide clarity about the Messiah's place of birth, something which the opponents in the text could not grasp. Subsequently, the performative power of irony sensitises the implied reader to make a choice (staying in the truth and testifying it). This leaves the implied reader closely associated with Jesus Christ in the text and consequently encourages the reader to disassociate him/herself from the unbelieving group who continues to reject Jesus based on their wrong perceptions about him.

¹⁸⁶ Borchert (1996:293) even concludes by proposing that John's silence may as well be understood as a suggestion that Jesus originated from neither Bethlehem nor Galilee but from God as John 1:1-18 indicates. Keener (1993:283-284) also adds, "Contradicting what others had said in 7:27, some people cite the place where the Messiah was to originate, based on Micah 5:2; that the Messiah was of Davidic descent was unanimously held. Although John included no birth narratives, the conjunction of Matthew, Luke and widespread Christian traditions known by the early second century (to pagans interrogated by Hadrian) suggests that John's readers know that Christ was born in Bethlehem. They would thus regard Jesus' opponents here as ignorant." Regarding the debate of Jesus' origin, Willmington (1999:612) says: "Through all the confusion, God was protecting his Son so that he could complete his mission (7:30)."

3.6 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 9:29

3.6.1 The Setting of the Story

The narration of Chapter 9 is a story of the healing of the man born blind.¹⁸⁷ This story is within the literary unit 9:1-10:21.¹⁸⁸ It is a dialogue between Christ, his disciples, the blind man, the parents of the blind man, and the Pharisees. Ito (2015:91) mentions that Chapter 9 of John's Gospel is placed within the broader context where the controversy between Jesus and those who opposed him, especially the Jewish leaders, gradually became more intense.¹⁸⁹

The polemic started at the Feast of Tabernacles in Chapter 7 and continues between Jesus and his (Jewish) opponents in Chapter 8.

Already in 8:12, Jesus had said, "*Εγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου*" (*I am the light of the world*). This proclamation intensified the theme of light and darkness in the Fourth Gospel.¹⁹⁰ The healing of the blind man in Chapter 9 is a perfect example or a practical demonstration of this theme. As

¹⁸⁷ Hendricksen (1976:71) indicates that this (blindness) was rather common among the ancients, just as it is even today among those who do not use the necessary precautionary measures in connection with childbirth. Keener (2003:777) explains that blindness was often associated with sin; in many cultures it is natural to associate another's affliction with a specific avoidable cause to prevent anxiety on the part of those who speculated about the causes (cf. Job 6:21). He further points out that ancients held that wrong caused a variety of maladies. Thus, gods and fate often sent punishment like crime; Jewish sources, including both early sages and sectarian sources as well as later rabbis, recite the same principle. In many Greco-Roman sources, God or gods punished with physical afflictions, including blindness. In Jewish sources, sickness often stemmed from sin.

¹⁸⁸ Keener (2003:775) remarks that this section opens with the healing of a blind man (9:1-7) and closes with the recognition that this miracle was not what one expected from a demon (10:21). Moloney (1998:291) also indicates that 9:1-10:21 must be regarded as a literary unit. Hughes and Laney (2001:475) insightfully comment, "It was held, though not widely, that the soul of a man could sin in a pre-existent state (9:2). Others held that the offspring would be punished by God for the sins of the parents. But the reason for this man's suffering was not that anyone had sinned; this man's blindness was allowed so that through his life God's glorious light might be displayed." For further notes on this, see Thomaskutty (2014:375).

¹⁸⁹ Richards (1991:686) correctly says: "Opposition to Jesus continues to intensify. When Jesus heals a man born blind (9:1-12), the Pharisees badger the healed man. They cannot deny the miracle but will not admit He is God's messenger (vv. 13-16)."

¹⁹⁰ Thompson (2016:273) emphasises that "from the beginning of the gospel of John 'light' serves as an important image in the portrayal of reality and of the figure of Jesus and the benefits that he bestows. Like other ancient authors, John exploits the common characteristics of light in developing this multifaceted image and its associations with sight and illumination." She continues to indicate that "Light always carries a positive connotation, symbolising among other things deliverance, freedom, joy hope truth and the reward of the pious."

already discussed in the analysis of 7:42, the question concerning Jesus' origin and identity by the Pharisees seem to be persistent in 9:29.

The text does not explicitly describe the setting (i.e., place and time) of the story.¹⁹¹ However, it can be deduced that this event took place in Jerusalem just after Jesus left the temple during the Feast of Tabernacles, as the text reports in 8:59: "...καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ" (*and he went out of the temple*). And in 9:1: "Καὶ παράγων εἶδεν ἄνθρωπον τυφλὸν" (*and going out he saw a blind man...*). Therefore, 8:59 and 9:1 form a logical thematic connection between the two chapters and does give the implied reader a clue regarding the time and place of the story. The following sub-section continues with the analysis of the illocutionary acts in the demarcated passage.

3.6.2 Illocutionary Act

The focus of the analysis is in 9:29 which reads as follows:

Ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεῖ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν (We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from).

The quotation above reveals an ongoing quest by the Pharisees to reject Jesus and to question his origin and identity.¹⁹² The utterance reveals their conviction about how God communicates to them.

They say, "Ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεῖ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός" (*We know that God spoke to Moses*).

The personal pronoun ἡμεῖς denotes an emphatic tone or over confidence¹⁹³ in their utterance. The use of a perfect verb λελάληκεν also denotes the ongoing effect (their confidence) of a completed action in the past. It is a revelation of their current conviction based on what they claim

¹⁹¹ However, Keener (2003:776-777) says that "the location near the temple (8:59-9:1) makes sense; temple with their broad colonnades provided natural places for begging. In the story world it therefore remains the final day of the feast of Tabernacles (7:2, 37)." For further suggestions regarding the time of the event, see Ito (2015:91), Schnackenburg (1968:240), and Jones (1997:165).

¹⁹² Keener (2003:789) correctly observes that this scene is about "debating Jesus' identity." When clarifying the stance of the Pharisees, Wiersbe (1996:326) explains: "The Pharisees were cautious men who would consider themselves conservatives, when in reality they were 'preservatives.' A true conservative takes the best of the past and uses it, but he is also aware of the new things that God is doing. The new grows out of the old (Matt. 13:52). A 'preservative' simply embalms the past and preserves it. He is against change and resists the new things that God is doing. Had the Pharisees really understood Moses, they would have known who Jesus was and what He was doing."

¹⁹³ Cf. Duke (1985:68).

to know God has done in the past. The second part of their utterance is a contrast of what they know (conviction).

Τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἶδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν (as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from).

The Pharisees question the identity and origin of Jesus. Based on this observation, the utterance in v. 29 can be classified as an illocutionary act of the category of *assertives*. The Pharisees simply present the prevailing situation, at least to their best knowledge, about Moses and their ignorance about the origin of Jesus.

Ito (2015:343) correctly observes that this utterance contains contrastive statements that emphasise the distinction they wanted to make. He further indicates that the distinction concerns the credibility or authenticity of the contrastive figures, namely Moses and Jesus. To the Jews, Moses came from God because God spoke to him, but Jesus came from nowhere, definitely not from God, because no one knew Jesus' origin nor identity.¹⁹⁴

The *assertive*, is ironic to say the least. Duke (1985:68) indicates that in each of these “false claims to knowledge” the opponents juxtapose what they think they know about Jesus with what they know of the Christ (6:42; 7:27, 42) or the Prophet-like-Moses (7:52, 9:29). He continues to argue that in every case their claims prove to be both resoundingly false and peculiarly true, though in ways never known to them. The following section will continue to discuss the performative power of this irony for the implied reader.

3.6.3 Perlocutionary Act

The perlocutionary force of the *assertive* invites the implied reader to evaluate the claim by the Pharisees (Jewish opponents) in the story. From the performative point of view, the irony also invites the implied reader to page back, in the text, to re-evaluate their knowledge about the origin of Jesus in relation to Moses. To the Pharisees, Jesus was an unknown; “We don't even know

¹⁹⁴ Ito (2015:343; cf. Bruce, 1983:218) further elaborates that they were certain of this, for the speech act of their utterance, in this instance, is both assertive and disputative. The Jews sincerely believed Jesus' unknown origin. Hughes and Laney (2001:475) rightly acknowledge this, saying: “Again, the question of Jesus' origin (9:29) arises. The Jewish leaders looked to his earthly origin. The healed man worked backwards from his healing to recognize the divine origin of his Healer.” Wiersbe (1996:326) adds, “The leaders were sure about Moses, but they were not sure about Jesus. They did not know where He came from. He had already told them that He had come from heaven, sent by the Father (John 6:33, 38, 41-42, 50-51). They were sure that He was the natural son of Mary and Joseph, and that He was from the city of Nazareth (John 6:42; 7:41-42). They were judging ‘after the flesh’ (John 8:15) and not exercising spiritual discernment.”

where He comes from,” yet they claimed to know Moses who, Jesus said, wrote about him in 5:46 (Blum, 1985:308). As the Jewish opponents continue in their empty confidence and false claims, by virtue of irony, the reader is cognitively sensitised and challenged to wonder at the ignorance of the Pharisees. The implied reader reaffirms their existing knowledge about Jesus, as they read in the previous chapters of the Gospel. Brown (2003:290) asserts that the *implied* reader knows that Jesus is from God (1:1-18), and that the believing reader recognises the irony in this statement, and sides with the cured man, who suggests that Jesus might be “from God” (v. 33).

The irony of their persistent denial invites the reader to draw closer to the author’s point of view (cf. Ito, 2015:344). And this is what the Gospel is purposed to achieve or do in the life of the implied reader, that is, the reader believes in Jesus Christ so that they may have eternal life.

In this case, the author’s communicative strategy is not neutral in its persuasive intent. The author ensures that the reader remains connected to the Jesus who came from God. And through this irony, the author achieves this goal. The irony also functions to discourage the believing reader to associate her/himself with those who continue in their ignorance to question Jesus’ origin and to reject him. Therefore, the reader is silently warned not to follow their bad example.

3.7 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 11:50

3.7.1 The Setting of the Story

John 11 reports the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead and the subsequent reaction towards the miracle. The setting of the story is in Bethany near Jerusalem. The characters involved are Jesus and his disciples, Lazarus, Mary, Martha (v. 1),¹⁹⁵ the Jewish opponents (v. 31), the Pharisees (v. 48), and the chief priests – Caiaphas (v. 48). Scholars have objected to this sign based on its historicity, since there is no parallel of it in the Synoptic Gospels.¹⁹⁶ However,

¹⁹⁵ Sloyan (1988:141) notes that the story begins with an identification of the three Bethany family members through reference to the next chapter. This argues for displacement, or else familiarity on the part of John’s hearers with a synoptic story like that of the anointing at Bethany (cf. Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9 and Luke 7:36-50).

¹⁹⁶ The historicity debate is outside the scope of this study, however Barrett (1978:389) is helpful in indicating that “this need not in itself mean that the narrative was created by John. There are suggestive parallels between Johannine narrative and a Lucan parable (Luke 16:19-31). The conclusion of the Lukan parable is that even should the poor man Lazarus rise from the dead, men will not be persuaded to repent. No such resurrection takes place, either in fact or in the fictitious narrative; but it is contemplated”. Kanagaraj (2005:355) also says, “[E]ven though there is no parallel of the story in the Synoptic Gospel, the three names – Martha, Mary and Lazarus – have been discovered in one tomb near Bethany as well as on ossuaries dating from the first century AD in the Jerusalem area. This archaeological discovery gives evidence that these persons were living in Bethany near Jerusalem in the first century AD.” For similar argumentation on this matter, see Brown

Kanagaraj (2005:355) asserts that Lazarus' resurrection provides the link between the events that took place during the Jewish feasts and Jesus' suffering and crucifixion. In fact, John presents it as the sign that precipitates the trial and death of Jesus.

In his story the narrator reports the consequent reactions to the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. The text mentions that some people believed (v. 45);¹⁹⁷ some reported the incident to the authorities (v. 46); the Pharisees discussed the matter in the Sanhedrin and decided to plot Jesus' death (v. 47-53);¹⁹⁸ while Jesus himself withdrew to the wilderness (Carson, 1994:1050).

Very critical is the revelation of Jesus' love to the family of Lazarus (11:3, 5, 11, etc.) and to his disciples or those who believe in him in general. Kanagaraj (2005:355; cf. Van der Watt, 2007:25) correctly observes that this miracle is a typical example of God's love expressed in and through Jesus, who places himself at the service of his friend and of the family he loved. He continues to indicate that Jesus' giving of life to the dead by the power from the Father (see v. 42) anticipates his own resurrection and the new life that he brings to all those who believe in him.

3.7.2 Illocutionary Act

Following the survey of the occurrences of irony mentioned earlier, the focus of this sub-section will be on 11:49b-50, which reads as follows:

Ἔμεῖς οὐκ οἶδατε οὐδέν, οὐδὲ λογίζεσθε ὅτι συμφέρει ὑμῖν ἵνα εἷς ἄνθρωπος ἀποθάνῃ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ μὴ ὅλον τὸ ἔθνος ἀπόληται (you know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish).

These words are uttered by Caiaphas,¹⁹⁹ the high priest, as he responds to the chief priests and the Pharisees who are plotting to kill Jesus. In giving the response, Caiaphas' utterance “Ἔμεῖς

(2003:84-85). Keener (2003:836) further contributes to this matter by saying: “As difficult as it is to distinguish tradition and redaction anywhere in this gospel, including in this narrative, Meier provides convincing evidence that the Lazarus story goes back to John's tradition, though it was originally a brief story unrelated to Jesus' passion. Hence, he does not regard it as surprising that the Synoptics omit it.”

¹⁹⁷ Van der Watt (2007:16) observes that the increasing number of people who began to believe in Jesus caused great concern among the Jewish leaders, leading them to finally decide to kill him (11:45-53).

¹⁹⁸ Thomaskutty (2014:475) opines that the dialogue begins with a question of frustration from the part of the chief priests and the Pharisees (v. 47a). The reason for their frustration is expressed at the authoritative and political levels.

¹⁹⁹ Regarding Caiaphas, Blum (1985:315; cf. Bruce, 1983:250; Barrett, 1978:406) states that “originally the high priest held his position for a lifetime, but the Romans were afraid of letting a man gain too

οὐκ οἶδατε οὐδέν” (*you know nothing at all*) (v. 49) reveals his confident and authoritative stance in what he is about to utter; first he tells the Pharisees that they have no idea how to stop Jesus from his works and the people from following him; second, he tells the council that it will be advantageous for them to let one man die for the people and thus to spare the whole nation from destruction (Keener, 2003:856-857).²⁰⁰ The utterance reveals a persuasive intent, from the side of Caiaphas, suggesting that his response or the solution he is offering to the Pharisees will resolve the situation.

Based on this observation, the utterance of Caiaphas can generally be called a *responsive speech act* with an *assertive* tone in it. As other scholars have already observed (Duke, 1985:87), Caiaphas’ utterance is ironic to the implied reader. Duke notices “an unconscious foreshadowing of what is properly called an irony of events” (cf. Neyrey, 2007:204-205). However, for the sake of the reader, the narrator provides an aside in verse 51. The high priest says that it would be better to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed (11:50). Ironically, Jesus did die to save the nation or family of God, although the high priest did not realise the truth of his words and he obviously did not intend it the way it turned out.²⁰¹

While commenting on this irony, Carson (1994:1050) states that John sees the unifying purpose of the death of Christ in gathering together the children of God, a term here used for all who would come to believe in Jesus (v. 52). The next sub-section continues with the demonstration of the performative power of the established irony.

3.7.3 Perlocutionary Act

In discussing the performative nature of irony in verse 50, the study will first look at the perlocutionary force of both the *responsive* and the *assertive* established in the discussion above.

much power. So, the Romans appointed high priests at their convenience. Caiaphas had the office from A.D. 18 to 36.” Kanagaraj (2005:377) adds that Caiaphas held the office of high priest from AD 18 to AD 36 and was the *ex officio* president of the Sanhedrin.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Kanagaraj (2005:355), Thomaskutty (2014:475), and Keener (2003:856-857).

²⁰¹ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:151) summarises the irony as follows: “Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation—He meant nothing more than that the way to prevent the apprehended ruin of the nation was to make a sacrifice of the Disturber of their peace. But in giving utterance to this suggestion of political expediency, he was so guided as to give forth a divine prediction of deep significance; and God so ordered it that it should come from the lips of the high priest for that memorable year, the recognized head of God’s visible people, whose ancient office, symbolized by the Urim and Thummim, was to decide in the last resort, all vital questions as the oracle of the divine will.” When commenting on the ironic dialogue, Thomaskutty (2014:475-476) correctly points out that Caiaphas’ proposal of Jesus’ death as a solution for the dilemma is the climax of the dialogue.

The perlocutionary force of the utterance has a potential to evoke the implied reader's awareness of the desperate state the Jewish opponents find themselves in. It also has a power to keep the reader in suspense, eagerly waiting to see how Caiaphas is going to resolve the situation. As for the irony and its performative function, it is first observed that the irony is located on the character level. Caiaphas is a victim of irony. While commenting on this irony, Duke (1985:87) indicates that the utterance made in verse 50 was made with proper conviction but Caiaphas cannot hear how he mocks himself, and never perceives that this unseen audience looks on with amusement.

The study notes that the crux of the irony lies in the reader's superior knowledge about the sacrificial death of Christ. The character in the story makes a profound statement without comprehending its full implications, while the reader, armed with complete awareness, can perceive the full extent of its significance.²⁰² Unless one opts to overlook the textual evidence, the irony is clear to the implied reader. Caiaphas unknowingly confirms that Jesus will die to save the people from the coming destruction.

Furthermore, the study has acknowledged the aside that the narrator provided in verse 51. The narrator confirms to the implied reader that Caiaphas' utterance is bigger than he comprehends. In this way the narrator smiles, winks, and raises his eyebrows to the implied reader (Culpepper, 1983:165), and this is stimulating to the reader. The irony evidently sensitises the reader's emotions and interests towards what is being said. The reader is excited to hear the confirmation that the death of Christ will save the nation. Cognitively and emotionally, the reader becomes a participating character in the story, in that he joins the narrator both in amusement and pity towards Caiaphas.²⁰³ It can, therefore, be argued that the author evidently utilises irony as his communicative strategy to draw the reader to Christ. Through the aside (v. 51), the implied author shows that he carefully writes the Gospel with the intention to do something in the life of the reader. The believing reader's faith is subsequently strengthened by means of irony.

²⁰² Keener (1993:294) says: "Here the high priest means one thing on the level of his own hearers, but his words have another meaning that would be more obvious to John's readers: others (both Greeks and Jews) also believed that those appointed as God's representatives could sometimes prophesy (speak God's truth) without meaning to do so." Barrett (1978:404) adds: "Caiaphas is made to prophesy against and his own people, just as their own law is elsewhere made to bear witness against them (e.g., 5.45)." Duke (1985:88) calls it an "ironic testimony to the triumphant work of Jesus and the tragic death of a nation."

²⁰³ Cf. Duke (1985:87).

3.8 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 12:4-6

The discussion of the performative nature of irony here focuses on the occurrence of situational irony. According to Duke (1985:96; Resseguie, 2005:70), situational irony focuses on how characterisation or the portrayal of a person by attribute, action, thought, and word are ironically presented. The two examples that this study wishes to discuss in the Fourth Gospel are Simon Peter and Judas Iscariot. In the quest to explore the performative nature of situational irony in the Fourth Gospel, this study will first focus on the character of Judas Iscariot in 12:4-6 as an example.

3.8.1 The Setting of the Story

In John 12, the text unfolds in a threefold division. First, we read about the anointing of Jesus at Bethany in verses 1-11. Then, the narrative shifts to the triumphant entry of Christ into Jerusalem, recounted in verses 12-19. Finally, the story takes a turn to present the account of some Greeks who expressed their desire to see Jesus in verses 20-36 (Willmington, 1999). The focus here is on the first part of the text, specifically the anointing of Jesus²⁰⁴ by Mary in 12:1-11, and the subsequent reaction by Judas Iscariot to this significant act. The story takes place in Bethany (a place just outside Jerusalem). The time is reported as six days before the Passover (*πρὸ ἕξ ἡμερῶν τοῦ πάσχα*).²⁰⁵ The reader should take note that at this stage of the Gospel, the Jewish religious authorities have taken a formal decision to put Jesus to death and are looking for an opportune time to arrest Him. Jesus journeys from Ephraim to Jerusalem in order to lay down his life there (11:54). Before entering Jerusalem, Jesus visits Bethany where he had raised Lazarus from the dead.²⁰⁶ During a meal, Mary anoints Jesus' feet with an expensive ointment and wipes

²⁰⁴ Keener (2003:859) correctly observes that Mary's anointing at Bethany contrasts starkly with the preceding scene of calculated plans to have Jesus killed: "a supreme act of ignorant unbelief and a supreme act of intelligent faith" (cf. Tasker, 1999:143). MacArthur (2008:2) says, "The worshipful act of Mary epitomizes faith and love; the cold, calculated, cynical response of Judas epitomizes unbelief and hatred."

²⁰⁵ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:151) suggest that this was on the sixth day before Passover; probably after sunset on Friday evening, or the commencement of the Jewish Sabbath preceding the Passover.

²⁰⁶ Thomaskutty (2014:492) opines that "the expressions at vv. 2b-3a do not provide a clear picture about the exact nature of the gathering. Similarly, though a group of people are present at the home set up, there is no clarity of their discussion." Cf. Moloney (1998:349). Barrett (1978:408) adds: "[T]he occasion is represented by John as being at least semi-public, and the presence of Lazarus attracted great attention (v. 9)."

Tasker (1999:142) simply notes the occasion as follows, "While the Jewish pilgrims were at Jerusalem making preparations for Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where a supper was given in His honour at which Martha served and Lazarus sat with Jesus as a fellow-guest" (cf. Keener, 2003:861).

them with her hair. Jesus acknowledges this as the anointing of his body for the day of his burial (Kanagaraj, 2005:385). Neyrey (2007:208) also asserts that “we last saw Jesus and the sisters at Lazarus’ tomb and now, with all reassembled, Mary anoints Jesus to prepare him for His tomb” (cf. Brodie, 1993:320). In reaction to the act of Mary, the text reports that one of Jesus’ disciples, namely Judas Iscariot, expressed his disapproval of Mary’s act. Judas does not shy away from putting his suggestion on the table regarding how the fragrant should have been used to benefit the poor instead of anointing the feet of Jesus.²⁰⁷ Keener (2003:864) suggests that by this point in the story (12:4, 13:2), it was evident that Judas was already intending to betray Jesus.

3.8.2 Illocutionary Act

The focus of the analysis here is on the utterance of Judas Iscariot when he shows disapproval of Mary’s act when she anoints Jesus’ feet. In response, Judas says:

Διὰ τί τοῦτο τὸ μύρον οὐκ ἐπράθη τριακοσίων δηναρίων καὶ ἐδόθη πτωχοῖς (Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?)

This utterance is the reaction of Judas Iscariot formulated as a question towards all who were present at the table (Jesus, the other disciples, and Mary’s family).²⁰⁸ The question seems to expect a good reason (Διὰ τί [why?]) for having not considered to use the fragrant in the manner he is suggesting. The phrase Διὰ τί (interrogative phrase) accentuates Judas’ confidence in the alternative use of the fragrant he is (deceivingly) suggesting. His proposed alternative is: the fragrant could have been sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor (See also Kanagaraj, 2005:389; Lindars, 1972:418).²⁰⁹ The utterance (Judas) strongly suggests that it is unthinkable that the fragrant has been used the way Mary used it.

Beside the fact that the utterance is in a question form, the utterance itself seems to be disputing the act of Mary. Therefore, his inquiry is why was the fragrant used or is being used in this way

²⁰⁷ Guthrie (1994:1051) points out that the complaint of Judas against this expensive waste (5) is fully in character with the synoptic account of him. He was stricken not only with the deadly sins of greed and covetousness, but also with dishonesty (Cf. Thomaskutty, 2014:492; Culpepper, 1983:124-125). When describing Judas’s character, Tasker (1999:143) says: “Marry action is contrasted with the treachery of Judas.”

²⁰⁸ When commenting on the two characters in the story, Thomaskutty (2014:493) remarks that “while Mary’s character reveals through her action (v. 3), Judas’s character reveals through his utterance (v. 5).”

²⁰⁹ Tyndale House Publishers (2007:1763) says, “Judas used a pious phrase to hide his true motives. But Jesus knew what was in his heart.”

while it could have been used in another better/profitable way? The intention of this utterance is clearly to get an answer, which is the reason or an explanation for Mary's act. The few observations made here warrant that the utterance be taken as both a *question speech act* and a *disputive speech act*.

The study observes that there is more to this question/dispute than meets the eye. The utterance is ironic to the reader, since the author has already introduced Judas as the one who will betray Jesus (6: 71, 12:4). As Judas disputes Mary's act, the reader already has some knowledge of who Judas is. Moreover, the narrator provides an aside in verse 6 saying: "This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it." Jesus' response in verse 7 further assures the reader that Judas is mischievous and greedy in his intent.²¹⁰

The following section continues with the exploration of the possible effects that this ironic utterance (*question speech act/disputive*) may have towards the reader (performative nature).

3.8.3 Perlocutionary Act

Judas' *question/disputive* in the story was done with the intention of getting the audience (Jesus, Mary, etc.) to consider the alternative way of using the fragrant. Therefore, the perlocutionary force of the *question speech act/disputive* also calls the reader to consider the alternative suggested by Judas. It is, however, unfortunate that the reader will not consider this alternative since they know Judas's intention with it. Therefore, the ironic situation created is not neutral in its performative intent since it challenges the reader's superior knowledge about Judas Iscariot. Therefore, the *disputive* invites the reader to pay attention, with amusement, to Judas' dispute. It is observed that the narrator's aside is eyebrow-raising in nature. The aside is meant to correct the possible misapprehension by the reader regarding Judas' action and intention in the story (cf. Brown, 2003:290). In case the reader would fall into the temptation of considering Judas' suggestion, the aside warns them not to do it, but watch his treacherous behaviour with amusement. The narrator demonstrates once again that he is very mindful of the choices the reader should make in the text. He doesn't want to fail the reader.

The narrator whispers to the reader that Judas' intention is not as genuine and caring as it sounds. In fact, the narrator informs the reader that the intention was not to help the poor but to steal the

²¹⁰ Thomaskutty (2014:493) says, "Jesus' utterance remains as an evaluative statement between the two discipleship models, one of Mary and the other of Judas Iscariot" (cf. MacArthur, 2008:8).

money from the sale of the fragrant.²¹¹ The narrator's aside to the reader reveals that Judas is now showing his true self (hypocritical behaviour) in the story. Judas raises this concern with a commercial motive to enrich himself and not with a true desire to help the economically poor (Kanagaraj, 2005:389). As he did in 6:71, the author continues to identify Judas as a betrayer and a thief (vv. 4, 6), and therefore not a true disciple into whom the Spirit of Christ enters as indicated in 14:20, 23 (Duke, 1985:99).

It seems that the narrator wants to ensure that this message about Judas is clear to the reader. The author evidently uses irony to sensitise the reader towards the story, since the aside v. 6 matches the superior knowledge of the reader.

The irony, therefore, brings the performative dynamic in the story and it functions to sensitise the cognitive awareness of the reader. The reader is duly invited to take Jesus' side and that of the other disciples (Mary's family included) and consequently move away from Judas and his selfish ambition. It suffices to argue that the use of irony is undoubtedly a communicative strategy by the implied author, and it is used with a performative intent towards the reader. It does enhance the implied author's stated purpose of writing the Gospel in 20:30-31.

Through irony, the reader is persuaded to denounce the hypocritical ways of Judas (false disciple) and be associated with Christ who gives eternal life to those who truly believe in Him. The reader is eventually invited to disassociate with Judas and associate him/herself with the other (true) disciples of Jesus and continue to be an advocate of truth and honesty.

3.9 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE POWER IN JOHN 19:19-22

3.9.1 The Setting of the Story

John 19:19-22 is part of the story of the crucifixion of Jesus. The ironic utterance explored in this section has a significant journey within the narrative, with its inception traced back to the palace where Pilate was before (18:33, 39 and 19:3). The conflict revolves around Jesus' title "ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων" (the king of the Jews), which Pilate had inscribed on the cross of Jesus.²¹²

²¹¹ MacArthur (2008:7) says, "Disillusioned, Judas – facing the end of his ambitions – decided to at least get some financial compensation for the three years he had wasted on Jesus. John, not seeing it at that moment, but writing in retrospect many years later, makes the appropriate inspired comment on Judas's real motive."

²¹² Blum (1985:339) also notes that "the game between Pilate and the priests continued with the writing of the notice (Gr., *titlon*; Latin, *titulus*) which was usually attached to a criminal's cross (cf. Theophylact,

However, for the sake of directness, the discussion here will focus only on 19:19 and 22. Jesus is charged by the high priests for claiming to be king of the Jews (according to the Jewish opponents). This charge leads to his crucifixion. Before Jesus is crucified, Pilate is compelled to summon him and put him on trial. The events reported in 19:19, 22 take place just outside the city of Jerusalem in the place called *the Place of a Skull*, which is called, *Golgotha* in Hebrew.²¹³ The characters in the story are Jesus, Pilate, and the Jewish opponents, as well as the Roman soldiers, chief priests, and officers.

As previously mentioned, the inscription on the cross of Jesus, written in three languages, holds significant importance in this setting.²¹⁴ The narrator informs the reader that Pilate personally wrote (ἔγραψεν) the inscription. Robertson (1933:301) highlights that John uniquely uses the technical Latin word *titlon* (several times in inscriptions) to refer to the board displaying the name of the criminal and the crime for which they are condemned. Kanagaraj (2005:613) emphasises that it is only in John's Gospel that the observation is made that many Jews read the inscription. The Jews who read the inscription mocked as they read the accusation, and they were not happy about it. In verse 21, the chief priests expressed their displeasure because the very accusation they had made against Jesus had now been used to label him on the cross. Responding to the displeasure, Pilate refused to modify it, telling them “Ὁ γέγραφα, γέγραφα” (*What I have written, I have written*). Tasker (1999:210) argues that the Roman procurator had been indecisive and delayed making a final decision for long enough. However, the last word was going to be with him and not with the Jewish authorities. What he had written, he had written, and his words, like the words of Jesus, were destined never to pass away.

2007:286; Mills, 1999). Barrett (1978:549) also comment that the charge against Jesus appears in similar forms in the other Gospels: Mark 15:26, Luke 23:38, and Matthew 27:37.

²¹³ MacArthur (2008:352) indicates that the Romans usually crucified prisoners in public places, such as alongside highways, so that the public would see the prices to be paid for resisting or challenging Rome's authority.

²¹⁴ MacArthur (2008:352) points out that it was customary that a criminal being led away to be crucified be preceded by a man carrying a placard. On that placard would be written the crime for which the condemned man was to be executed. Tasker (1999:210) opines that John alone adds, perhaps in order to draw attention to the universal scope of the kingship which the crucified Jesus would exercise, it was written in Hebrew, and Greek and Latin. Robertson (1933:301) adds that Latin was the legal and official language; Aramaic (Hebrew) was for the benefit of the people of Jerusalem; Greek was for everybody who passed by who did not know Aramaic. Keener (2003:1137) opines that the three languages suggest the universality of Jesus' reign; these very languages all coexist on Roman Jewish burial inscriptions (cf. Kanagaraj, 2005:612).

3.9.2 Illocutionary Act

The focus here is on the utterance of Pilate as he responds to the request to modify the title written on the cross of Jesus. The whole conversation as recorded from verse 19 is as follows:

¹⁹ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ τίτλον ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ· ἦν δὲ γεγραμμένον, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων. ¹⁹And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

The narrator informs the reader (v. 19) what Pilate has written as a title on the cross of Jesus. The aorist indicative active verb ἔγραψεν denotes that the narrator is reporting a simple and completed act in the past. The narrator wants the reader to understand that the inscription was done and concluded, and therefore these are the words written on the cross of Jesus. As highlighted earlier, the chief priest and the Jews were displeased about the title. After being requested to change or modify it, Pilate refuses. The text reports Pilate's refusal in a perfect form "ἔγραψεν" (I have written). This emphasises the finality of his decision and that it remains valid. The two main verbs of the utterance are perfect indicative active, emphasises the continuing effect of the action completed. The implication of this answer entails that Pilate stands by his decision and it is final and permanent.

Based on this grammatical observation, Pilate's utterance is an illocutionary act belonging to the category of both *responsives* and *assertives*. Pilate is basically responding to the displeasure of the chief priest and the Jewish opponents by asserting the finality of his decision. In other words, the *assertive* entails that Pilate believes that what he has written is correct and final. Many scholars (e.g., Duke, 1985:89; Brown, 2003:314) have already established that Pilate's utterance is ironic.²¹⁵

In elaborating on the ironic character of Pilate, Duke (1985:89) asserts that the governor of Judea (Pilate) shares honour with the high priest of Israel in ironically disclosing who Jesus is. While Pilate displays more sarcasm and knowledge than Caiaphas, it is evident that he cannot possibly possess all the understanding he claims to have (Duke, 1985:89). Duke further underscores that Pilate's testimony, delivered with almost unbearable irony, proclaims Jesus as the "King of the Jews."²¹⁶ He is more prophet than he knows as well, for when he posts the *titulus* in irrevocable

²¹⁵ Keener (2003:1136) asserts that, "The charge posted above Jesus' head reveals the irony of the situation: Jesus is executed for being king of Israel, though the leader of his own people rejects his kingship."

²¹⁶ Barrett (1978:549) mentions, "[T]he title suggests, on the one hand the price paid by the Jews for rejecting their king, namely the condemnation and destruction of Judaism and of its age-long hopes.

Greek, Latin and Hebrew, he proclaims to all that Jesus will be named King of a far greater realm than anyone there – including a provincial governor – would be comfortable knowing. The next section continues to demonstrate the performative nature of this irony to the reader.

3.9.3 Perlocutionary Act

Pilate's *assertive* speech indicates that he wanted the chief priest and the Jewish opponents to know and acknowledge that his decision has been made and is still standing, though not aware of the essence of its meaning. The inscription cannot be changed. The Perlocutionary force of this *assertive* is such that the reader should know and acknowledge the final decision made by Pilate. As highlighted earlier, Pilate's utterance or decision is ironic to the reader. The irony here is based on the reader's superior knowledge of what is being stated as the title on the cross of Jesus (Van der Watt, 2010:150) and is performative in its nature. The reader could perceive a deeper level of irony here in that the "Son of Man" is a term that Jesus has consistently used to refer to himself (1:51; 3:13-14; 5:27; 6:27; 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23, 13:31).

At the heart of the irony lies the reader's superior knowledge of Jesus' true identity. The reader understands that Jesus is far more than just a "man"; he is the Son of Man and the Son of God, bestowed with all authority by the Father (5:25, 27). The *assertive* has the power to invite the reader to join the author, and look at Pilate's inscription with amusement, wondering if Pilate has full knowledge of what he has written. Pilate has unknowingly confirmed that Jesus is the King of the Jews.²¹⁷ The performative power of this irony entails that the reader is cognitively and emotionally influenced to acknowledge Jesus as the King of the Jews and the whole world (cf. Van der Watt, 2010:150).

The study acknowledges that this communicative strategy by the author is consistent with the central purpose of the Gospel. The Gospel is formulated and presented in such a way that the reader will not miss this irony as he/she is carefully guided towards establishing (or strengthening) their faith in Christ.

On the other hand, the reader knows that, precisely because of the crucifixion that Jesus, the Lord is King; indeed, the cross is the manner of his exaltation and glorification."

²¹⁷ When discussing the role of irony in the Fourth Gospel, Van der Watt (2007:19) correctly concludes that "even more ironically, in the case of Jesus, the cross becomes the throne of Jesus. The title at the top of the cross declared that: this is the king of the Jews (19:19). The cross should not be seen as an instrument of suffering and humiliation, but rather the glorification of the Son of God (12:18; 17:1-5)."

3.10 IRONY AND ITS PERFORMATIVE POWER IN JOHN 20:13-15

3.10.1 The Setting of the Story

The story narrates the events of Jesus' resurrection from the dead (20:1-18). The setting of the story, as mentioned in 19:41, is the garden, specifically at the tomb of Jesus, situated very close to where he was crucified (*ἦν δὲ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη κῆπος*). This suggests that the place is close to Golgotha just outside the city of Jerusalem.²¹⁸ The characters are Mary Magdalene, Simon Peter, John (the beloved Disciple), the resurrected Jesus, and two angels. The author of the Fourth Gospel's report of the setting, particularly the characters, is slightly different from the Gospels according to Mark and Matthew. Carson's observation is insightful:

John is clearly selective over the resurrection incidents he relates. He intends to illustrate some of the spiritual lessons to be learnt from the event. It is not easy to combine the various happenings related by the four evangelists, for John relates that Mary Magdalene was at the tomb alone (20:1), whereas Matthew and Mark include others. All however agreed that Mary Magdalene was there. It may be that the others had left Mary at the tomb. What John is concerned with is her encounter with Peter and the beloved disciple and their conclusions over the empty tomb. This then prepares the way for the appearance of Jesus to Mary (Carson, 1994:1063).

3.10.2 Illocutionary Act

As Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, the two angels standing where Jesus was lying asked her: “Γύναι, τί κλαίεις” (Woman, why are you weeping?). After explaining the cause of her weeping to the angels, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there (the narrator clarifies that Mary did not recognize Jesus), Jesus asks her the same question, saying: “Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; τίνα ζητεῖς” (Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?)

Clearly Mary's emotional state called for this question from both the angels and Jesus.²¹⁹ Mary's situation provoked the question from the sympathisers. The narrator quotes both the angels and Jesus asking Mary “τί κλαίεις” (why are crying?), with the present indicative of κλαίω denoting the lively and vivid manner of reporting by the narrator.²²⁰

²¹⁸ The Aramaic name of a hill near Jerusalem where executions where Jesus' crucifixion took place (Louw & Nida, 1996:834; cf. Strong, 1996).

²¹⁹ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:169) note that “Mary was absorbed in the one Object of her affection and pursuit, she speaks out her grief without fear.”

²²⁰ See the similar observation by Robertson (1933:309) on the word θεωρεῖ in 20:6 and 20:14.

The utterances by both the angels and the resurrected Christ in 20:13 and 20:15 are a *question speech act*. On the character level, this is basically a question from one character to the other, asked with the intention of getting an answer. Whether the angels or Jesus really needed Mary's answer or not is a question beyond the focus of this study. However, both angels and Jesus inquire from the woman her reason for weeping.

On the textual level, this utterance is ironic to the reader. Duke (1985:104) calls it an irony of identity. The reader already knows that Jesus has risen (or will rise) from the dead according to 2:22. Under the discussion of the perlocutionary act, in the following section, the study will continue to discuss the performative power or the effects that this irony may have on the reader of the Gospel.

3.10.3 Perlocutionary Act

The perlocutionary force of the *question speech act* entails that Mary must respond to the question asked by both the angels and Jesus. Consequently, the reader should expect Mary to answer the question. In her response, she indicates that the cause of her weeping is because they have taken her Lord away. It is noted that there is more to this question than meets the eye. Duke (1985:104) summarises the irony here as follows:

Readers of the Fourth Gospel know that Jesus has risen from the dead before Mary does. We are told of the resurrection as early as 2:22 and as late as 20:9. The narrator relates the account in a way which maximises the difference between what we know and what Mary knows. Clue after clue is laid before her which she does not grasp; and, as the evidence mounts, so does our gleeful suspense: when will she know? Why can't she see? How much longer before the light breaks through her tears? The result is a deeply satisfying narrative that bit by bit builds the joy of Easter.

It can be argued that the reader of the Gospel is not desperately expecting Mary's answer because he/she already knows the answer. The reader's superior knowledge serves him/her well. As Mary walks around the garden weeping, looking for the body of Jesus, the reader watches her with both sympathy and hilarity because she does not know what the reader knows.

Clearly, the irony is not neutral in its performative power or effects. As highlighted above, the performative nature of the irony is primarily based on the reader's superior knowledge of the resurrection of Christ in the text, as Duke also asserted above. The irony influences the reader to adopt the resurrection story and consequently invites him/her to establish (to further strengthen)

a relationship with the risen Christ. In a dramatic manner, the irony further keeps the reader glued to the text, eagerly anticipating Mary's relief to come.²²¹

By virtue of irony, the narrator successfully persuades the reader to align him/herself with his point of view regarding the resurrection of Christ. The message is clear to the reader: Christ has died, and he has risen – he conquered death. As already observed in the other ironic utterances, it is evident that the author's communicative strategy is consistent with his purpose of writing the Gospel (20:30-31).

3.11 SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter was to conduct a literary analysis of specific texts in the Fourth Gospel, with the primary goal of illustrating the performative nature of irony as a literary device. The chapter sought to validate the stated hypothesis, which emphasises that the Fourth Gospel's performative nature is evident through the skilful use of literary devices, particularly irony, to captivate the reader's interest in the text. Essentially, the underlying task of this chapter was to investigate how the author achieves the purpose of the Gospel (20:30-31) using irony as his communicative strategy.

The chapter limited itself to the analysis of utterances (illocutionary and perlocutionary acts) and how they give rise to irony in a given setting of the story. The chapter established that in some narratives some characters are victims of irony. For example, the utterance in 2:16-20.

The Jewish opponents, in a derogatory manner, ask Jesus if he can destroy the temple and raise it up in three days. Unaware that Jesus is referring to the temple of his body, they become victims of irony in the story. However, the reader is not left in the dark. Through an aside, the narrator ensures that the reader is privy to the true meaning behind Jesus' words. The study argues that by means of irony, the reader is persuaded to adopt the author's point of view regarding Jesus Christ as the new temple in the story. This persuasive use of irony allows the author to achieve a profound impact on the reader's life, leading them to faith in Christ.

With reference to the irony in 4:12; the study observed that irony is caused by the Samaritan woman's false assumption. She assumes/claims that Jacob is greater than the stranger (Jesus) who is talking to her at the well. The assumption is seen in her question to Jesus: "Are you greater

²²¹ This relief came in 20:16 as Jesus calls her "Mary" and she in turn recognises Jesus, answering "Rabboni!" (Which is to say, Teacher). Ito (2015:113) suggests that vocative "Rabboni" is probably the conventional word for the disciples when they tried to get attention from Jesus.

than our father Jacob?" The woman's failure to see and acknowledge the superiority of Jesus constitutes the irony, since this is not the case in the reader's superior knowledge about Jesus Christ in the Gospel. It was demonstrated that ironic utterances of this nature have a performative effect since they sensitise the reader's interest to the truth in the text. While the woman is not aware of the fact that the stranger she is talking to (Jesus) is greater than Jacob and can even provide something better (the living water) than what Jacob gave them, the (believing) reader of the Gospel already sees it. The reader knows and acknowledges the superiority of Jesus. The reader also knows the Jesus can offer the gift of living water, the gift which the woman asked for a little later in their conversation (Duke, 1985:70). Again, the irony has the power to draw the reader closer to Jesus and what he represents or can offer in the text.

The analysis in 7:42 was categorised as a false claim to knowledge (Duke, 1985:64). The Jewish opponents reject Jesus based on his origin, without doing any proper investigation of the matter. The essence of the irony is based on their ignorance, which the reader can clearly see. The irony appeals to the reader's superior knowledge about Jesus's origin. The reader knows that Jesus was born in Bethlehem and comes from the seed of David. The reader also is aware of the transcended origin of Christ (1:1-18). Both the author and the reader know the origin of Jesus. Had the Jewish opponents conducted a thorough investigation of this matter, they surely would have discovered it. The irony challenges the reader to re-read the Fourth Gospel (even the Synoptic Gospels) to confirm the truth regarding the birth, origin, and the transcended nature of Jesus. In this case, the reader is influenced to accept the author's point of view regarding the origin of Christ. The author's communicative strategy is again found to be consistent with the purpose of the Gospel. Through irony the reader is encouraged to remain in the author's point of view regarding the Messiahship of Jesus and his origin.

The analysis of 9:29 is similar to that of 7:42. The Jewish opponents are again the victims of irony. According to their claim, Moses came from God because God spoke to him, but Jesus came from nowhere, definitely not from God, because no one knew Jesus' origin nor identity. The irony is based on their ignorance of Jesus' origin. However, the believing reader recognises the irony in this claim, and sides with the cured man, who suggests that Jesus might be "from God" (v. 33). Brown's analysis is insightful: the reader knows that Jesus is from God, as indicated in 1:1-18 (Brown, 2003:290). The irony of the Jews' persistent denial and false claims about Jesus influences the reader to adopt the author's viewpoint, that is, Jesus comes from God (1:1-18). And he came so that, through faith in him, people may be cured from their spiritual blindness.

The analysis in 11:50 is classified under extended irony by Duke (unconscious prophecy and testimony). The study observes that Caiaphas' utterance is ironic to the reader, and the narrator

ensures that the reader does not miss it through his aside or comment in verse 51. The high priest says that it would be better to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed (11:50). Ironically, Jesus did die to save the nation, although the high priest did not realise the truth of his words and he obviously did not intend it the way it turned out. By means of an aside, the author winks and smiles at the reader. The irony sensitises the reader's interest to the truth that Caiaphas has declared unknowingly. The irony here coaxes the reader into sharing the author's point of view regarding the sacrificial death of Jesus.

The discussion of irony in 12:4-6 was based on the character of Judas Iscariot whom the author had already described as the one who will betray Jesus (6:71, 12:4). With this superior knowledge about Judas, the reader meets Judas expressing his disapproval in the manner in which Mary uses an expensive fragrant to anoint Jesus. Judas seems to have better ideas on how the fragrant should be used. The narrator informs the reader (by means of an aside in v. 6) that Judas is lying; his intention is to sell the fragrant so that he can steal the money. These two levels of communication invite the reader (who already knows who Judas is) to participate in the text by making a choice or a decision whether to believe Judas or not. The answer is obvious. The reader listens to Judas' suggestion with amusement and shame, feeling for him. The study concludes that the reader is invited to make a decision regarding his/her association with Judas. Through irony, the reader is persuaded to denounce the hypocritical ways of Judas (false disciple) and be associated with Christ (who gives eternal life to those who truly believe in him) and/or at least the other disciples.

Similar to the analysis of 11:50, the irony in 19:19 and 22 is about an unconscious prophecy and testimony by Pilate. During the crucifixion of Jesus, the chief priest and the Jewish opponents are displeased with the title written on the cross of Jesus. The chief priest proposes alternative wording which would clarify that this is not a title but a claim by Jesus. Pilate dismisses their request. In his response, he confirms that he has made up his mind; the title shall be "Jesus King of the Jews." Based on the superior knowledge of the reader, Pilate's decision is true and undisputable. Both the narrator and the reader watch with amusement as Pilate prophesies unknowingly. The performative power of this irony entails that the reader is influenced cognitively and emotionally in their relationship with Jesus (Van der Watt, 2010:150). The reader is encouraged to acknowledge Jesus as the King of the Jews and, of course, of the whole world.

Lastly, the performative nature of irony was explored in the resurrection story of Jesus, when the two angels and the resurrected Christ asked Mary Magdalene "*Γύναι, τί κλαίεις*" (*Woman, why are you weeping?*) in 20:13, 15. The study concluded that the question was both ironic and performative to the reader. As Mary weeps and walks around the garden, the reader is already

aware of the events unfolding in the text. The irony introduced creates a sense of tension in the reader's mind, heightening their anticipation of seeing Mary finding what she was looking for – the resurrected Jesus Christ, and not his dead body anymore. By virtue of irony, the author effectively invites the reader to have the same point of view regarding the resurrection of Christ. Through dramatic irony, the teaching and the confirmation of resurrection of Christ is well-presented to the reader. The way the story unfolds makes it easy for the reader to remember the fundamental message, i.e., Jesus has risen from the dead. He has conquered death; consequently, those who believe in him will not die/perish but have eternal life (3:16).

Reading and analysing the Fourth Gospel in this way proved to be yet another insightful way of looking at the impact that the text may have on the reader. It can therefore be asserted that irony, in the Fourth Gospel, has a performative intent to the reader. The author skilfully employs irony as a key element of their communicative strategy, aimed at captivating the reader's interest and leading them to embrace the author's perspective, ultimately fostering faith. This purpose aligns with the overarching goal of the Gospel, as emphasised in 20:30-31. The deliberate use of irony as a literary device highlights the author's intention to radically transform the life of the reader.

Attention now shifts in the next chapter to the performative nature of forensic dialogue in the Fourth Gospel.

Chapter 4 Performative Nature of Forensic Dialogue in the Fourth Gospel

4.1 INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL SURVEY, AND RESEARCH GAP

This chapter explores the performative nature of forensic dialogue in the Fourth Gospel. To begin, a historical survey/overview of research on this topic is presented in the introductory section. By doing so, the chapter highlights the research gap and the contribution the study intends to make to the field. It is observed that yet one of the prominent literary features in the Fourth Gospel is the utilisation of forensic²²² dialogues or language to communicate the message of the Gospel. Scholars have already noted that the author of the Fourth Gospel uses forensic dialogue/utterances as one of the literary features to enhance the central purpose of the Gospel as stated in 20:30-31 (Van der Watt, 2010:160). Lincoln (2000:170) maintains that the way the trial motif is used in the Gospel, encourages the reader to “view the narrative, as a whole, from the perspective of a trial”. Lincoln (2000:170; cf. Neyrey, 1996:107-124) also describes the genre of the Gospel as “a testimony or defence speech in a trial,” since its biography is dominated by the motif of a trial. He identifies explicit occurrences of the trial motif in 5:19-47, 8:12-59, and 2:25; 3:11, 17-19, 26-28, 32, 33; 4:39, 44; 7:7, 14-52; 9:39 (Lincoln, 2000:170). He further guides the reader to explore the advocate motif in 14:16, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7-11; 21:24, and obviously, the well-known trial in 18:1–19:42 (Lincoln, 2000:170).

This chapter puts forward the argument that the use of forensic dialogue in the Fourth Gospel is not accidental or coincidental but forms part of the implied author’s communicative strategy and has a performative intent directed at the reader. It appears that the implied author of the Gospel utilises forensic dialogue to actively engage the implied reader, thereby ensuring the Gospel achieves its desired goal of transforming the life of the reader. Van der Watt (2010:160-161) argues that forensic dialogue is an effective way of convincing people since the forensic process involves people and their views, and eventually judgement on a particular issue.²²³ Odiam

²²² Van der Watt (2010:160) comments, “The *term* ‘forensic’ should be qualified. Technically, it covers all matters pertaining to the law court. John uses those matters selectively. In the sections in John where forensic material is found the emphasis falls more on the arguments about the actions and person of Jesus.”

²²³ When addressing the question, which legal system underlines the Johannine narrative? Van der Watt (2010:160-161) argues that in many cases the Jewish legal system seems to be basic to the argument, although the Roman system is also present, especially in the Pilate narrative (Ch. 18-20). He further emphasises saying “it may be assumed that where Roman influence was strong for military and administrative reasons, the same applied to the Roman legal system. The Gospel was indeed

(1989:23) had already stressed that “forensic speech attempts to convince²²⁴ or persuade the readers/listeners about the innocence or guilt of a person who performed deeds in the past. Were the moral codes enshrined in law broken or not?” In addition to these views, Neyrey (1996:107)²²⁵ also points out that, in the forensic dialogues of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is constantly engaged in tribulations, which the narrator most frequently portrays as a formal trial or forensic proceeding against Jesus. The exploration undertaken by this study seeks to establish how forensic dialogue, in its various occurrences, enforces the stated purpose of the Gospel, and consequently persuades the reader to act on it.

The history of research on the forensic dialogues/trial motif in the Fourth Gospel dates back to the early 1940s. Notably, around 25 years ago, Lincoln (2000:4) contributed significantly to this field with his work titled *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*. In this book, Lincoln offered a valuable historical survey of the study of the trial motif in the Fourth Gospel, covering the period from 1946 to 1994. He shows that “interests on the themes of witness, judgement and trial seem to have been at its height in the sixties and early seventies and is reflected in the appearance of several monographs written largely independent of each other” (Lincoln, 2000:4). The contribution of these studies lies in the fact that each one of them focused on a particular aspect of the trial motif, relating it to some aspects of the Fourth Gospel.²²⁶ To establish the specific need and focus of this chapter, it is essential to emphasise that none of the previous studies have approached the forensic dialogues of the Fourth Gospel in the same manner as this chapter intends to do.

addressed to a diverse group of people which most probably included Greeks, Jews, Romans, and even Samaritans. It would therefore be fair to assume that the readers were acquainted with Jewish as well as Roman law, even if most of them probably belonged to the lower classes) – what they say of Paul equally applies to the Johannine situation. This means that one should not think of a single judicial system, but these systems overlapped. In various situations, diverse laws as well as different hearings would have been acceptable”.

²²⁴ Agreeing with Odium, in this case, Van der Watt (2010:124) states that “Insights from speech act theory (with theorists like Austen and Searle) drew attention to the fact that with performative language the focus falls more on what the speaker wants to do than what he wants to say.”

²²⁵ See also Barrett (1978:255), Bruce (1983:126), and Lindars (1972:217).

²²⁶ For example, Preiss (1946/1957) dealt with the trial motif relating it to the aspect of justification; Blank (1964; cf. Boice, 1972; Beutler, 1972) explored the idea of witness, relating it to the Gospel’s theology of revelation; Pancaro (1975) focused on the law’s role in the Jews’ judgement of Jesus; Harvey (1976) and Maccini (1996) focused on the forensic vocabulary and also an historic investigation on how women’s testimonies are presented in the Fourth Gospel. For further reading, see Lincoln (2000:4-6).

Lincoln's (2000) study itself made a significant and substantial contribution to the exploration of the lawsuit motif in the Fourth Gospel. The goal of his monograph is stated as follows: "[T]o produce a more wide-ranging exploration of the trial motif than has previously been undertaken and to employ a variety of perspectives" (Lincoln, 2000:7). In summary, Lincoln's work consists of nine chapters that offer a literary reading of the Gospel of John, focusing on its trial motif. He primarily utilises narrative-critical and reader response approaches to examine the text.²²⁷ Very significant is Lincoln's (2000:19) recognition of the role that irony and misunderstanding play in the lawsuit motif, when he says:

There is irony as the readers watch the characters' responses and frequent misunderstandings because they have already been taken into the confidence of the implied author and know who Jesus is from the prologue. This way of structuring the narrative coaxes its readers into sharing the implied author's point of view about Jesus as the incarnate Logos, the Son of God.

Another contribution to the study of the Fourth Gospel's trial motif is the commentary by Neyrey (2007). In his analysis of the Fourth Gospel's major motifs, Neyrey pays special attention to the lawsuit motif. He helpfully outlines all the necessary forensic elements involved in a typical Judean forensic process, e.g., the charge (guilty or not guilty), accusers and the accused, witnesses for the defence (Neyrey, 2007:170-176). It must be indicated and acknowledged that various key commentaries on the Fourth Gospel²²⁸ do have cursory comments on the lawsuit motifs of the Fourth Gospel and will be helpful for this study.

While acknowledging the valuable contributions of scholars like Neyrey and Lincoln, along with others mentioned earlier, it is important to highlight the distinctive nature of this chapter. Unlike previous studies, this chapter takes a fresh and unique methodological approach in its examination of the trial motif and forensic dialogues within the Fourth Gospel. Specifically, it aims to explore these elements as a literary device, with a particular focus on their performative nature. As stated in Chapter 1, and again reiterated here, this endeavour is unique and has not been comprehensively explored within the Johannine scholarship. The following sub-section discusses the central theoretical argument of the chapter.

²²⁷ For a detailed discussion of his work, see Lincoln (2000:8-11).

²²⁸ For example, Lindars (1972:216-17) on Jesus healing on the Sabbath in John 5, Barrett (1978:542ff) on the trial of Jesus in John 18, Schnackenburg (1968:244-256) on the healing of the man born blind in John 9:1-41, Bruce (1983:229-233; cf. Kruse, 2003:239-245) on the conflict between Jesus and Jewish opponents during the Festival of Dedication in John 10:22-39, Brown (1975:213-221) on the Sabbath healing in John 5, and Keener (2003:1076ff) on the trial of Jesus in John 18, etc.

4.2 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT OF THE CHAPTER

As already observed in the previous two chapters, it seems logical to argue that the implied author of the Fourth Gospel employs literary devices as his communicative strategy to persuade the reader. Any reading of the Fourth Gospel that overlooks the presence and importance of these literary devices would undoubtedly be superficial in nature. Here, it is firmly believed that the author strategically employs these literary devices, primarily aiming to captivate and engage the reader's interest throughout the text. On the cognitive level, the reader is subsequently left with no choice but to decide whether to adopt the implied author's point of view as can be drawn in the Gospel's stated purpose in 20:30-31 or not. The desire of the implied author is to persuade the reader to believe in Jesus Christ so that they may have eternal life.

This chapter, therefore, sets the following theoretical argument: that forensic language or dialogue in the Fourth Gospel is not a literary coincidence but an intentional communicative strategy used to make the text more appealing and inviting to the reader, as the author aims to bring the reader to faith in Jesus Christ. Just like in the case of irony and misunderstanding, the central argument here is that a thorough reading and/or study of the Fourth Gospel should leave the reader understanding that forensic dialogue has a performative role in the Gospel of John and cannot be overlooked in the process of reading/interpreting the book. This chapter, therefore, explores how this literary device fulfils its performative task in all its occurrences in the Fourth Gospel.

As already indicated in Chapter 1, the exploration of the performative nature/power of forensic dialogue will be done from the speech act interpretive angle. As proposed in the previous two chapters, this study will also limit itself to the very basic of the study of forensic utterances and how they engage the reader of the Fourth Gospel.

The chapter will further delve into the performative nature of forensic dialogue by exploring the perlocutionary acts that an illocution may have on the reader.

4.3 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FORENSIC DIALOGUE

By forensic dialogue, this study refers to a Jewish trial procedure. The basic characteristic of a Jewish forensic process would comprise of the following elements: a charge of an evildoing, an accused (defendant), accusers, judges who are elders (prosecutors), witnesses for or against the accused, verdict, and the sentence (Neyrey, 2007:112; cf. Van der Watt, 2010:161-163; Lincoln, 2000:4, 66-67). According to Ito (2015:72; cf. Harvey, 1976:46), Jewish trial procedures were

much less formal. It was not necessary for the accused to appear before a formally constituted court in order for a trial to take place (Harvey, 1976:46).²²⁹

When discussing the characteristics of a Jewish forensic process, Harvey (1976:47; cf. Ito, 2015:72) opines that “it appears that the role of witnesses was of greater importance in the trial.” He further indicates that a Jewish court was not equipped to investigate evidence. The admissibility and competence of witnesses were often the dominant factors in deciding a case. The judges were merely present to ascertain the reliability of the witnesses (Harvey, 1976:47). According to the Jewish custom, in hearings, normally at least two witnesses had to supply evidence to prove the legitimacy of the charge (Ito, 2015:73; cf. Neyrey, 2007:113; Trites, 1992:877). However, Harvey (1976:47) reports: “It could happen in certain cases that there might be only one witness.” He indicates that this was also a distinctive character of Jewish procedure (Harvey, 1976:47). In order to win such a court case, it would be better if the witness was a person who was well respected in society, or if the claimant supported his claim on oath, calling God as his witness. Since the witness’s role bore such weight, grave penalties were imposed if he gave false evidence (Harvey, 1976:49; cf. Neyrey, 2007:113; Ito, 2015:73). Keener (2003:1086) opines that “most often writers have cited against the *Fourth* Gospel account its incompatibility with rabbinic sources concerning proper legal procedures, but this argument is difficult to defend today.” However, Sanders (1992:487) helpfully says: “[T]he system as the gospels describe it correspond to the system that we see in Josephus. The trial of Jesus agrees very well with his stories of how things happened.”

The following section proceeds with the application of the stated methodology to explore the performative nature of forensic dialogue in the Fourth Gospel. The aim here is to select few passages that exhibit this kind of literary device and demonstrate their performative nature towards the reader. From the reading done of the text of the Fourth Gospel, the following sections are selected: 5:1-47 (the healing of a paralytic man and the subsequent conflicts with the Jewish opponents); 9:13-34 (the healing of the man born blind); 10:22-39 (the opposition at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem); and 18:12–19:16 (Jesus’ trial before Annas, Caiaphas, and twice before Pilate). It is believed that the selected passages do represent a broad spectrum of forensic

²²⁹ Harvey (1976:46; Ito, 2015:72-73) provides more clarification on the procedure in Old Testament times: “Justice was ‘at the gate’ of the city (Amos 5.15) and was administered by the ‘elders’, that is, the leading citizens in the place (Deut. 19.12), who might be called upon at any time (as in Ruth 4.1-12) to arrest an offender (Deut. 19.12), determine his guilt (Deut. 25.7-9), and either carry out the punishment themselves (Deut. 22.18-19) or command the witnesses of the deed to do so (Deut. 21.18-21). There were, of course, superior courts to which more difficult cases might be referred (Deut. 17.8-13).”

dialogues in the Fourth Gospel. This study also identifies section 8:12-59 as a forensic dialogue, but, however, acknowledges the work of Van der Watt (2010:160-163) on this section.²³⁰

4.4 FORENSIC DIALOGUE AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 5:19-47

4.4.1 Introduction

The exploration of the performative nature of forensic dialogue in John 5:19-47 (the healing of a paralytic man and the subsequent conflicts between Jesus and the Jewish opponents) and the other selected texts mentioned above (section 4.3) will be preceded by a discussion of the setting of the story, then followed by the discussion of both the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, as proposed in the discussion of the methodology in Chapter 1 (section 1.6). The exploration concludes by providing preliminary findings to the study. The Greek text under exploration is quoted and translated as the study continues with the analysis. This applies to all the sections to be explored in this chapter mentioned above.

4.4.2 The Setting of the Story

John Chapter 5 reports the story of the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethzatha in Jerusalem. Keener (2003:634; cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998:111; Lincoln, 2000:73) indicates that the narrative opens with Jesus healing on the Sabbath and leads into a conflict dialogue between Jesus and the authorities. Kanagaraj (2005:167; cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:4; Keener, 2003:634; Barrett, 1978:249; Hutcheson, 1972:72) correctly adds that Chapters 5-7 in John constitute a new unit that shows how Jesus redefined various Jewish festivals and had confrontation with his Jewish opponents. He further indicates that the theme of God's self-revelation through Jesus' words and deeds continues. Chapter 5 portrays Jesus as the Son whose equality with God enables him to help the helpless, heal the disabled, give life, and render judgement both now and in the future (Cf. Brown, 1975:216; Keener, 2003:634; Van der Watt, 2007:14). Morris (1971:298) also observes that Chapter 5 introduces the reader to a theme which

²³⁰ The study done by Van der Watt titled: "Ethics Through the Power of Language: Some Exploration in the Gospel According to John, 2010:139–167," explores the performative nature of the forensic dialogue in section 8:12-59 of the Fourth Gospel. He mentions that John 8:12-59 provides a good example of the forensic argument. While Jesus is the speaker who takes on the role of the defendant, the Pharisees and Jews are the hearers who act as the prosecutors. The paternity of Jesus would be the main argument (Stibbe, 1993:99). In this argument, Jesus uses the notion of the light of the world to enhance his personal credibility. This credibility is the key concept concerning the speaker as a witness, and Aristotle calls it *ethos* (Stibbe, 1993:100). As the argument proceeds, the author reveals the irony that these roles will be reversed and Jesus, the judged, will become the judge (Neyrey, 2009:177).

is important in the rest of this Gospel. Jesus does his mighty works, his “signs.”²³¹ But instead of faith from his hearers, strenuous opposition is aroused among the national religious leaders.²³² This study observes that this strenuous opposition against Jesus and his mighty “signs” leads to the trial motif or forensic dialogue in the Gospel. The healing incident is reported as taking place on a Sabbath day and the Jews (here forth simply referred to as Jesus’ opponents) respond with aggression to the breaking of the Sabbath rules.²³³ The characters involved in this story are Jesus (the accused), the sick man (to whom the miracle is performed), and Jesus’ opponents or Jewish opponents (the complainant). The charge is the violation of the Sabbath Law.

4.4.3 Illocutionary Act

The story begins with the narrator’s voice (in 5:1-5), informing the reader about the setting of the story and the introduction of the characters involved. The reader learns that the story takes place in Jerusalem when Jesus attends one of the Jewish festivals.²³⁴ The actual event takes place at the pool of Bethzatha,²³⁵ where many “unwhole” people are gathered, eagerly waiting for an

²³¹ Keener (2003:634; cf. Neyrey, 2007:110) opines that “John reveals that behind Jesus’ signs, particularly his signs that challenge what no mere mortal could challenge, stands his identity. The signs therefore point to Christology: Jesus is the Father’s supreme agent ... Jesus is concurring with the Father’s decree.”

²³² Morris (1971:299) notes, “The conflict grows and intensifies. Eventually as a result of it, Jesus will meet his death. This has, of course, been foreshadowed in the prologue that he came unto his own, and they that were his own did not receive him”. Regarding this conflict, Carson (1982b:81) wonders that “there was a multitude of sick, blind, lame and impotent folk gathered at the same place. Does not the healing of one of them raise questions about the real motivation behind the cure?” To this question Carson avers that the motivation behind this Sabbath cure is more directly related to the soteriological work for the Lamb of God came into the world (1:29) However, he further posits that it is remotely possible that Jesus is here presented as provoking a clash over rabbinical legalism about the Sabbath and that there is no compelling reason to suppose he is precipitating a crisis over the Torah.

²³³ Brown (1975:210; cf. Huteson, 1972:75) asserts “that the violation of the Sabbath is the main theme of the miracles as it is now reported is clear both from the discourse that follows and from the place of ch. Five in Part Three of the Book of Signs, a part which deals with Jewish feasts.”

²³⁴ Brown (1975:206; cf. Lindars, 1972:211; Bruce, 1983:121; Keener, 2003:635) mentions, with reference to “a feast or festival,” that an early tradition in the Greek church identifies this unnamed feast as Pentecost, a view accepted by some modern scholars. Barrett (1978:251; cf. Keener, 2003:635) mentions, “[I]t seems however that John here introduces a feast simply in order to account for the presence of Jesus in Jerusalem.” Neyrey (2007:102) offers a plausible conclusion that the author locates the story on “a feast,” which we cannot identify. He adds that the only significant thing about this feast is that it was the Sabbath, which colours the evaluation of the healed man and Jesus’ action.

²³⁵ Bruce (1983:121) accurately notes that the name of the pool is spelled variously by our principal witnesses, with different variations such as Bethesda, Bethzatha, and Bethsaida. Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:110) remark: “[T]he pool was originally built to supply water for the temple, but Jesus’ time this function seems to have been superseded with newer water sources, and it seems to have

opportunity to enter the stirred waters in the hopes of obtaining healing. Of particular significance in this narrative is the introduction of an invalid man who has endured a lengthy and painful suffering for 38 years. Chapter 5:6-7 is the report of the interaction between Jesus and the sick man at the pool and his subsequent healing. The narrator's report further informs the reader in 5:9b that “Ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ” (*and that day was the Sabbath*). In 5:10-13; Jesus' opponents enquire about this act of healing on the Sabbath day, and they are not pleased about it. On the contrary, Jesus does not seem to be concerned about performing a miracle on the Sabbath. He further encourages (actually warns) the healed man to sin no more, lest the worst thing come to him. The speech act utilised in 5:1-5 is *informative*. The narrator's intention with the speech act is to provide information to the reader regarding the healing of the sick man on a Sabbath day. By means of this speech act, the reader is well-informed about all the necessary information that he/she should know regarding the forensic proceeding that is about to begin.

In 5:6-9 the reader is offered an opportunity to have a dramatic experience of how the healing took place, as Jesus and the sick man interact. This dialogue can be categorised as a *question-response speech act*. The dialogue concludes with Jesus' utterance: “Ἐγείρε ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει” (*rise, take up your bed and walk*). The utterance has two tones in it. First, it is a *directive speech act*, in that Jesus commands the sick man to do something, i.e., to get up and take his bed and walk.²³⁶ Secondly, the utterance is a *declarative speech act*. By uttering it, Jesus is declaring that the healing of the sick man has taken place and that he may walk away. The narrator's report confirms the healing in verse 9. What made him better/healed? Nothing but the enabling command of Christ, to which his will responded obediently (Bruce, 1983:125; Carson, 1982b:81). The narrator further informs (underscoring to) the reader that the day on which this healing took place was a Sabbath (v. 10). This *informative speech* is crucial in this analysis. It introduces tension in the story. The reader should take note of it. The analysis of 5:1-10 can be summarised as utterances/speech acts that function to bring key information to the reader, i.e., the introduction of the characters, the place, the occasion, and the day on which the miracle takes place (Sabbath day).

acquired a reputation for healing qualities.” However, Keener (2003:634) asserts that, “The water of the pool of Bethesda, like the ritual water in most of the preceding chapters, is ineffectual, leaving a man paralyzed for forty-eight years until Jesus comes to heal him. While the water of such a pool would not be used in official Jewish ritual, its significance on a popular level must have been great.”

²³⁶ Lindars (1972:215) rightly observes that the utterance/command encourages the healed man to “doing something that is forbidden on a Sabbath day.” However, Barrett (1978:234) points out that “Just as the thirty-eight years prove the gravity of the disease, so the carrying of the bed and the walking prove the completeness of the cure.”

The narration in 5:11-14 is the report of the dialogue between the authorities and the healed man. This dialogue marks the beginning of the investigation of the wrong doer in the infringement of the Sabbath law. According to Moloney (1998:168; cf. Carson, 1982b:81), the Jewish authorities make their entrance into the story, accusing the man of violating Sabbath law by carrying his mat or bed. In response, the man does not take responsibility for breaking Sabbath practice; instead, he explains that he simply followed the instructions given to him by the stranger who had healed him. The narrator's *informative speech* comes back in 5:15-16, informing the reader about the reaction of Jesus' opponents toward the act of the healing on a Sabbath. This happens after the sick man (who was now healed) reported to them that it was Jesus who healed him.²³⁷ In this *informative speech*, the study observes that Jesus' opponents table their first official accusation against him. Jesus becomes *de facto*, an accused and the Jewish opponents are both accusers and judges. The charge/offense is the breaking of the Sabbath law, as stated in 5: 16: “ὅτι ταῦτα ἐποίησεν ἐν σαββάτῳ” (*because he did these things on the Sabbath*). The ensuing punishment for the offense is persecution²³⁸ (5:16). To this accusation, the story continues with a *responsive speech act* in 5:17 introduced by the phrase “ὁ δὲ [Ἰησοῦς] ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτοῖς” (*but Jesus answered them*). This study reads the word “ἀπεκρίνατο” (*he answered*) in the context of defence in the trial (not necessarily answering a direct question) since the text does not report any specific words or questions directed to Jesus regarding the accusation (cf. Morris, 1971:308).²³⁹ This *responsive speech act* marks the beginning of Jesus' formal defence speech in the trial (Brown, 1975:213).²⁴⁰ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:136; cf. Carson, 1982b:81) comment that Jesus' response emphatically points out that “the creative and conservative activity of my Father has known no Sabbath-cessation from the beginning until now, and that is the law of my working.”

²³⁷ Brown (1975:209) opines that “the healed man repays his benefactor by reporting him to the Jews. This is less an example of treachery than of persistent naïveté.” Bruce (1983:126), however, asserts that “some commentators have denounced his action as ungrateful; others have thought his intention was to give credit where credit was due.”

²³⁸ Morris (1971:308) mentions that “the Jews took action against Jesus, though we are not told exactly what form their persecution took.”

²³⁹ Kanagaraj (2005:173) opines that, “This implies that the religious authorities had confronted him and accused him of breaking the Sabbath law.”

²⁴⁰ Cf. Schnackenburg (1971:100); Hutcheson (1972:77-78); Lincoln (2000:72); Moloney (1998:17); and Neyrey (2007:106).

Kanagaraj (2005:174; Keener, 2003:645)²⁴¹ concurs, indicating that the essence of 5:17 is that while God rested from his work of creation, he did not cease his work of sustaining what he had made and of blessing humanity.

The *responsive speech* act by Jesus in 5:17 provoked the Jewish opponents even more. Through the narrator's voice (5:18a), the reader learns that the opponents sought all the more to kill Jesus (*διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μᾶλλον ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτεῖναι*). This study views this action as their actual judgement/sentence against Jesus, i.e., death (cf. Barrett, 1978:256; Moloney, 2005:96).

In response to Jesus' defence statement (defence), the opponents brought a second charge against him. This charge was twofold: firstly, they accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath law, and secondly, he claimed oneness with the Father, as reported in 5:18:

ὅτι οὐ μόνον ἔλυεν τὸ σάββατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγεν τὸν θεὸν ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ θεῷ (because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God).²⁴²

According to the Jewish opponents, this claim amounts to blasphemy (Neyrey, 2007:106). Schnackenburg (1971:100; cf. Lindars, 1972:219) mentions that the "Jews understand at once whom Jesus means by his Father. They know that he means God and calls him his Father in the real sense of the word, and they accuse him of the blasphemy of making himself equal with God."

Chapter 5:19-45 is a long narration (a monologue/direct speech) of Jesus' defence to the two charges brought against him. This narration is in fact the expansion of Jesus' defence in verse 17, revealing the authority of Jesus.²⁴³ The monologue is authentic in nature. The reader can pick up the certainty and confidence with which Jesus responds. Jesus is certain about his relationship

²⁴¹ Schnackenburg (1971:100), Lindars (1972:228), and Bruce (1983:127) hold a similar view in this regard.

²⁴² Keener (2003:645; cf. Brown, 1975:214) says, "Because Jesus grounds his own Sabbath work in that of his Father (5:17), the Pharisees charge Jesus with seeking to make himself equal with God (5:18). This sets the stage for one of the Gospel's lengthy Christological discourses: far from seeking to make himself equal with the Father, Jesus merely carries out what the Father commissioned him to do (5:17-30)."

²⁴³ Lindars (1972:219; cf. Barrett, 1978:257; Bruce, 1983:128; Keener, 2003:647-648; Neyrey, 2007:110) provides a valuable summary, saying: "The issue of the Sabbath is left on one side. Jesus is concerned only with defending his saying as it has been interpreted in the light of verse 18. His work is equivalent to the Father's, because the Father has delegated to him his own prerogatives of giving life and of judging the dead at the end of the age. The healing of the paralysed man is a token of this function, doing for one man now what is applicable to all men at all times and to the end of the world."

with the Father. The utterance here can be classified as a *responsive speech act*, since Jesus is responding to the two charges levelled against him by the opponents. However, the underlying intention with this speech act is to highlight Jesus' authentic defence of his obedient and perfect submissive relationship with the Father (Bruce, 1983:128). This *responsive speech act* is also aimed at empowering the reader with the relevant knowledge about Christ and his oneness and working relation with the Father. The defence further dispels the possible indecisions in the mind of the reader regarding Jesus' deity and the nature of his oneness with the Father.²⁴⁴ It is observed that within Jesus' *responsive speech act*, there is actually an *assertive speech act*. Jesus represents the state of affairs between him and the Father (this is what it is), which has proven to be far from the existing knowledge of the Jewish opponents.

The following sub-section is the discussion of the perlocutionary act/performative nature of the established illocutionary acts.

4.4.4 Perlocutionary Act

Firstly, the importance of the *informative speech act* established in 5:1-5 has been noted. As already highlighted, the narrator's intention with the *informative speech* is to provide information regarding the characters, place, time of the event, and the actual event. Two important observations are noted here: (1) the report of the return of Jesus to Jerusalem creates tension in the mind of the reader. Jesus left Jerusalem as reported in 4:1-2 because already the opposition was rising against him, especially from the Pharisees; (2) the report of the day on which the miracle was performed is also problematic to the reader. A reader who is familiar with Jewish customs and their conservative approach in keeping them can expect Jesus to have difficulties with the Pharisees (2:13-20; 4:1-2). Since there are already signs of opposition against Jesus in the Gospel, this *informative speech act* places the reader in an anticipatory position as the story unfolds. However, the reader is invited to accept the information provided to them so that they can keep up with the development of the story and the basis upon which the trial is set. The *informative speech act*, therefore, functions to empower the reader with the information so that they can also make their own judgement in the forensic proceedings. In this way, the reader is involved in the forensic proceeding since they possess some information about it. The reader is therefore not a by-stander in the trial but a participant. It can also be argued that the information

²⁴⁴ See the opening phrase of his response, i.e., "Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν" (Most assuredly, I say to you).

provided enables the reader to be a judge, since they also have information regarding the legitimacy of the accusations, and the apparent judgement by the Jewish opponents in 5:18a.

Secondly, the *question-responsive speech acts*, e.g., 5:6-8 (Jesus with the sick man), 17 and 18 (Jesus and opponents) also play a critical role towards the reader. The narrator's intention with this speech act is to let the characters express themselves and their views about the matters of concern in the story, that is, the healing miracle, Sabbath law violation, and alleged blasphemy. Where there are direct questions, the reader is also invited to answer for themselves (cf. Ito, 2015:236). Questions and answers enable the reader to experience a dramatic side of the story and thus keep them close to the proceedings of the trial story. It also affords the reader the opportunity to listen to both parties and their witnesses in the dialogue. Questions and answers are performative in the sense that they equip and prepare the reader (real or implied) to make their own judgement after listening to the characters deliberating.

Thirdly, it was noted that the *assertive speech act* (within Jesus' response or defence) in 5:19-45 is uttered with certainty and confidence, and is, in fact, authentic in nature. This speech act is intended to elaborate and to clarify the basis upon which Jesus does what he does. The utterance is a firm defence for the second charge of blasphemy levelled against him. Jesus disputes this accusation. The reader is also invited to listen and accept this defence. In his defence speech, firstly, Jesus reveals in 5:19 that whatever he does, he saw it from the *Father*,

ὁ υἱὸς ποιεῖν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐδὲν ἔαν μὴ τι βλέπῃ τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα (the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do).

In this utterance, Jesus responds to the charge, confirming that he is equal to the Father in power. Thus, all of God's deeds of creation/providence Jesus likewise does (Neyrey, 2007:108).²⁴⁵ Secondly, in 5:20, he confirms that the Father has shown him everything he does (because of his love for the Son), e.g., the Father raises the dead and gives life to them (ὁ πατήρ ἐγείρει τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ ζωοποιεῖ). In 5:21, Jesus confirms that this is the basis why he does the same:

οὕτως καὶ ὁ υἱὸς οὐ θέλει ζωοποιεῖ (even so the Son gives life to whom He will).

²⁴⁵ Barrett (1978:257; cf. Schnackenburg (1971:102; Lindars, 1972:219; Bruce, 1983:128, Keener, 2003:647-648) comments that, "[T]he Father is one true spring of life and of righteous judgement, but he has committed both the bestowal of life and the responsibility of judgement to the son. These are mentioned partly because they are signs of the manifest power which will lead men either to honour Christ as they honour the Father or to reject him and so condemn themselves and partly because life and judgement are two of the main themes of the Gospel as a whole." Brown (1975:214) even asserts that this verse is not unlike Numbers 16:28: "The Lord has sent me to do all these works, and it has not been of myself." He further asks, "[I]s Jesus hurling Moses' words back at the legalist?"

Fourthly, the *assertive speech act* of 5:22-30 is the continuation of Jesus' defence. The defence confirms that Jesus is equal with the Father in authority. In 5:24 and 25, Jesus still opens his speech with the phrase "Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν" (*most assuredly, I say to you*). The utterance still reveals the certainty with which Jesus presents his defence to the accusers. The reader is called to accept this testimony as true and legit. Very critical to this defence argument is the utterance in 5:27, which says,

καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ποιεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν (and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man).

Jesus is not only equal to the Father in power but also has authority to execute judgement. The reader further learns that Jesus' judgement is righteous because, as he judges, he does not seek his own will but the will of the Father who sent him.²⁴⁶ This is ironic to the reader. As the opponents accuse and charge Jesus with breaking the Sabbath law and blasphemy, and subsequently sentence him to persecution and death, the reader learns that Jesus (the accused) is actually the righteous Judge who has the right to judge the opponents and sentence them to eternal death for rejecting the Son of God.²⁴⁷ The text is presented in such a way that it places the reader in a position to judge the Jewish opponents for their disbelief and rejection of the Christ.

As already highlighted above, the role of the witnesses is critical in the Jewish forensic proceedings. Jesus emphasises that if he is his own witness, then his testimony cannot be verified (5:31). Neyrey (2007:113)²⁴⁸ highlights that trials in Israelite and Greco-Roman antiquity revolved around testing the credibility of witnesses who testified for or against the accused. He further mentions that the testimony of a person speaking on their own behalf held little standing in the court. The text reveals that Jesus is fully aware of this Jewish forensic aspect. Therefore, in his defence speech, Jesus strategically presents four witnesses to solidify his defence (5:31-47). The first witness mentioned is John the Baptist, as reported in 5:32-33,

²⁴⁶ Barrett (1978:262) comments, "Jesus is qualified and authorized to judge because he has shared the experiences of men as one of themselves...and this arises out of the uniqueness of his relationship with the Father." Bruce (1983:132; cf. Brown, 1975:215; Lindars, 1972:225) asserts, "His pronouncing of judgement is the reverse side of his life-giving act. His presence in the world inevitably involves judgement, in the twofold sense of the Greek work *crisis*, discrimination and condemnation."

²⁴⁷ Guthrie (1994:1036) correctly remarks, "Although judgment is given to the Son, it is wholly in line with the Father's will."

²⁴⁸ See also Moloney (1998:171), Hutcheson (1972:87), Brown (1975:223), Schnackenburg (1971:120), Barrett (1978:264), Keener (2003:656-657) and Lincoln (2000:23) who hold a similar view.

ἄλλος ἐστὶν ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἐμοῦ, καὶ οἶδα ὅτι ἀληθὴς ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία ἣν μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ.³³ ὑμεῖς ἀπεστάλακατε πρὸς Ἰωάννην, καὶ μεμαρτύρηκεν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ (There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true.³³ You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth).

Guthrie (1994:1037) indicates that John the Baptist's witness was valuable but inadequate (33–35). He further mentions that John's witness certainly led some to Christ, but it was unthinkable that Jesus should need to rely on that witness.²⁴⁹

The second witness is the “works” God gave him to do as reported in 5:36:

ἐγὼ δὲ ἔχω τὴν μαρτυρίαν μείζω τοῦ Ἰωάννου· τὰ γὰρ ἔργα ἃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ ἵνα τελειώσω αὐτά, αὐτὰ τὰ ἔργα ἃ ποιῶ μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὅτι ὁ πατήρ με ἀπέσταλκεν (But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me).

Neyrey (2007:113) aptly argues that Jesus' works serve as his indisputable credentials, confirming him as God's agent. Through his remarkable deeds, Jesus effectively demonstrates that he is the Son of God, as these works are accomplished through his divine power and unwavering obedience to the Father.²⁵⁰ In fact, the text explicitly reveals that it is the Father who commissioned and mandated that these miraculous works be performed (cf. Bruce, 1983:135; Keener, 2003:658). However, the Jewish opponents are blind enough not to see and acknowledge this. The text portrays them as still blindly trapped in their legalistic ways, that they cannot even see the works of God in Jesus.

The third witness to be presented is God the Father Himself, as indicated in 5:37-38:

καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ ἐκεῖνος μεμαρτύρηκεν περὶ ἐμοῦ” (And the Father Himself, who sent me, has testified of me).

²⁴⁹ Barrett (1978:264) reminds us that “it was for witness that John came to the world (1:7).”

²⁵⁰ Lindars (1972:229; cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:122; Brown, 1975:224; Keener, 2003:656; Lincoln, 2000:23; Guthrie, 1994:1037) correctly points out that, “[O]bviously one thinks first of the Signs, such as the healing of the paralytic. They prove Jesus' special relation to the Father, because they done with his power and authority and fulfil his redemptive purpose.”

Neyrey (2007:114) calls this Witness “the best possible Witness”. He further states that “Clearly Jesus is not a disobedient or non-observant sinner as charged, but holy in the paramount way holiness was assessed: total faithfulness and obedience to God.”²⁵¹

The fourth witness in the defence of Jesus is the Scriptures, as mentioned in 5:39:

ἐραυνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς, ὅτι ὑμεῖς δοκεῖτε ἐν αὐταῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχειν· καὶ ἐκεῖναί εἰσιν αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι περὶ ἐμοῦ (You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of me).

While commenting on this Witness, Neyrey (2007:114) mentions that Judaism, a religion of the Book, lives and dies on its understanding of the Scriptures. Hence, Jesus notes the pious practice. Morris (1971:334; cf. Lindars, 1972:230; Barrett, 1978:267) pronounces that that the Jews prided themselves on their knowledge of Scripture. However, it is surprising to the reader that this time, they do not seem to put effort in understanding the coming of the Messiah.²⁵² They are totally ignorant about it. Their ignorance surely empowers the reader to accuse them of the ignorance of the Law. Therefore, the reader may judge them for their ignorance.

The fifth and the last witness is Moses, as noted in 5:46-47,

εἰ γὰρ ἐπίστευετε Μωϋσεῖ, ἐπίστευετε ἂν ἐμοί· περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν (For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote about me).

Moses was the pride of Jewish leaders.²⁵³ Morris (1971:334; cf. Barrett, 1978:270; Bruce, 1983:139) indicates that the Jewish opponents were proud of their connection with the great

²⁵¹ While commenting of the seriousness of calling the Father as witness, Van der Watt (2010:162) indicates that, “The seriousness of this accusation within the frame of Jewish juridical practices should be noted. By calling God as witness on his behalf (see also 5:37) implies that Jesus is willing to be judged by God himself if his witness is not true. However, if the witness of the opponents is not true, they will be judged (Motyer 1997:156). The accusers of the first process thus become the accused in the second and vice versa.”

²⁵² Keener (2003:659; cf. Brown, 1975:225; Schnackenburg, 1971:125) mentions, “Searching the Law was an act of piety that often included returning to investigate it and implement what had been neglected (1 Macc. 14:14).”

²⁵³ Keener (2003:661; cf. Morris, 1971:334) says, “Although John’s Pharisees do not represent all of early Judaism or even all of its elite, their fidelity to Moses is perfectly believable in the light of the rest of early Jewish piety; it clearly exalted Moses. He was the most righteous of all people in history. Contrary to 1 Kgs 3:12, he was also the wisest of all people in history.” On the same line of argument, Neyrey (2007:114) calls him “Israel’s most reliable figure.”

lawgiver, but he (Moses, not Jesus) is their accuser before God. Moses is a standing witness against them.²⁵⁴

The study notes that all these witnesses are also submitted to the reader to affirm the legitimacy of Jesus' defence. The reader has been empowered with enough evidence, in terms of witnesses (5:31-47) to make their own judgement. Besides these witnesses, the reader has thus far, in the Fourth Gospel, gathered enough knowledge to recognise Jesus and his works as from God (1:14, 29; 2:11, 19-22; 3:2, 31-36; 4:34, 42, 54). The reader, because of this evidence at their disposal, cannot assume a neutral role in this forensic proceeding. This is in sharp contrast with the misguided conviction of the Jewish opponents about Jesus. Therefore, the implied reader has to use the information provided to them to make a decision either to support or reject the opponents. Furthermore, the reader is aware of the consequences of rejecting Jesus (3:18-21). Thus, the text is presented in such a way that the reader is persuaded to make a judgement in favour of Jesus. It emphasises that failing to do so will result in the reader him/herself being judged for rejecting the Son of God, potentially jeopardising the attainment of eternal life.

This analysis views the narration in Chapter 7 as a resolution to the current forensic process. The reader learns that Jesus is indeed innocent. The reader is somehow vindicated to have judged the Jewish opponents. First, in 7:30, 32 and 44, the narrator reports that their intentions to arrest him (7:30, 32, 44) fails because his time/hour had not yet come.²⁵⁵ This serves as compelling evidence of his divine nature and close relationship with his Father. Jesus is indeed God's agent and instrument in the execution of his plan of salvation (Schnackenburg, 1971:148). Secondly, in 7:45-53, the opponents' inability to arrest him is reported. They are frustrated by the military (7:45-49). The guards sent out to seize him come back empty-handed, saying, "We have never heard anyone talk like this!" They are also frustrated by a member (7:50-53): One of their own members, Nicodemus, now stands up for Jesus (Willmington, 1999; cf. Keener, 2003:734; Schnackenburg, 1971:161).²⁵⁶

²⁵⁴ Neyrey (2007:115) states that "the tables are turned, and the accusers are now accused." Brown (1975:226) opines that "it is not impossible that the evangelist thinks of Moses as having already begun his accusation *against the Jewish Opponents*."

²⁵⁵ Barrett (1978:323; cf. Bruce, 1983:179) says, "The hour is the hour of death and glorification of Jesus (2:4). Until the appointed time he may work unhindered."

²⁵⁶ Brown (1975:330) remarks: "[I]n vv. 45-52 John gives us a dramatic vignette of the frustration and helplessness of the Sanhedrin authorities when faced with Jesus. Jesus has won a following among the crowds; the temple police are impressed; and even one of the members of the Sanhedrin raises his voice in Jesus' defense."

4.4.5 Conclusion: The Analysis of 5:1-47 and its Performative Nature

This analysis focused on the story of the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethzatha in Jerusalem (5:1-8). Within this forensic dialogue, Jesus is the accused, and the Jewish opponents are the accusers and judges. The first charge as identified in 5:16 is breaking the Sabbath law. Firstly, the narrator's *informative speech act* throughout narrative has been lauded for its significance to the implied reader. It assists the implied reader to know the details of the trial. The text presents the Jewish opponents condemning Jesus for working a miracle on a Sabbath (cf. Theophylact, 2007:86). For this charge, the Jewish opponents persecute Jesus. Following the analysis here, it seems that, for the first charge of breaking the Sabbath law, the sentence is persecution.

However, Jesus defends himself against this accusation. He asserts that what he does is no different from what the Father (whom the Accusers claim to believe in) has been doing since the inception of the creation. The Father has been working, and so is Jesus. This implies that if the Jewish opponents accuse Jesus of breaking the Sabbath, they should do the same with the Father, as Theophylact (2007:86), while paraphrasing the defence of Jesus, comments the following: "*God my Father works on the Sabbath and you do not condemn him, neither should you fault me.*" God the Father is consequently brought in as the Witness of Jesus in the trial. The dialogue in the story is dominated by *question-response* speech acts. This affords the characters an opportunity to express their views about the Sabbath law and how God the Father works with his creation. The narrative is presented in such a way that the implied reader is invited to listen to the debate and weigh the defence arguments of both parties in order for them to make their own judgement.

At this stage of the trial, the implied reader gains insight into the motives of the Jewish opponents. Their accusations arise from a lack of understanding about Jesus' true identity. They also lack knowledge on how Jesus relates to the Father. Cognitively, the unfolding of the trial invites the implied reader to judge the Jewish opponents since they make baseless accusations because of their lack of knowledge. Therefore, it turns out that there is a dramatic change of roles in the narrative. The judges and accusers are themselves accused and judged by the implied reader. In this manner, the forensic dialogue proves to be performative in nature, in that the reader is subsequently hooked into the text and become a participating character.

The trial continues with the Jewish opponents levelling the second charge against Jesus, accusing him of blasphemy (5:17). They allege that Jesus did not only break the Sabbath law but also audaciously declared that God is his Father, thus making himself equal with God. This charge intensifies the hostility towards Jesus, leading the accusers and judges in the text fixated on killing

him even more. The text reveals in this instant that the charge of blasphemy levelled against Jesus carries a significant consequence: the deserving sentence for this alleged act is death. However, their approach and judgement are also evaluated in 7:45-52. Nicodemus argues that their application of the law is not consistent.

In 5:19-45, Jesus defends this second accusation by asserting and emphasising that just as his Father has been working, so he, too, is also working. This is the basis upon which he does what he does (5:1-15) and says what he says (5:17). The implied reader is also invited to listen and weigh this defence speech, as Jesus presents it.

In his defence speech, the implied reader understands that whatever Jesus does, he saw it from the *Father* (5:19). Therefore, Jesus confirms that he is equal to the Father in power. Jesus also confirms that the Father has shown him everything he does (because of his love for the Son). For instance, the Father raises the dead and gives life *to them*, and this serves as the foundation for why Jesus, too, performs similar acts.

In 5:22-30, Jesus continues with his defence, asserting that he is equal with the Father in authority. This *assertive* speech act continues to invite the implied reader to listen and weigh the testimony of Jesus against that of the accusers. Jesus confirms that he is not only equal to the Father in power but also with authority to execute judgement. The irony imbedded in this *assertive* speech has been recognised. The implied reader learns that Jesus (the accused) is, in fact, the righteous Judge, and not the Jewish opponents.

As the trial continues, Jesus reveals four witnesses to strengthen his defence in this trial. The first witness is John the Baptist, as reported in 5:32-33. John the Baptist has borne witness about Jesus to the Jewish opponents, as Theophylact (2007:93; cf. Bruce, 1983:135; Barrett, 1978:264) comments: “[Y]ou (Jewish opponents) yourselves sent men to John to get answers to your questions because you trusted him to speak the truth.”

The second witness is the “works” God the Father gave Jesus to do as reported in 5:36. Theophylact (2007:93) points out that by “works” Jesus means his miracles, such as the raising of the paralytic, and many more. Jesus’ works are revealed as precisely his credentials that he is God’s agent. Bruce (1983:135) explains that “by doing these works, Jesus showed himself to be the son of God.”

The third witness is God the Father Himself as reported in 5:37-38. Theophylact (2007:86; cf. Bruce, 1983:136; Barrett, 1978:266) points out that the witness of the Father regarding Jesus

extends far beyond the event of his baptism. The testimony of Jesus being the Son of God can be found throughout the entirety of the law, the prophets, and all Scriptures.

The fourth witness in the defence of Jesus is the Scriptures, as reported in 5:39. The fifth and the last witness is Moses, as indicated in 5:46-47. Moses stands as a witness against the Jewish opponents.

All these witnesses are also presented to the implied reader to cross-exam them (by reading the text). The implied reader is therefore provided with sufficient evidence and witnesses to make their own choices and judgement. In this way, the forensic dialogue has a performative power to the implied reader.

4.5 FORENSIC DIALOGUE AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 9:13-34

4.5.1 Setting of the Story

The setting of the story of the healing of the man born blind was discussed previously in Chapter 2 (misunderstanding). It has already been established that this narrative reports the events during Jesus' public ministry and underscores the challenges that Jesus met when dealing with the unbelieving world, particularly the Jewish opponents. Similar to 5:1-47, the point of contest is the investigation of the violation of Sabbath law. Jesus heals the man born blind on a Sabbath day. Neyrey (2007:171) calls it "the trial that never ends."²⁵⁷ The setting of the story is in Jerusalem since the text (9:7) reports that Jesus sends the blind man to the local pool called Siloam (Neyrey, 2007:168).

The trial can be summarised as follows: The charge is the violation of the Sabbath law; the Pharisees are the judges and accusers; Jesus²⁵⁸ is the accused (defendant); and the witness (on behalf of Jesus) is the man born blind. Various neighbours and parents testify as well (Neyrey, 2007:171; cf. Schnackenburg, 1968:238).

²⁵⁷ Neyrey (2005:171) explains, "[O]nce the author tells us that Jesus healed on the Sabbath (9:14), a forensic process begins, just as happened in 5:10-16." Van der Watt (2010: 160) also recognises the forensic nature of this narrative when he says: "The discussion between the blind man and the Pharisees in Chapter 9 is also forensic in nature. Eventually the blind man is judged and thrown out of the synagogue. The reader can follow the argument, which is clearly won by the blind man, who is then treated unjustly. Again, the reader becomes involved in judging the outcome. In this way, the text becomes performative, actively drawing the reader into the narrative world of the text."

²⁵⁸ It should be noted here that the accused, Jesus, is absent from the scene.

4.5.2 Illocutionary Act

As indicated above, the section comprising verses 1-7 narrates the miraculous healing of the blind man. Verses 7 and 8 are crucial in this section. Firstly, verse 7 is a report of how Jesus healed the man. The report is an *informative* speech by which the narrator informs the reader how the blind man was healed. This report is essential since it reveals two important aspects, namely: the power of Christ to restore sight to the blind man and the Sabbath day violation (cf. Keener, 2003:781; Brown, 1975:372; Tasker, 1999:123; Carson, 1982b:82) that leads to the forensic proceedings in the story. Secondly, the utterance in verse 7 comprises of a *directive* speech act.²⁵⁹ For the man to be healed, Jesus instructs him to take action by going and washing himself in the Pool of Siloam²⁶⁰ (*Ἔπαγε νίψαι εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωάμ*), so that he can finally experience the sign of healing.

The narrative section (vv. 8-12) marks the commencement of a forensic inquiry into the healing of the blind man. His neighbours and those who previously saw him as a blind man and a beggar are interested in knowing the person who healed him. In the first place they confirm whether it is him or not (vv. 8-9); secondly, they want to know how his eyes were opened (v. 10). The man born blind replies in verse 11. His *responsive* speech act reveals that Jesus (*Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰησοῦς [a man called Jesus]*) is the one who healed him. This speech act intends to inform the neighbours and the acquaintances that Jesus did perform the sign of healing to the blind man. The implied reader is also invited to take note of this response and know that Jesus is the healer as the story unfolds. Their inquiry concludes with a question, seeking to locate Jesus, to which the former blind man responds *“οὐκ οἶδα” (I don’t know)*.

As highlighted above, the trial story begins in verses 13-17. The beginning of the interrogation of the healed man by the Pharisees is reported in verse 13, when “they”²⁶¹ brought him who was formerly blind before them (Pharisees). The voice of the narrator provides this critical background

²⁵⁹ Brown (1975:372; cf. Barrett, 1978: 358) mentions that “an antecedent for such a directive may be found 2 Kings 5:10-13, where Elisha does not heal Naaman on the spot but sends him to wash in the Jordan. In Luke 17:12-15 Jesus does not heal the lepers immediately but sends them off to the priests and they are healed on the way.”

²⁶⁰ While commenting on the significance and the symbolic meaning of Siloam, Ito (2015:97; cf. Grigsby, 1985:228) says, “It is assumed that the characters and the reader are aware of the symbolic role of Siloam’s waters. They would have regarded Siloam’s waters as cultic (to be used for a ritual purification) as well as “living.”

²⁶¹ It is not immediately clear who brought him to the Pharisees. Guthrie (1994:1045) suggests that it may have been the neighbours of verse 8 or others who were hostile to Jesus.

information to the implied reader (vv. 13-14). These two verses also signal the formal constituting of the court proceedings (Neyrey, 2007:171). Very critical in this report is the mentioning of the act of healing and the day on which the healing took place (v. 14),

ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ᾗ ἡμέρᾳ τὸν πηλὸν ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀνέωξεν αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς (Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay²⁶² and opened his eyes).

The utterance here is an *informative speech act*, delivered with the intention of providing critical information about the trial to the reader. This *informative speech* reports the actual violation upon which the Pharisees charge Jesus. The study notes that the Pharisees here are not only portrayed as accusers but also judges in the trial.²⁶³ In verse 15, the narrator takes the reader to the scene of questioning or inquiry. The Pharisees, in their quest for information, interrogate the healed man, seeking to understand how he had received his sight. The healed man proceeds to explain to them how the healing was accomplished. The Pharisees (according to their religious standard or the observance of the Sabbath law) question the origin of the person who healed the blind man. The text reports their reaction in verse 16 as follows,

Οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι τὸ σάββατον οὐ τηρεῖ (This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath).

Schnackenburg (1971:248; cf. Keener, 2003:784)²⁶⁴ observes that certain Pharisees quickly notice the breach of the Sabbath. As a result, they draw the conclusion that the person who performed the healing cannot be from God. The utterance emphasises the profound importance of Sabbath observation within the beliefs and practices of the Pharisees. For them, observing the Sabbath was not only a matter of religious tradition but also an act of worship and obedience to God. Thus, according to them, Jesus has disqualified himself by breaching it, and therefore he cannot be from God. This study suggests that this utterance is stronger than just an expression of their feelings or a claim, but it can be classified as an illocutionary act belonging to *declaratives*.

²⁶² Bruce (1983:212; cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:247; Brown, 1975:373) says, “[O]ne of the categories of the work specifically forbidden on the Sabbath in the traditional interpretation of the law was kneading, and the making of mud or clay with such simple ingredients as earth and saliva was construed as a form of kneading.”

²⁶³ While elaborating on the role of judges in a Jewish trial, Schnackenburg (1968:247; cf. Neyrey, 2009:248) states, “[T]he text evidently envisages teachers of the law with the right to make authoritative decisions, though John never mentions the scribes separately. He further indicates that in this day all teachers of the law were Pharisees, and they here represent the whole of legalistic official Judaism.”

²⁶⁴ Cf. Barrett (1978:360); Brown (1975:373); Morris (1971:484-485); Bruce (1983:212); and Lindars (1972:346).

The tone of the utterance is conclusive based on their logical understanding of the violation of the Sabbath law. With this kind of an authoritative utterance, the Pharisees confirm, as suggested above, that they are not only accusers but also judges in the trial. Their main goal with this inquiry is to establish facts around the violation of the Sabbath law.²⁶⁵ The intention of the *declarative* also invites the implied reader to make their own conclusion based on their cognitive awareness of the facts around the matter and, of course, their pre-knowledge of who Jesus is and how he operates.

The first interrogation session comes to an abrupt halt with a divided bench of judges, as reported in verse 16b: “καὶ σχίσμα ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς” (*and there was a division among them*). While some have declared Jesus as not coming from God, others posed a question (v. 16b) that appeared to consider the possibility that he might be from God. As a result, a division arose among them regarding Jesus' origin and identity.²⁶⁶ The forensic process in this case cannot be concluded fairly. The Pharisees have to continue gathering evidence from the witnesses. The same cannot be suggested for the reader. The reader knows that Jesus is from God (1:14) and is therefore invited to make their own judgement against the Pharisees who are trapped in their own legalistic religion (cf. Schnackenburg, 1968:247; Brown, 1975:373).

The narration in verses 18-23 comprises the third scene of the trial. In this segment, the Pharisees persist with their interrogation, this time directing their questions towards the parents of the man born blind. The narrator's *informative* speech covers this part, particularly verse 18. The narrator informs the reader that this scene takes place because the Pharisees are sceptical and disbelieving of the testimony given by the man who was once blind but now healed.²⁶⁷ The *informative* speech of the narrator intends to update the reader about the proceedings of the trial,

²⁶⁵ Guthrie (1994:1045) comments, “[T]he objectors were obviously those who were sticklers for the Jewish law. The making of clay on the Sabbath would have been enough to raise their hackles, in spite of its being done in an act of mercy. The Pharisees' interest in the method of healing (15) was no doubt because they saw some opportunity to criticize Jesus over it.”

²⁶⁶ Schnackenburg (1968:248) notes that others held the view that “It is inexplicable that a man who has shown himself to be a sinner by breaking the Sabbath (which they do not deny) can perform such signs.” He further points out that the plural ‘signs’ reveals that they are already aware of other signs performed by Jesus.

²⁶⁷ Neyrey (2007:172) explains that this court is dissatisfied with the testimony of the man born blind because they do not believe (Οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν) he was in fact born blind, so they summon the only witnesses who can verify this, namely his parents.

so the reader may continue to listen to the witnesses and their arguments thereof. The interrogation is reported in verse 19 as follows:

Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμῶν, ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη; πῶς οὖν βλέπει ἄρτι
(Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?).

The interrogation here consists of two things: Firstly, the Pharisees want to confirm from the parents if the man born blind is indeed their son. Secondly, they also want to know how this man was healed.²⁶⁸ From the speech act perspective, it can be argued that the two utterances are basically a *question speech* act that seeks answers from the parents. The basic intention with the questions is to get answers regarding the paternity of the man born blind and how he was healed. The reader must also answer these questions for themselves. It is known, however, that the Pharisees sought more than just information from this question. They wanted to establish a case against Jesus. In essence, it can be argued that the speech also has a *disputive* tone in it.²⁶⁹ In their response to the first question, the parents do accept that the healed man is indeed their son and that he was born blind, as reported in verse 20,

Οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ἡμῶν καὶ ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη (We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind).

It is noted that the parents' response, particularly to the second question, is rather disappointing to the Pharisees, since the parents could not tell by what means he now sees and do not even know who opened his eyes. The answer from the parents is purely a necessary lie and dishonesty since they feared the Pharisees and that they would be thrown out of the synagogue. The narrator informs the reader through an aside (v. 22). The two answers from the parents can be classified as a *responsive* speech act, uttered with the intention to give answers or to give a confirmation to the Pharisees.²⁷⁰ It has been noted that the first answer was indeed true, but the second answer

²⁶⁸ Barrett (1978:361) submits, “[I]n this verse, and the two following, the circumstances of the cure as well as the gravity of the disease are brought out with fullest clarity.”

²⁶⁹ While commenting on the nature of these two questions, Neyrey (2007:172) also suggests that “like other questions we have studied in this Gospel, these are by no means simple requests for information but challenges to the son and to Jesus, who healed him.” He further points out that, “moreover, these questions carry with them threats, such that the parents feared the Jews.”

²⁷⁰ In his speech act analysis of John 9, Ito (2015:299) classifies this utterance as a *confirmative*. It is noteworthy to mention that the perspective of this study aligns with Ito's findings, as both studies concur on the classification of the utterance as confirmative. In general, the utterance by the parents is a response (*responsive*) issued with the intention to confirm.

was a lie due to the fear of the Pharisees.²⁷¹ The reader is also invited to accept these answers as they are, even though with amusement since she/he is aware that the parents lied.²⁷² The Pharisees proceed with their investigation by going back to the man born blind.

The narration in 9:24-34 is the second interrogation of the man born blind and his expulsion from the community by the Pharisees. Following this study's observation, this section constitutes the fourth trial scene. The Pharisees called the man and said to him (v. 24),

Δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ· ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν (Give God the glory! We know that this man is a sinner).

The utterance highlights the frustration and desperation from the side of the Pharisees to get the healed man to at least testify against Jesus or defame his positive character. The frustration stems from their inability to obtain negative testimony from the parents about Jesus or to make them deny the reality of the healing. It seems that their leadership (also as representatives of Judaism) is at stake, and to get people to testify against Jesus is the major issue in this court case (cf. Keener, 2003:789).

The utterance above consists of two things. Firstly, it is a command “Δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ” (*Give God the glory!*). This is a *directive* speech act issued with an intention to get the healed man to do something, that is, speak the truth.²⁷³ Secondly, the second utterance in verse 24b is an

²⁷¹ Neyrey (2007:172; cf. Brown, 1975:374) comments, “The parents tell a defensive lie, but what is worse, they abandon their son to the court, by saying ‘ask him, he is of age, he will speak for himself’.” Keener (2003:788) argues that “technically the parents did not know how their son was healed (sorcery was a possibility) and could offer only second-hand testimony; but their motives for concealing even that testimony make their confession more like a denial.”

²⁷² When discussing the illocutionary effect of the Pharisees' interrogation to the man born blind, Ito (2015:311) states, “When the reader reads the first utterances by the Jews, he may initially be puzzled by them. One should remember that this was the blind man's judicial interrogation conducted by the Jews. In such a situation, the inquisitors' first utterance usually starts with a question regarding the issue concerned. But their utterances were not of this nature. This was also the second interrogation, as they had already questioned him in the first session. Therefore, there was no need for any introduction, and their tactic, in this instance, was to focus on the issue. They may have thought it a good idea to pressurise him from the start of this session. Accordingly, they started with the first utterance: *Give glory to God*”.

²⁷³ This was a common Jewish oath to call someone to speak the truth (Schnackenburg, 1971:250-251). Lindars (1972:347) correctly points out “that this figure of speech is not an admonition to ascribe the healing to God instead of Jesus but an unusual way of adjuring the man to speak the truth” (cf. Bruce, 1983:216-216). Barrett (1978:362) also advances that the words “Give glory to God” have the same force as in the story of Achan in Joshua 7:19. Hughes and Laney (2001:475) also remark that the words “δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ” (give glory to God) imply “give glory to God by telling the truth”. Moloney (1998:294) further states, “[U]sing an oath formula employed before taking testimony or a confession

assertive speech act.²⁷⁴ The Pharisees claim to possess some knowledge about Jesus to which they want the man born blind to give consent. It is interesting to note that the Pharisees did not ask him a question this time, but rather made use of a simple statement of what, they thought, they knew: “*We know that this man is a sinner*” (Ito, 2015:310). This utterance can be taken as part of the Pharisees’ argument in the court case, that is, Jesus is a sinner. Their utterance is made with confidence based on what they know or claim about Jesus (Cf. Morris, 1971:491; Lindars, 1972:347).²⁷⁵ In his response, the man intelligently ensures that he does not fall into agreeing with the Pharisees’ assertion that Jesus is a sinner, but he however continues to affirm that he was blind but now he can see, as reported in verse 25,

Εἰ ἁμαρτωλός ἐστιν οὐκ οἶδα· ἐν οἶδα ὅτι τυφλὸς ὦν ἄρτι βλέπω (Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see).

The utterance of the blind man here can be classified as a *dissentive* speech act. In this instance, the blind man was unwilling to meet their requirement, for he did not believe personally that Jesus was a sinner, as the Pharisees suggested (cf. Ito, 2015:316). Not being able to force the blind man to agree to their statement of declaring Jesus a sinner, the Pharisees continue with the interrogation by posing yet another two questions to him as reported in verse 26.

Τί ἐποίησέν σοι; πῶς ἤνοιξέν σου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς (What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?).

The utterance here is basically a *question* speech act. It should be noted, however, that this question has more to it than seeking information. The healed man counters (*responsive speech act*) this question by going back to his testimony in verse 25. He argues that he has already answered the question, but they were not willing to listen to him or take his answer (v. 27). The reader must also understand why the man does not want to answer the question for the second time, for it has already been answered. Neyrey (2007:173) comments that the man mocks their

of guilt (cf. Josh 7:19; 1 Chron 30:6-9; Jer. 13:16) they command the man to give praise to God. But it is a god of their own making, not the God of Jesus Christ, because they ‘know’ that Jesus is a sinner.”

²⁷⁴ See also Ito’s analysis, who states: “Each of the Jews’ utterances, in this instance, has its own speech act. These utterances can be assigned to one global speech act by the *Generalization Rule*, which constructs a new proposition. The first utterance, a command, is a speech act of *requirement* with the purpose of ordering the blind man to testify that Jesus was a sinner, for the Jews had the necessary authority over the blind man. The second utterance is a pure assertion of what the Jews claimed to know (*assertive*) and forms an explanatory speech act in answer to the first utterance” (Ito, 2015:311).

²⁷⁵ See also Morris (1971:491), and Lindars, 1972:347), who mention that the utterance “expresses a confident assertion.”

demands to hear his testimony once more because they did not accept it previously. According to him, Jesus did nothing wrong except heal his blindness (Cf. Barrett, 1978:362). The healed man is not persuaded or intimidated to change his statement to defame Jesus' character. On the contrary, the healed man ironically (v. 27) suggests to them to consider being his disciples also (Lindars, 1972:348). Ito (2015:321) suggests that the primary illocutionary act performed in the Jews' utterance, in this instance, could be that of *requestive*.²⁷⁶ This means that the Jews intended to ask the blind man to tell them who Jesus was. By questioning the manner of 'how,' the Pharisees were, in fact, asking the identity of 'who' (Ito, 2015:321). Brown (1966:379) validates this view when he says, "In these interrogations the real issue is whether or not Jesus has miraculous power and, if he does, who he is."²⁷⁷ Neyrey (2007:173; cf. Bruce, 1983:217) correctly observes that the Pharisees demand more testimony, nothing new, but the same information already given them several times (see also vv. 11 and 15). It can be indicated that the repeated interrogation by the Pharisees helps the reader realise how true a disciple the healed man has become.

In response to the healed man's question in verse 27, the Pharisees simply affirm their religious position or belief. Their utterance recorded in verses 28-29 is as follows,

Σὺ μαθητῆς εἶ ἐκείνου, ἡμεῖς δὲ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐσμὲν μαθηταί·²⁹ ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεὶ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἴδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν· You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from.

Although they are responding to the blind man's question, their answer is disputive against his supposition. They further strongly affirm their positions as disciples of Moses. The words "*ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν*," and later "*δὲ οὐκ οἴδαμεν*," are emphatic. In this case, they continue to cite Moses as their witness in this forensic process. Their dispute is based on the sure knowledge of what they know and do not know, that is, they know that God spoke to Moses but as for Jesus, they do not even know where he comes from. With this observation, the utterances in verses 28-29 are *responsive, disputive, and assertive* speech acts. Through these speech acts, the Pharisees primarily respond to the healed man's question (v. 27), while at the same time disputing his

²⁷⁶ Ito (2015:330) says, "Requestives are one of the subcategories of Directives that express 'the speaker's attitude toward some prospective action by the hearer and his intention that his utterance, or the attitude it expresses, be taken as a reason for the hearer's action' (Bach & Harnish 1979:41). The schema of *requestives* by Bach and Harnish (1979:47) is as follows: *Requestives*: (ask, beg, beseech, implore, insist, invite, petition, plead, pray, request, solicit, summon, supplicate, tell, urge)."

²⁷⁷ Moloney (1998:294) emphasises that at this stage of the forensic proceedings "the issue of 'how' rather than 'who' is still at the center of their discussion."

positive testimony about Jesus and subsequently rejecting Jesus and affirming their position as disciples of Moses.²⁷⁸ Schnackenburg (1971:251; cf. Barrett, 1978:362; Brown, 1975:374; Lindars, 1972:349) points out that this is a typical phrase of Pharisaic scribes. Moloney (1998:294) correctly observes stating that “but ‘the Jews’ will not be moved. They are followers of Moses while the cured man is a disciple of ‘that fellow’. Their discipleship is based on the certain knowledge that God has spoken through Moses and, as for Jesus, “τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἶδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν” (they do not know where he comes from) (cf. chapter 5:39ff). With this *responsive* and *disputive* speech act, the text invites the reader to accept and weigh the evidence collected and judge for themselves as to which party is the real disciple(s) of God and why. The narrator challenges the reader to make the right decision (Ito, 2015:338).

This study views the utterances in verses 30-33 as a unit and comprises few illocutions in them that deserve attention, since it contributes a great value to understanding the forensic dynamic of the story. The blind man continues to argue as follows:

³⁰ἀπεκρίθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ τὸ θαυμαστόν ἐστιν, ὅτι ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἐστίν, καὶ ἤνοιξέν μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. ³¹οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἀκούει, ἀλλ’ ἐάν τις θεοσεβῆς ἦ καὶ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῇ τούτου ἀκούει. ³²ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ ἠκούσθη ὅτι ἠνέωξέν τις ὀφθαλμούς τυφλοῦ γεγεννημένου. ³³εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ, οὐκ ἠδύνατο ποιεῖν οὐδέν. (³⁰ The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! ³¹Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. ³²Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing).

This study views this utterance (vv. 30-34) in general as a *disputive* speech act.²⁷⁹ In his role as witness in the trial, the blind man continues to challenge the viewpoint of the Pharisees on the acts and the person of Jesus Christ. In verse 30, the utterance is more of a *descriptive* speech act than anything and constitutes the body of his argument. Few points can be noted:

²⁷⁸ Keener (2003:791) propounds: “Yet their claim to be ‘disciples of Moses’ (9:28) is ironically refuted by the rest of John’s Gospel (cf. 5:45-47), as is their trust in Moses (5:45). On a broader level, their claim to speak for all Judaism is ironically undermined by John’s eschatology elsewhere, including the ensuing discourse (10:3-5; cf. pp. 199-201, 214-228).”

²⁷⁹ Ito (2015:352) postulates, “Relatively speaking, the force of *disputative* seems to be dominant in the utterance.”

- The blind man disputes, insisting and marvelling that Jesus opened his eyes, yet the religious leaders do not know where he comes from (v. 30).²⁸⁰ The blind man, therefore, describes the contradiction in the understanding of the Pharisees about their view of Jesus and what he has done. The essence of the clarification is that despite the fact that Jesus opened his eyes, the Pharisees did not accept that Jesus came from God (Ito, 2015:347).
- The blind man deduces that Jesus is not a sinner since God hears him. This would not be the case since God does not listen to sinners;²⁸¹ and this is the presupposition that both the blind man and the religious leaders know (*οἶδαμεν*). He further argues that Jesus is the worshipper of God (*θεοσεβής*) and, in fact, according to the healed man, what Jesus does is according to the will of God (v. 31). The ironic part of it is that the Pharisees are judging incorrectly while this is a common knowledge which, as leaders of the people, they should know better. The Pharisees are challenged to revisit their pre-existing knowledge of how God works and possibly correct their understanding. The blind man challenges the Pharisees to re-evaluate their accusations against Jesus based on this common shared knowledge. The utterance here comprises of more than one illocutionary force. Firstly, the utterance as highlighted above is *disputive* in nature. Secondly, the blind man puts forward some thoughts in an emphatic manner suggesting that the utterance is *assertive*. Lastly, the fact that the man continues to describe God's relation with sinners cannot be overlooked. Therefore, the utterance is also *descriptive*. The three illocutions established above, are also educative to the reader. The reader gets to know how God relates to those who do his will and those who do not.

²⁸⁰ Barrett (1978:363; Lindars, 1972:348; Keener, 2003:792; Brown, 1975:375) advocates that the leaders of Israel should know the credentials and authority of so notable a miracle-worker. Bruce (1983:218) says, "a miracle of this magnitude must be recognised as an answer to prayer; the man who received this answer to prayer must be no ordinary man."

²⁸¹ Barrett (1978:363; cf. Lindars, 1972:348; Moloney, 1998:295) states, "[I]t is of course not denied that the penitent prayer of a repenting sinner is heard, it is the hypocritical prayer of one who has no intention of offering obedience that is disregarded."

- The blind man insists, through a *disputive* speech act,²⁸² that a miracle of this magnitude has never happened before. This argument serves to conclude that Jesus is not an ordinary man (v. 32).²⁸³
- The blind man finally arrives at the close of his argument by asserting that Jesus is from God; if that was not the case, he would not be able to do what he does (v. 33).²⁸⁴ The utterance intends to further confirm to the reader the illegibility of the testimony provided by the man, and the reader should accept this testimony as the forensic dialogue draws to a close. The utterance is still part of his general *disputive* speech act as identified in verses 30-33. However, as noted above, it also comprises a strong assertion (*assertive*) and a confirmation (*confirmative*) tone in it. The reader is invited to take note of this witness and continue listening to further arguments. His view of Jesus is undoubtedly suggested to the reader so that they can strengthen their belief in Jesus Christ. The reader is also persuaded to agree on the presuppositions that Jesus is not a sinner since God hears him.

The utterance of the Pharisees in verses 34a and 34b concludes the fourth trial scene. In response to the blind man's testimony, they say,

Ἐν ἁμαρτίαις σὺ ἐγεννήθης ὄλος καὶ σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς (You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?)

The utterance reveals that the Pharisees do not accept the testimony of the blind man. Without further deliberations, they make a conclusive statement about him. They conclude that the blind man was born in sin. In asserting this, they find it convenient to believe that man's blindness was

²⁸² However, the study concurs with Ito (2015:357) who too observes that the utterance in verse 32 can also be a *confirmative* speech act. He states that, "The blind man expressed not only his belief, but also that he believed it as a result of his observation by virtue of some truth-seeking procedure." In this case, it would be the man's own testimony and knowledge. According to the schema of *confirmatives* by Bach and Harnish (1979:42-43), in uttering that "*Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of the one born blind,*" the blind man confirms that only Jesus could open the eyes of the one born blind.

²⁸³ Brown (1975:375) advances, "No miraculous healing of a blind man is recorded in the protocanonical books of the OT; Tobias' sight was miraculously restored (Tob. 11:12-13), but he was not born blind."

²⁸⁴ Ito (2015:360) calls this utterance a "confirmative speech act" which follows the schema of confirmatives by Bach and Harnish (1979:42-43). He postulates that, "Briefly, the blind man intended to conclude his arguments by saying that Jesus came from God by virtue of his *confirmative* speech act." While commenting on the testimony of the blind man, Kanagaraj (2005:313) says, "The healed man, uneducated and poor as he was, now makes his case with intelligence and simplicity. The illumination he had received from Jesus, the Light, transformed him, an unlearned person, so that he now becomes a teacher to the teachers of the Law."

due to sin, as argued in 9:1 (Barrett, 1978:364). Consequently, they claim that he cannot teach them, or he cannot be a reliable witness to their case. The utterance in verse 33a is an *assertive* speech act. The Pharisees are making a claim based on their knowledge of the blind man, and consequently reject the blind man's argument. According to Ito (2015:364), the blind man's arguments are portrayed as exceptionally logical and persuasive, devoid of any weaknesses. As a result, the Jews appear unable to muster any counterarguments against him. This assertive speech act serves as an invitation to the reader to critically assess the Pharisees' arguments as well. Moreover, the unfair treatment the blind man receives from the Pharisees is presented in full view of the reader's cognitive view.

The forensic scene concludes with the narrator's voice reporting that, "καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω" (And they cast him out). The final action taken by the Pharisees against the blind man is to throw him out of the synagogue. The utterance is an *informative* speech act, since the narrator is informing the reader about the final verdict to the blind man by the Pharisees. The information provided here is important to the implied reader for it invites her/him to sympathise with the man and acknowledges the failure of the Pharisees. Having listened to the dialogue up to this point and the unfair verdict by the Pharisees, the reader is left with the opportunity to judge the Pharisees on their unfair verdict. The reader is fully aware that the Pharisees have failed to convince the man to reject or denounce Jesus and call him a sinner and that he is not from God (cf. Kanagaraj, 2005:314; Carson, 1982b:83). This study intends to treat section 9:35-41 independently from the forensic dialogue. The next chapter will deal with this part closely. The next sub-section discusses the perlocutionary force (performative nature) of all the forensic illocutions established above.

4.5.3 Perlocutionary Act

Focusing on the section that encompasses verses 1-7, the illocutionary act has been established as the *informative* speech act by the narrator. The *perlocutionary force* of this narration is to invite the reader to accept the way in which the story begins. The reader is informed about the setting, characters, and time of the story. The story cannot start successfully without the cognitive empowerment of the reader. The reader needs this information so that they can also partake in the forensic proceedings. Therefore, the informative speech is a performative gesture by the narrator in order to enable the implied reader to make sense of the unfolding forensic proceedings. The study noted the *directive* speech act by Jesus to the man born blind in verse 7. The directive offers lessons to the reader. The result of being obedient to the directive of Jesus can be seen.

The narrative section (vv. 8-12) has been identified as the beginning of the inquiry about the healing of the blind man. The people conducting the inquiry are the neighbours and those who

previously saw him as a blind man and a beggar (v. 8). The focus here is on establishing the person who healed him. The two speech acts established were *question-responsive* speech acts.

The performative power of these speech acts not only serves their intended purposes within the narrative but also invites the reader to actively engage with the unfolding trial proceedings. This involvement of the reader adds to the intrigue and sustains their interest in the storyline. Finally, in verses 8-12, the reader, along with the neighbours and acquaintances, receives undeniable confirmation that the man named Jesus indeed healed the blind man. This revelation of Jesus as the healer serves to deepen the reader's connection and relationship with him. Despite the opponents' accusations of Sabbath violation against Jesus, the reader is encouraged to remain close to his character.

The narrative section (vv. 13-17) is the interrogation of the blind man by the Pharisees. The *informative speech act* by the narrator reports the commencement of the forensic procedure in verses 13-15. The implied reader gets to know that it was on a Sabbath day when Jesus healed the man and knows that the Pharisees observe the Sabbath law strictly. This gathered evidence has the power to create tension and expectation from the side of the implied reader. The anticipation of a consequent conflict in the text is inevitable to the reader.²⁸⁵ This *informative speech* highlights the following important information about the trial: The Pharisees are both the “accusers” and “judges,” Jesus is the “accused,” though absent in the trial scene, and the charge is “Sabbath law violation.”

As highlighted above, the expectation created in the mind of the reader becomes a reality when the Pharisees pronounce (with a *declarative* speech act in v. 16) that Jesus is not from God since he does not keep the Sabbath law. This declaration is shocking to the implied reader who already knows that Jesus came from God (1:14). The *perlocutionary force* of this *declarative* invites the reader to make their own judgement about the origin and identity of Jesus. The performative power of this juridical procedure is such that the reader is never in a neutral space, as Van der Watt (2010:161) also states, “Neutrality does not exist. The implications of grouping yourself on either side are spelt out – it is either judgment or life.” The reader is provided with all the information to make a decision and is thus forced to take sides.²⁸⁶ The text forces the reader to

²⁸⁵ Van der Watt (2010:161) also notes that, “forensic procedures create expectations, namely, that there would be an accused, witnesses, an accuser, a judge, a charge, judgement etc.”

²⁸⁶ See also Lincoln (2000:169-170) who puts it this way: “The effectiveness and impact of the narrative of the Fourth Gospel are due to thematic between its content and its form. It is a narrative that asserts that the truth about God, Christ, and life is to be seen in terms of the metaphor of a cosmic lawsuit, and it displays this assertion by making its discourse and plot have Jesus on trial, a trial in which the

involve him/herself as they read the text. The reader is either expected to join the “accusers and judges” or sympathise with “the accused” in the trial. The forensic *proceedings* come to conclusion with a division among the Pharisees. The *informative* speech act by the narrator reports this to the reader. Some say Jesus is not from God, some seem to question that, saying a sinner cannot perform such a miracle. This division amongst the opponents also creates some anticipation in the mind of the implied reader. Where is the reader going to be? Either side, the nature of the text is performative in that it leaves the reader with no option of a neutral ground but invites him/her to take sides.

The narrative section of verses 18-23 is the interrogation of the parents of the man born blind by the Pharisees. The narrator’s *informative* speech reports about the Pharisees not believing the testimony of the blind man. The question here is: is the reader also in disbelief of the evidence provided on the trial? By means of *question-responsive* speech acts, the reader gets to confirm, from the testimony of the parents, that the blind man is indeed their son, and yes, he was born blind. However, the parents do not know how he was healed.

The performative power of a *question-responsive* speech act has already been highlighted. As the question-response juridical procedure unfolds, the implied reader is also afforded time to respond to these questions as they seek to strengthen their relationship with Jesus. In the case of the second question, which the parents of the man claim not to “know,” it has been noted that this is not the case with the implied reader. The implied reader knows how the blind man was healed. Additionally, the implied reader is aware that the man’s parents also know the truth, yet they remain silent due to their fear of the Pharisees.²⁸⁷ The forensic dialogue, through the narrator’s aside, places the reader in a privileged position. The implied reader’s interest in the story is sensitised.

The narrative section of verses 24-34 is the second interrogation of the blind man and his subsequent expulsion from the community. This juridical procedure is dominated by a *defensive*

other characters (and, by extension, the readers) have to come to a verdict and are invited to become witnesses. In this way it not only makes a truth claim but also enables its readers to experience this claim. To put it the other way around, it not only narrates a story that involves its readers; it does so in such a way that they cannot escape its truth claim. One of the main ways in which it achieves this is the presentation of itself as a testimony, a written narrative testimony, in the trial. The Fourth Gospel is not simply about a trial; it is itself a testimony in the trial.”

²⁸⁷ Ito (2015:299) postulates, “The reader should appreciate that the narrator confirms the reason for the parents’ answer in verse 21. Due to the repetition of their answer, the reader should perceive the importance of the information about the Jews’ decision in the plot of the story and should recognise the closure of the dialogue between the parents and the Jews.”

utterance by the blind man. The perlocutionary force of the established speech act (*disputive*) is impressive to the implied reader to say the least. The text (vv. 25, 27, 30-33) reveals the intelligent way in which the healed man has become the witness of Jesus in the trial.²⁸⁸ After being coerced into taking an oath to speak the truth, the blind man fearlessly challenges the Pharisees to re-evaluate their accusations against Jesus.

The trial scene concludes with the narrator's *informative* speech, announcing the result of the trial. He reports that, "καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω" (And they cast him out). The perlocutionary force of this act persuades the reader to sympathise with the blind man, more especially after such an intelligent witnessing. This study keeps in mind that the juridical procedure is not against the healed man but Jesus. The blind man is only a witness in the bigger trial of Jesus, where Jesus is absent. The Pharisees fail in their mission to get him to pronounce Jesus as the sinner or at least say something bad about him. He stood strong in being a witness of Jesus. The reader who believes in Christ should also be prepared to participate in this trial as a witness of Jesus Christ. Such manner of concluding a forensic dialogue is performative in its intent and is in line with the purpose of the Gospel (20:30-31). It leaves the reader closer to Jesus than the Jewish opponents. In fact, the reader is also given the opportunity to accuse and judge the Jewish opponents since their investigation was fruitless. The implied reader could argue that Jesus is innocent, and the Pharisees are in the wrong, since their accusations could not be proven legitimate.

4.5.4 Conclusion: The Analysis of John 9:13-34 and its Performative Nature

This section is the story of the healing of the man born blind. The narrator makes efforts to inform the implied reader about the setting, characters, and time of the story. It was established that Jesus is the accused, and the Jewish opponents are both accusers and judges in the trial. The parents of the man born blind, and the blind man (now healed) are identified as witnesses of Jesus in this trial. Jesus is accused of breaking the Sabbath law since he healed the man born blind on a Sabbath. It was noted that Jesus does not participate directly in many of the exchanges between the Jewish opponents and both the parents and the man born blind. However, it is known

²⁸⁸ While commenting on the perlocutionary force of verses 25-33, Ito (2015:317-322) highlights, "The Jews should accept the meaning of the blind man's utterances, namely that Jesus was not a sinner. It is expected that the polite and intelligent remarks the blind man made to the Jewish authorities should impress the reader. Therefore, the reader should observe the Jews' subtle strategy and consider how the reader himself should react to the questions. Hence, the author may induce more interest in the reader's mind, thus encouraging him to continue reading. In addition, for the reader's faith, the author may wish to warn the reader to re-examine his own position in relation to Jesus by asking two questions: Are you really Jesus' disciple, too? Can you show the same courage as that of the blind man?"

that the whole trial revolves around the acts of Jesus and that the Jewish opponents look for a way to find him guilty of breaking the law through interrogating the people.

The forensic procedure opens with the narrator's *informative* speech telling the implied reader that this story took place during the Sabbath. The mentioning of the Sabbath day holds the potential to create tension for the implied reader. Being aware that the Jewish opponents strictly adhere to the Sabbath law, any violation of it is viewed as a serious offence to them. This informative speech is performative in nature, as it raises the implied reader's eyebrows and sets them on edge, anticipating some dramatic events to follow. The implied reader can expect a lot of drama to happen between the accusers and the accused in contestation of the value and the observance of the Sabbath law.

The healing of the man born blind by Jesus on the Sabbath leads the Jewish opponents to make a declarative speech act in 9:16. They pronounce that Jesus cannot be from God because he does not keep the Sabbath law. However, the study indicated that contrary to this pronouncement, the implied reader of the Gospel is cognitively aware that Jesus comes from God (1:1-14). Consequently, the text invites the implied reader to make their own judgement. The performative power of this juridical procedure is such that the implied reader is never in a neutral space. She/he is expected to endorse either the "accusers or judges" or "the accused" in the trial. It was also noted that the trial (*noted as juridical procedure 2*) ends with the Jewish opponents divided amongst themselves. Some believed that Jesus is not from God, while others seem to question the pronouncement, suggesting that a sinner cannot perform such miracles. This division is rather, on the one hand, comical to the implied reader and, on the other hand, encouraging to their faith in Jesus. Either way, the study noted that the nature of the text is performative in that it persuades the implied reader to make choices and decisions.

The study further established (9:24-34) that the Jewish opponents finally expel the blind man from the community because he refuses to succumb to their pressure of denouncing Jesus as a sinner, which the opponents believe to be true. Moreover, the study clarifies that the juridical procedure is not primarily directed at the healed man but rather targets Jesus himself. The blind man is only the witness of Jesus in the trial. He, in actual sense, also defends Jesus. Additionally, the study highlights the nature of the text, which calls upon the implied reader, who already believes in Christ, to actively participate in the narrative as a witness of Jesus Christ in this trial.

4.6 FORENSIC DIALOGUE AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN 10:22-39

4.6.1 Setting of the Story

The demarcated section of 10:22-39 is yet another encounter between Jesus Christ and the Jewish opponents in the temple. Jesus once again experiences opposition from the Jews during the Feast of Dedication.²⁸⁹ Since 7:1, John has been describing Jesus' conflict with "the Jews" at the Feast of Tabernacles. Now he moves on to describe a similar confrontation that occurred at the Feast of the Dedication (Kanagaraj, 2005:342). Neyrey (2007:186) observes that after an absence of several months,²⁹⁰ Jesus comes back to alien territory for the winter Feast of Dedication. He further points out that "we argue that the extended exchange occurring in 10:22-39 is best understood in terms of the anatomy of a trial, a dynamic that occurs again and again."

This forensic dialogue can be summarised as follows: The charge brought forward is blasphemy;²⁹¹ the accusers and judges in the trial are the Jewish opponents; and the accused is Jesus. The following section will continue with the analysis of important utterances (illocutionary and perlocutionary acts) that shape the unfolding of the forensic dialogue and its performative power to the implied reader.

4.6.2 Illocutionary Act

As already noted throughout the analysis in this study, the narrator makes effort to bring the implied reader into the story by updating them about the proceedings. He does this through an *informative speech act*. In verses 22-23, the narrator informs the reader about the time or the occasion during which the forensic dialogue takes place (*τὰ ἐγκαίρια [the Feast of Dedication]*), setting (*ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις ... ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐν τῇ στοᾷ τοῦ Σολομῶνος [in Jerusalem ... in the temple in Solomon's Porch]*) and the accusers, are the Jews (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι). The information is of

²⁸⁹ Maloney (1998:312-313, cf. Lindars, 1972:366; Schnackenburg, 1971:303) says, "This relatively recent celebration was instituted to commemorate the rededication of the Temple after Judas Maccabeus' successful campaign to take possession of Jerusalem in 164 B.C.E. Kanagaraj (2013:110; cf. Keener, 2003:821) mentions, "The feast of dedication (*also called Hanukkah*), a festival called 'lights' was celebrated in Jerusalem during winter, commemorating the cleansing of the Temple and relighting of the altar fire by Judas Maccabees in 164 BCE, three years after the desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes (2 Macc. 10: 1-9; cf. 1 Macc. 1:54)."

²⁹⁰ Kanagaraj (2005:342; Keener, 2003:821) clarifies that "these two feasts took place three months apart and were both associated with light."

²⁹¹ Kanagaraj (2005:342; Barrett, 1978:378) indicates, "As always in John's Gospel, the events and dialogue revolve around one major theme: the identity of Jesus and his oneness with God."

importance to the implied reader so that they can also familiarise themselves with the setting of the story.

In the narrator's report, the implied reader is further informed about the confrontational move by the Jews toward Jesus. Their utterance in verse 24 ignited the debate around Jesus' identity. The text records them saying,

Ἔως πότε τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν αἴρεις; εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός, εἰπὲ ἡμῖν παρρησίᾳ (How long do you keep us in doubt or suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly).

The utterance is made with the intention of drawing a response or an answer from Jesus. Lindars (1972:367; cf. Morris, 1971:518) observes that the nature of their approach to Jesus had a hostile intent. The speech act utilised here is clearly a *question speech act*, which introduces the forensic proceedings. The Jewish opponents' question intends to get Jesus declaring plainly that he is the Christ. The question is ironic to say the least. This point will be discussed further in the discussion of the performative effects of this *question speech act* to the implied reader.

To this *question speech act* (which can actually be a *statement*), Jesus responds by bringing few issues on the table. His response is recorded in verses 25-30. These verses can generally be categorised as a *responsive speech act*. However, there is more into these verses than just a response. The utterance has more than one illocutionary force.

Firstly, the utterance is *disputive* in its force. Jesus does not answer their question directly or in the manner they would like him to answer. In this regard, Jesus' conversation overlooks the *maxim of manner*. This answer may not be as clear as the opponents would like to hear it from him. The opponents would want to hear a "yes" or "no" answer. Instead, Jesus draws their attention to what he has already told them (cf. Kanagaraj, 2005:343). Jesus tells the opponents that he has already told them (Ἐἶπον ὑμῖν) his identity, but they did not believe him (v. 25). He states that the reason why they do not believe him is that they are not his sheep (ἀλλὰ ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε, ὅτι οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐκ τῶν προβάτων τῶν ἐμῶν).²⁹²

Secondly, in his indirect answer, Jesus is defensive in that he pulls out his witness in the forensic dialogue. His witness, as has been realised before, is the works that he does (τὰ ἔργα ἃ ἐγὼ ποιῶ

²⁹² Barrett (1978:380; cf. Keener, 2003:824) correctly observes that "only to the Samaritan woman (4:26) has Jesus specifically declared himself to be the Messiah (cf. his avowal to the man born blind in 9:37 that he is the son of man). Yet his teaching has so constantly enforced and illustrated his unique relation with the father that there should have been no room for doubt – and indeed with the elect there is no doubt (6:69)."

... ταῦτα μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ). His works testify or bear witness that he is the Christ who comes from God.

Furthermore, in his *disputive speech* Jesus continues to emphasise his relationship with the Father. He does nothing outside his Father's will; even the works that he does, he does them in the name of his Father (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς μου). It is noted here that this speech act (*disputive*) is not only disputive in nature but also offensive to the Jewish opponents. The fact that Jesus continues to call God his Father (vv. 26 and 29) is something the opponents do not want to hear, for it is, according to them, blasphemy.²⁹³ This, actually, is the basis of their accusation against him. Thirdly, it is noted that in this *responsive speech act*, there is also a *descriptive speech act* (vv. 27-29). Here we have overlaps of speech acts. Contrary to the acrimonious relationship that exists between him and the opponents, Jesus describes to them how he is related to his sheep (followers or those who believe in him). Those who believe in him are his sheep. They hear his voice (τῆς φωνῆς μου ἀκούουσιν); he knows them (κἀγὼ γινώσκω αὐτὰ), and they follow him (καὶ ἀκολουθοῦσίν μοι). In this respect, Jesus does the application of the proverb (*παροιμίαν*) and the metaphor²⁹⁴ he told them earlier (vv. 1-18). The *descriptive speech act* continues as Jesus informs the opponents how his sheep (followers) benefit from their relationship with him (v. 28). Jesus gives them eternal life (cf. v. 10),²⁹⁵ and they shall never perish, and no one can snatch them out of his Father's hand.²⁹⁶ It can be indicated that this *descriptive speech act* is employed with the intention to impart knowledge to the opponents regarding the essence of the relationship between Jesus and his followers.

Finally, Jesus' *responsive speech* comprises of an *assertive speech act* by which he claims or states his oneness with the Father,²⁹⁷ when he says: "ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἓν ἐσμεν" [*I and the Father*

²⁹³ Barrett (1978:381) points out that "this virtual identification of Jesus with God leads to the charge of blasphemy."

²⁹⁴ Newman and Nida (1980:339) concur, saying: "At this point John reintroduces the metaphor of the sheep and it may be necessary to mark this figurative usage as a simile, for example 'because you are not my sheep, so to speak' or 'because you are not my sheep, as it were'."

²⁹⁵ Kanagaraj (2005:345; Lindars, 1972:369) comments, saying: "The Shepherd's love and care for his sheep are shown by his giving them eternal life. While eternal life means the life of the age to come, that is, the end-time life, Jesus words 'I give' (in the present tense) imply that he gives that life now."

²⁹⁶ Keener (2003:826) comments, "John's audience, facing persecution, would take courage that amount of opposition could seize them from Jesus if they chose to remain faithful to him."

²⁹⁷ Kanagaraj (2005:346; cf. Barrett, 1978:372) says, "[T]he affirmation 'I and the Father are one' is a concise summary of John's theology and the distinguishing mark of his presentation of Christ."

are one].²⁹⁸ This is most probably the declaration the opponents did not want to hear from Jesus. This affirmation constitutes the basis of the opponents' accusation against him. This, according to them, is blasphemy; the accusation that is at the very centre of this forensic dialogue (vv. 22-42).

In verse 31, the narrator reports that,

Ἐβάστασαν πάλιν λίθους οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἵνα λιθάσωσιν αὐτόν [Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him].

The narrator's report here is an *informative speech act* (the utterance can also be read as an aside – it guides the narrative and decision made in the story) done with the intention to inform the reader about the reaction of Jesus' opponents towards his assertive as recorded in verse 30. The narrator's report informs the reader that, according to the opponents' understanding, the punishment/sentence suitable for Jesus' action is death by stoning, as they also tried in 8:59.²⁹⁹ This report further suggests that, in the mind of the opponents, Jesus as the accused, has been tried and found guilty of blasphemy, and therefore, is sentenced to death. This move by the opponents suggests that Jesus is the sinner who deserves to die (the judgement they are asking for). Unlike in 8:59 where Jesus hid and left the temple when they wanted to stone him, this time he stands his ground and challenges their decision to stone him. His utterance in verse 32 highlights this challenge. This utterance has two illocutionary forces. While it can generally be categorised as a *responsive speech act* (Jesus responds to their reaction), it can also be understood as a *disputive speech act*. Jesus challenges his attackers by asking:

διὰ ποῖον αὐτῶν ἔργον ἐμὲ λιθάζετε (for which of those works do you stone me).

Jesus asks them for evidence for their decision to stone him. The utterance is also some form of cross-examination in the trial.

Jesus does not agree with their decision to stone him. In the forensic dialogue, an utterance like this is clearly some form of defence uttered with the intention to challenge the opponents to re-

²⁹⁸ Newman and Nida (1980:341; cf. Barrett, 1978:382) mention that in the overall context of this passage, the oneness that Jesus shares with the Father grows out of his obedience to the Father, by which he is able to do the same deeds as the Father. They further point out that elsewhere in John's Gospel the oneness of nature or being that Christ shares with the Father is emphasised, but in the present context the emphasis seems to be that Christ reflects the Father in all that he says and does.

²⁹⁹ Barrett (1978:382-383; cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:309) remarks that the penalty for blasphemy was stoning, but stoning was not a matter of lynch war, though that is what seems to be in operation here.

think their sentence or decision.³⁰⁰ Moreover, the utterance challenges the implied reader to weigh the arguments/evidence from both sides so that they can also evaluate the decision.

The opponents are awarded a textual space to clarify their decision in verse 33. They counter Jesus' defence as follows,

Ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, Περὶ καλοῦ ἔργου οὐ λιθάζομέν σε ἀλλὰ περὶ βλασφημίας, καὶ ὅτι σὺ ἄνθρωπος ὢν ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν (For a good work we do not stone you, but for blasphemy, and because you, being a Man, make Yourself God).

As already noted in verse 32, this interaction between Jesus and his opponents is *disputive* in nature. In their response, the opponents clarify their decision for wanting to stone Jesus. Their intention to stone him is not due to any good work he might have done but rather because of blasphemy.³⁰¹ The utterance is a general *responsive speech act* with a *disputive* tone in it, and it does satisfy all the *maxims* of communications. Neyrey (2007:188; cf. Kanagaraj, 2005:348; Schnackenburg, 1971:309) comments that “they understand clearly what Jesus says but still judge him guilty for blasphemy.” The utterance intends also to clarify the reader about the rationale behind (Jesus') opponents' decision of a death penalty by stoning.

In verses 34-37, Jesus proceeds with his defence, delivering a *responsive speech act* aimed at both defending himself and highlighting certain ignorance or misunderstandings in the opponents' arguments. In this portion of Jesus' defence, he draws upon Scripture to support his claim that he is the Son of God, emphasising that this truth should be evident to his opponents. Furthermore, Jesus asserts that he is truly one with God (vv. 34-37).³⁰² Though categorised as a *responsive speech act*, the utterance is also a *defensive speech act* with a descriptive element in it. Jesus

³⁰⁰ Kanagaraj (2005:348; cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:309; Keener, 2003:827) holds a similar view saying: “The aim of this ironic question is to make them question the validity of their attack on a person who has always done good. Jesus' works are ‘good works’ because they originate from God and are done by the ‘good shepherd’ in order to show (ἐδειξα) God.”

³⁰¹ Regarding the use of the concept “blasphemy,” Schnackenburg (1971:303; cf. Lindars, 1972:371-372) says: “Only in this instance does the formal expression (βλασφημίας) appear in the Johannine Gospel, whereas the reproach that Jesus makes himself equal to God is more frequently made (5:18; 19:7).”

³⁰² Kanagaraj (2005:349; cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:310; Lindars, 1972:373; Morris, 1971:525; Brown, 1966:403) says, “[H]is defense is introduced with the phrase ‘is it not written in your law’ referring to the Law which the Jews themselves uphold. Jesus is not denying his Jewish heritage or distancing himself from the Law by speaking of ‘your law’. Rather, he is distancing himself from the Jews who do not believe in him in spite of the fact that the Law, which they themselves accept as the Word of God, bears witness to him.”

takes an opportunity to educate the opponents regarding his identity³⁰³ as the Son of God and his oneness with God.

Jesus continues with his defence by drawing the opponents' attention back to his works (vv. 37-39). Again, the utterance is a general *responsive speech act* with a *defensive and descriptive force* in it.³⁰⁴ These speech acts can also be read as Jesus' appeal in the trial (Schnackenburg, 1971:312; cf. Bruce, 1983:235-236). Jesus appeals to the opponents not to believe in him if what he does is contrary to what God would approve. The utterance in verse 37, "εἰ οὐ ποιῶ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς μου, μὴ πιστεύετε μοι" (*If I do not do the works of my Father, do not believe me*), is an open challenge or appeal to the opponents to reassess their accusations (and their verdict of stoning him to death) in as far as his works are concerned.³⁰⁵ Jesus continues with the same appeal in verse 38, pointing out that,

εἰ δὲ ποιῶ, κἄν ἐμοὶ μὴ πιστεύητε, τοῖς ἔργοις πιστεύετε, ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ γινώσκητε ὅτι ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ (but if I do, though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him).

In the phrase "εἰ δὲ" (*but if*), Jesus seems to bring another alternative to the opponents since they do not want to believe in him (as a person who comes from God). He invites them to at least believe in his works. This study views this alternative as no difference as Bruner (2012:652) also says, "In the final moment Jesus summons them to accept the truth that the God of Israel, once present in the building of the consecrated Temple, is now present to them in the visible works of

³⁰³ Bruner (2012:646; cf. Bruce, 1983:234-235) reckons, "If powerful persons are called 'gods' in the Psalm because of the Word of God coming to them, then what should we call the person most especially sent from God to them? Indeed, what should we call the Messiah when he comes?" Bruner continues to indicate that "this utterance in the middle of Jesus' argument shows that Jesus' high view of Hebrew Scripture, a book not always easy to like in some places, even for Christians." See also Neyrey (2007:190) who says, "If Israel became holy and was called *God*, then it is not blasphemy if Jesus, whom God consecrated and sent as his apostle into the world, is called *god*, and *Son of God*. Jamieson *et al.* (1997:148) contend, "The whole force of this reasoning, which has been but in part seized by the commentators, lies in what is said of the two parties compared. The *comparison* of Himself with mere men, divinely commissioned, is intended to show (as NEANDER well expresses it) that the idea of a communication of the Divine Majesty to human nature was by no means foreign to the revelations of the Old Testament; but there is also a *contrast* between Himself and all merely human representatives of God—the one "*sanctified by the Father and sent into the world*"; the other, "*to whom the word of God (merely) came*," which is expressly designed to prevent His being massed up with them as only one of many human officials of God."

³⁰⁴ Neyrey (2007:190) points out that in this instant Jesus' actions and powers serve as irrefutable testimony on his behalf since God has authorised it. He further indicates that if Jesus does not do them, he disobeys God, and becomes a sinner, and deserves death.

³⁰⁵ Bruner (2012:651) suggests that "this is in the form of a concession, as if he were saying 'I do not want you to feel bound to believe in me for any other reason than the fact itself appears plainly.'"

God's Son. There is only one place where the Father may be found and understood, and that is in the story of his Son." One cannot separate the person of Christ from his works (the healing of the paralytic man – 5:8; the feeding of the five thousand – 6:1-14; and the healing of the man born blind – 9:30ff), since they all come from the Father.³⁰⁶

The study views this appeal as Jesus' way of ensuring the opponents that his witness is trustworthy and reliable.

The forensic dialogue concludes in verse 39 with the narrator's voice reporting the subsequent reaction of the opponents towards Jesus:

Ἐζήτουν [οὖν] αὐτὸν πάλιν πιάσαι, καὶ ἐξήλθεν ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν (Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand).

The report is an *informative speech act* that intends to inform the reader about the outcome of the forensic dialogue. In spite of Jesus' teaching, the authorities seek to arrest him, but Jesus escapes from their hands (Kanagaraj, 2013:112). Judging by their attempt to seize him (*πιάσαι*), it can be argued that the verdict of the trial was death. In the upcoming section, the focus will be on exploring the performative power of all the illocutionary acts established thus far. Through this analysis, the study aims to demonstrate how these speech acts shape the narrative and elicit the response of the implied reader.

4.6.3 Perlocutionary Act

In the first place, the *informative speech act* established in verses 22-23 serves to inform the reader about the setting, the occasion, and all the characters involved in this particular forensic dialogue. It enhances the relationship between the implied reader and narrator since the reader is challenged to accept the story as it is told. Cognitively, it serves the implied reader well to know all the relevant information about the place and people involved in this dialogue, e.g., the dialogue takes place in the Porch of Solomon. According to Acts 3:11 and 5:12, this was a traditional place for teaching and disputation (Kanagaraj, 2013:110; cf. Bruce, 1983:230). The implied reader would also understand why Jesus was walking in Solomon's Porch, since it was winter and

³⁰⁶ Carson (1994:1048) indicates, "The works of Jesus are the means by which people may come to understand the relationship between Jesus and the Father. Faith based on works is inferior to faith based on what Jesus has said. The works (or signs) are for a theological purpose—to bring understanding of the relationship between Jesus and the Father." Kanagaraj (2013:112) shares the same view, saying: "Then he invites them to believe his works so that they may perceive that the Father is in him and he in the Father (10:38; cf. 14:10-11), for his signs themselves will show to them his oneness with the Father in terms of their mutual indwelling."

therefore cold (wintry weather). Therefore, this kind of knowledge is needed by the implied reader so that they may not wonder why the story continue as it does. Without this kind of knowledge, the story will not make sense to the implied reader.

The *question speech act* discussed in reference to verse 24 is intended to challenge Jesus to provide a satisfactory answer to the opponents regarding his identity as the Christ.³⁰⁷ The question can be succinctly summarised for the reader as, “Are you the Christ or not?” The question also indirectly addresses the implied reader of the text, prompting her/him to consider the same inquiry, “Is he the Christ or not?” The reader must also attempt answering it. Apart from mentioning that the obvious answer from the reader would be “yes,” the question is comical to the implied reader, since she/he can realise that the opponents are failing to see the obvious truth before them. At this stage of the Fourth Gospel, the believing reader has no doubt that Jesus is the Christ (4:24; 10:17; 10:25) because he has pronounced it countless times before the Jewish opponents, but they would not accept it. Besides the pronouncements, the implied reader has already witnessed a number of signs that Jesus performed. These signs testify and confirm that Jesus is the Christ (10:25). Therefore, it can also be asserted that this question, though amusing, does help the implied reader to strengthen his/her belief in or relationship with Jesus.

The *disputive speech act* established in verses 25-30 is an attempt to help the opponents realise that their accusations against Jesus are baseless since Jesus is indeed the Son of God. Jesus did tell them, but they chose not to believe him. Kanagaraj (2013:110; cf. Neyrey, 2007:187; Tasker, 1999:134) asserts that “thus Jesus implicitly accepts that he is the Christ and that only those who believe his words and works can perceive this ‘Messianic Secret’.” Jesus further points to his works as proof of his identity as the Christ. The defence assures the reader that the opponents’ accusations are not true and therefore the reader is comforted to hear this defence from Jesus. Jesus’s remark about his works act as encouragement to the implied reader, who has already experienced them in the text. Cognitively, the defence invites the implied reader to critically assess the opponents’ response, who failed to acknowledge them.

The *descriptive speech* discussed in reference to verses 26-29 further assures the reader about their close relationship with Christ. By referring to the believing reader as τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἐμὰ (my sheep), Jesus teaches the reader that faith (in him as the Son of God) is fundamental to entering Jesus’ sheepfold. This is not the case with the opponents, since they do not believe in him.

³⁰⁷ Bruner (2012:645) also notes that “the question of the person of Jesus dominates section [vv. 22-42].”

It has been noted that the *assertive speech act* (10:30) by which Jesus explicitly claims his oneness with the Father is offensive to the opponents but not the implied reader. The reader gets to hear it explicitly that Jesus is one with the Father. This utterance may be understood as a conclusive statement to the disputive speech of verses 26-29, and it confirms the person of Christ to the reader. The reader, therefore, has no uncertainties that Jesus is the Christ, and he comes from God. This further strengthens the implied reader's relationship with Christ.

The *informative speech act* in verse 31 reports the opponents' reaction to Jesus' claim of oneness with the Father. The opponents here assume their role not only as "accusers" but also as "judges" in the juridical procedure. Their action of attempting to stone Jesus to death suggests that they find him guilty of blasphemy. However, this should not be the case in the mind of the implied reader. Jesus has presented his defence plainly and convincingly. And the implied reader had an opportunity to listen and weigh the evidence. Jesus is not the sinner as the opponents claim or accuse him but is one with God. Therefore, the reader grapples with the question, "who is the sinner that deserves to be stoned?" The text implicitly invites the implied reader to assume their role as a judge in the text. In the mind of the implied reader, the accusers become the accused, the sentence is misdirected to a wrong person. In fact, the ones having stones in their hands, deserves to be stoned to death themselves, for they did not believe in the Son of God who explicitly revealed himself before their eyes. This exchange of roles in the text is performative in nature. It draws the implied reader closer to Jesus Christ in the text.

Jesus' question which has actually been categorised as a *disputive* (appeal) in verse 32 challenges the opponents to clarify their decision of wanting to stone him to death. As the opponents explain that they are stoning Jesus not for the good works but for blasphemy (whose legal punishment was stoning according to Lev. 24:11–16), the implied reader asks, "Is this reason (evidence) valid enough?" The implied reader senses an ironic situation in the utterance of the opponents when they try to clarify their reason for stoning Jesus, saying:

καὶ ὅτι σὺ ἄνθρωπος ὢν ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν (and because you, being a man, make yourself God).

The opponents are made to utter a statement which, in a sense, is true about Jesus but they do it in a derogatory manner. As discussed in Chapter 3, the reader is never a victim of irony, but the accusers are. Jesus has repeatedly mentioned to the opponents and the reader that he is one with the Father and that is what and who he is. Jesus does not make himself "God," he is God. The *disputive* here invites the implied reader to weigh the opponents' reason and either endorse or reject their decision.

The *disputive and descriptive* speech discussed in reference to verses 34-38 refutes the opponents' reason to stone Jesus. The reader notes that their understanding of the person of Jesus and his good works is completely wrong, therefore their accusation of blasphemy does not stand. This study argues that the person of Jesus and his good works cannot be separated. The opponents are prepared to only endorse or accept his good works and reject his identity. This does not make logical connections from the side of the opponents. But Jesus, realising their short sightedness, invites them to believe in his good works. The study notes that here there is no difference since even his good works are done in the name of the Father (10:25). This insight is conveyed through the disputive and descriptive speech, which effectively assures the implied reader of the sound basis and reliability of Jesus' argument. Having realised the illogical reasoning by the opponents, the implied reader is persuaded to take the side of Jesus. In this manner the reader's faith in Jesus Christ is strengthened. It can further be indicated that this *disputive and descriptive* speech cognitively widens the gap between the implied reader and the opponents in the text. In the mind of the reader, the opponents have no case. Their reasoning is illogical. In fact, the case should be turned against them.

The narrator's *informative* speech in verse 39 reports that despite all the evidence and argumentation brought forward by Jesus, the opponents still find him guilty of blasphemy, hence they attempt seizing him. They most probably still want to stone him to death. The *informative* speech here invites the implied reader to realise how hard-hearted the opponents are. That despite all the evidence brought forward, they are not prepared to accept Jesus as the Christ, and rather charge him with blasphemy. However, this section of the analysis contends that the opponents (accusers) should actually be the ones on the receiving end of judgement for rejecting the one whom the God of Israel has sent to them. The forensic dialogue is crafted in a manner that allows the implied reader to discern the faults and shortcomings of the opponents. As the dialogue unfolds, the implied reader gains insight into the opponents' stubborn disbelief and flawed reasoning, which serves to draw the reader closer to Jesus Christ in the text (cf. 20:31).

4.6.4 Conclusion: Analysis of John 10:22-39 and its Performative Nature

This section discussed the performative nature of forensic dialogue in the exchange between Jesus and the Jewish opponents during the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem. The study acknowledged the *informative speech act* in verses 22-23 as indispensable to the implied reader. The exchange between Jesus and the Jewish opponents takes place in Jerusalem in the temple in the Porch of Solomon. In this dialogue (presented in a *question speech*), the Jewish opponents are interested in establishing whether Jesus is the Christ or not? It was argued that the question is rather amusing to the implied reader and thus performative in nature. The implied reader, who

has read the Gospel, is in full knowledge of the fact that Jesus is indeed the Christ (4:24; 10:17; 10:25), while the Jewish opponents could not see this obvious truth before them.

Jesus in 10:25-30 implicitly accepts that he is the Christ, and that only those who believe his words and works can perceive this truth (Kanagaraj, 2013:110). Jesus defends himself by telling the Jewish opponents that his works are proof that he is the Christ. Upon hearing this, the Jewish opponents accuse Jesus of blasphemy (v. 33). It is noted that their downfall was due to lack of knowledge of who Jesus is and, of course, their disbelief. The defence has been noted as performative since it brings assurance to the implied reader that the opponents' accusations are not true, and therefore, the reader is comforted to hear this defence from Jesus. In this case, the performative power of the defence invites the implied reader to judge the opponents.

In this forensic procedure, the Jewish opponents are revealed as accusers and judges. The Jewish opponents' reaction against Jesus for attempting to stone him to death was argued as an indication that, as judges, they find Jesus guilty of blasphemy and thus sentence him to death. Even though they appreciate his good work, they still do not believe that he is from God.

However, the implied reader finds the sentence unfair and unjust, since his/her knowledge of Christ is better than that of the Jewish opponents. In fact, in the mind of the implied reader, the judges and accusers, in this case, should be the ones to be accused and judged for rejecting the Christ who comes from God. Jesus has presented his defence plainly and convincingly to the implied reader. And the implied reader had an opportunity to listen and weigh the evidence from both sides. The finding in the implied reader's mind is that Jesus is not the sinner as the Jewish opponents claim but is truly one with God.

4.7 FORENSIC DIALOGUE AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 18:12–19:16

4.7.1 Setting of the Story

The section under discussion narrates the two critical parts of Jesus' trial that leads to his crucifixion on the cross.³⁰⁸ This trial story comes after Jesus was betrayed by Judas, one of his

³⁰⁸ Keener (2003:1065) summarises the passion and resurrection narrative as follows, "[H]ere the Fourth Gospel's conflict theme climaxes, and the narrative concretely illustrates Jesus's teaching about his glorification and the world's hostility and its being on trial before God (cf. 16:1-12; 17:1-5). This part of the Gospel reveals most plainly Jesus' glory (1:14; 12:23-24), the narrative fulfilment of the theme of God's sacrificial love in 3:16-18, and the meaning of the world's rejection (1:10-11; 3:19-21)."

own twelve disciples, and arrested by the troops (18:1-11).³⁰⁹ Henry (1996:2035) describes the setting of the encounter as, “The hour was now come that the captain of our salvation, who was to be made perfect by sufferings, should engage the enemy. We have here his entrance upon the encounter.” This trial story can be summarised as follows: Firstly, Jesus appears before the Jewish authorities, namely, Annas, and later to the high priest, Caiaphas (18:12-27). Secondly, Jesus appears before the Roman authorities, namely, Pilate, on two occasions (18:28–19:16).

As it has always been the case with rest of the forensic dialogues discussed so far, Jesus is at the focal point of the trial. The forensic dialogue here can be summarised as follows: The charge, “blasphemy”; the judges, “Jewish and Roman authorities”; and the accused, “Jesus.” The following sub-section proceeds with the analysis of the nature of the utterance (illocutionary acts) that contributed to the development of the trial.

4.7.2 Illocutionary Act

4.7.2.1 Trial before Annas

The account of the trial of Jesus begins with the narrator’s report of the arrest of Jesus by the troops. The narrator opens his report, in 18:12, as follows:

Ἡ οὖν σπεῖρα καὶ ὁ χιλιάρχος καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται τῶν Ἰουδαίων συνέλαβον τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸν (Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him).

This report by the narrator can be viewed as the commencement of the preparation for the trial. In this report, the implied reader is informed about the events subsequent to Jesus’ betrayal by Judas as reported in 18:1-11. As can generally be expected in a historical narrative, like the Fourth Gospel, the narrator reports the event in aorist verbs, e.g., “συνέλαβον καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸν” (*they arrested and bound him*),³¹⁰ to express a simple historical fact. The utterance is therefore categorised as an *informative* speech act uttered with the intention to inform the reader about the developments around the arrest of Jesus by the authorities. The report is not strange to the reader

³⁰⁹ Kanagaraj (2005:571; cf. Lindars, 1972:544) opines, “John’s account of Jesus’ arrest is comparatively brief. Jesus is presented as being in full control of the situation and as voluntarily surrendering himself to his enemies. He is not captured by force. Nor is it Judas’ betrayal that makes the arrest possible. Rather, it is Jesus’ submission to the Father (18:5, 6, 8).” Moloney (1998:482) seems to view the aspect of Jesus’ submission to the troops or his arrest as guided by the fact that “the hour has come.”

³¹⁰ Morris (1971:746) indicates that “the reason for the binding of Jesus is not apparent. Since, however, there is no suggestion of escape, it must be simply the standard practice in arresting prisoners. There may also be something of a rebound from their earlier fear.”

since it connects well with the preceding story of Jesus' betrayal and the troops approaching him as mentioned 18:3. Therefore, the speech is relevant to the topic of Jesus' passion, informative, not misleading, and contains no ambiguity to the reader. It is therefore a successful speech act for it does not violate any maxim of communication and is beneficial to the reader.³¹¹

The *informative* speech act by the narrator continues until verse 16. As already highlighted above, the narrator reports the story as historically reliable (although it may differ from other documents) and informative to the reader. When the narrator reports that "*Jesus was led to Annas first*" (*καὶ ἤγαγον πρὸς Ἄνναν πρῶτον*), he intends to tell the reader about the unfolding of the story of Jesus' trial and his way to be interrogated by Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest (Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998:252; cf. Barrett, 1978:524, Bultmann, 1971:542). The account informs the reader about the trial route Jesus took on his way to the cross. The first court hearing or interrogation by Annas is at the courtyard of the high priest. The account further tells the reader that Simon Peter was accompanied by another disciple whom the narrator does not mention by name but tells the reader that this disciple was known by the high priest (15-16). Even though some scholars view the motive of Peter's following in another light,³¹² this study views the introduction of these two disciples as the introduction of two possible witnesses of Jesus in this particular trial.

In verse 17a, the narrator reports on the encounter between Peter and the servant girl who keeps the door (*ἡ παιδίσκη ἡ θυρωρός*). The servant girl is interested in confirming Peter's relationship with Jesus. The servant girl asks Peter as follows:

Μὴ καὶ σὺ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν εἶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου; λέγει ἐκεῖνος, Οὐκ εἰμί (you are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?)

In uttering "*Μὴ καὶ σὺ*" (*are you not also?*), the servant girl wants to confirm if Peter is indeed one of Jesus' disciples. The utterance here is primarily a *question* speech act done with the intention of seeking an answer or a confirmation from Peter regarding his relationship with Jesus.

³¹¹ Regarding the arrest in the garden, Wiersbe (1992:260) says: "It is interesting to note that the arrest took place in a garden. Christ, the Last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), met the enemy in a garden and triumphed, while the first Adam met the enemy in a garden and failed. Adam hid himself, but Christ openly revealed Himself."

³¹² Kanagaraj (2005:578) indicates that "Simon Peter followed Jesus, but this following should not be understood as signalling that he is willing to share the suffering of Jesus at this point. His motive in following Jesus here was curiosity and concern about what was going to happen to Jesus next." Wiersbe (1992:260) comments that in this narrative we begin to see Peter's sad decline.

Peter's answer in verse 17b is recorded as, "Οὐκ εἶμι" (I am not). In this, Peter answers and denies that he is one of Jesus' disciples. Peter's utterance here is a *responsive* speech act that tells the servant girl that Peter is not one of Jesus' disciples. This study views this answer as an unsuccessful speech act in that it is shocking to the implied reader. The response does not only violate the *maxim of quantity* – lack information but violates the *maxim of quality* – it is a deliberate lie and is misleading. The implied reader is aware that Peter is surely one of the disciples of Jesus.³¹³

The narrator's *informative* speech in verse 18 further informs the reader about Peter's movements and conduct after denying Jesus. Kanagaraj (2005:580) states that "fearing that he has now been identified as one of Jesus' disciples, Peter does not seek to go further into the palace but quickly tries to blend into the crowd in the courtyard. Peter joins them around the fire probably hoping that by so doing he can hide his identity as a follower of Jesus.

Even though this study views Peter's denial as part of Jesus' trial,³¹⁴ the account of the actual interrogation of Jesus by Annas begins in verse 19. The text presents the first interrogation as a report by the narrator. The text states that,

Ὁ οὖν ἀρχιερεὺς ἠρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδασκαλίας αὐτοῦ (The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine).

The interrogation seeks to establish two things about Jesus: information concerning his disciples and his doctrine (*περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδασκαλίας αὐτοῦ*).³¹⁵ The utterance is an *informative* speech act that gives the reader a summary of the content of Jesus' interrogation by Annas. Even though there is no specific or explicit question asked, regarding the disciples of Jesus and his doctrine, the reader can appreciate the effort of the narrator that informs them that the interrogation is about these two aspects. It can be suspected that, most probably, the author

³¹³ Moloney (2005:315) avers that Simon Peter is well known as a leading disciple (1:41-43; 6:8, 68-69; 13:6-9, 24, 36-38). The text has already introduced him to the implied reader, and he is well-known as the disciple of Jesus Christ. Bruce (1983:345; cf. Hutcheson, 1972:379) opines that "for all the confidence with which, in the upper room, he had declared his readiness to lay down his life for his master (13:37), the event was to prove that his master knew Peter better than Peter knew himself (13:38)."

³¹⁴ This study has already taken a position that the introduction of Peter and the other disciple is viewed as the introduction of possible witnesses of Jesus in the forensic dialogue. However, Peter's denial proves him not a reliable witness in this instant.

³¹⁵ Bruce (1983:346; cf. Hutcheson, 1972:380) says, "If Annas suspected Jesus of subversive speech and action, he wanted to know how many people were implicated in the subversion, and what its nature was. Hence, he interrogated Jesus about his disciples and about the substance of his teaching."

was not interested in affording a textual space for the details of the proceedings, hence, he just decided to summarise it to the reader.³¹⁶ Therefore, this speech act is fairly acceptable and is a successful communication to the reader by the narrator.

Verses 20-21 is the record of Jesus' response to the high priest, Annas. The utterance is done with the intention to give an answer to the interrogation about his disciples and doctrine as asked in verse 19. Jesus' utterance is a *responsive* speech act since its intention is to give an answer to the interrogation. However, it is noted that Jesus does not give a direct answer to the "question"³¹⁷ as the reader would expect it to be. The answer has two illocutionary forces in it. It is both an *assertive* and *disputive* speech act. While disputing whatever Annas or any of his opponents might raise regarding his disciples and his doctrine, Jesus asserts that he has spoken openly to everyone, and that he has taught in the synagogues (6:59) and in the temple where the Jews always meet, and has said nothing in secret.³¹⁸ By uttering these words, Jesus confirms to Annas and all the hearers that he stands by whatever he has spoken and taught, regarding his disciples and his doctrine. This information is also directed to the reader of the Gospel.

Jesus concludes his *responsive* speech by revealing that he has many witnesses, in this regard, who have heard him speaking and teaching in public. These witnesses can attest to everything that he has taught. This utterance must not be understood as a shifting of responsibility to the disciples or all those who heard him teach. Instead, it serves as a way of providing additional witnesses to strengthen his testimony about his teachings.³¹⁹ The utterance further ensures the

³¹⁶ While this study observes that the text mentions nothing about the two aspects in the interrogation, Theophylact (2007:272), however, states that "Because he (Annas) wanted to prove that Christ was a revolutionary, a fomenter of rebellion, the high priest interrogates him about his disciples: 'where are they? Who are they? Why did you assemble them? What are you planning'?" He further mentions that "he also questions him about his teaching and whether it was opposed to the law and to Moses. For if he could prove that Jesus was an enemy of God, he could put him to death." However, Barrett (1978:527) comments, "[H]ere it may be observed that John completely omits the two points on which the synoptic trial turns: the question regarding the Messiahship of Jesus and the accusation of blasphemy. The high Priest's question is put in a surprising form, since he inquires about Jesus' disciples and teaching, but not about his person, which, according to the Jews (19:7) and in the other Gospels, was the real center of disputes and accusation."

³¹⁷ It is noted that there was no explicit question asked in the text. However, the expectation is created in the mind of the implied reader that Jesus will answer the high priest regarding 1). His disciples, and 2). His doctrines.

³¹⁸ Bruce (1983:346) says, "Jesus therefore, claimed that, if his teachings were in question, evidence should be heard in the normal way."

³¹⁹ This study also acknowledges that Jesus needed no human witness to strengthen his argument. He has relatedly indicated that his good works, done in the name of the Father, testify for him (10:25).

reader about Jesus' confidence about what he is saying. In his conclusion, Jesus further gives an assurance to Annas that those who heard him know what he said (*“ἴδε οὗτοι οἶδασιν ἃ εἶπον ἐγώ”* [*Indeed they know what I said*]). Jesus, therefore, makes all those who listened to him his witnesses in the trial – Simon Peter and the Jewish opponents included.

Jesus' response seems to have angered the officers who were listening when Annas interrogated Jesus. The narrator reports in verse 22 as follows,

Ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ εἰπόντος εἷς παρεστηκῶς τῶν ὑπηρετῶν ἔδωκεν ῥάπισμα τῷ Ἰησοῦ
(And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus
with the palm of his hand).

This report by the narrator informs the reader that the officer was not happy about Jesus' response. The officer appears to have particularly been angered by the manner in which Jesus answered the question. It has already been noted above that Jesus did not answer the question directly. In saying, *“Οὕτως ἀποκρίνη τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ”* (*Do you answer the high priest like that?*), the text suggests that Jesus probably did not answer the high priest with the respect the officer believed he deserved, or he provided the answer not in the manner they would have expected him to.³²⁰

The trial before Annas concludes with Jesus' *responsive* speech act to the question of the officer. As already established on many occasions, when Jesus responds to the opponents' questions, his answers have a *disputive* force. Jesus responds to the question of the officer as follows:

Εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ· εἰ δὲ καλῶς, τί με δέρεις (If I have
spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?)

Jesus contends that his answer contains nothing evil that warrants being slapped. He challenges the officer to point out any wrongdoing, if there is any. With this utterance, the trial before Annas comes to an end. It is noted that the manner in which the trial ends violates some rules of communication according to the speech act theory. The text is less informative (*maxim of quantity*) to the reader with regard to the possible further reaction from the officer. The narrator does not give the characters enough textual space to do so. The violation of the *maxim of quantity* creates biasness in the text. The text ends favourably towards the defence of Jesus than the officer or even Annas. It can be pointed out that at the conclusion of this trial, both sides have presented their arguments: Jesus was interrogated about his disciples and teachings, to which he answered

³²⁰ Lindars (1972:551) asserts that the action is evoked by Jesus' refusal to give a direct answer to the question of v. 19 which is taken to be evasion.

(with confidence and was willing to call witnesses – v. 21), but to the dissatisfaction of his accusers. The verdict of the first trial is not immediately clear, however the trial, in general, is not in favour of Jesus, at least judging by the anger of the officer. However, Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:252; cf. Neyrey, 2007:292) opine that the fact that Jesus' question goes unanswered, the silence indicates Jesus' acquisition of a grant of honour in the interaction. Under the discussion of the perlocutionary acts, the study will focus on the effects of this scenario on the implied reader.

4.7.2.2 Trial before Caiaphas (John 18:24-27)

The report of this trial before Caiaphas begins with the narrators' voice informing the reader that Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas for further interrogation (v. 24).³²¹ Again, the narrator mentions that Jesus was still bound when he was sent to Caiaphas, who was the high priest in that year. This study is of the view that this specific report intends to remind the reader about Jesus' humiliation (cf. also Wallace, 2004:271). The utterance in verse 24 is certainly an *informative* speech act by which the narrator intends to inform the reader about the progress in the trial of Jesus before the Jewish authorities. However, it is noticed that the trial of Jesus before Caiaphas does not mention anything about Jesus being interrogated. Kanagaraj (2013:177; cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998:253) also observes that "without mentioning what happened in Caiaphas' palace, the scene now turns to the events happening outside (18:25-27)."³²²

The narrator reports in verse 25 that as Simon Peter stood by the fire and warmed himself, "they"³²³ asked him if he was not also *one* of Jesus' disciples, to which he denied, saying: "Οὐκ εἶμι" (I am not). It has been noted earlier that this answer by Peter violates the *maxim of quality*.

³²¹ Morris (1971:757; cf. Neyrey, 2007:292) claims, "Annas apparently decided that he would get nothing from such a prisoner and decided to send him on to Caiaphas." However, Bruce (1983:347) contents that "plainly, Annas's attempt to find incriminating evidence in the content of Jesus' teaching, or the identity of his disciples was unfruitful, so the preliminary inquiry before him came to an end. If Jesus was to be accused before the Roman governor, this had to be done by the reigning high priest as leader of the nation and president of the Supreme Court; to Caiaphas therefore he was sent."

³²² Kanagaraj (2013:177) is of the view that this is the Gospel's characteristic "vestigial scenes," in which a stage is set but nothing happens, e.g., 2:12; 11:54; 12:9, 20-22. While Kanagaraj makes a valuable observation here, this study views Peter's scene as the interrogation of the witness in the juridical procedure. While Jesus was questioned about his doctrine and disciples (18:19), his disciple, who was supposed to be testifying for him, is denying him. Therefore, the stage set in Caiaphas' palace is not viewed as a stage that has been left unattended. The juridical procedure just shifted to the questioning of the witness, namely, Simon Peter. The study suspects that the content of the interrogation in Caiaphas' palace was still about Jesus' doctrine and his disciples as Annas has already asked.

³²³ The "they" is taken to refer to "οἱ δοῦλοι καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται" (the servants and Officers), as introduced in verse 18.

Both Peter's hearers and the implied reader knows that Peter deliberately told a lie in his communication (cf. Bultmann, 1971:648). Peter's intention of telling a lie to the hearers was probably that he might save his own life. As the reader reflects on Peter's denial of Jesus, it becomes evident that Peter's actions were driven by the desire to save his own life. However, the reader also recognises that this denial was the fulfilment of Jesus' earlier prophecy that Peter would eventually deny him. The speech act here is generally an *informative*, with the narrator successfully using *question-responsive* communication to provide the implied reader with information about Peter's interrogation. The scene unfolds as the narrator informs the reader that another exchange occurs, this time between Peter and one of the servants of the High Priest, who happened to be a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut (v. 26).³²⁴ The servant of the High Priest is interested in getting Peter to admit that he was seen with Jesus in the garden. While the narrator is generally reporting the scene, he quotes the question asked by the servant as follows:

Οὐκ ἐγὼ σε εἶδον ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μετ' αὐτοῦ (Did I not see you in the garden with Him).

The narrator informs the reader that, for the third time, Peter denied that he was one of the disciples of Jesus and also that he was with Jesus in the garden. We may argue that Peter represents the world that has disowned Jesus (cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998:253). He fails to be a faithful and true witness of Christ in this trial. Keener (2003:1096) points out that whereas Jesus proves bold, Peter's denials (18:25-27) appear shameful. In Jewish martyr stories, the protagonists refuse to renounce the ancestral faith even under the most terrible tortures and

³²⁴ Barrett (1978:529; cf. Lindars, 1972:552) says: "[O]nly John knows the name of the man who was struck (v. 10); he only knows about this relationship. We must conclude either that behind the Johannine passion narrative there stand a first-hand source, or that John is himself elaborating details in the manner of the apocryphal gospels."

executions.³²⁵ The scene of the trial before Caiaphas concludes with the narrator reporting that Peter denied Jesus three times,³²⁶ then the rooster crowed.³²⁷

4.7.2.3 Trial before Pilate (The First Roman Trial, John 18:28-38)

The utterance in verse 28 is the narrator's intention to bring some important information regarding the progression of Jesus' trial to the reader. It is reported that in the early morning Jesus was led (by the detachment of *troops* and the captain and the officers of the Jews as introduced in 18:12) from Caiaphas to the Praetorium – the official residence of the Governor / Procurator in Jerusalem (Barrett, 1978:531; cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998:255, Bultmann, 1971:651). The narrator's utterance (which can also be read as an aside – cf. Chapter 5 on this literary device) in verse 28 can be categorised as an *informative act*, since its aim is primarily to inform the reader about Jesus' trial proceeding to Pilate, the Roman Governor. In the same breath, the narrator informs the reader that the Jews did not enter the Praetorium lest they should become ceremonially defiled before the Passover.³²⁸

³²⁵ Keener (2003:1096) further comments that “whereas Jesus could not be justly convicted for a crime, Peter could be. The high priest's earlier inquiry about Jesus' disciples (18:19) may have partly indicated concern about such violent and possibly revolutionary sentiments as had been directed against his own servant Malchus; the charge against Jesus was sedition (18:33-35), and if anything, Peter's act had only helped to make that charge more credible.”

³²⁶ Keener (2003:1096; cf. Bruce, 1983:348) notes that “whereas Jesus suffers for Peter, Peter disowns Jesus and his own responsibility.” Keener's comments on this matter align with the viewpoint of this study, emphasising that Peter's denial is perceived as a failure to bear witness to Jesus Christ during a crucial moment when it was essential to do so. This lack of testimony occurred precisely during a critical juncture when Peter had the opportunity to demonstrate his loyalty to Jesus, but instead, he denied knowing him, which significantly impacted the course of the juridical procedure.

³²⁷ Keener (2003:1096; cf. Lindars, 1972:552; Hucheson, 1972:383; Moloney, 2005:325) also observes that “the denial scene closes with Peter's conviction by the crowing of the cock, signalling the fulfilment of Jesus' warning that Peter would in fact deny him” (13:38). He further indicates that “Cockcrowing was a negative omen to the superstitious in some parts of the empire, but more critically here, the cockcrowing also signalled early morning when leading representatives of the municipal aristocracy could bring Jesus before Pilate.”

³²⁸ Tasker (1999:200; cf. Barrett, 1978:532; Bruce, 1983:349; Morris, 1971:762; Keener, 2003:1100; Bultmann, 1971:653) states that, “The irony of the situation is that they are anxious to avoid external defilement in order to observe a festival whose *real* significance was that, as well as reminding God's people of the ancient deliverance from Egypt, it pointed forward to the true Passover Lamb, whose sacrifice would bring to an end all distinctions between what was ceremonially clean and unclean, and effect an inward cleansing; and it was the death of that true Passover Lamb that the Jews at this moment are anxious to bring about.” Michaels (2010:915) also takes note of the irony, saying: “The scene is heavy with irony. Those bringing Jesus to Pilate are so scrupulous about the laws of purity that they will not even enter the Praetorium, yet their scruples do not extend to murder. Their intent all along has been to kill Jesus (see 5:18; 7:1, 19; 8:37, 40), and now the opportunity has come. The irony was recognised already by Origen, who (in commenting) wrote that those who ‘purified themselves’

The narrator informs the reader in verse 29 that since they would not enter the Praetorium, Pilate came out to meet them, and asks:

Τίνα κατηγορίαν φέρετε [κατὰ] τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου (What accusation do you bring against this man?)

The study reads this utterance as a sign of the commencement of the judicial proceedings (cf. Bruce, 1983:350).³²⁹ By this speech act, the narrator intends to reveal to the implied reader exactly what Pilate asked the accusers of Jesus about their grounds of accusation against him. The speech act of the narrator is, therefore, an *informative* with a *question* in it. In v. 30, the text records an utterance by the Jewish opponents giving an answer to the question posed to them by Pilate. In their answer, they contend that “Εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος κακὸν ποιῶν, οὐκ ἄν σοι παρεδώκαμεν αὐτόν” (If he [Jesus] were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you).

It is noted here that their answer does not explicitly mention what evil or wrong Jesus committed.³³⁰ However, it is evident from their utterance that they have already judged him as an evil doer, probably from the previous hearing (cf. Barrett, 1978:533).

The answer is given with a protesting tone, as if they have evidence that Jesus is an evildoer. The nature of the utterance here serves to emphasise that they are protesting accusers (who have already judged Jesus but have no concrete evidence) in this juridical procedure. However, this study concedes that it is an answer. Therefore, their utterance is a *responsive* speech act, uttered with the intention to provide an answer to the asked question and to further emphasise to the reader that they are accusers of Jesus.

The text seems to suggest that Pilate also sees them as just protesting accusers with no basis for charging Jesus. The text reveals this in the answer that Pilate gives in verse 31, directing the

for the Passover did so for act of worship that was ‘not a work of God’s feast, but a polluted work that they performed when they killed Jesus’ at the Passover. They thought their Passover worship ‘offered service to God’ but in fact it only made them ‘more polluted than they were before the purified themselves.’

³²⁹ For more information on the public nature of his trial, see Neyrey (2007:298).

³³⁰ Tasker (1999:200, cf. Lindars, 1972:553) also correctly observes that “There is no mention in this narrative of the exact nature of the accusation against Jesus made by the Jews to Pilate; but the protest that they would not have brought him before a Roman tribunal unless he was guilty in their judgment of a criminal offense.” Jamieson *et al.* (1997:163) state, “They were conscious they *had no* case of which Pilate could take cognizance, and therefore insinuate that they had already found Him worthy of death by their own law; but not having the power, under the Roman government, to carry their sentence into execution, they had come merely for his sanction.”

Jewish opponents to take Jesus and judge him according to their (Jewish) law. The utterance is intended to make the hearers do something about the situation of Jesus. The utterance further informs the reader about the standpoint that Pilate has taken upon realising that they do not have a genuine case against Jesus.³³¹ Therefore, the speech act of this utterance can be categorised as a *directive*.

To this *directive*, the Jews respond to Pilate by indicating that it is not lawful for them to put anyone to death.³³² While the utterance can be accepted as a general *responsive* speech act, its force and tone is that of protesting (mainly because, in their minds and hearts, they have already judged Jesus to death) the *directive* issued by Pilate. Their protest and attitude enable the implied reader to realise this aspect. The interaction between Pilate and the Jewish opponents ends with the narrator's aside in verse 32: "that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die." The narrator issues this comment to help the reader understand (to give direction to the reader) why the story or the interaction is progressing the way it is going. Asides play a huge role in the communicative strategy of the Fourth Gospel, and they deserve a special study on their own; however, in this particular scene, it can be classified as an *informative* speech.³³³

In verse 33, the scene of the trial shifts from the exchange between Pilate and the Jewish authorities to an exchange between Pilate and Jesus inside the Praetorium. The narrator informs the reader that "Εἰσῆλθεν οὖν πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ Πιλάτος" (*then Pilate entered the Praetorium again*), confirming that Pilate had walked out earlier to address the accusers (Jews) who could not enter the Praetorium due to their fear of defilement. Meanwhile, Jesus remained inside the Praetorium, presumably still bound, awaiting further interrogation by Pilate. This

³³¹ Michaels (2010:916) correctly states: "They had no answer for Jesus in v. 23, and they still do not have an answer for Pilate."

³³² Michaels (2010:916; cf. Bruce, 1983:351) opines that "there is every evidence within the Gospel that they could have done so. A few verses later they will Pilate that they have a law and according to their law, Jesus ought to die, because he made himself Son of God and on that ground (5:18; 10:33) they have repeatedly tried to kill Jesus, culminating in two attempts at a stoning (8: 59; 10:31)." Michaels continues, saying: "But if they are free to take him and judge him according to their law, and if stoning is still their intention, why have they brought Jesus to Pilate at all? Their answer is puzzling. Instead of confirming that their law condemns Jesus to death, they seem to imply the opposite."

³³³ Michaels (2010:920; cf. Morris, 1971:766) comments, "In any event, the Gospel writer's comment that this exchange took place 'so that the word of Jesus that said signifying by what death he was going to die might be fulfilled' sounds premature. Its point is that since the Jews will not execute Jesus, he will die not by stoning (as he would have in 8:59 and 10:31) but by crucifixion, the Roman method of execution." Michaels further warns the reader that, "This is by no means a foregone conclusion. Pilate has not yet agreed to crucify Jesus."

informative speech is followed by a series of exchange utterances between Pilate and Jesus, which are essentially a *question-response* speech act from verses 33b-38a. In 33b, Pilate asks if Jesus is the king of the Jews. The intention of Pilate's question is to establish or seek confirmation whether or not Jesus proclaims himself "ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων" (*king of the Jews*).³³⁴ The expected answer for the question would be a simple yes or no. However, the reader does not immediately get this answer from Jesus. Instead, in his *response* speech in verse 34, Jesus responds by questioning Pilate about the source of his question, saying:³³⁵

Ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ σὺ τοῦτο λέγεις ἢ ἄλλοι εἶπόν σοι περὶ ἐμοῦ (Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning me?)

In this *question-response* speech, the reader notices the exchange of roles between these two characters in the trial process, as Michaels (2010:1067) also observes that, "This is not an accused's standard reply to a judge's serious opening question. As with Annas in the previous hearing (vv. 19-24) Jesus' royalty seems present in his opening remark. Jesus behaves almost as if he is the judge and Pilate the accused." This seems to be John's intention of the portrayal of Jesus (cf. Bruce, 1983:353).

Michaels (2010:1067; cf. Morris, 1971:769) makes a significant observation that Pilate appears genuinely provoked by Jesus's response. This reaction indirectly, yet clearly, implies that Jesus must keep his place. He points out that what Pilate wants to know has made Jesus' own people and leadership so furious with the man, that they clearly want to kill him? Having asked Jesus who he is a moment ago and not having gotten a direct answer, Pilate now asks the more practical "τί ἐποίησας" (*what have you done?*). With this *question speech* act, Pilate seeks to establish exactly what Jesus did that made the Jewish opponents and leaders bring him to the Praetorium. Again, Jesus does not give him a direct answer; instead, he states the special nature of his kingdom.³³⁶ In this response, which is an *assertive* in nature, Jesus seems to be answering

³³⁴ Brunner (2012:1067; cf. Morris, 1971:768; Keener, 2003:1111; Barrett, 1978:536) comments, "In all the four Gospels these are exactly Pilate's first words to Jesus." Cf. Michaels (2010:920), who also comments, saying: "Pilate question 'Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; - Are you the King of the Jews' is exactly the same question, word for word, that he asks in all four Gospels, leaving us to wonder where the title came from, and where Pilate got the idea that this was what Jesus might be claiming."

³³⁵ Michaels (2010:920; cf. Keener, 2003:1111) says, "It sounds as if Pilate had heard of Jesus from others, which is quite likely and which now becomes, in fact, Jesus' first question of Pilate."

³³⁶ Morris (1971:769; cf. Barrett, 1978:537) says, "Jesus' reply admits that there is sense in which he has a 'kingdom', but stresses that it is not a kingdom as this world understands kingdoms. It does not take its origin from this world, and it is not basically concerned with this world."

Pilate's first question when he was asked: "are you King of the Jews?" The reader is invited to take note of this dramatic exchange between these two characters.

Tasker (1999:201; cf. Keener, 2003:1112) makes a valuable contribution, commenting that, "The reader is now presented with a dramatic scene, in which two types of kingship are contrasted; the kingship backed the authority and might of imperial Rome represented by Pilate, a *kingship of this world* and upheld by this world's weapons, and the kingship of Jesus *not of this world* in which the monarch is to reign by being lifted up to the cross (v. 36)."³³⁷

Pilate responds to Jesus' *assertive* with a direct question again: "Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σύ" (*Are you a king then?*), hoping to finally get some direct answer from Jesus.³³⁸ The utterance in verse 37b provides an answer to the question whether Jesus is King or not. In saying "Σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι" (*You say rightly that I am a king*), Jesus affirms that he is King, but the elaboration of his kingship is probably not what Pilate expected.³³⁹ Though the reader has at this stage gathered sufficient knowledge to understand the nature of Jesus' kingship, this exchange is important for them to follow, and pick up the irony around it so that they can also make their own informed judgement as the trial comes to conclusion. Jesus' affirmative utterance also indirectly challenges Pilate's conscious³⁴⁰ when he states that "πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς" (Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice). Whitacre (1999:443) rightly observes that in uttering this statement, "Jesus continues to walk through this trial in his own terms. Pilate thinks

³³⁷ Tasker (1999:201) further points out: "[T]he narrative clearly presupposes that it had been intimated to Pilate that Jesus, by claiming kingship over Jewry, was in effect a political revolutionary and therefore a potential danger to Rome; but it lays the guilt for supposing him to be such upon the Jews rather upon Pilate. In reality Jesus had come into the world for no political purpose whatsoever, but solely to witness unto the truth, the truth about God, to testify by word and deed to his justice and at the same time to demonstrate his love." Whitacre (1999:442) adds: "If Pilate had an open heart, he would have picked up this hint and asked where Jesus' kingdom is from, but he does not. Instead, he focuses on Jesus' reference to my kingdom, which is repeated three times. Pilate picks up on this emphasis and presses his earlier question, again in keeping with the Roman practice of questioning the defendant three times."

³³⁸ Bultmann (1971:654) advances "Indirectly the answer is Yes; but Jesus does not speak directly about himself, rather he speaks about his *βασιλεία*. It is not 'of this world,' i.e., it does not have its origin in this world, and therefore it is not of this world's kind, it is -Johannine sense- and eschatological phenomenon".

³³⁹ Whitacre (1999:442; cf. Keener, 2003:1113; Morris, 1971:770) mentions: "Jesus' further explanation reveals that he is king in a sense that transcends all other kings. He is King who testify the truth. He is the king of the truth and he manifest his royal power not by force but by the witness he bears to the truth (3:32, 5:33)." See also Hoskyn (1940:619).

³⁴⁰ Brunner (2012:1069) says, "Then Jesus seeks Pilate's soul with this question. A sentence that can be heard to be saying 'Pilate, are you listening? This is the single most important moment in your life.'"

of Jesus as a defendant, but Jesus is taking the part of a witness who has come to testify against the rule of the lie and for the truth, that is, for God and for God's claim on the world" (cf. Ridderbos, 1997:596).

In conclusion of the first Roman trial, Pilate asks Jesus "*Τί ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια*" (*what is truth?*). The text does not provide the reader with further exchange between Pilate and Jesus over the question about the "truth"; however, it seems that Pilate asked the question out of frustration that he could not establish any political wrongdoing from Jesus.³⁴¹ The Implied reader already possesses knowledge that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. This understanding enables the implied reader to make informed judgements, even regarding Pilate. As will be emphasised in the discussion of the perlocutionary force of this utterance, the judges become the judged. The narrator informs the reader that after saying this, Pilate went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "*Εγὼ οὐδεμίαν εὕρισκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν*" (*I find no fault in Him at all*). In uttering this statement, Pilate declares that Jesus is not guilty of any wrongdoing that warrants punishment by death. This utterance is a *declarative* speech act, intended to announce the sentence after the first Roman trial. The first Roman trial comes to an end and Jesus is not found guilty of any wrongdoing, at least from Pilate's perspective, but not from the Jewish authorities' perspective as argued earlier.

4.7.2.4 Trial before Pilate (Second Roman Trial before Pilate John 18:39–19:16)

The second Roman trial begins with an exchange between Pilate and the Jewish authorities outside the Praetorium. Having declared Jesus' innocence, Pilate proposes that he should then release one of the offenders following the Paschal Amnesty Custom (v. 39a).³⁴² In verse 39b, Pilate proposes that he should release Jesus, saying,

³⁴¹ Keener (2003:1114) comments, "Pilate's tone may be undecipherable, but as Duke notes, John's dramatic irony here is clear. Pilate asks, 'what is truth'? of the very one who is the truth (14:6). The meaning of 'truth' might be debatable, but Pilate was hardly interested in what appeared to him to be philosophical matters (18:38a); he was interested in politics, and from that vantage point, Jesus was 'not guilty'. Pilate thus took the matter back to Jesus' accusers."

³⁴² Bruce (1983:355; cf. Lindars, 1972:560-561; Keener, 2003:1116) helpfully observes: "The Barnabas episode is recorded by all four Evangelists. Whereas John and Matthew seem to make Pilate take the initiative in offering to release a prisoner under the customary Paschal amnesty, Mark and Luke suggest that accusers and bystanders first ask Pilate to observe the annual practice. Perhaps a request had already been made for the release of Barnabas; now Pilate offers to release Jesus instead."

Βούλεσθε οὖν ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων” (Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?).

The utterance here is a *question speech* act (which can also be read as a statement) filled with sarcasm and a wishful expectation from Pilate. The reader should recognise Pilate’s intention in asking this question as an attempt to release Jesus, as he perceives Jesus as harmless. However, the opponents express their disapproval of the proposed name for the Paschal Amnesty custom. In uttering “Μὴ τοῦτον ἀλλὰ τὸν Βαραββᾶν” (*Not this Man, but Barabbas!*) (v. 40), the crowd expresses that they would rather have Barabbas awarded the Paschal Amnesty than Jesus. The demonstrative pronoun *τοῦτον* here is used to refer to Jesus (the man they are currently dealing with). Therefore, the utterance in 40a is a *response speech* act uttered with the intention to clarify the choice made by Jesus’ opponents regarding their preference for the Paschal Amnesty. The reader should therefore register this choice and continue with the proceedings of the trial.³⁴³

The trial continues with the narrator (19:1-3) informing the reader that,

Τότε οὖν ἔλαβεν ὁ Πιλάτος τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐμαστίγωσεν. καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν περιέβαλον αὐτόν. καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτόν καὶ ἔλεγον, Χαῖρε ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων· καὶ ἐδίδοσαν αὐτῷ ῥάπισματα. (Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ And they struck Him with their hands).

The irony of the crown of thorns and the significance of the purple rope is revealed to the reader in this utterance. The detail of this irony and its performative power has been discussed in Chapter 3 of this study.³⁴⁴ This utterance in verses 1-3 serves as an *informative speech* act, aiming to provide the reader with details of the manner in which Jesus was mistreated by the soldiers under Pilate’s authority.³⁴⁵ Through this speech act, the narrative emphasises the suffering and

³⁴³ However, Keener (2003:1117) says, “If Pilate wished to grant any prisoner’s release for the festival, it was far safer to release Jesus, whom he now supposed a harmless philosopher, than alternatives such as Barabbas, who, like those ultimately executed with Jesus, was a ‘robber’.”

³⁴⁴ However, regarding this particular scene, Kanagaraj (2013:182; cf. Bruce, 1983:358; Barrett, 1978:540; Keener, 2003:1118-1119) says: “Jesus becomes a ‘mock king’ in the hands of the soldiers. They plaited a crown of thorns put it on his head, and clothed him with a purple robe, and kept going up to him, saying ‘Hail, o King of the Jews!’. By greeting Jesus as ‘the King of the Jews,’ a title that was normally used to greet Caesar, the soldiers unconsciously acknowledged him King in his humiliation and suffering, anticipating his reign from the cross.”

³⁴⁵ Keener (2003:1118; cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh, 1998:258; Lindars, 1972:563) comments: “As was typical in such cases, the soldiers’ abuse includes ridicule and some torture. Yet the narrative is deeply ironic: the one whom they mock as king of the Jews really is king of the Jews.” Keener asserts that “scourging

humiliation that Jesus endured on his way to the cross. In verse 4 the narrator informs the reader about Pilate's consistency against the Jewish opponents in proclaiming Jesus' innocence. The utterance effectively informs the reader that Pilate, despite pressure from Jesus' opponents, consistently declared Jesus's innocence. It can therefore generally be classified under *informatives*, particularly 4a, and an *assertive* in 4b. In reference to 4b, Pilate states before Jesus' opponents that Jesus has committed no crime.

As promised in the preceding utterance (v. 4b), Pilate fulfils his commitment, and the narrator continues to inform the reader that he brings the humiliated Jesus out to them, demonstrating that he found no crime in him (Kanagaraj, 2013:182). This information in verse 5a is important to the reader so that she/he can realise how blind and inconsiderate the opponents are. Through this *informative* speech, the narrator continues to inform the reader about the mockery and humiliation (with crown of thorns and a purple robe)³⁴⁶ Jesus experienced from the Jewish opponents. In reference to verse 5b, the acclamation “Ἴδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος” (*Behold the Man!*)³⁴⁷ is a declarative speech act. Scholars hold varying views regarding any possible deeper meaning of the expression; however, it is enough to indicate that Pilate presents Jesus to the crowd faultless and innocent (cf. Lindars, 1972:566; Bruce, 1983:359). This study views this utterance as a *declarative*, but also keeping its mockery tone in mind (cf. Keener, 2003:1123).

In v. 6a the narrator informs the reader that when Jesus was released to appear before his opponents, the chief priests and officers shouted (*ἐκραύγασαν*) calling for Jesus to be crucified. The narrator's intention is to inform the reader that despite Pilate's declaration of Jesus's innocence and the absence of any crime committed by Jesus, the opponents remain resolute in their determination to crucify him. The utterance is therefore a speech act belonging to

is not all incompatible with Pilate's belief that Jesus was innocent; the procurator Albinus later reportedly flogged Joshua ben Hananiah until his bones showed, for similarly disrupting public order, but afterward released him as harmless.” See also Kanagaraj (2013:182), who says: “Scourging, slapping and spitting recapitulate Isaiah's experience (Isa 50:6).”

³⁴⁶ Keener (2003:1122) states: “The crown of thorns (probably woven from the branches of an available shrub such as acanthus) was probably an instrument of mockery rather than one of torture, The crown recalls the garlands worn by Hellenistic vassal princes, as generally only the highest ruler wore a diadem with white wool.” Keener continues, stating that “the long thorns may thus have turned outwards to imitate contemporary crowns rather than inward to draw blood, and the soldiers probably removed it along with the other mocking regalia before leading him to crucifixion. The purple robe reflects the colour of garments worn by Hellenistic princes.”

³⁴⁷ Keener (2003:1123) indicates, “John may well expect the more biblically literate members of his audience to recall Samuel's acclamation of the Israel's first king with identical words recalls Ἴδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος’ (1 Sam 9:17).”

informatives, since the narrator is telling the reader that this is how the opponents reacted when Jesus appeared before them.

Pilate responds to their exclamation or a call to crucify Jesus (6b) by saying:

Λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ σταυρώσατε· ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὕρισκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν (You take him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him).

The utterance in verse 6b is a soft command (more of a suggestion), issued by Pilate to the opponents to crucify Jesus. Despite Pilate's investigations and interrogations, he concludes that Jesus is not deserving of crucifixion, and commands them to crucify him themselves. Lindars (1972:567) astutely points out that Pilate's command is impossible and likely intended as sarcasm. The command serves to advance the dialogue in the direction John requires for the climactic events that will follow. It further underscores Pilate's decision regarding the crucifixion of Jesus. The utterance here is a *directive* speech act that intends to let the opponents do something. It is noted, however, that Pilate has only issued a command but excused himself from whatever Jesus' opponents will do, in this case it is known that they want to crucify him. Pilate issues a command but he himself is not committed to it. Whitacre (1999:448) further states: "Pilate's little plan failed, so in exasperation he tells the leaders to take Jesus and crucify him themselves, since, as he says for the third time, he finds no charge against him."

Jesus' opponents responded to Pilate's *directive* by bringing yet another version of their understanding on the trial (v. 7). They formulate their case in the following manner:

Ἡμεῖς νόμον ἔχομεν καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν (We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God).

The utterance is intended to clarify to the reader why Jesus should be crucified according to the Jewish opponents' understanding of their law. Jesus' opponents, therefore, claim that according to "their" law³⁴⁸, Jesus ought to die. Since they are claiming that this understanding and

³⁴⁸ Whitacre (1999:449; Lindars, 1972:567; Bruce, 1983:360) states, "Pilate and the Jewish leaders are very agitated, but the appeal they both make is to law. According to Roman law Jesus is innocent, as Pilate has now said three times. But the leaders now assert that according to Jewish law, Jesus must die." Whitacre adds: "This was the charge that was brought against Jesus at the trial before Caiaphas, though not recorded by John. The law they seem to have in mind says, 'anyone who blasphemes the name of the Lord must be put to death' (Lev. 24:16). Jamieson *et al.* (1997:165) remark, "Their criminal charges having come to nothing, they give up that point, and as Pilate was throwing the whole responsibility upon them, they retreat into their own Jewish law, by which, as claiming equality with God (see Jn 5:18 and Jn 8:59), He ought to die; insinuating that it was Pilate's duty, even as civil governor, to protect their law from such insult."

interpretation of the law is how things are, their utterance can be categorised as both an *assertive* and *disputive* speech act. This *assertive* speech act is also intended to educate the reader about the claim of the accusers in the trial. The narrator informs the reader that when Pilate heard a newly formulated version of the charge, he was more afraid (v. 8). The Jewish opponents claim that Jesus called himself the Son of God, and for that he must be crucified. The comparative adverb μᾶλλον in the narrator's report underscores the fear on the sight of Pilate. The speech act here is basically an *informative*. The narrator intends to keep the reader posted about the situation and mood in the trial. In verse 9, the narrator informs the reader that a frightened Pilate entered the Praetorium again, now with a more fundamental question of Johannine Christology, he asks Jesus as follows: "Πόθεν εἶ σὺ" (*Where are You from?*) (cf. Maloney, 1998:496). The study takes note that this is a very important question in John (cf. Jn 8:14).

The narrator informs the reader that Jesus gave no answer to this question.³⁴⁹ It is not immediately clear what Pilate wanted to achieve with this question from Jesus. However, the implied author intends to remind the reader about Jesus' origin as Keener (2003:1125) says, "Because Pilate demands Jesus' origin after hearing that he claimed to be God's "son", his question may imply an understanding of origin language that Jesus' Jewish interlocutors had earlier misapprehended: he refers to ultimate rather than geographical origin (1:46; 7:41-42, 52)." The reader is already aware that Jesus is from God (3:2; 7:28; 8:42; 13:3). It is further noted that the question of Jesus' origin is a point of contest in the Gospel. Pilate might have been attempting to have Jesus confirm that he is from God, or he is the Son of God.

Pilate responds to Jesus' silence with hostility (v. 10).³⁵⁰ The utterance in verse 10 is a *question* speech act, asked with the intention of eliciting an answer from Jesus. In this question speech act, Pilate is annoyed and pushes Jesus to break away with the silence and recognise his position of power and answer him (Bruce, 1983:361). The reader finds this question ironic to say the least. This point will be discussed later in the performative power of this illocution. Jesus engages in a

³⁴⁹ Keener (2003:1125; Bruce, 1983:361) comments, "Jesus' unwillingness to answer at this point may exemplify the ancient theme of 'divine' philosophers refusing to answer worldly judges but is broader than that, reminiscent of the Maccabean martyr tradition or anyone defying authorities for the higher cause." Keener continues, pointing out that "[i]n this case, Jesus's silence here fits the Markan line of tradition" (Mk 15:5).

³⁵⁰ Keener (2003:1125) explains, "Roman law did not interpret silence as a confession of guilt, but failure to respond to charges could leave a case one sided and hasten conviction; if a defendant failed to offer a defense, the judge would normally ask about the charge three times before the defendant would be convicted by default. Neither legal custom is at issue here: as noted above, Pilate is not bound by the *ordo* and can act at his discretion. Rather he seems exasperated that Jesus fails to recognise both his office and his attempts to act on Jesus' behalf."

power debate initiated by Pilate in verse 10. Jesus responds to Pilate's question by asserting that Pilate's power comes from above, otherwise he would not be able to act against him otherwise. He also points out that those who brought him to Pilate bear greater sin. Pilate is responsible, but not as responsible as the Jewish elite who delivered him to Pilate (cf. Keener, 2003:1126). Since the utterance intends to provide an answer asked by Pilate, the utterance is a *responsive* speech act. It is also noted that the utterance has a descriptive force in it. Jesus informs Pilate where he gets his power from and also describes the severity of the opponents' guilt.

The narrator tells the reader that from this (ἐκ τούτου [out of this]) Pilate tried to release Jesus, but the Jewish opponents would not allow him, since he had not cleared their charge of blasphemy in verse 7. The narrator's information in verse 12a assures the reader that at no point did Pilate change his mind about his verdict on Jesus. The implied reader needs this information so that they can validate the final outcome of the trial. Therefore, the utterance in verse 12a is an *informative* speech act, since it enriches the reader's knowledge regarding Pilate's position with Jesus. The opponents strongly opposed Pilate's attempts to release Jesus, expressing their disagreement in the following manner:

Ἐὰν τοῦτον ἀπολύσῃς, οὐκ εἶ φίλος τοῦ Καίσαρος· πᾶς ὁ βασιλέα ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν ἀντιλέγει τῷ Καίσαρι (If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar).³⁵¹

The opponents claim that if Pilate ever (Ἐὰν) releases Jesus, then it means that Pilate is not loyal to Caesar (since the gesture of releasing Jesus would mean that Pilate agrees with Jesus calling himself king). According to them, anyone who declares themselves a king is opposing Caesar. The utterance is a speech act belonging to the category of 'assertives,' as the opponents are expressing their belief about the potential consequences that would arise if Jesus is released.

Having heard the assertion that threatens his political position, Pilate brought Jesus out and sat at the judgement seat (λιθόστρωτον [stone pavement]). This gesture is crucial in this forensic discussion. Pilate solemnly takes a position to pronounce judgement against Jesus, and he said to them: "Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν" (Behold your King!) (13-14). The narrator also informs the reader that it was the preparation day of the Passover. This information is important for the reader as will

³⁵¹ Michaels (2013:939) says, "The Jewish priests explain themselves further, shifting their ground once more. Previously, the charge *against Jesus* had been that Jesus 'made himself the Son of God' (v. 7), a religious charge which, as we have seen, was their real reason for wanting to kill Jesus (5:18; 10:33). Now they have changed it back to the political charge that was implied in bringing Jesus to Pilate in the first place, the charge that Jesus 'makes himself king'. This means that he 'opposes Caesar' and by implication that Pilate himself is 'opposing Caesar' in refusing to prosecute such a person."

be discussed in the following sub-section. The utterance is an *informative* speech since it intends giving the reader important information regarding Pilate's final decision about Jesus. Pilate brings Jesus before the Jewish opponents, while he sits on the judgement seat. The *informative* here adds tension to the reader. In verse 15a, upon seeing Jesus in front of them, the opponents shout: "Ἄρον ἄρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν" (*Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!*).³⁵² The utterance is an expression of a wish that intends to inform the reader about the verdict the opponents (in fact they are accusers) would want to be taken against Jesus. They want Jesus crucified. Therefore, they suggest or express themselves in this regard,³⁵² as they have been doing since the beginning of the trial, to Pilate to sanction their wish or demands to crucify Jesus. Therefore, the utterance can be categorised as an *expressive* speech act since they are expressing their thoughts or feelings about the outcome of the trial. In verse 15b, the reader experiences the final drama between Pilate and Jesus' opponents through a *question-response* speech act. Pilate asks them for the last time if they do allow him to crucify their king. To this question the chief priests (speaking on behalf of the crowd) respond: "Οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα" (*We have no king but Caesar!*). The narrator informs the reader that finally Pilate delivered (literally: παρέδωκεν – he handed *him* over) Jesus to them so that (ἵνα)³⁵³ they might crucify him (σταυρωθῆ). The narrator's *informative* speech act continues to inform the reader that the opponents, subsequently took (Παρέλαβον) Jesus and led *him* away.

The following sub-section continues to demonstrate how the established illocutions can invite the reader of the Gospel to participate in the text.

4.7.3 Perlocutionary Act

4.7.3.1 Trial before Annas (18:12-23)

The narrator's report in 18:12-16 (*informative* speech act) introduces the implied reader to the commencement of the forensic dialogue. The speech act informs the reader about the developments around the arrest of Jesus by the authorities. The implied reader is assisted to keep up with the developments around Jesus' trial. The reader must also take note of the role players, like Annas and Caiaphas, who are introduced in the narrative. Jesus is reportedly accompanied by two of his disciples: Simon Peter and an unnamed disciple. The trial is set to

³⁵² The imperative verb σταύρωσον in verse 15 may not be understood or read as if the Opponents are commanding Pilate what to do with Jesus, but as more suggestive or the expression of wish.

³⁵³ The expression of the "purpose" of handing Jesus over to the opponents.

take place in the courtyard of the high priest. The reader should pay attention to these details as the events unfold. The narrator presents this crucial information for the reader to accept and grasp the unfolding events. The reader is encouraged to appreciate the way the story is told and remain engaged in the narration of the story. Without this information, the implied reader will not be able to participate in the trial. Therefore, it can be argued that the giving of this information to the implied reader is a performative gesture from the narrator's side and it helps the reader to stay close to the proceedings in the trial.

In reference to the servant girl's *question* speech act in 17a, the implied reader should also attempt answering it for themselves. Moreover, Peter's blatant denial is not neutral in its performative intent to the implied reader. His answer "Οὐκ εἰμί" (*I am not*) is not only misleading but shocking to the reader. The implied reader is already aware that Peter had previously pledged unwavering support for Jesus, even going as far as promising to lay down his life for him (13:37). However, the implied reader should listen to this answer in the light of 13:38 and get comforted that the words of Jesus are fulfilled before them. Contrary to Peter's behaviour, Jesus never lies, and the implied reader know that. Whatever he promises or predicts is fulfilled. This does strengthen the implied reader's faith. While the implied reader knows that Peter is the disciple of Jesus Christ, his *responsive* speech act should be viewed as an act of not willing to testify or witness on behalf of or for Jesus for the fear of his own life. In the forensic dialogue such as this, this denial is performative in nature. The implied reader should feel placed on the same spot of answering this question and re-evaluate their faith and commitment or loyalty to Jesus, regardless of how life-threatening the circumstances are.

The implied reader must also accept the information the narrator is providing in verses 18-19. Firstly, she/he knows about Peter's movements around the courtyard after denying Jesus. The implied reader gets to know that Peter mingled with the servants and officers around the fireplace. The significance of Peter's hanging around will be appreciated even more a little later when the story continues. At this stage, this information helps the implied reader to keep track of the number of times Peter denies Jesus and the circumstances surrounding each denial.

Secondly, the implied reader is provided with the information regarding the commencement of Jesus' interrogation. The reader must appreciate the report that Jesus was questioned by Annas, and the interrogation was regarding his disciples and his doctrine (*περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδασχῆς αὐτοῦ*). The study observed that the narrator did not mention explicitly what exactly Annas wanted to establish regarding Jesus' disciples and his doctrine. However, the implied reader can appreciate that they know what the interrogation was all about.

Both the *assertive* and *disputive* speech act in Jesus' response to Annas in verses 20-21 are also directed to the reader. Jesus states that he has spoken and taught openly in the synagogues and in the temple and has said nothing in secret. The reader is comforted and strengthened by the fact that Jesus stands by whatever he has spoken and taught. This *assertive* has the power to bolster the implied reader's confidence in Jesus. Jesus does not turn against his disciples nor back down from his words or teachings. By empowering the implied reader to question the objections raised by Jewish opponents, it presents an opportunity for them to make an informed choice.

Jesus goes on to disclose that numerous witnesses have not only listened to but also believed in his teachings. Annas, too, can approach these witnesses to inquire further, particularly concerning Jesus' disciples and his doctrines. The reader, who believes in Jesus and has delved into the Gospel, is also encouraged to see themselves as potential witnesses in this trial. They are invited to step up and bear witness to Jesus Christ. This calling is a significant responsibility, as they must be prepared to account for what they have read and learned. In the future, they may be called upon to testify about their beliefs and experiences.

Jesus' response to Annas was not welcomed by one of the officers (v. 22), who thought that Jesus was disrespectful to the high priest. Firstly, this invites the implied reader to go back and read the answer again to establish what could be disrespectful in it. Secondly, if the implied reader had already adopted the answer of Jesus as correct and genuine, the text alerts them that they would be in the same situation as Jesus. If the second scenario is true, the question is: Is the reader ready to endure such abuse in the hands of the officer for Jesus' sake? Be that as it may, the text is performative in that it invites the reader to reassess their commitment to Jesus.

The trial of Jesus before Annas reaches its conclusion, with Jesus being granted the opportunity to have the final word. In response to the officer who slapped him, Jesus asserts that his answer contains nothing evil that justifies such treatment. He confidently challenges the officer to identify any wrongdoing in his response. This *disputive speech* heightens the reader's confidence in Jesus.

As noted, the trial before Annas comes to an end with Jesus' utterance. Neither the officer nor Annas is given textual space to make a follow-up question to Jesus. This gap leaves the reader anxious about the future and where this trial is heading on now. This works for the implied author, since he has the attention of the implied reader. The trial ends favourably towards Jesus. Since the accusers are not finding any fault with Jesus, the implied reader may turn and accuse them of injustice. This encourages the implied reader to grow more confident in Jesus and their faith in

him is strengthened. However, the trial has only begun. The reader is encouraged to stay close to the text and see where the trial is heading to.

4.7.3.2 Trial before Caiaphas (John 18:24-27)

The *informative* speech act by the narrator in verse 24 informs the implied reader about the progression of the trial. Jesus is sent to Caiaphas as the trial continues. The implied reader is informed that Jesus was still bound when sent to Caiaphas. The reader is challenged to accept the information as provided by the narrator and sympathises with Jesus in the humiliation he is going through.

With reference to verses 25-27, the reader must take note that the focus of the trial shifts from Jesus back to Simon Peter. As suggested earlier, the reader is invited to keep the count of how many times Peter denied Jesus. The trial before Caiaphas comes to conclusion with the narrator reporting that Peter denied Jesus three times. As prophesied, the rooster crowed.

On the one hand, it should be shocking and disappointing to the implied reader to witness this denial, but, on the other hand, it is comforting to the implied reader since it is the fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy. The implied reader continues to sympathise with Jesus in that while Jesus defends his disciples and his teachings, two of his own disciples are doing the opposite, namely Judas (18:3) and Peter (18:17, 24-26). Judas sold him and Peter now denies him. However, it is emphasised that the implied reader should not focus on the weaknesses of these two disciples but on the fulfilment of the Scriptures. In that case, the text works to encourage the faith of the implied reader.

4.7.3.3 Trial before Pilate (The First Roman Trial, John 18:28-38)

The *informative* speech act established in verse 28 has been noted as the narrator's intention to inform the implied reader about the progression of Jesus' trial. The reader must also take note of the time mentioned in the narrator's utterance, that is, in the early morning of the day. Jesus is led to Pilate, the Roman Governor. The reader is further informed that the Jewish opponents did not enter the Praetorium out of fear of becoming ceremonially unclean before the Passover. This *informative* speech continues to create suspense and anticipation in the reader's mind. The implied reader keeps wondering what is going to happen as the trial proceeds. As the reader continues to accept the information provided to them by the narrator, the desire to stay close to the narrative grows and they follow the developments of the trial closely.

In the Praetorium, the implied reader is given the opportunity to listen again to the accusation brought forward against Jesus (v. 29). Pilate asks the Jewish opponents: "*What accusation do*

you bring against this man? (Τίνα κατηγορίαν φέρετε [κατὰ] τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου). This *question* speech act allows the implied reader to hear exactly what the Jewish opponents/accusers have against Jesus. When the question is asked, the reader is also invited to carefully listen to it.

A question creates expectations of the answer in the mind of the implied reader. The expectation is finally resolved in verse 30 when they answered Pilate saying, “*If he (Jesus) were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.*” Has the expectation of the reader been successfully met? Maybe not because their answer does not explicitly mention what evil Jesus has committed. The implied reader is invited to notice that the Jewish opponents insinuate that they had already found Jesus worthy of death according to their own law, but they do not have the authority to carry their sentence into execution, unless the Roman Governor says so. The text is written in such a way that it invites the reader to see the Jewish opponents as mere accusers in the trial. By accepting the Jewish opponents as accusers, the reader takes the side of Jesus. In this way the reader becomes an active participant in the trial. The trial turned on its head – the reader judges the accusers.

In verse 31, the *directive* issued by Pilate tells the Jewish opponents to take Jesus and judge him according to their own (Jewish) law, since they do not have any basis for charging him. This development is not only encouraging to the believing reader but also exciting that Pilate’s standpoint is favourable toward them. The *responsive* speech act by the Jewish opponents to Pilate, arguing that it is not lawful for them to put anyone to death, not only casts them as accusers but also portrays them as baseless protesters. The more the text portrays them in this way, the more the implied reader disassociates with them and takes the side of Jesus. The conversation between Pilate and the Jewish opponents ends with the narrator’s aside in verse 32: “*that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die.*” Through the aside, the implied reader is drawn closer to the text, understanding why the story is progressing the way it is.

The narrator’s *informative* speech act in verse 33 draws the reader’s attention back to the Praetorium where Jesus is. Pilate begins to interrogate Jesus. As established, this *informative* speech is followed by a series of *question-response* speech acts between Pilate and Jesus, in the Praetorium (vv. 33b-38a). Pilate’s interest in verse 33b is to find out if Jesus calls himself “ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων” (king of the Jews). The implied reader must also attempt answering this question, based on their knowledge already gathered about Jesus. In his *responsive* speech act, Jesus does not give a direct answer to Pilate, but instead questions him about the source of his question (v. 34).

In the discussion of the illocutionary act on this point, it has been indicated that the implied reader should notice the exchange of roles between these two characters. Jesus behaves almost as if he is the judge (which in actual sense he is) and Pilate the accused. The nature of this *question-response* speech act sensitises the interest of the reader towards the story and has the potential to win the reader to the side of Jesus.

Getting frustrated with Jesus' philosophical answers, Pilate asks a direct question seeking to establish what crime exactly did Jesus commit (*τί ἐποίησας [what have you done?]* v. 35). The *question* speech act here appeals to the implied reader to answer as well. While the implied reader knows that Jesus did nothing wrong, Jesus continues to be economical with direct answers; instead, he gives Pilate a lecture about the special nature of his kingdom (v. 36). This teaching, in the middle of a trial proceeding, serves to strengthen the faith of the reader in Jesus.

Moreover, in verse 37, the reader receives additional teachings that seek to clarify the nature of Jesus' kingship (kingship of Jesus is *not of this world*) as contrasted to the *kingship of this world*. This *assertive* speech act benefits the reader with a deeper understanding of Jesus' kingship. Consequently, the implied reader takes note that the Jewish opponents are bringing an invalid charge. The Jewish opponents are contesting for the worldly kingship while Jesus is contesting for the heavenly kingship. Jesus' witness in this case is his Father from whom he came. The implied author invites the reader to make a choice between the two contrasted kingdoms (cf. v. 37). Finally, in verse 38b, the reader hears the pronouncement of judgement by Pilate. According to Pilate, Jesus is not guilty of any wrongdoing. The reader must accept this judgement and remain encouraged in their faith in Jesus.

4.7.3.4 Trial before Pilate (Second Roman Trial before Pilate John 18:39–19:16)

The second Roman trial before Pilate, as recorded in 18:39-40, commences with a *question-response* speech act between Pilate and the Jewish opponents outside the Praetorium. This detail serves as a reminder to the implied reader that the Jewish opponents remained resolute in their determination not to enter the Praetorium due to their fear of defilement before the Passover. Pilate has just declared Jesus not guilty (at all) of any crime, now he proposes to release Jesus as a way of observing the Paschal Amnesty Custom (v. 39a).

The Jewish opponents expressed their disapproval of Pilate's proposal to release Jesus. Instead, they cry out for Barabbas to be released and not Jesus. The choice of the Jewish opponents here further reveals their desperation to have Jesus crucified. In uttering "*Μὴ τοῦτον ἀλλὰ τὸν Βαραββᾶν*" (*Not this Man, but Barabbas!*), the implied reader gets the message clearly. In 19:1-3 is the narration of Jesus' suffering in the hands of the soldiers and Pilate.

The irony of Jesus suffering even if found not guilty (v. 5a), and the call to release Barabbas, whom the narrator has described as the robber, is very clear to the reader. Jesus is the blameless Lamb of God. His suffering has nothing to do with any wrong he committed but had higher value, that is, for the salvation of the world.

The reader continues to witness the mockery and the irony imbedded on it. The soft command (or rather a request) in 19:6b by the Jewish opponents to crucify Jesus also challenges the reader to make a decision. The question is: given all the investigations and interrogations done before the reader, what would the reader do if given the position of the opponents. Would they crucify him? Or release him? The implied reader cannot escape this invitation to participate in decision-making in the text. In 19:7, the reader learns of the newly formulated charge against Jesus. The reader should take note of this dramatic turn in the charge against Jesus and awaits Pilate's reaction to it. Finally, the implied reader becomes aware that the Jewish opponents are accusing Jesus of blasphemy, and the expected sentence for such a charge is death (See also 5:18). This twist in the narrative raises important questions for the reader: Is Jesus truly guilty of blasphemy, or is it a result of the disbelief and rejection of the Son of God by the Jewish opponents?

The narrator's *informative* speech in 19:8 reports that Pilate was more afraid after hearing the newly formulated charge by the Jewish opponents against Jesus. Certainly, this emotional language by the narrator carries some effects to the reader. The report of Pilate's fear heightens the tension in the reader's mind. The narrator's intention of reporting the exchange between Pilate and Jesus in verse 9 regarding Jesus' origin, is also not neutral in its performative intent. Suddenly, Pilate is interested in Jesus' origin. Jesus' decision not to answer Pilate leaves the reader pondering several possibilities. What could have happened if Jesus had answered and declared before Pilate that he is from God, as he did several times before the Jewish opponents? Could this have taken the trial to a different direction? What would Pilate have done about it? The performative nature of this *question* speech act is that it engages the reader to think further and wonder what could have happened.

Pilate reacts to Jesus' silence in verse 10 with an utterance of intimidation. Pilate reminds Jesus about his authority. This is ironic to the implied reader. Pilate claims to possess power to either crucify or to release Jesus, while the implied reader knows that Jesus is in control of the situation and the salvation plan of God is being revealed, as Carson (1994:1062) also says: "Jesus knew that the whole work of redemption did not rest on the despotic action of the Roman governor." While Pilate boasts about his earthly powers, the reader knows that Jesus is the Son of God (1:29-34). He has the power to forgive sin, including that of Pilate, if he can only open his eyes and see Jesus for who he really is. The reader therefore listens to Pilate's question with hilarity.

Jesus' *responsive* speech act in verse 11 is educative to the reader and further keeps the reader encouraged in their faith in Jesus. It assures the reader that God the Father is in charge of the whole situation.

The narrator's *informative* speech in verse 12a, on the one hand, continues to assure the reader that Pilate's stance on finding Jesus not guilty has never changed in the whole trial. This update and consistent stance by Pilate is encouraging to the reader. The reader's faith in Jesus is strengthened in knowing that Jesus is not convicted of any crime or wrongdoing. He is indeed the blameless Lamb of God, as John the Baptist proclaimed about him in 1:29. The text vindicates the reader's choice, who is presumed to be more on the side of Jesus than the Jewish opponents, as highlighted above. The study further observes that a trial comprises of emotional dynamics to the reader. This forces the implied reader to be involved emotionally.

In verse 12b, the more the narrator informs the implied reader about the conduct of the Jewish opponents, the more the implied reader realises that this group is desperate. They are desperate to crucify Jesus to save the status quo. As the story continues, they are revealed more and more as desperate accusers in this trial. The fact that they intimidate Pilate regarding his relationship with Caesar if he releases Jesus, proves this point. They pull all strings they can to ensure that Jesus is crucified.

Finally, in verses 13-14, the narrator informs the reader that Pilate brought Jesus out of the Praetorium to meet the accusers. Pilate himself comes out and sits on the judgement seat. This report creates suspense, tension, and anticipation in the mind of the implied reader. The reader's anticipation of the final judgement against Jesus heightens. The text engages the reader emotionally.

However, it must be point out that the irony of the scene is not hidden to the implied reader. As the Jewish opponents push for Jesus to be judged and sentenced to death, according to their skewed law,³⁵⁴ the implied reader knows that Jesus is the Son of God and is guiltless. This scenario invites the implied reader to exercise their own judgement. Firstly, the reader is already aware that Jesus is the true Passover Lamb who has come to die for the remission of the world's sins. Secondly, they know that Jesus will sit on the judgement seat and hand down judgement to

³⁵⁴ While commenting on the forensic proceedings of chapter 8, Van der Watt (2010:xx) states: "The judgment of the Pharisees is impaired, since they use fleshly, earthly criteria (8:15). Jesus uses different criteria, based on his origin and mission (8:16)."

all who have rejected him. Therefore, this ironic situation serves to encourage and strengthen the implied reader's faith in Jesus.

In verse 15a when the Jewish opponents see Jesus in front of them, they shout out, demanding that Pilate pass down the judgement of crucifixion upon Jesus. The speech act has been established as purely an expression of a wish (or demand) from their side. The reader learns that, according to the Jewish opponents, Jesus' blasphemous act is punishable by death on the cross. They want Pilate to sanction their demand. This is encouraging to the reader, since it confirms the fact that Jesus is the true Passover Lamb that comes from God (see 19:14). The theological truth is unmistakably revealed to the implied reader: Jesus had to undergo death for the redemption of the world.

The *question-response* speech act (19:15) established in their exchange reveals the final rejection of Jesus as the Messiah and King who came from God. The expression by the chief priests – “*Οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα*” (*We have no king but Caesar!*) – can be read as the people's declaration of the rejection of the Messiah. This expression constitutes their final verdict on Jesus. The implied reader should be encouraged to realise the fulfilment of 3:19, that says: “This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.” The reader is challenged to weigh the accusations against all the evidence and witnesses that Jesus presented in the whole trial. As the trial concludes, the reader is challenged to endorse the verdict or reject it, as Van der Watt (2010:xx) also states,

Forensic language is by nature deliberative. It consists of weighing, considering, evaluating evidence. The most important action would be to say 'I concur' or accept the witnesses for Jesus, or to reject them. These words would be performative and would automatically place one under judgment or not. “I concur” means that I concur in that it has the force of siding me with a position and that I have committed me to that position. These words would be performative and would automatically place one under judgment or not.

The implied reader must finally witness Jesus being handed over to the Jewish opponents so that (ἵνα) they may crucify him. The implied reader should accept this information with comfort in their heart, knowing that this is the fulfilment of Jesus' purpose for coming into the world.

4.7.4 Conclusion: Analysis of John 18:12–19:16 and its Performative Nature

4.7.4.1 Trial before Annas (John 18:12-23)

The story of the trial before Annas encompasses the events of Jesus' arrest, Peter's first denial of Jesus, and Jesus' initial interrogation by Annas. Firstly, the arrest of Jesus vividly portrays the

humiliation he endured throughout the entire trial process. Secondly, during this trial, Jesus is accompanied by two of his disciples: Simon Peter and another disciple who remains unnamed. When the narrator mentions that Simon Peter and the other disciple accompanied Jesus (v. 15), an expectation is created in the mind of the implied reader that the disciples are there to provide support or, at the very least, offer positive testimony about him. The implied reader expects these two disciples to be witnesses of Jesus in the forensic dialogue. However, this expectation is shattered by the fact that instead of being witnesses, one of them (Peter) denies Jesus. This is disappointing to the implied reader since they have just witnessed him defending Jesus by cutting Malchus' ear. This dramatic turn of events, in terms of characterisation, is both unexpected and disappointing for the implied reader, engaging them deeply with the text. The surprise encourages the reader to actively discern the unfolding events and their implications. In particular, the implied reader must recall Jesus' predictions regarding Peter to make sense of the situation. Therefore, the text appeals to the implied reader to remember what they have read already, so that they can understand why things are happening in this way.

The narrator's purpose in presenting this information to the implied reader serves as a performative gesture, drawing the reader's attention to the fulfilment of Jesus' prediction. As Jesus' prediction is beginning to be fulfilled in the eyes of the implied reader, the text persuades them to strengthen their trust in Jesus.

Jesus' interrogation in 18:19 was about his disciples and his doctrine (*περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς αὐτοῦ*). It is not immediately clear what exactly Annas wanted to know regarding these matters about Jesus. Given the context of the trial and the accusations at hand, it was argued that perhaps Annas wanted to establish whether Jesus was a revolutionary and whether his teachings were against the Law and Moses. Jesus' response (*assertive* and *disputive* speech act) in 18:20-21, indicates that he has taught nothing subversive, as they suspect, nor anything deceitful, concealing the sinister purpose (Theophylact, 2007:272).³⁵⁵ This *assertive* speech act has the power to strengthen the confidence of the implied reader in Jesus, who neither changes his standpoint nor gives up his disciples.

Jesus further reveals that he has many witnesses who listened (the Jewish opponents included) and believed his teachings. This *disputive* speech act is performative in the sense that it makes the reader feel invited to be the witness of Jesus Christ in the trial, since they also have listened

³⁵⁵ However, Theophylact (2007:272) remarks: "Understand that Jesus' answer relates only to the high priest's accusations; otherwise, we make a liar of him. For he did in fact teach his disciples *in secret* many things that were beyond the comprehension of the multitude."

to Jesus preaching in the text. The implied reader must also be ready to give an account for what they read and learn from the text. It is also noted that Jesus' *defensive* speech has the power to ensure the implied reader's confidence in Jesus, since it turns his enemies to his witnesses. The reader can only be comforted that Jesus indeed speaks the truth even the enemies know.

It was observed that Jesus' answer did not get any response except the blow from the officer. Jesus is afforded the opportunity to have the last word in this trial. The study indicated that the trial ends favourably towards Jesus. This manner of ending the story is performative, since it leaves the implied reader with a one-sided story or evidence. The implied reader is persuaded to judge the Jewish opponents, since they are not finding Jesus guilty of anything (this is noted as the theme throughout the trial). The narrative continues to beckon the implied reader to remain closely connected to the trial proceedings, as the trial has merely commenced. The reader is encouraged to follow the unfolding events and discover where the trial will lead next.

4.7.4.2 Trial before Caiaphas (John 18:24-27).

The trial before Caiaphas was not so much focused on Jesus, but on Simon Peter. The implied reader is only informed that Jesus was still bound when he was sent to Caiaphas. The reader is presented with a vivid depiction of the humiliation Jesus endured, but the focus swiftly shifts to Simon Peter's interrogation. The trial before Caiaphas reaches its conclusion as it confirms that Peter denied Jesus three times, just as Jesus had predicted, and the rooster crowed. This significant development holds great importance for the implied reader, as it confirms the fulfilment of Jesus' prediction, making it a performative moment with a powerful intent. It appeals to the implied reader to trust in the promises and predictions of Jesus. Jesus never lies and his predictions are never in vain. The performative nature of the trial before Caiaphas lies in its challenging effect on the implied reader. It prompts the reader to seriously acknowledge the stark contrast: while Jesus endures humiliation in defence of his disciples and teachings, two of his own disciples, Judas (18:3) and Peter (18:17, 24-26), are behaving in the opposite manner. These are the two characters the implied reader should avoid emulating. The text is presented in such a way that it forces the believing reader to reassess their commitment to Jesus. Thus, the faith, commitment, and loyalty of the implied reader is not left unchallenged by the text.

4.7.4.3 Trial before Pilate (The First Roman Trial, John 18:28-38)

The first trial before Pilate is filled with a lot of drama. The story takes place in the Praetorium, where the Jewish opponents did not enter because they feared that they would become ceremonially unclean before the Passover. Besides the dramatic tension that the story has masterfully crafted in the mind of the implied reader, the irony of the scene cannot be overlooked.

The Jewish opponents, who fear defilement before the Passover, seem untroubled by the prospect of committing murder against an innocent person. Pilate first interrogates the Jewish opponents about the reason why they bring Jesus to him. He intends to establish the accusations they have against him. The Jewish opponents allege that Jesus is an evildoer, and this is the reason they brought him to Pilate. The text is performative in that the implied reader is invited to continue seeing the opponents as mere accusers without tangible evidence to put Jesus to death. Consequently, the text encourages the implied reader to persist in judging the opponents. By doing so, the reader continues to participate as a judge in the trial.

Since Pilate could not find any wrong in Jesus, he tells the Jewish opponents to take Jesus and judge him according to their (Jewish) law. The Jewish opponents tell Pilate that it is not lawful for them to put anyone to death, thus making them not only accusers but also protesters. The text continues to portray the opponents in a negative way, and this has a performative element in it. The more the text portrays them in a negative way, the more the reader disassociates him/herself from them and consequently takes the side of Jesus.

In the Praetorium, Pilate begins to interrogate Jesus. His question seeks to establish whether Jesus calls himself "king of the Jews" or not. Based on the implied reader's cognitive awareness, the question is inviting the reader to think about the nature of Jesus' kingship. Yes, he is king to the implied reader. He has already revealed himself as such (Jn 12:12-19). Instead of giving a direct answer, Jesus questions Pilate about the source of his question (v. 34). It was noted that, in this instance, Jesus behaves almost as if he is the judge and Pilate the accused, and this is amusing to the implied reader. The text sensitises the interest of the implied reader towards the story and has the power to persuade the implied reader to side with Jesus. The manner in which the text is formulated and presented constantly tells the implied reader that Jesus did nothing wrong.

Jesus finally gives Pilate a lecture about the special nature of his kingdom (v. 36). The lecture has been noted as encouraging to the faith of the implied reader. The debate about the nature of Jesus' kingship and kingdom, as contrasted to that of the world, has the power to invite the implied reader to make a choice between the two kingdoms, and is accordingly performative in nature. The implied reader is not given an opportunity to remain on the neutral ground but to make choices.

Finally, Pilate hands down the verdict, pronouncing Jesus not guilty of any wrongdoing. The judgement is inviting to the reader. The reader must accept the judgement and remain encouraged in their faith in Jesus.

4.7.4.4 Trial before Pilate (Second Roman Trial before Pilate John 18:39–19:16)

The second Roman trial before Pilate is dominated by an exchange between Pilate and the Jewish opponents. The setting of this particular forensic dialogue is outside the Praetorium with the Jewish opponents and once inside the Praetorium (vv. 10-11). A considerable amount of textual space is given to the conversation between Pilate and the Jewish opponents. Pilate continues to declare Jesus as not guilty of any wrongdoing, while the Jewish opponents continue with their accusation against Jesus. The Jewish opponents are determined to see Jesus crucified. They are even determined to see Barabbas walk free and not Jesus, as Pilate proposed the observance of the Paschal Amnesty Custom (v. 39a).

The text somehow reveals their desperation, and all this happens before the eyes of the reader. The study has also observed that the developments here are ironic. Jesus continues to suffer even when Pilate has found no fault in him (v. 5a). The Jewish opponents call for the release of Barabbas, the robber, instead of Jesus, the blameless Lamb of God. This development is performative in the sense that the implied reader realises it, without being a victim of irony in the text. It should be indicated that the performative nature of this irony is in such a way that the implied reader is drawn towards the character of Jesus. In this way, the reader will come to faith in him (20:31).

In 19:7, the text continues to reveal the desperation of the Jewish opponents to crucify Jesus. They formulate the new charge against Jesus. The dramatic turn of accusations surprises the implied reader and is performative in nature. It encourages the implied reader to persist in viewing and regarding the opponents as desperate accusers, above all else, within the text. It is subsequently mentioned in 19:7 that Jesus is charged with blasphemy and thus sentenced to death (See also 5:18).

As the exchange between Jesus and Pilate continues (v. 10), the implied reader experiences yet another ironic utterance. Pilate claims to possess power to either crucify or release Jesus. It has been argued that this claim is ironic to the implied reader since he/she knows that Jesus is in control of the situation and the salvation plan of God is being revealed (Carson (1994:1062). While Pilate boasts about his earthly powers, the reader knows that Jesus is the Son of God (1:29-34), and the kingdom he represents is not of this world but of heaven. The text calls on the implied reader to take observe the sharp contrast between Pilate's arguments and Jesus'. Pilate's arguments are grounded in his earthly powers, whereas Jesus' language is deeply spiritual. Furthermore, the text continues to expose the Jewish opponents' baseless accusations and their desperate measures to ensure Jesus' crucifixion (19:12b).

Finally, Pilate hands Jesus over to them to be crucified (v. 16). This subsequent action by Pilate is not neutral in its performative power. It invites the implied reader to accept the final verdict with comfort in heart, accepting that this is the fulfilment of God's plan for the salvation of those who believe in his Son.

Through the deliberate implementation of literary devices such as misunderstanding and irony, it becomes evident that the utilisation of forensic language in the Fourth Gospel is far from being a mere textual accident; rather, it emerges as a highly intentional and effective communicative strategy. The implied author skilfully employs these to ensure the fulfilment of the Gospel's central purpose. It is therefore asserted that the occurrence of trial motifs/forensic dialogues in the Fourth Gospel has a performative intent toward the implied reader. It is indicative of the implied author's intent to bring the implied reader to faith in Jesus Christ. This is consistent with the purpose of the Fourth Gospel as stated in 20:30-31.

4.8 GENERAL CONCLUSION TO THE CHAPTER

The goal of this chapter was to do a literary analysis of the identified four sections (narratives) of the Fourth Gospel to demonstrate the performative nature of the forensic dialogues in the text. The exploration of the performative nature of forensic dialogues was done from the speech act interpretive angle (the proposed methodology of the study). The investigation involved identifying the passages or narrative units in which the forensic dialogues take place, followed by a concise examination of the respective settings within which these utterances occur. Speech act theory, as an approach to analysis, was applied solely to establish the type of utterances (illocutionary acts) and to discuss the perlocutionary acts (performative nature) of the text. The findings, as elaborated above, are summarised in 4.4.5, 4.5.4, 4.6.4, and 4.7.4.

In the next chapter, the thesis discusses the performative nature of asides and repetition in the Fourth Gospel.

Chapter 5 The Performative Nature of Asides and Repetition in the Fourth Gospel

5.1 INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL SURVEY AND RESEARCH GAP

The goal of this chapter is to present an analysis of two literary devices, namely: asides³⁵⁶ and repetition.³⁵⁷ As stated in Chapter 1, the current chapter will investigate the performative nature of these two literary devices following the proposed methodology.³⁵⁸ The primary focus of this chapter extends beyond the exploration of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel, but also endeavours to vividly demonstrate their performative nature. This demonstration highlights their capacity to not merely exist as passive elements but to actively engage and persuade the implied reader to participate in the text by making choices or decisions. The question is: how do they persuade the reader to make choices and/or decisions as they read the text? The existence and significance of both asides and repetition in interpreting the Fourth Gospel have been widely recognised by most Johannine scholars. Specifically, asides have been a subject of interpretation and study among scholars in the Johannine field for a considerable period.³⁵⁹ This chapter also

³⁵⁶ Thatcher (1994:430) defines “asides” as “a direct statement that *tells* the reader something. Asides are never observable events, but are interpretive commentary on observable events, commentary that reveals information ‘below the surface’ of the action. Asides are always what the author tells.” He further elucidates, “Because asides are not events, they do not advance the plot. Rather, the author uses them to guide the reader’s interpretation of and response to events. Asides thus have a rhetorical function.”

³⁵⁷ Resseguie (2005:42) defines “repetition” as “a stylistic device that reiterates words, phrases, themes, patterns, situations, and actions for emphasis”. He further says, “when repetition is employed intentionally, it ‘adds force and clarity to a statement’ or motif”. Repetition, or chiasm, is also acknowledged and listed amongst the features that actively invite participation and give the text of the Fourth Gospel its performative nature. Cf. Van der Watt (2007:165), Labahn (1999:178), Botha (1991:34) and Du Rand (2017:1) for similar argumentation.

³⁵⁸ The chapter addresses two distinct subjects, namely asides and repetition, owing to the abundance of existing literature on both literary devices. By taking the existing research as a starting point, the goal is to advance the argument, provide illustrations, and offer support for the overall thesis without duplicating previous studies. Consequently, the chapter aims to explore these two literary devices more comprehensively, leveraging prior work to contribute to the overarching argument of the thesis.

³⁵⁹ See the study by Merrill C. Tenney (1960), “The Footnotes of John’s Gospel”. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 117, pp. 350-364; John J. O’ Rourke (1979), “Asides in the Gospel of John,” *Novum Testamentum*, Volume XX1, pp. 210-219; Many of the Johannine commentaries acknowledge and comment on the role of asides in the interpretation of the Gospel’s message, e.g., R.E. Brown. (1966). *The Gospel According to John i-xii* (AB 29). Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday; R. Bultmann. (1971). *The Gospel of John*, translated by G. R. Beasley-Murray et al. Oxford: Blackwell; B. Lindars. (1972). *The Gospel of John* (New Century Bible). London: Gliphants; L. Morris. (1971). *The Gospel According to John: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (NICNT). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; J.N. Sanders. (1968). *The Gospel According to St. John*, edited and completed by B.A. Mastin (HNTC). New York: Harper &

wants to acknowledge the remarkable insightful contributions that have been made within the Johannine field of research concerning these literary devices. In its analysis and the contribution that it seeks to make, this chapter will rely on some of these contributions as far as they remain relevant to the aims and objective of this chapter. Having acknowledged these contributions, this study asserts that the exploration of the performative nature of asides in the Fourth Gospel has not been done in the way that this chapter intends to, except, as already mentioned in Chapter 1, the work of Van der Watt (2010), on John 8. Therefore, this exploration remains a critical contribution to the Johannine scholarly field.

With regard to the study of repetition, an overview will be given in the second major part of this chapter. It is noted that research on this device has, over the years, developed from their systematic study to their rhetoric function in the text. The endeavour here is not to repeat what has already been said, but to attempt to contribute to the field in a more pragmatic way, that is, to demonstrate their performative power to the implied reader. In essence, the task here is to demonstrate how asides and repetition persuade the implied reader to participate in the text. In all the occurrences of these literary devices and their analysis, the study will furthermore attempt to show how these two literary devices contribute towards reinforcing the central purpose of the Gospel as stated in 20:30-31.

5.2 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

Literary devices in the text extend beyond mere textual decorations; rather, they serve a distinct purpose for the (implied) reader of the text. Beyond their rhetorical function, these devices exert a tangible impact on the implied reader as they engage with the text. This observation emerged from thorough reading and re-reading of the text of the Fourth Gospel, and it applies to the Johannine use of various literary devices. These include irony, misunderstanding, forensic dialogue, asides, and repetition, to mention a few.

The first three chapters of this thesis dealt with three of these devices, demonstrating their performative nature. In the current chapter, it is strongly posited that asides and repetition can also make the implied reader participate in the text as they read it (performative function). By employing asides and repetition as communicative strategies, the Gospel actively involves the implied reader in the text, so that he/she can subsequently make decisions, i.e., adopting the

Row; Schnackenburg (1968). *The Gospel According to St John*. Burns & Oates: London, pp. 352-353; C.S. Keener. (2003). *The Gospel of John: Commentary*. Vol 1 & 2. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, p. 530, etc.

implied author's point of view as stated in 20:30-31. The central point of argumentation revolves around the implied author's ultimate aim in the Fourth Gospel: to persuade the implied reader to believe in Jesus Christ, thereby attaining eternal life. To achieve this profound purpose, the implied author deftly employs literary devices such as asides and repetition.

The following section will continue with the analysis of the two stated literary devices and their performative nature towards the implied reader. The aim here is to select a few of their occurrences in the text and demonstrate their performative function.

5.3 ANALYSIS OF ASIDES AND THEIR PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

While acknowledging that there might have been some other studies done on Fourth Gospel's asides, since the study by Thatcher (1994),³⁶⁰ this chapter was inspired by how this author categorised the asides of the Fourth Gospel in his study. As highlighted above, the idea here is to select a few examples of asides from the text and demonstrate their performative nature. The method of selection will be guided by Thatcher's classification of asides,³⁶¹ which is considered lucid and straightforward to follow. By using this classification, the chapter will carefully choose specific instances of asides from the text that best illustrate their persuasive and engaging qualities. In this way, the chapter will achieve its stated goal.

According to Thatcher (1994:430; cf. Du Rand, 2016:2), asides in the Fourth Gospel may be organised under four broad functions, with subcategories based on content (cf. Table 1 in his study), namely, some asides function to *stage* an event by defining the physical context in which it occurs. Other asides function to *define* or specify something. Still, other asides *explain*

³⁶⁰ The article by Tom Thatcher (1994), 'A New look at asides in the fourth gospel.'

³⁶¹ This study avoids delving into the recounting and debating of the number of occurrences of asides in the Fourth Gospel, as doing so may lead to a diversion from its central goal. However, it is worth noting that some scholarly challenges in reaching a consensus on the exact number of asides in the Fourth Gospel have been highlighted by Thatcher (1994:428). Thatcher (1994:428) comments that, "After defining "footnote," Tenney identified 59 footnotes in the Fourth Gospel and grouped them into 10 categories. He explained each category, noted difficult cases, and included a helpful summarizing chart. Almost 20 years later, John O'Rourke observed that a number of recent English commentaries had acknowledged the significance of asides in the Gospel of John, including commentaries by Raymond E. Brown, Rudolf Bultmann, Barnabas Lindars, and Leon Morris. O'Rourke sought to clarify the subject by revising Tenney's work, which he said was "the most systematic study" available. O'Rourke described Tenney's categories, then reshuffled Tenney's asides, while increasing the list to 109. The "theological discussions" category underwent the most notable expansion, from Tenney's three asides to O'Rourke's 27. O'Rourke also provided a tabular compilation of his findings and a chart tracking chapter frequency."

discourses, telling why something was said (or was not said, e.g., 7:13, 30). Parallel to these are others that function to *explain actions*, noting why something happened (or did not happen).

The analysis in this chapter will adopt Thatcher's four categories of asides. Within each category, specific asides will be carefully selected, adhering to Thatcher's grouping. This approach is chosen because it provides a logical and structured flow to the argumentation, enabling a coherent examination of the performative nature of asides in the Fourth Gospel. The study will proceed to determine the type of illocutionary act and the perlocutionary effect (performative nature) of the aside on the implied reader. Where necessary, the chapter will also give commentary on the semantics of words involved, and characterisation as proposed in the methodology. As has been done in Chapters 2 to 4, the analysis of the performative nature will be preceded by a brief discussion of the context within which the aside is made.

5.3.1 Asides that Function to Stage an Event

According to Thatcher (1994:431), asides in this category may include references to space (Sp), time (Ti), objects (O) available for use, or climate (C). The Fourth Gospel is remarkable for qualitative notations of space, time, and climate. Qualitative markers situate events in symbolic contexts that define their significance (Thatcher, 1994:431). Examples of asides are as follows:

John 18:5

This verse provides a spatial note during Jesus' betrayal and arrest, which reads:

Ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ· Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον. λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἐγώ εἰμι. εἰστήκει δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτὸν μετ' αὐτῶν (They answered him, 'Jesus of Nazareth.' Jesus said to them, 'I am he.' And Judas, who betrayed him, also stood with them).

The context within which the aside is given is during the arrest of Jesus in the garden of the Brook of Kidron. The broader section (18:1–20:32) in which this aside is found deals with the departure of Jesus Christ from this world. The departure occurs as the storyline culminates in the passion and resurrection (Lincoln, 2000:14; cf. Lindars, 1972:533). The implied reader is told in 18:1 that this space is a usual place where Jesus and his disciples would often meet. Therefore, Judas, as one of the disciples, would be familiar with the place.

First, the aside here, as can generally be anticipated with many of them that will be discussed in this study, is information given to the implied reader by the narrator. The narrator is not suggesting or questioning anything but stating the presence of Judas amongst those who came to arrest Jesus. Therefore, the speech act here is described as an illocutionary act belonging to the category of *informatives* (*informative speech act*) uttered with the intention to inform and to

emphasise to the implied reader that Judas was part of the mob that came to arrest Jesus. The intention again is for the implied reader to take note that Judas stood "with them," (the mob), during Jesus' arrest (cf. Thatcher, 1994:431; cf. Barrett, 1978:516). The utterance functions to emphasise Judas' treacherous act (ὁ παραδιδούς [the one who betrays or the betrayer]) against Jesus. The aside makes sense to the implied reader who has already read 6:64³⁶², 70.³⁶³

Regarding the *perlocutionary acts* of the utterance, the informatives within the text play a crucial role in influencing the implied reader. They hold significant effects, empowering the implied reader with relevant knowledge about something. They enhance the cognitive awareness of the implied reader concerning the developments around Jesus' arrest. They remind and update the implied reader about the state of events. In this case, the implied reader is reminded of Jesus' prophecy or prediction in 6:64 and 71. Upon hearing this aside, the implied reader is invited to witness the fulfilment of Jesus' prediction about one of his disciples, Judas.

The aside, in this case, is performative in the sense that it has the power to draw the implied reader closer to Jesus, particularly when one reads it with 18:4 in mind: "*Ἰησοῦς οὖν εἰδὼς πάντα τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἐπ' αὐτόν*" (*Jesus, therefore knowing all things that will come upon him*). With this assurance to the implied reader, the aside, uttered in 18:5, does not pose a threat or shock/surprise to the implied reader. In fact, the essence of its performative power lies in its ability to persuade the implied reader to gain more confidence in the person/character of Jesus. The implied reader is invited or persuaded to partake in Jesus' confidence. Jesus is in control of the situation and is not afraid of the mob.³⁶⁴ Furthermore, the aside has the potential to discourage the possible conduct of treacherousness/deceitfulness in the life of the implied reader. It leaves the implied reader with no possible choice but to cognitively disassociate themselves from Judas (ὁ παραδιδούς [the one who betrays or the betrayer]) in the text and associate themselves with Jesus who is in control. In this case, through the performative power of an aside, the implied

³⁶² "ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν τινες οἳ οὐ πιστεύουσιν. ἤδει γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τίνες εἰσὶν οἳ μὴ πιστεύοντες καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ παραδώσων αὐτόν (But there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him) (NKJV).

³⁶³ Οὐκ ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς τοὺς δώδεκα ἐξελεξάμην; καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν εἷς διάβολός ἐστιν (Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?) (NKJV).

³⁶⁴ While commenting on Jesus' response (*ἐγὼ εἰμι [I am he]*), Bruce (1983:341) says: "His reply – I am he – can be understood on two levels, and this is the Evangelist's intention: On one level it simply means 'I am he' in the ordinary sense such as any man might use in similar circumstances. But in an appropriate setting *ἐγὼ εἰμι* is more than that; it is a word of power the equivalent of the God of Israel's self-identifying affirmation, I am He."

author's communicative strategy to enforce the achievability of the purpose of the Gospel in the life of the implied reader is realised.

John 2:13 and 23

This second example of asides in this category involves references to time. (For more of these asides, see 6:4, 11:55, 12:1, 13:1, and 19:14). In the broader structure of the Fourth Gospel (2:13-22), this section falls within the context of Jesus' public ministry (Brown, 1966:cxxxviii-cxxxix; cf. Lincoln, 2000:15). This section is called the 'book of signs.'³⁶⁵ Thatcher (1994:431) points out that 12 of these asides situate Jesus' activity in reference to a Jewish festival, particularly the Passover.

The aside in question comes after the narration of Jesus' first sign in Cana of Galilee (2:1-12). The narrator reports it as follows,

Καὶ ἐγγύς ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων, καὶ ἀνέβη εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ὁ Ἰησοῦς (Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand and Jesus went up to Jerusalem).

Very notable, is that the aside here is a speech act (report) by the narrator, informing the implied reader about the time in the broader year calendar or season (ἐγγύς ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων [*the Passover of the Jews was near*]), rather than specifying a particular hour of the day. It is reported that Jesus went up to Jerusalem. It was a custom for the Jewish people (Ex 12:14-20, 43-49; Deut 16:1-8). Jesus went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover (two other Passover feasts – one in John 6:4 and another in John 11:55, 12:1 and 13:1 – are mentioned).³⁶⁶ This celebration reminded the Jewish people of God's grace in delivering them from the bondage in Egypt (Blum, 1985:279).

The speech act here is an illocutionary act belonging to *informatives*. The narrator intends to inform the implied reader of the time or the occasion when Jesus went up to Jerusalem. This information is significant since it strives to put the implied reader in a good position to understand the occasion within which the subsequent events and development in the story of Jesus occurs.

³⁶⁵ Lincoln (2000:15) further points out that "Section 2:12-22 sets the tone of what is to follow *in the rest of the 'book of signs'*. Its setting in this narrative shows Jesus confronting the Jewish authority at the heart of their religion system, and the dialogue that follows and the narrator's comments make clear that the resurrected Christ is in fact to replace the old religious order represented by the temple."

³⁶⁶ Brown (1975:114; cf. Barrett, 1978:197; Bruce, 1983:73) says, "This is the first Passover mentioned in John (6:4, 11:55)."

In this report, the study notes the clarity with which the narrator informs the implied reader about the occasion, that is, “τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων” (*the Passover of the Jews*). The narrator wants this message to be clear to the implied reader: this is a Jewish festival. This specification is seen by this study as the narrator’s effort to ensure that the implied reader gets the message about the occasion. Clearly the narrator wants to do something to the implied reader with this report.³⁶⁷

What could be the effects of this report on the implied reader? Before one mentions the possible effects of this utterance, few things need to be put into perspective here. The implied reader is already aware of who Jesus is (his identity, origin, and the values he represents), that is, his divine nature, the “ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν” (*the Word [which] was with God*) (1:1). Van der Watt (2007:46) also notes that Jesus is explicitly called God at the beginning and end of the Gospel (See Thomas’ confession in 20:28). With regard to his human nature, the values he represents are equated with those of Moses, and Jesus’ values fulfil those of Moses (1:17).

The implied reader is already aware of the reception he got from his own people, as reported in 1:6-13, particularly in verse 11: “εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον” (*he came to his own and his own [people] did not receive him*). Furthermore, the text has already revealed the attitude of the Jewish opponents (identified as Pharisees) against him when they came to question John the Baptist about him (Jesus) in 1:20-28.

The illustration provided above substantiates the cognitive level of the implied reader about Jesus and the situation around him. It would be a superficial reading of the text to imagine that the implied reader will read the aside in 2:13 without this background knowledge in mind. Therefore, reading the aside with this context in mind, ignites tension and anticipation of dramatic events in the mind of the implied reader. With Jesus in attendance, the aside therefore functions to stage the dramatic events that are likely to happen during the Passover Feast of the Jews. The aside, in this case, introduces tension to the implied reader, and therefore, is performative in nature. Anticipation and tension sensitise the implied reader toward the story of Jesus. It brings the implied reader to the edge of their seat, as they read the story with expectation that something unusual or dramatic is going to happen.

³⁶⁷ In this regard, Bruce (1983:73; cf. Brown, 1975:114-115) correctly comments, “Our Evangelist repeatedly refers to festivals as festivals ‘of the Jews’ – not because he himself was not a Jew by birth and upbringing (he was), but because many of his readers would be Gentiles, unacquainted with the details of the Jewish sacred year. It is unnecessary to suppose that he was in this way depreciating the festivals as belonging to a now superseded order; his language is simply descriptive.”

In this case, it can be argued that the aside does not leave the implied reader in the same position they were in before reading it but encourages them to continue reading the story with more eagerness and anticipation.

With regard to 2:23, the narrator reports as follows:

Ὡς δὲ ἦν ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐν τῷ πάσχα ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ, πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ θεωροῦντες αὐτοῦ τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίει (Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did).

Again, this utterance is an “update” of the result of Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem during the Passover Feast, as initially announced to the implied reader in 2:13. From 2:13, textual space was dedicated to reporting the dramatic events of the cleansing of the temple and the exchange between Jesus and the Jewish opponents. The comment/aside made by the narrator in 2:23 seems to fill the gap and provide additional information not previously disclosed during the proceedings of the Feast.

The aside, therefore, is an *informative* speech act done with the intention to inform and update the implied reader about some of the things that Jesus did during the Passover Feast and the results thereof. The narrator indicates that during the Feast Jesus performed signs that are not mentioned in 2:13-22. The narrator adds that during the Feast, many people believed (*πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν*) in the name of Jesus when they saw the signs that Jesus performed.

Regardless of the dramatic events witnessed by the implied reader during the Feast, this aside has the power to resolve the tension created in 2:13, and the subsequent dramatic events in 2:14-22. The aside is thus performative in the sense that it is a positive and an encouraging report to the believing implied reader. As for an unbelieving implied reader, the aside appeals to their conscience to make a right decision, i.e., to believe in Jesus Christ, like many as reported in 2:23. Therefore, this aside can be read as an invitation to the implied reader to have faith in Jesus. Either way (believing or unbelieving), the aside’s performative power persuades the implied reader to become a participating character in the text by either rejecting or accepting Jesus in their lives.

John 19:14

Another aside deserving close attention is found in 19:14. This aside stages the time of Pilate's condemnation of Jesus during the trial. The text records the aside as follows:

ἦν δὲ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα, ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη. καὶ λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν (Now it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, 'Behold your King').

The utterance is the narrator's report of the climax during Jesus' trial before Pilate (for a detailed analysis of this forensic dialogue, see Chapter 4 of this study). The utterance, on the one hand, marks the end of the trial before Pilate and Jesus' route to be crucified. The utterance itself is a piece of information conveyed to the implied reader about the specific time when Jesus was handed over to the Jewish opponents to be crucified (See the final *informative* speech act by the narrator in 19:16).³⁶⁸

Therefore, the aside in 19:14 is an *informative* speech act done with the intention of informing the implied reader about the time when Jesus was handed over to be crucified. The implied reader should pay attention to this information.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the emphasis on the time (*ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη [about the sixth hour]*) and the occasion (*παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα [the preparation of the Passover]*) creates an ironic situation for the implied reader. According to Keener (2003:1129; cf. Bruce, 1983:364), the "day of Preparation" was the day that the Passover Lamb would be slaughtered to be eaten that night. The reference to the "sixth hour" has evoked a lot of scholarly interpretations.³⁶⁹ However, the irony created is within the cognitive reach of the implied reader. In 1:29 Jesus has been introduced as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (*ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου*) (See also 1:39). Jesus is condemned and handed over to be crucified in the Day of Preparation of the Passover, like a Passover Lamb that had to be slaughtered for the occasion.

The aside in 19:14 clearly creates this ironic situation, and the implied reader witnesses how Jesus becomes the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Chapter 3 of this study

³⁶⁸ "τότε οὖν παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς ἵνα σταυρωθῆ" (Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led *Him* away) (NKJV).

³⁶⁹ On this point, Keener (1993:311-312; Keener, 2003:1129-1130; Lindars, 1972:571) acknowledges various interpretations, but opines that "Jewish people reckoned days from sunset to sunset, so what we would call Friday night they considered the beginning of the Sabbath, or Saturday. Later rabbis estimated that offerings began earlier on Passover eve, but the slaughter of Passover lambs probably had to continue all day and was finally completed about the time the evening offering was slaughtered, roughly when Jesus died (about 3 p.m.). The 'sixth hour' should mean noon but by a different reckoning could mean 6 a.m., close to dawn. Or John could use it for a symbolic connection with 4:6 or a symbolic connection with Passover (many scholars argue here that the slaughter of Passover lambs began about noon). John's other large work, Revelation, also uses time symbolically."

has attempted to show how irony invites the implied reader to participate in the text. Similarly, in this case the implied reader shares some knowledge (1:29 and 39) about Jesus (as the Lamb of God) with the implied author. Pilate utters this aside unaware of the depth (in meaning) of what it entails to handover Jesus to be crucified. It is hidden to Pilate but not to the implied author and the implied reader. Here, there is a silent communication between the implied author and the implied reader as Culpepper (1983:166) suggests. The implied author scattered the puzzle pieces on the table. The implied reader is, therefore, expected to pick up the puzzle pieces and finish the narrative picture of Jesus as the Lamb of God.

In this sense, the aside is performative in that it forces the implied reader to make conclusions about the story of Jesus as the Passover Lamb. The aside stages an event where the fulfilment of Jesus' purpose of coming into the world can be easily realised; that he came to die for the sins of people, and that whoever believes in his name will not perish but may have eternal life (3:16). Cognitively, the aside encourages the believing reader to continue having faith in Jesus and realise that the unfolding of the trial and passion story is actually the fulfilment of God's salvation plan for the world. Furthermore, it is an invitation to the unbelieving reader (upon realising the irony) to reconsider their ways in terms of believing in the name of Jesus. Thatcher (1994:431-432) presents a valuable summary regarding the nature of other asides that serve to stage events, focusing on elements such as time and climate.³⁷⁰ Several of these asides will be further examined in the subsequent chapter on Focalisation, particularly exploring their role in the perceptual facet of focalisation.

This section of the study was dedicated to analysing and demonstrating how asides, which function to stage events, invite/persuade the implied reader to participate in the text, highlighting their performative nature. It was established that although asides primarily serve to provide information to the implied reader, they can also create tension in the text (2:13). The implied reader is likely to experience this on the cognitive level when they read the text. Additionally, it was discovered that an aside can function to resolve the tension it previously created in the text, by bringing new and updated information to the implied reader (2:23). It was further established that asides can create an ironic situation in the text. In this case, they function as a silent

³⁷⁰ It is asserted that "Notations of climate specify light (day or night), season (e.g., winter), and temperature (cold or warmth). 'Night' and 'cold' are not good places to be in John's Gospel: Nicodemus went to Jesus at night, apparently symbolizing his inability to grasp the truth (3:2); Judas went from the Upper Room into the night to betray Jesus (13:30); just before denying Jesus, Peter sought the dim light and warmth of a charcoal fire in the 'cold' courtyard (18:18). Thus, in the Gospel of John a wide variety of content types may function to stage an action by situating it in a particular, often symbolic, context" (Thatcher, 1994:431-432).

communication between the implied author and the implied reader. Consequentially, the implied reader is left to realise the bigger picture of the unfolding drama in the text.

The study concedes that not all the asides that fall in this category were discussed. The few that were analysed, were intentionally used for the purpose of demonstrating their performative nature, thereby challenging the reader of the Fourth Gospel to be open to such a kind of reading when interpreting the Gospel.

5.3.2 Asides that Function to Define or Specify Something

Thatcher (1994:432) says, “Asides in this category may include translations (Tr) from Aramaic to Greek or vice versa; preliminary character labels (PL), which introduce characters to the implied reader; and reminiscent character labels (RL), which reintroduce characters who have already appeared.”³⁷¹

With regard to the asides or notes that function to translate, either from Aramaic to Greek, or vice versa, they serve to show that the narrator is mindful of the possibility that the implied reader may not understand what it means. Examples of these asides are as follows:

John 19:13

The text reports that,

ὁ οὖν Πιλάτος ἀκούσας τῶν λόγων τούτων ἤγαγεν ἔξω τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, Ἑβραϊστὶ δὲ Γαββαθα (When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgement seat in a place called the Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbath).

As has been noted with all the asides analysed so far, asides are the narrator’s report/notes to the implied reader. They are therefore categorised as *informative* speech acts. In this case, as highlighted above, the narrator uses a particular word in his report, which the first readers of the Gospel might be familiar with in another language.³⁷² Therefore, in making sure that the first readers (even the implied reader) understand the meaning of the word, he translates it for them. Translation brings information and clarification to the implied reader in a simplified way. They

³⁷¹ Thatcher (1994:432) suggests that, “Eight of the 10 translations indicate the Greek meaning of Hebrew (Aramaic) terms, but two move from Greek to Hebrew (19:13, 17). Character labels establish identity or personal qualities, pointing out the significance of an individual or explaining his or her behaviour.”

³⁷² The study notes that the context of these writings is that of the Greco-Roman world, where Greek was a spoken language, but Hebrew, Aramaic, and Latin were also languages in use to some people.

provide wider access for the implied reader to understand what is meant in the text. With reference to the translation of the “Judgement seat,” which is translated “Gabbatha,” Keener (1993:311)³⁷³ adds:

Some commentators have thought that the “Stone Pavement” is the pavement in the fortress Antonia on the temple mount, but that pavement seems to date from a later period. Instead, the text undoubtedly refers to the raised, outdoor paved area near Herod’s palace, where the governor resided. Both Pilate and a later governor are known to have addressed audiences from this platform. Evidence suggests that the governor had to pronounce death sentences from the judgment seat (see comment on Rom. 14:10-12).

It is evident that the narrator does not want the implied reader to miss any dimension in understanding the significance of the place translated in the story. While the narrator may have provided a translation or explanation of the term ‘Gabbatha’ to the original readers of the text, it remains unfamiliar to non-Hebrew or non-Greek speakers, including modern readers of the Fourth Gospel. The aside, in this case, does not directly offer a definitive meaning and significance of the place, but instead challenges the implied reader to continue seeking the meaning elsewhere. The aside in this case is performative in that it sends the implied reader to read more sources so that they can gain additional information that will help them understand the text and its possible connotations better.

The same argument can be used with reference to 19:17. The aside “Κρανίου, ὃ λέγεται Ἑβραϊστί Γολγοθα” (*the Skull which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha*) creates suspense in the mind of the implied reader. It calls for the implied reader to not only stop with the text at hand, but to continue searching for the meaning and its significance in some other sources.

Amongst the asides in this category, some function to specify/define something or someone. These asides are prevalent throughout the Fourth Gospel and play a significant performative role. An immediate example is the description of the man who had been sick for 38 years in 5:5, where the text is reported as follows:

ἦν δέ τις ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ τριάκοντα [καὶ] ὀκτώ ἔτη ἔχων ἐν τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ αὐτοῦ (Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years).

The utterance is an *informative* speech act, since the narrator is transmitting information to the implied reader regarding the condition of the sick man. The intention of this *informative* speech is

³⁷³ See also Barrett (1978:544); Jamieson *et al.* (1997:165), and Lindars (1972:570).

to specify the number of years that this man had in that condition of infirmity. What could the possible significance of this specification be to the implied reader? The first observation here is the long period or many years that a man had been suffering from the infirmity. The information ensures that the implied reader gets the message that the man has been suffering for a very long time. Besides the possibility that the implied reader could be sympathising with the sick man, these number of years heighten the sense of hopelessness and suspense in the mind of the implied reader (cf. Brown, 1975:207). The implied reader ponders if he will be healed or not? Will Jesus be able to heal him from the infirmity of 38 years? In this way, the aside does not only function to specify but also plays a significant role in creating suspense in the mind of the implied reader. By introducing the information about the man's prolonged illness without revealing the outcome immediately, the Gospel heightens anticipation and curiosity.³⁷⁴ As the implied reader continues to read the narrative, the suspense builds, and they eagerly follow the story to discover what will happen to the man. When Jesus ultimately heals the man, it reveals not only the power of Jesus over sicknesses but also provides a gratifying resolution to the suspense built by the aside.

The same argumentation applies to the man born blind in 9:1. The text specifies that he was blind since birth. The narrator does not inform the implied reader of the age of the man. However, from the information provided about him, he was old enough to answer for himself, as the parents indicate in 9:21. The mentioning of his blindness since birth creates confident expectation in the mind of the implied reader. The implied reader has by now experienced wondrous signs done by Jesus, including the recent one at Bethesda. Jesus has already proven his power to the implied reader and that he is from God (9:33), even though the Pharisees continue to question it. Therefore, the implied reader reads these kinds of asides with much encouragement and confidence in the works of Christ. In that way, the text engages the reader as they read it.

Some asides in this category, as already defined, function to remind the implied reader about the person and their story that has already been told. In this case, Nicodemus serves as an example. He was initially introduced in 3:1 as a prominent leader among the Jews and a teacher of Israel, who went to Jesus at night. His next appearances in the Gospel are in 7:50 and 19:39. On both occasions, the narrator specifies that “ὁ ἑλθὼν πρὸς αὐτὸν [τὸ] πρότερον, εἶς ὢν ἐξ αὐτῶν” (the one who came to him [Jesus] by night being one of them). Besides the observation that the asides function to specify something/someone from a performative point of view, the asides primarily

³⁷⁴ Lindars (1972:214) points out that the circumstantial detail, which John may have found in his source, makes the subsequent healing seem more remarkable (and to modern minds less credible).

function to remind the implied reader about the events of the past. The narrator wants to assist the implied reader to make the necessary connections as they read the story. The aside, in this case, appeals to the implied reader to remember. As the plot of the story unfolds, the asides provide the narrator with an opportunity to take the implied reader back to the beginning of the Gospel's narrative. Furthermore, through an aside, the narrator silently communicates a potential possible positive development in the character of Nicodemus. In 7:51, Nicodemus defends Jesus against the Jewish opponents in broad daylight.³⁷⁵ In 19:39, Nicodemus provides a mixture of myrrh and aloes, which is of great value, and participates in the burial of the body of Jesus. He who formerly went to Jesus at night out of fear that he is the leader of the Jews, now seems to fearlessly participate in the ministry of Jesus during the day. Could these asides (7:50 and 19:39) be an implicit way of letting the implied reader know about the possible change in the life of Nicodemus? This study is of the view that, either way, the asides are performative in that they challenge the implied reader to fill these gaps about the character in the story.

Another aside is made about the character, Joseph of Arimathea, in 19:38.³⁷⁶ The narrator introduces him as:

Ἰωσήφ [ὁ] ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας, ὢν μαθητῆς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ κεκρυμμένος διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων (Joseph of Arimathea being the disciple of Jesus, but secretly, because he feared the Jews).

The aside added to the name informs the implied reader that Joseph was a disciple (a follower/believer in Christ, but not necessarily part of the twelve) of Jesus too, but secretly, because he feared the Jewish opponents. This is an *informative speech act* done with the

³⁷⁵ When commenting on Nicodemus' defence of Jesus, Bruce (1983:186) says: "[T]he rule to which Nicodemus appealed is formulated thus in rabbinic literature: 'flesh and blood may pass judgement on a man if it hears his words; if it does not hear them, it cannot establish its judgement'."

³⁷⁶ Barrett (1978:559; cf. Lindars, 1972:591-592; Barrett, 1978:559) notes, "Joseph was not previously mentioned in John," but suggests that "John has drawn this from Mark 15:43, although Mark does not say that he was a disciple, though John may have taken him to mean this." Keener (2003:1158) mentions, "Apart from specifying his discipleship, John provides such a little introduction to Joseph of Arimathea that it sounds as if his audience is already familiar with this character, probably from the early passion traditions." Keener further explains that "John and Mark independently attest Joseph's historical role: given early Christian experiences with, and feelings toward, the Sanhedrin, the invention of a Sanhedrist acting piously toward Jesus (Mark 15:43) is not likely." However, Keener (2003) adds, "Although Brown is convinced that Jesus was buried and believes that Joseph played a role in this, he doubts that Joseph was a disciple, supposing that this is why the women did cooperate with him in the burial; but we may well question to what degree the women would have trusted a Sanhedrist they did not know at that point in any case. The preservation of his name and other details may suggest that Joseph either followed Jesus at this time (as we think more likely) or as Brown think, became a disciple later." (cf. Brown, 1994:1218).

intention to inform and introduce Joseph, as a disciple of Jesus, to the implied reader. From the performative point of view, upon hearing his introduction as a disciple of Jesus, particularly the aside “διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων” (*because he feared the Jews*), the implied reader would be surprisingly encouraged to see that Joseph is now coming out and participating as Jesus’ follower in public without fear. The fact that he approached Pilate to ask to bury the body of Jesus is a perception-changing story.³⁷⁷ It is courageous and caring of him to do what he is doing. The aside is performative since it also appeals to the implied reader to be a public confessing follower of Jesus, without fear. It encourages the believing implied reader, inspiring them to let go of any fear and confidently profess their faith in Jesus.

The last character to be considered here is Judas Iscariot.³⁷⁸ The narrator introduced him in 6:71 (first alluded to in 6:64), 12:4, and 13:2. In all these occurrences, the name of Judas is specified or accompanied by a phrase “παραδιδόναι” (*to betray*, which literally means “to deliver up” or “to hand over”).

It seems logical to argue that the narrator has been consistent with this label for Judas throughout the Fourth Gospel. Consequently, the narrator’s report of Judas leaving the upper room (13:30), and the events of Jesus’ arrest in 18:1-11 (particularly 18:2-3), comes as no surprise to the implied reader. It is expected for the implied reader to learn that Judas leads the detachment of troops and officers sent by the chief priests and Pharisees to apprehend Jesus. The narrator has taken time to prepare the implied reader to understand the conduct of Judas in the story.

Therefore, the implied reader is invited to witness the fulfilment of Jesus’ predictions about Judas in the text. Even more encouraging to the implied reader is the fact that the narrator mentions that Jesus knew all things that would come upon him (18:4). Despite Judas’ actions and the label of betrayal attributed to him, Jesus is portrayed as remaining in total control of the situation, and this is reassuring to the implied reader. The unfolding of the story of Judas “the betrayer” is performative in the sense that it is not so much a negative story to the implied reader, but it draws

³⁷⁷ Keener (2003:1160) comments, “The narrative also presents Joseph’s current act as a positive model for discipleship, for, in coming forward to seek Jesus’ body, Joseph ceases to be merely a ‘secret’ disciple. Joseph’s coming forward is significant in securing Jesus’ burial.”

³⁷⁸ Lindars (1972:276) indicates that “only John tells us his father’s name. The name Iscariot is taken by most scholars to a Hebrew phrase, ‘man of Kerioth’ (a place in southern Judea about 15 miles west of Masada, Jer. 48:24; Am. 2:2). The latter MSS take Iscariot with Judas (reading accusative instead of genitive). If this were right, the name could be descriptive, equivalent to *sicarius* (‘assassin’), the most fanatical sect of Jewish nationalists at this time (Acts 21:38); but this view has been largely abandoned among scholars today. It is normal style to designate a man by either his father’s name or his hometown or both.”

the implied reader closer to Jesus who is not shaken by the events but still demonstrates his power (18:6). The more the name of Judas (and what it represents) is mentioned, the more the implied reader would want to distance themselves from it.

The focus here has been on the asides that define or specify something or someone. It was observed that asides that specify something by providing a translation are performative in a sense that they show that the narrator is mindful of the implied reader. They want readers to gain relevant knowledge of what she/he is reporting about. However, it was also realised that for modern Bible readers or non-Greek/Hebrew speakers, the asides are performative in that they challenge the implied reader to seek more information about the translated word. The implied reader should take it upon themselves to do this as they want to gain a thorough knowledge of the text.

The study has also examined asides that serve to specify or label characters in the text. Within this category, these asides were described as performative since they fulfil the role of reminding and updating the implied reader on the development of a character in the story, e.g., Nicodemus. Additionally, these asides play a significant role in introducing a character with a positive story (Joseph of Arimathea). Moreover, asides can spare the implied reader from surprises since they affirm the conduct of a character in the story, e.g., Judas Iscariot. The study acknowledges that the few occurrences of asides discussed here are only a few examples in the Fourth Gospel. However, they were carefully examined to effectively demonstrate the performative nature of asides that serve to specify or define something.

5.3.3 Asides that Function to Explain Discourse

According to Thatcher (1994:432), asides in this category may include the reason (R) for what a speaker said or its significance (Si). Both categories of asides, those that explain discourse functions and those that specify or define something, serve to limit the reader's interpretation of what characters in the narrative said. He further explains that when characters did not speak openly about their belief in Jesus, it was often because they feared the Jews or the Pharisees (Thatcher, 1994:432).

An example of an aside of this nature is found in 7:13. This aside is made during the Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) in Jerusalem, to which Jesus made a private decision to attend (Lindars, 1972:277). Lindars asserts that the significant feature of verses 1-14 is the speculation among the people about Jesus. The Jewish opponents are looking for Jesus (to kill him – 7:1). The people in the festival show mixed feelings about him. They are reported to be “γογγυσμὸς περὶ αὐτοῦ”

(murmuring/muttering about him). Some say, “he is a good man,” while others say, “No, he is deceiving the crowd.”³⁷⁹ The narrator informs the implied reader that,

Οὐδεὶς μέντοι παρρησίᾳ ἐλάλει περὶ αὐτοῦ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων (However no one spoke openly of him for the fear of the Jews).

While the implied reader wonders why the crowd was murmuring about Jesus, the narrator reports, as highlighted above, that it was “because they feared the Jews.” According to Lindars (1972:286), this is the first instance in John’s Gospel where opposition is mentioned not only against Jesus but also against those who would support him. He further observes that people are compelled to keep their opinions secret, though their motives may not be as noble as Jesus’.³⁸⁰ In performative terms, it can be argued that the function of the aside in question is to make the implied reader thoroughly understand the amount of tension and anger in the hearts and minds of Jesus’ opponents.

While the next verse (v. 14) could be a relief from the tension caused by the aside, it is also surprising that Jesus still seizes an opportunity in the middle of the festival to go up to the temple and began teaching.³⁸¹ The implied reader is indirectly invited to witness Jesus’ persistence and fearlessness in the face of angry Jewish opponents. Despite the clear danger and their intent to harm him, Jesus continues to confront them through his teachings.³⁸² While murmuring and silence are reported among the people in verses 12-13, verses 14-15 challenge the implied reader to go beyond quiet contemplation and boldly voice their opinion or confession about Jesus. This invitation encourages the reader to express their beliefs openly and fearlessly, without succumbing to the temptation of seeking the approval of men rather than the approval of God (12:43). Jesus is portrayed as a good model for this in verses 14-15. The aside might as well

³⁷⁹ Lindars (1972:285) explains that “the word γογγυσμὸς refers to the people’s discussion among themselves about Jesus and the word refers primarily to the low sound which is made on such occasions and can even be applied to the cooing of doves.”

³⁸⁰ Brown (1975:306; cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:144; Barrett, 1978:314; Neyrey, 2007:140) says, “This is a clear indication that ‘the Jews’ are the Jerusalem authorities, for the crowds themselves were certainly Jewish and still they fear the Jews.”

³⁸¹ Lindars (1972:286) suggests that “this might be intended to be the Sabbath that fell in the week of the feast, a suitable day for the teaching. But more likely it is necessary stagecraft, to allow for Jesus’ late arrival and the Jews’ search for him.”

³⁸² However, Lindars (1972:286; cf. Bruce, 1983:174-175) points out that Jesus’ arrival at the temple in the middle of the feast might be intended to be the Sabbath that fell in the week of the feast, a suitable day for teaching.”

persuade the implied reader to judge the possible followers of Jesus amongst the crowd, who did not show any boldness in voicing their opinions openly and loudly about Jesus.

While the aside might seem to call the implied reader to focus on the anger of the Jewish opponents and the people's fear to voice their opinion openly, Jesus' boldness stands out in the story. The people of Jerusalem are astonished to witness Jesus speaking openly without fear (7:25),³⁸³ and they start to contemplate whether he could truly be the Messiah. However, their speculation is hindered by their limited knowledge about his origin and identity.

Yet another aside that functions to explain the discourse, is found in 7:30. Jesus is still in the same Feast of Tabernacles, and while still teaching the crowds, the Jewish authorities attempt to arrest him once more. The text reports that,

καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπέβαλεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν τὴν χεῖρα, ὅτι οὐπω ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ (but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come).

The *informative* speech here intends to inform the implied reader of the outcome of the attempt by the Jewish authorities to arrest Jesus. The narrator provides a clear explanation that despite the tense situation, no one laid a hand on Jesus because his time had not yet come. The aside serves as a reassurance to the implied reader that Jesus is in complete control of all the events unfolding around him. Nothing will happen to him, and no one can do anything to him, unless it is the assigned time for it (cf. Schnackenburg, 1971:148; Brown, 1975:312). The Jewish authorities are unable to arrest him because the designated time has not arrived yet. Anything that should happen to him will happen according to his timing or God the Father's timing.³⁸⁴

The nature of the aside is performative in that it continues to build the implied reader's confidence toward Jesus, while the Jewish opponents are portrayed as helpless and powerless. This

³⁸³ Schnackenburg (1971:145) comments, "Some of the residents of Jerusalem react in astonishment at finding Jesus teaching publicly in the temple area. They ask in amazement how the man whom 'they' are seeking to kill can thus speak without let or hindrance. As Jerusalem residents, they are aware of the attitude and intentions of the leading group in the capital."

³⁸⁴ Similarly, Bruce (1983:179) observes, "[T]he attempt made to arrest Jesus may be that which is more fully described in verse 32, 45. It came to nothing, for in the purpose of God the hour for his arrest and passion had not arrived (see also 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 7:1)." Lindars (1972:295) also comments that "from John's point of view no action can be taken before the appointed time." He adds that "the verse has a striking parallel in Lk. 22:53, which suggests that John's thought may have been developed from the Passion narrative." Barrett (1978:323) helpfully clarifies that "the hour is the hour of death and glorification of Jesus. Until the appointed time he may work unhindered."

revelation of Jesus' power and control over situations and time is an encouraging aspect in the life of the implied reader and it draws the implied reader closer to Jesus.

Some of the asides in this category present a situation where Jesus' associates often make unperceptive statements about him because they lack proper understanding (Thatcher, 1994:432). An example can be found in 20:14 and 20:15. The setting within which the aside is made is during Jesus' first appearance to Mary Magdalene after his resurrection.

After conversing with the angels in the tomb of Jesus, Mary turned around and saw Jesus standing before her. The narrator issued an aside, that *"καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν"* (*But she did not know it was Jesus*). Clearly, the utterance is the narrator's alert (as he shares this information) to the implied reader about Mary's inability to recognise Jesus at first hand.³⁸⁵ The aside has the potential to prepare the implied reader for some dramatic statements³⁸⁶ and actions to be said or done from the side of Mary, since she is not recognising Jesus. The performative power of this aside lies in its ability to amuse the implied reader. The implied reader has been cautioned not to judge or blame Mary for her forthcoming actions or words. Instead, the reader is urged to approach her with understanding and forgiveness, as she remains unaware that the man she is conversing with is Jesus.

Mary, supposing that Jesus was the gardener, says to him:

κύριε,³⁸⁷ εἰ σὺ ἐβάστασας αὐτόν, εἰπέ μοι ποῦ ἔθηκας αὐτόν, κἀγὼ αὐτὸν ἀρῶ (Sir, if you have carried him, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away).

³⁸⁵ While commenting about Mary's inability to recognise Jesus, Bruce (1983:388) suggests that "Mary may simply have been so blinded by her tears that she could only make out the form of a man standing behind her." However, Keener (2003:1189) convincingly argues "that Mary at first does not recognize Jesus reflects early tradition that Jesus was not immediately recognized by all who saw him after the resurrection (21:4-7; Luke 24:16, 31) though may note that she was also weeping." He further explains that "This tradition may also imply something about the character of the resurrection body, analogous to the early Jewish belief that angels could appear in different forms. According to Greek folklore, deities assumed various familiar shapes to communicate with people or to disguise themselves or escape or concealed or transformed the appearance of their favorite mortals, but in Jewish terms, one would think especially of the disguises of angels."

³⁸⁶ On the dramatic nature of the event, Keener (2003:1189) asserts, "Mary's encounter with Jesus in 20:14-16 is one of several 'recognition scenes' in the Gospel, reflecting a dramatic-type scene in ancient literature."

³⁸⁷ The translation of the word κύριε is "Sir", taken to emphasise the usual address between human beings. Barrett (1978:564) supports this by asserting that "To this word 'Κύριε' corresponds, not 'Lord' but 'Sir'. Contrast Κύριε in vv. 13, 18. See also 19:41 and note."

This is indeed unperceptive of Mary to say. However, it is both a dramatic and humorous situation. The implied author presents the event of Jesus' resurrection and appearance to his disciples, starting by Mary, in a dramatic and humorous way. The drama keeps the implied reader sensitised to read the story of Jesus' resurrection. This keeps the implied reader glued to the story and encourages him to continue witnessing Jesus' return to life and reuniting with his disciples (the implied reader included). The hilarity of the story, cleverly introduced by the aside, not only entertains the implied reader but also equips them to effortlessly retell the story of Jesus' resurrection to others. This performative aspect empowers the implied reader to become the narrator of the story themselves. This is how the testimony of resurrection can be carried to all the people. In fact, this study views this aside and the subsequent humorous situation as an eye through which the implied reader also gets to (eye)witness the resurrection of the Lord and its significance in his/her life.

As highlighted above, some of the asides in this category serve to emphasise the significance of this discourse. However, most of these asides primarily function to interpret Jesus' enigmatic statements (Thatcher, 1994:432).³⁸⁸ He further suggests that John, perhaps concerned that the reader might misunderstand Jesus' words, explicitly decodes them for better understanding.

The first to be discussed is the aside made by the narrator during the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles in 7:39.³⁸⁹ Jesus extends an invitation for all who are thirsty to come to him and

³⁸⁸ Thatcher (1994:433) highlights that "Significance is frequently stated as signs or fulfilment of Scripture (2:11, 17; 4:54; 12:15; 12:38; 19:24, 36-37; 20:9). Four statements of significance cluster around the cross (19:23-37); three assure the reader that Scripture was fulfilled in Jesus' death; and the fourth (19:35) indicates the value of John's testimony as he claimed to be an eyewitness of these events. Most of the Gospel's 'theological notes' are in fact given in asides that specify the significance of some event."

³⁸⁹ The comment by Bruce is very descriptive and helpful here. He says, "The festival lasted eight days, and on the eighth day was 'a holy convocation...a solemn assembly' (Lev. 23:36; cf. Num. 29:35ff; Neh. 8:18). When the people thanked God at the celebration of Tabernacles for all the fruits of the past year – vine and olive as well as barley and wheat – they did not forget his gift of rain, apart from which none of those crops would have grown. An association of this festival with adequate rainfall is implied in Zech. 14:16ff, and although the ceremony of water-pouring, well attested in connexion with Tabernacles for the two centuries preceding AD 70, is not mentioned in the OT (with the doubtful exception of 1 Sam. 7:6), it was probably of very considerable antiquity. This ceremony, which was intended to acknowledge God's goodness in sending rain and to ensure a plentiful supply for the following season, was enacted at dawn on the first seven days of the festival. A procession led by a priest went down to the pool of Siloam, where a golden pitcher was filled with water, and returned to the temple as the morning sacrifice was being offered. The water was then poured into a funnel at the west side of the altar, and the temple choir began to sing the Great Hallel, Ps. 113-118" (Bruce, 1983:181).

those who believe in him to drink (from him). This call is in accordance with the Scriptures.³⁹⁰ The narrator, through an aside, explains what Jesus meant by this call, in case the implied reader misunderstands it. He indicates that,

τοῦτο δὲ εἶπεν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ὃ ἔμελλον λαμβάνειν οἱ πιστεύσαντες εἰς αὐτόν· οὕτω γὰρ ἦν πνεῦμα, ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐδέπω ἔδοξάσθη (Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit).

The aside is obviously an *informative* speech issued with an intention to empower the implied reader with knowledge. Through the side, the implied reader can easily interpret the call made by Jesus to the people. Furthermore, the implied reader now knows that Jesus said this regarding the (Holy) Spirit. Barrett's comment in this regard is invaluable:

John does not mean to deny the earlier existence of the Spirit, nor indeed that he was active in the prophets; and he says expressly that the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus himself at the beginning of his ministry (1:32). He means rather that the Holy Spirit was not given in the characteristically Christian manner and measure until the close of the ministry. This corresponds closely with the almost complete silence of the Synoptic Gospels regarding the Spirit; that John has so much more to say on the subject is due to the fact that he writes from the latter standpoint. He himself recognises clearly the dependence of the gift of the Spirit upon the completed work of Jesus (See 20:22 and 19:34) and in his recognition he is in close touch with the eschatological roots of the Christian proclamation" (Barrett, 1978:328).

From a performative point of view, it can be argued that the *informative* (aside) calls for the implied reader to stay closer to the narrator, since the narrator proves to have knowledge and the ability to interpret the words of Jesus. The aside appeals to the implied reader to rely on the narrator's interpretation as they continue reading the utterances of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. However, it must be indicated that this goes beyond the relationship between the narrator and the implied reader. In fact, it can be asserted that the ideological stance of the narrator cannot be disassociated from that of the implied author and the Protagonist (Jesus) in the story.

³⁹⁰ Lindars (1972:299) suggest that "the various possibilities can be arranged under two headings. First there are those which assume that the quotation is to be applied to the believer, as in the RSV punctuation. Prov. 18:4; Isa. 58:11; Sir. 24:30-34 all contain the idea of Wisdom as a fountain or river within Man. Secondly, there are those which assume that the quotation refers to Jesus. Isa. 43:19ff and 44:3 promise water like rivers, the latter passage actually equating it with the Spirit. The context of both these passage carries a reminiscence of the water from the rock in the wilderness. As Paul already has a tradition of this as a type of Christ (1 Cor. 10:4), it must be regarded as a serious possibility that the same is meant here." This study takes the second possibility as more plausible and applicable here.

Consequently, it is asserted that the more the implied reader relies on the narrator's interpretation of Jesus' words, the more the implied reader is drawn to Jesus' ideology in the text.

Similar conclusions can be drawn with regard to the two asides in 12:33 (Jesus speaks about his death)³⁹¹ and 21:19 (Jesus speaks about the kind of death with which Peter would glorify God).³⁹² Both asides are the narrator's *informative* speeches, done with the intention to explain the meaning of Jesus' utterance. The aside helps the implied reader understand and correctly interpret the words of Jesus. In both utterances, the deaths and implications/significance of each character (first of Jesus, and later of Simon Peter) are presented in words that are not easy to interpret. However, in 12:33 the narrator informs the implied reader that “τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἤμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν” (*He said to indicate the kind of death he was to die*).

Similarly, with regard to Simon Peter's death, in 21:19 the narrator informs the implied reader, that “τοῦτο δὲ εἶπεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ δοξάσει τὸν θεόν” (*He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God*). As highlighted above, both asides are provided to prevent the implied reader from misunderstanding and misinterpreting Jesus' words. These explanatory asides serve to shed light on the purpose and reason behind Jesus' utterances, clarifying that they were intended to “indicate the kind of deaths” both characters would undergo and their respective significance. With regard to the death of Christ, it is reported that when Jesus is lifted

³⁹¹ Schnackenburg (1971:394; cf. Bruce, 1983:266-267; Barrett, 1978:427) gives a lengthy, but helpful commentary on this, saying: “The evangelist wants to stress the announcement of the crucifixion. He does not just want to explain Jesus' sayings, which he quite often does (cf. 2:21; 6:6, 64, 71 etc.); he also has a more important purpose. (a) Jesus' foreknowledge is not limited to the fact of his imminent death (7:33; 9:4; 11:9); he also knows the sort of death. The death of the grain of wheat (12:24) is given a specific reference. (b) The cross has a symbolic significance, not in the sense of a σημεῖον, but as a symbol of hidden divine thoughts which Jesus recognizes and to which he refers (σημαίνω) in talking about the 'lifting up'. When the evangelist regards this word as 'fulfilled' when Jews hand over Jesus to Pilate (18:32), the dark side predominates the first: the Jews are delivering their king up to the most shameful of deaths. And yet in so doing they are 'lifting up the son of man' (cf. 8:28). (c) In the form of execution, the cross provides a basis for the idea of 'lifting up' and becomes a symbol of salvation (13:14; 12:32). (d) This death gives rise to the image of the one who 'draws all men' to himself and so opens up a universal perspective, the gathering of the scattered children of God (11:52), the bringing in of the Gentiles (cf. 10:16; 12:20-21), the unity of the new people of God. The evangelist's commentary is another attempt to make his readers aware of the full significance of what happens on the cross.”

³⁹² Jamieson *et al.* (1997:171) point out that Jesus' words are not, therefore, a mere prediction of the manner of his *death*, but of the *honor* to be conferred upon him by dying for his Master. And, indeed, beyond doubt, this prediction was intended to follow up his triple restoration: — “Yes, Simon, thou shalt not only feed My lambs, and feed My sheep, but after a long career of such service, shalt be counted worthy to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

up (to the cross),³⁹³ he will draw all people³⁹⁴ to himself. Regarding Peter's death, "he would glorify God"³⁹⁵ through it.

As observed and concluded in the discussion of 7:39 above, the narrator proves to have knowledge to interpret the utterances of Jesus. The asides, therefore, appeal to the implied reader to rely on the narrator's help, and thus are performative in nature. The two asides persuade the implied reader to draw closer to the narrator, and consequently, to Jesus, who demonstrates the power to talk about the future events. Here, Jesus is revealed to the implied reader as having knowledge of the future and being in control thereof. Again, the asides reveal the dominance of Jesus' ideological teachings and thus appeal to the implied reader to accept it and continue believing in him.

Finally, the aside to be discussed in this category is in 19:28. This is during the crucifixion of Jesus on the cross. The aside which the narrator seeks to clarify is commonly known or referred to as the "sixth sayings" of Jesus on the cross. The narrator reports the moment as follows,

³⁹³ Bruce (1983:267) correctly avers that "the 'lifting up' of the Son of Man is primarily his crucifixion, the expression has already been used in this sense in John, 3:14 and 8:28." However, he further observes that "the verb of double meaning is deliberately chosen; it can signify not only literal elevation (as on the cross) but also exaltation (in rank or honour). It is used in this latter sense in the Septuagint, Isa. 52:13, where 'he (the Servant) shall be exalted.'" For a similar observation and argumentation on the use of the word ὑψωθῶ, see also Barrett (1978:427). See also footnote 34.

³⁹⁴ Barrett (1978:427) comments that the word "πάντας refers to 'not to Jews only,' and is anticipated by the inquiry of the Greeks (v. 20)." Bruce (1983:267) explains further, saying: "And when he has thus been lifted up. Exalted and glorified, he will (like a spiritual magnet) draw to himself Gentiles as well as Jews, all without distinction. This has been alluded to previously in the 'other sheep' who are to be brought to join those whom the shepherd of Israel has called out from the Jewish fold (John 10:16) and in the 'children of God who are scattered abroad' whom Jesus by his death will 'gather together into one' (11:52). His death will obliterate all racial and religious barriers. In the language of Luke 12:50, he was limited until his appointed baptism was undergone; once that ordeal was past, all limits would disappear." See also footnote 34.

³⁹⁵ When commenting on this aside, Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:290) state: "In conclusion Jesus gives his word of honour about Peter's fate, thus also intimating reconciliation. Death for members of John's group is another way of 'glorifying God.'" Keener (2003:1237) asserts, "Jesus is explaining that when Peter is old and depended, he will suffer execution. Second Peter 1:14, probably independently of John, suggest the tradition that Jesus showed Peter that would die. Early Christian tradition reports that Peter died by crucifixion, probably upside down, finally 'following' (21:19) Jesus fully (13:36); early Christian texts applied 'stretching out one's hands' to crucifixion." He explains further, saying that "Many commentators thus see crucifixion implied here. Whether the specific picture of crucifixion is presented here or not (it probably is), Peter's martyrdom certainly follows Jesus. Jesus explained here by what sort of death Peter would glorify God, just as he had earlier explained by what sort of death, he himself would glorify (12:23; 13:31-33; just as Lazarus's death glorifies death glorified Jesus by allowing him to raise Lazarus)."

Μετὰ τοῦτο εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤδη πάντα τετέλεσται, ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή, λέγει·
διψῶ (After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said [in order to fulfil
the Scripture], 'I am thirsty'.

The narrator's *informative* is aimed at helping the implied reader understand why Jesus says what he is saying, that is, "*I am thirsty*."³⁹⁶ From the performative point of view, the aside cognitively empowers the implied reader. It allows the implied reader to have insight into and understand the significance of Jesus' utterance. Accordingly, the implied reader is put in a better position to understand why the story is unfolding in this way. The aside further challenges the implied reader not to read the Fourth Gospel in isolation, but to read it in the context of the whole Bible. It alerts the implied reader to always remember that some of the utterances in the Gospel are truly the fulfilment of prophecies uttered elsewhere (cf. 12:38; 19:24, 36-37) in the Scriptures. This challenges the implied reader to search for God's truths in some other books of the Bible rather than focusing only on the Fourth Gospel.

5.3.4 Asides that Function to Explain Actions

This is the last group of asides to be discussed in this chapter. According to Thatcher (1994) these types of asides note why something happened (or did not happen). He further indicates that "asides that explain actions may again provide the reason (R) or motive for an act or indicate its significance (Si)."³⁹⁷ The implied author was concerned that the reader understands the reasons and significance behind what Jesus did. Five reasons explain Jesus' actions, and 19 of the 24 explanations of events indicate the significance of his activity. The significance is frequently stated as signs or fulfilment of Scripture. The study acknowledges, as already highlighted in its introduction, that some of the asides belonging to this category have been discussed in Chapters 2–3 (when the study focused on misunderstanding, irony, and forensic dialogue). Therefore, only

³⁹⁶ Bruce's elaboration is helpful here. He says: "In the course of this narrative, various things are said to have taken place in order that this or that scripture might be fulfilled – the soldiers' dividing of Jesus' garments, for example (verse 23ff). But the agents who did those things has no idea that they were fulfilling scripture: their actions were providentially overruled for its fulfilment. When Jesus is the agent, the situation is different. It goes without saying that he was actually thirsty and craved something to drink: exposure on a cross to the afternoon Judean sun must have caused rapid and exhausting dehydration. But, as he uttered the words, 'I am thirsty', he knew that in doing so he was fulfilling scripture. The scripture in question may have been Ps. 69:21 ('for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink') or Ps. 22:15 ('my tongue cleaves to my jaws'). John does not want to give a histrionic impression of our Lord's utterance: his words were unreservedly spontaneous – indeed, the more spontaneous they were, the more truly was scripture fulfilled" (Bruce, 1983:372).

³⁹⁷ When commenting on Tenney's word in this regard, Thatcher (1994:434) explains that Tenney's "explanation of custom" falls under the 'reason' category, as content about Jewish customs generally explains why individuals were doing something (11:55; 18:28; 19:40; 19:42).

three asides have been selected for the purpose of demonstrating their performative nature. The study does not in any way propose/suggest that the results to be established here, will automatically apply to those asides that are not discussed here.

The first aside to be discussed is in 7:5. This passage has previously been addressed in this chapter while examining certain asides belonging to other categories. However, for the sake of clarity, it is worth explaining that the passage, particularly verses 1-9 (where the focus is), revolves around the narrative of Jesus' brothers' unbelief. Jesus is in Galilee, and the Jewish Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) is nearby. Jesus did not wish to go to Judea to attend the festival. The text records his brothers urging him to go to Judea, saying:

³. εἶπον οὖν πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ· μετὰβηθι ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ὑπάγε εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν, ἵνα καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ σου θεωρήσουσιν σοῦ τὰ ἔργα ἃ ποιεῖς· ⁴. οὐδεὶς γὰρ τι ἐν κρυπτῷ ποιεῖ καὶ ζητεῖ αὐτὸς ἐν παρρησίᾳ εἶναι. εἰ ταῦτα ποιεῖς, φανέρωσον σεαυτὸν τῷ κόσμῳ (³. So his brothers said to him, 'Leave here and go to Judea so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. ⁴. for no one who wants to be widely known acts in secret. If you do these things, show yourself to the world).

The utterance of Jesus' brothers can be divided into three thought units. Firstly, they suggest/request (actually commanding – look at “μετὰβηθι καὶ ὑπάγε”) Jesus to leave Galilee and go to Judea. This part of speech can be categorised as an illocutionary act belonging to the class of *directives*. The intention behind the statement is to urge Jesus to do what they are commanding (or suggesting) him to do. Secondly, verse 3b introduces the purpose or reason (introduced by ἵνα) for their request. This part of speech can accurately be described as an assertive. The speech act is performed with the intention of stating the reason why the brothers make such a request. Thirdly, in verse 4, the explanation provided (introduced by the particle γάρ) serves as the substantiation why Jesus' brothers are urging him to go to Judea.

To the implied reader, this utterance creates tension. It is surprising to hear Jesus' brothers speaking in this manner. The implied reader would likely expect such insensitive speech to come from the Jewish opponents, not his own brothers. In other words, the implied reader is cautioned against making assumptions, particularly expecting that Jesus' brothers would naturally believe in him or be supportive of him. The text can be described as performative in the sense that it is surprising to the implied reader. However, as if the narrator feels what the implied reader is feeling already, he provides an aside, saying:

οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπίστευον εἰς αὐτόν (For not even his brothers believed in him).

The aside is an *informative* speech done with the intention of informing the implied reader about Jesus' brothers' unbelief. The aside is performative in that it helps to clear the implied reader's surprise. The implied reader can now understand why Jesus' brothers spoke the way they did, i.e., because even they did not believe in him. Moreover, the implied reader is cautioned not to emulate them but to continue believing in Christ.

The second example is in 20:9. The setting within which the aside is made is in the narration of the resurrection of Jesus. Upon realising that the tomb is empty, Mary Magdalene announces to Simon Peter and the other disciple that the Lord is not in the tomb (supposing that someone has taken his body).³⁹⁸

After confirming that the tomb was empty, the narrator confirms that “καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐπίστευσεν” (*and they saw, and they believed*). This utterance is clearly directed to the implied reader. It is an illocutionary act belonging to *confirmatives*. The intention, with the utterance, is to confirm to the implied reader that indeed the other disciple has seen and believes that Jesus has been resurrected.

The implied reader, however, might begin to wonder why this is only confirmed now, since the two disciples have been with Jesus. Didn't they know? The story raises suspense in the implied reader's mind.

The narrator, through an aside (v. 9), explains to the implied reader that,

Οὐδέπω γὰρ ᾔδεισαν τὴν γραφὴν ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι (For as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead).

The aside is an *informative* speech intended to help the implied reader understand why the beliefs of the two disciples, with reference to Jesus' resurrection, are only confirmed now.

The performative nature of the aside lies in the cognitive empowerment of the implied reader. Essentially, the aside invites the implied reader to actively participate by becoming a witness of Jesus' resurrection. Through the eyes of the text, the implied reader can confidently report: “he

³⁹⁸ When emphasising the matter of the empty tomb, Bruce (1983:386) mentions “That the tomb was found empty is recorded as a matter of some importance by all four evangelists, but it is given no prominence in the apostolic preaching.” Barrett (1978:564; cf. Lindars, 1972:602) says “the disciples' faith was grounded simply upon what he has seen at the tomb.”

has seen, and he also believes.” In this way, the reader becomes a textual eyewitness of the Lord’s resurrection.

The last aside to be discussed is found in 19:35. The setting in which the aside is made is during Jesus’ crucifixion, particularly when his side is pierced (vv. 31-37). The narrator reports this as follows,

Καὶ ὁ ἑωρακῶς μεμαρτύρηκεν, καὶ ἀληθινὴ αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οἶδεν ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγει, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύ[σ]ητε (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true and he knows that he tells the truth).

The narrator reports the eyewitness’s confirmation³⁹⁹ of the piercing of Jesus’ side on the cross. The speech act here can be described as both an *assertive* and *confirmative* speech act. The intention of the speech act is both to assert and to confirm to the implied reader that the report about Jesus’ piercing is true, and it happened for the fulfilment of the Scripture, as indicated in 19:36-37. This is an assurance given to the implied reader regarding Jesus’ death. The aside invites the implied reader to believe that Jesus has been pierced (or died). In fact, this study reads this aside as the implied author’s effort to indicate the value of his testimony since he claims to be an eyewitness of this event (cf. Thatcher, 1994:433). Thatcher (1994) further indicates that most of the Gospel’s “theological notes” are in fact given in asides that specify the significance of some event. Here, the aside is given to specify the significance of the piercing of Jesus, and ultimately, his death.

This study also wants to argue that this aside is performative. It forces the implied reader to respond or make a decision. It is either he/she rejects or accepts this testimony. If she/he accepts the testimony, she/he become a witness of the death of Christ and gains eternal life. In this way, the text forces the reader (real or implied) to participate in being a witness (believer in Christ) or reject being a witness (unbeliever) of Jesus Christ.

A summary of the findings related to asides in this chapter will be provided at its conclusion. As we progress, the focus will shift to exploring the performative nature of repetition in the Fourth

³⁹⁹ Keener (2003:1154) comments, saying: “The narrator claims that his source, presumably the beloved disciple (19:26), is an eyewitness (19:35). Eyewitnesses, particularly participants, were considered the most reliable sources.” Keener (2003:1154) adds: “Some have argued that the use of the third person here requires a distinction between the beloved disciple (the eyewitness source of the tradition) and the narrator or author. Such a distinction of language makes sense and is possible (the first-person testimony in Rev. 22:8) but, given John’s style, is not a necessary inference from the text; Jesus speaks of himself both in the first (3:11-12; 5:24, 30-47; 12:44-50; 17:4-26) and the third person (3:13-18); 5:19-23, 25-29; 12:35-36; 17:1-3).”

Gospel. This next section will delve into how repetition serves as a powerful tool in conveying key themes, emphasising important points, and engaging the implied reader on a deeper level.

5.4 Analysis of Repetition and their Performative Power in the Fourth Gospel

As indicated in section 5.1, the investigation in this section focuses on repetition as a literary device and its performative nature. Repetition, as highlighted earlier, is one of the notable⁴⁰⁰ literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. Van der Watt (2008:76) opines that “the stylistic phenomenon of repetition is well known in the Gospel according to John and is often described in terms of a hermeneutical circle or spiral.”⁴⁰¹ While reflecting on the history of research on this literary device, Van der Watt (2008:76) acknowledges that in spite of this well-known phenomenon, remarkably little has been done in the past to thoroughly address this important stylistic feature in a detailed, systematic, and coherent manner. However, in recent years, invaluable contributions have been made from studying this literary device. Studies focusing on the repeated use of concepts like “λόγος” (word), “φῶς” (light), and ζωὴ (life), and many others⁴⁰²

⁴⁰⁰ In his book review of Van Belle, on the study of repetition, Koester (2011:904) comments that “Repetition and variation are notable features of the Gospel’s literary style. The contributors to this volume (2009:904-906) help to bring some order to the discussion of the repeated elements in the Gospel, taking them as integral parts of the text. The first four essays give a history of the interpretation of the problem and observations about methodology: Gilbert Van Belle, ‘Theory of Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: A Neglected Field of Research?’; idem, ‘Repetitions and Variations in Johannine Research: A General Historical Survey’; Jan Van Der Watt, ‘Repetition and Functionality in the Gospel according to John: Some Initial Explorations’; and Geert Van Oyen, ‘Repetitious Style and the Interpretation of the Gospel of Mark.’ One of the significant points made in these essays is that repetition and variation often amplify and develop certain aspects of the Gospel. A good example is the way in which the theme of life and eternal life occurs repeatedly in different episodes. Each recurrence takes up what is said elsewhere while often suggesting different dimensions of meaning. The result is a network of meaning in which the occurrence of an expression in one passage contributes to and is informed by the meanings suggested in other passages.” Van Belle (2009:22-23) also points out that “John presents his narrative of Jesus in a dramatic form with a view to involving the reader therein and to leading him or her to faith (20:30). In addition, not only the prologue (1:1-18) and the conclusion (20:30-31) are of importance for leading the reader through the structure of the narrative, but also (a) the many hiatuses between two sentences or scenes, (b) the commentaries, (c) the allusions to what precedes and what follows, (d) the misunderstandings, (e) the imagery, (f) the irony and (g) personifications. In order to provide the reader with a degree of orientation within the narrative, the Evangelist, likewise and primarily, employs the technique of repetition, a feature characteristic of Graeco-Roman literature and both the Old Testament and later Jewish literature.”

⁴⁰¹ Cf. Zimmermann (2009:40) for similar argumentation on his study “Metaphoric Networks as Hermeneutic Keys in the Gospel of John” (in Van Belle, 2009).

⁴⁰² For instance, the study of H. Mardaga, titled: ‘The Repetitive Use of ὑπόω in the Fourth Gospel: The Catholic University of America’ (2012:101-117).

in the Fourth Gospel, are clearly part of the efforts towards contributing to the field focusing on this literary device (cf. Koester, 2011:904-906; Van der Watt, 2008:75).

In his study, Van der Watt (2009:87-108)⁴⁰³ asks: “Are there any clear reasons for Johannine repetitions and what are the functions of repeating words or ideas?” In his study, Van der Watt (2009) identifies various forms of repetitions within the Fourth Gospel and delves into their functions. He gives particular attention to three examples, namely: love (in John 1-12), faith, and two sets of words, namely eternal life and Paraclete. Through this detailed exploration, Van der Watt (2009:87-108) concludes that,

[T]hese examples show that repetition and variation are *inter alia* functionally employed to develop a particular concept, reminding the implicit reader of the concept in relation to others, linking different contexts together and developing the relations between the mentioned concepts in those contexts. Repetition in the examples investigated shows that it is a stylistic tool that could be fruitfully used in analysing and interpreting the text of the Gospel according to John.

The observation and findings of Van der Watt are important for this section of the chapter. As already proposed in the discussion of the central theoretical argument, this study does not intend to repeat what has already been done. Many scholars, as highlighted above, have contributed to identifying and showing the significance of this literary device in the composition of the Fourth Gospel. However, the field lacks a pragmatic approach to the treatment of this literary device. Therefore, the primary aim here is to make a pragmatic contribution to the function(s) of repetition in the Fourth Gospel. By exploring how repetition operates as a performative device, the study seeks to demonstrate how it actively involves the implied reader as a participant in the text.

Before the study continues to present the performative nature of repetition, it would like to acknowledge what Busse (2009:423) observes when he says:

Johannine repetition may be roughly classified as (1) word-repetition, and (2) phrase-repetition. In (1), the repetition follows closely in the context, e.g., confessed and denied, non-confessed and confessed. In (2), it is something of a nature of a refrain, as in, ‘A little while and ye shall see me...’ Repetition may, or may not, be accompanied with variation of order.

⁴⁰³ See G. Van Belle. (2009). ‘*Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: Style, Text, Interpretation*’; also see Van der Watt. (2008). ‘Johannine style: Some initial remarks on the functional use of repetition in the Gospel according to John’, *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 42(1), 75-99.

This chapter finds Busse's (2009:423) classification helpful. Therefore, the following section will use one example from each classification to demonstrate how repetition invites the implied reader to participate in the text.

5.5 WORD-REPETITION: REPETITIVE USE OF THE WORD, ΖΩΗ (NOMINATIVE CASE), ΖΩΗΝ (ACCUSATIVE CASE) AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE⁴⁰⁴

Van der Watt (2009:89) established that the word ζωή has 63 occurrences in the Fourth Gospel. In his observation, for instance, he indicates that the use of this central term ζωή⁴⁰⁵ is spread evenly throughout the first chapters but is only repeated five times in the latter part of the Fourth Gospel (chapters 14, 17 and 20). By far the highest frequency of the term is found in chapters 3-6, where the concepts of eternal life and Jesus as the giver of life are developed in more detail, especially in chapters 4-6. However, the frequency of the use of the terminology decreases significantly in the second part of the Gospel (chapters 13-21). Despite the reduced frequency, the instances of its use remain semantically significant, continuing to hold profound meaning and importance within the narrative.

The word is first introduced in 1:4 in the narrator's report (ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων [in him was life, and the life was the light of men]).

The speech can be described as an *informative* speech act. The narrator informs the implied reader that in the ὁ λόγος (Jesus – as later revealed in v. 14) was life. This information is repeated many times in the Gospel, e.g., 5:21, 24, etc. At this stage the implied reader hears about it for the first time in the Gospel.

The same word (conveying the same idea) is repeated by Jesus himself in 3:15 when he asserts that “ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον” (So that everyone who believes in him may

⁴⁰⁴ This chapter concedes that it does not discuss all the occurrences of the word or phrase (next section) repetitions in the Fourth Gospel but uses one example to demonstrate how repetition invites the implied reader to participate in the text. In this regard, central concepts like 'love,' 'light,' 'truth,' etc., can be explored further (cf. Van der Watt, 2009:87-108).

⁴⁰⁵ The concept of 'life' is mentioned in central statements in key positions in the Gospel, for instance, in 11:25-26 before Jesus raises Lazarus. These words then interpret the raising of Lazarus theologically. In 7:39 it is linked to the crucial statement about the coming of the Spirit and the eschatological abundance. The abundance of the "door" is emphasised in 10:10, while the climax of the shepherd discourse is reached in 10:28-30. In 12:25 it forms a focal point by being part of a well-structured proverb-like expression that brings together and explains not only the death of Jesus but also the implications for his followers. In 17:2-3 the mission of Jesus is summarised, and the nature of eternal life defined as part of the conclusion of the farewell discourse(s). The term is repeated at the end of the Gospel where the purpose of the Gospel is stated (20:31).

have eternal life). An *assertive* speech act done with the intention to state the truth about Jesus and the purpose for him to die on the cross (3:14). In this utterance, Jesus uses it with an adjective αἰώνιον (cf. 3:16, 36, and many other occurrences), building and developing its meaning in the mind of the implied reader. The reader hears about the assurance of eternal life to those who believe in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, it is noted that in this utterance (3:15; see also 3:16, 36, even 20:30-31 itself), Jesus calls for people (the implied reader too) to believe in the Son of Man so that they may have eternal life.⁴⁰⁶ This invitation has the power to persuade the implied reader to consider making a decisions or choices about it. The implied reader has to decide whether they want to have eternal life or not.

The implied author repeats the word ζωῆ (and all its various morphologies) with the intention to have the implied reader focusing on Jesus in the text. It can be argued (as Van der Watt established) that the frequent use of the word ζωῆ in the first 12 chapters, is also an intentional communicative strategy by the implied author. The first 12 chapters of the Gospel cover events of Jesus' public ministry. In this section of the Gospel, Jesus performs signs (e.g., the raising of Lazarus from the dead), while teaching and declaring that *“ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ”* (*I am the resurrection and the life*), the one who believes in him will live (cf. 5:21, 24, 25, 26, etc.). It is noted that this is the Gospel section where the Lord Jesus deals mainly with people who are foreign to his ideology (e.g., Jewish opponents).

Finally, the Gospel's purpose is stated in 20:30-31. The narrator still informs the implied reader that the Gospel has been written so that the reader (real or implied) may believe, and that by believing they may have life (ζωῆ). The narrator has been consistent in mentioning the words ζωῆ as something that can only be attained by believing in Jesus.

How does this repetition mechanism affect the implied reader? Firstly, judging by the number of occurrences of the word ζωῆ, and the key places where it is used, it can be suggested that the implied author strategically utilised it to emphasise the idea that Jesus is the giver (or source) of eternal life. In other words, the meaning and significance of the concept “ζωῆ αἰώνιον” cannot be understood apart from Jesus. This kind of emphasis is not neutral in its performative power. On a cognitive level, it forces the reader (real or implied) to begin to make some considerations about believing in Jesus as they read the text.

⁴⁰⁶ Bruce (1983:88; cf. Lindars, 1978:158) says, “Nicodemus had failed to grasp the teaching about the new birth when it was presented to him in terms drawn from Ezekiel’s prophecy; now it is presented to him by means of an object-lesson, from a story with which he had been familiar since childhood.”

By consistently repeating the word, the text makes it difficult for the implied reader to ignore the idea of eternal. The text, in this regard, guides the implied reader to easily associate the concept with Jesus Christ. Furthermore, it is highly probable that the implied author's strategy aims to accentuate the significance of Jesus' mission and his ideological differences with the Jewish opponents. Through deliberate repetition, this emphasis becomes pronounced and ingrained in the implied reader's mind as they progress through the Gospel, making it hard to overlook or forget.

Secondly, according to Florman (2017), repetition can also be utilised as a persuasive device. As the word is used repetitively and constantly, it persuades the implied reader to change their minds towards the propositions made in the text; in this case, the call is for the implied reader to believe in Jesus (*πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ [everyone who believes in him may have eternal life]*), so that they may have eternal life. Jesus explicitly makes this call in 14:1: "You believe in God; believe also in me" (*πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν θεὸν καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ πιστεύετε*). The Gospel's central purpose itself marks the entire Gospel as a text that aims at persuading the reader to believe in Jesus so that they may have eternal life.

Repetition can also reinforce remembrance (Van der Watt, 2009:90).⁴⁰⁷ The highest frequency of usage is in chapters 3 to 6, where the teaching about eternal life and Jesus as the giver of life is performative, in this regard. The reader (real or implied) is aided to remember what Jesus' ideology in the text is all about. Consequently, the implied reader, through repetition, is constantly persuaded because they can remember the word with ease.

5.6 PHRASE-REPETITION: REPETITIVE USE OF PHRASE IN JOHN 16:16-38

The study here focuses on the repetitive use of the phrase: "*I am going to the one who sent me*" (*ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με*). The utterance is done by Jesus to his disciples as he announces

⁴⁰⁷ Van der Watt (2009:90), when elucidating the function of repetition in the Gospel of John, mentions: "This is a natural and logical way of using material repetitively – first develop a concept (chs. 3-6) and fix the knowledge with the implied reader. With this knowledge assumed the implied author can then simply repeat the concept at strategic points in the narrative. A mention of the implied concept thus activates the complete knowledge presented earlier in the Gospel. In this way, the repetition of the term *life* throughout the Gospel constitutes a link between the different themes and sections in the Gospel, interrelates them and binds them into a coherent semantic whole."

his soon (μικρὸν [in a short while]) coming departure to the Father.⁴⁰⁸ In some occurrences, it is repeated by the disciples, as they wonder what Jesus meant by it.

Chapter 16 is used here as a central focus, as this phrase is used here more frequent than in any other place in the Fourth Gospel. While chapter 14 does contain about four occurrences of the phrase, chapter 16 has been chosen because of its greater appeal. In his utterance of departing to the Father, Jesus uses the adjective “μικρὸν” (*little while*), which leaves the disciples feeling uneasy, as they struggle to comprehend its meaning.

Chapter 16 opens with Jesus’ utterance, wherein he explains the purpose behind both the warnings⁴⁰⁹ and encouragements he previously provided to his disciples in the teaching of chapter 15:18-27 and 16:2-4. In chapter 16, specifically verses 5-15, two main thought units are presented. It narrates Jesus’ announcement of his departure to the one who sent him (the Father). In 16:5 he announces it saying, “νῦν δὲ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με” (*But now I am going to the one who sent me*). Another thought dominating the section is the promise/announcement of the coming of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit (16:7).

The idea of the departure to the father is carried out by the repetitive use of verbs like “ὑπάγω” (I depart) and forms of “ἄπερχομαι” (I go away). These verbs are key to understanding the repetition of the “departure” discourse in the passage. The idea of departing or going away to the Father is repeated frequently in verses 5-7 and from verses 7b-15, where emphasis is laid on the coming of the Advocate and his function toward the disciples, as highlighted earlier.

In verse 16 Jesus takes the announcement to yet another level when he includes the adjective “μικρὸν”, saying,

Μικρὸν καὶ οὐκέτι θεωρεῖτέ με, καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με (In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me).

The phrase is first introduced as an *assertive* speech act. By uttering it, Jesus intends to announce his departure to the Father⁴¹⁰ as introduced in verses 5-7, but now qualified by an adjective

⁴⁰⁸ Keener (2003:1043) correctly remarks that the phrase a “little while” is used with reference to the remaining days before Jesus’ hour of glorification, which begins with the cross (7:33; 12:35).

⁴⁰⁹ When commenting on the importance of these warnings, Bruce (1983:317) states: “If the troubles predicted by the Lord were to come on the disciples unawares, they might feel resentfully that they should have been forewarned and conclude that he let them down.”

⁴¹⁰ Regarding the thorough understanding of the “little while” phrase, Bruce (1983:321-322; cf. Keener, 2003:1043-1044) warns that “We should not imagine too quickly that we understand what was so

μικρὸν. The implied reader also hears this announcement, for the first time with an adjective *μικρὸν*, by Jesus. However, it must be indicated that the implied reader is not hearing the idea of the departure for the first time in the Fourth Gospel. The implied reader has already heard the announcement, for example:

- In 7:33 with the adjective *μικρὸν*, as repeated in v. 16: “ἔτι χρόνον μικρὸν μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι καὶ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με” (I am with you for a short time, and then I am going to the one who sent me).
- In 8:14: “οἶδα πόθεν ἦλθον καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω” (I know where I came from and where I am going).
- In 8:21: “ἐγὼ ὑπάγω καὶ ζητήσετέ με, καὶ... ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν” (I am going away and you will look for me, ... where I go, you cannot come).
- In 13:3: “ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθεν καὶ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπάγει” (...and that he had come from the Father and was returning to God).
- In 14:2: “ὅτι πορεύομαι ἐτοιμάσαι τόπον ὑμῖν” (...that I am going there to prepare a place for you...).
- In 14:4: “καὶ ὅπου [ἐγὼ] ὑπάγω οἴδατε τὴν ὁδόν” (and you know the way to where I am going).
- In 14:12: “ὅτι ἐγὼ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα πορεύομαι” (because I am going to the Father).

The occurrences of the phrase in the above citations are viewed as a foundation upon which the idea of departure in chapter 16 is built and developed, and eventually clarified to the disciples (including the implied reader). In chapter 16, the phrase or sentence is repeated as follows,

unintelligible to the disciples. It is easy to suppose that Jesus meant, ‘In a little while you will not see me, because I am about to die; but in a little while after that you will see me again, because I am going to rise on the third day and appear to you once more.’ Certainly, he was going to be taken from them in a ‘little while’ – in a few hours’ time – but ‘you see me no more’ (cf. verse 10) seems to indicate a longer interval than that between Jesus’ arrest and the resurrection appearances.” He further opines that “Perhaps, then it is that ‘coming again’ promised in John 14:3 that is in view in the words: ‘again a little while and you will see me.’ But in saying this we must recall what was said in the comments on John 14:3, 18 about the ‘vanishing distinction’ in the upper room discourses between Jesus’ coming in the resurrection appearances, in the Spirit’s abiding presence, and at his final advent. When the disciples, wondering aloud what Jesus can mean, add to his words quoted from verse 16 the clause ‘Because I am going to the Father,’ they hark back to what he has said in verse 10 ‘I am going to the Father and you see me no more.’”

- In v. 17: “μικρὸν καὶ οὐ θεωρεῖτέ με, καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με; καί· ὅτι ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα” (‘In a little while you will no longer see me, then in a little while you will see me again,’ and ‘because I am going to the Father’) (ISV).
- In v. 18: “τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο [ὁ λέγει] τὸ μικρὸν” (‘what is this ‘in a little while’ that he keeps talking about’?) (in this verse, only the phrase “τὸ μικρὸν” [a little while] is repeated – as the disciples continue to ponder on its meaning).
- In v. 19: “μικρὸν καὶ οὐ θεωρεῖτέ με, καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με” (‘In a little while you will no longer see me, then in a little while you will see me again’) (Jesus repeats it when providing clarification to the disciples).
- In v. 38: “πάλιν ἀφήμι τὸν κόσμον καὶ πορεύομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα” (‘again I am leaving the world and going back to the Father’).

It is worth mentioning that, besides the inclusion of the adjective “μικρὸν” (little while), the implied reader is familiar with the fact that Jesus will “depart to the one who sent him.” The inclusion of the adjective *μικρὸν* is viewed as a development in the meaning of “departure,” built upon the earlier announcements, as Van der Watt (2008:95) also observes, saying: “Spiral argumentation assumes a process of logical and progressive succession of related information where the one piece of information builds on the other to eventually present the full picture.”

The phrase is repeated even beyond chapter 16. Jesus finally uses it with the explicit reference to his ascension back to the Father in 20:17,

λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς· μή μου ἄπτου, οὕτω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἶπε αὐτοῖς· ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεὸν μου καὶ θεὸν ὑμῶν (Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God’).

This utterance by Jesus to Mary should not be a surprise to the implied reader. Here it is read as an application to all the repeated utterances concerning the departure of Christ from 7:33 through to 16:28. The text reveals that, by this time the disciples had already understood what he meant by departing to the Father, as reported in 16:29-30.

By virtue of repetition, the text has also prepared the implied reader to understand and to remember this coming event by the time Jesus mentions it to Mary after the resurrection.

As indicated earlier in the illustration and discussion of “word repetition,” repetition of this nature in the text carries effects for the implied reader. Generally, similar observations and conclusions can be made regarding “phrase or sentence repetition.”

The implied author, strategically, uses the phrase or sentence repetition to emphasise the origin and identity of Jesus Christ in the Fourth Gospel. Through repetition, the message that Jesus came from the Father (or sent by the Father) and will depart back to the Father cannot be missed by the implied reader. As established with “word repetition,” the repetitive use of the phrase here is also performative. It makes it difficult for the implied reader to ignore/forget it in the text, as they read. It forces the reader (real or implied) to see Jesus for who he really is, as someone who came from the Father and will go back to the Father (his transcendent nature). In numerous narratives within the Fourth Gospel, the Jewish opponents emerge as formidable challengers, questioning Jesus’ identity and origin. Indeed, the question of identity and origin of Jesus serves as a central point of contention in the Fourth Gospel. The Jewish opponents, limited by their earthly understanding, refuse to accept him (9:29). However, through deliberate repetition, the implied reader has no reason to doubt the origin and identity of Jesus. The text reiterates this crucial aspect time and again, engraving it in the mind of the implied reader like a familiar song that has been played repeatedly.

The study further highlights that the repeated emphasis on the phrase not only serves to convince the Jewish opponents about Jesus’ origin, identity, and destiny but also acts as a persuasive warning to the implied reader. The implied reader cannot fall into the trap that caught the Jewish opponents, who rejected Jesus based on their misunderstanding and unbelief. By heeding the warnings (repeated phrase), the implied reader is able to change his/her view of Jesus and begin to respond positively to the propositions he makes in the text. In this way, the implied reader is persuaded to accept Jesus’ ideological propositions in the text, and eventually believe in Jesus for who he is. And this is what the Gospel’s central purpose wants to achieve in the life of the reader (real or implied).

As noted earlier, repetition reinforces remembrance. The repeated phrase has the power to create a rhythm, like beats of a drum, within a sentence (Florman, 2017). The reader (real or implied) is aided to remember Jesus’ propositions with ease. This cognitive component is performative, in that as the phrase is repeated as the Fourth Gospel continues, the implied reader can make the links or connections of meaning as the idea is developed to the end. Subsequently, the implied reader remains close to the story as it challenges them to make choices about Jesus as they read it.

In this regard, it is argued that repetition (of words or phrases) has a performative role towards the reader (real and implied) of the text.

5.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The goal of the chapter was to conduct an analysis of asides and repetition, as widely recognised literary devices in the Fourth Gospel, with the aim of demonstrating their performative nature. Therefore, the chapter comprised of two major parts, namely: the study of the performative nature of asides; and secondly, the study of repetition and its performative nature in the Fourth Gospel.

Regarding the asides, this study embraced Thatcher's (1994) established categories of asides in the Fourth Gospel. The primary focus was not to debate the merits of his approach in categorising asides but rather to adopt these stated categories as they were considered appropriate for the purpose of this chapter, which is the examination of asides in the Fourth Gospel. Thatcher's framework delineates four overarching functions of asides, namely:

The asides that function to *stage* an event.

The study of asides in this category was found to have the power to invite the implied reader to participate in the text. In reference to 2:13, it was established that asides can create tension in the mind of the implied reader. It was further observed that an aside can also be used to resolve the tension that another aside created in the text. It does this, by updating (providing new information) to the implied reader (2:23). It was further observed that asides can create irony in the text. In this case, they also function as a silent communication between the implied author and the implied reader (19:14). Subsequently, the implied reader is left to realise the bigger picture of the unfolding drama in the text, and this is performative in nature.

The asides that function to define or specify something.

The study here established that asides that seek to specify something by providing a translation (e.g., the word Gabbatha – 19:13, and Golgotha – 19:17) are also performative in nature. They give the implied reader a sense of being taken care of by narrator. They show that the narrator is mindful of the implied reader's relevant knowledge of what the story (a particular word used) is all about. It was further realised that for modern Bible readers or non-Greek/Hebrew speakers, the asides do challenge the implied reader to seek more information about the translated word. In this way, the text is formulated and reported in such a way that it keeps the implied reader engaged with it. The implied reader is therefore forced/persuaded to do a lot more reading to gain a thorough knowledge of the Scripture.

Amongst the asides in this category, some serve the purpose of specifying or defining something or someone. For instance, two notable examples are presented: a man who had been sick for 38 years (5:5), and a man who had been blind since birth (9:1). These asides effectively generate suspense and anticipation within the mind of the implied reader. Initially, the reader may feel a sense of hopelessness, wondering if these suffering individuals will ever find relief or healing. However, as the narrative unfolds and the implied reader progresses further into the story, they eventually discover that Jesus does indeed intervene and heal both of these men. Consequently, the implied reader is persuaded to place their trust in Jesus or, if they already have faith, to have it strengthened further.

The analysis also encompasses asides that serve to specify or label characters in the text. Notably, two instances were examined for demonstration: the aside in 3:1 referring to Nicodemus and the aside in 19:39 mentioning Joseph of Arimathea. These asides were found to be performative, as they take the implied reader back to the story about the character (e.g., Nicodemus). By doing so, they refresh and update the implied reader's understanding of the character's development throughout the story. It was observed that these asides often introduce a character with a positive story (Joseph of Arimathea). However, they can also serve to spare the implied reader from surprises since they affirm the conduct of a character in the story, e.g., Judas Iscariot. When the character's actions align with the expectations set by these asides, the implied reader is not taken aback but rather encouraged, as it confirms the fulfilment of the expectation created about that particular character.

The asides that explain discourse

The study discussed an aside in 7:13, as an example. With regard to the situation at the Feast of Tabernacles, the aside functions to make the implied reader understand the amount of tension and anger Jesus' opponents had. Through this aside, the implied reader is drawn in to experience this tension also. The Jewish opponents are plotting to kill Jesus, and Jesus, after showing no interest to attend, eventually attends the festival. The text does not only create tension but also creates expectations of dramatic events in the mind of the implied reader. In this way, the implied reader is persuaded to continue reading the story of Jesus to find out how the tension is going to be resolved. It turns out that nothing bad happens to Jesus, even when the Jewish authorities attempted to arrest him. The aside (7:30) is performative in nature. It gives the implied reader a sense of confidence in Jesus and assures the implied reader that Jesus is in control. In fact, nothing will happen to him unless it is the assigned time for it. Anything that should happen to him will happen according to his Father's timing. Cognitively, this serves to solidify Jesus' ideological stance in the text, and it persuades the implied reader to associate themselves with him.

In the passages 20:14 and 20:15, which recount Jesus' first appearance to Mary Magdalene, the aside stating that Mary "*did not know it was Jesus*" is viewed as performative in nature. It has the power to invite the implied reader to be prepared for some dramatic statements. Its performative power lies in its capacity to evoke a sense of humour and amusement for the implied reader. The aside serves as a warning to the implied reader not to judge or blame Mary for whatever action or utterance she might say or do, as she is unaware of Jesus' identity at this moment. The implied reader is encouraged to pardon her but enjoy the dramatic nature of the event. The drama keeps the implied reader sensitised toward the story of Jesus' resurrection. Through this drama and humour, the implied reader is converted into also being an (eye)witness of the resurrection events (of course through the text). It was asserted that the hilarity of the story enables the implied reader to retell the story of Jesus' resurrection with ease to other people.

The study proceeded with the analysis of asides that function to state the significance of the discourse. The majority of which are used to interpret Jesus' enigmatic statements and help the implied reader not to misunderstand the words of Jesus.

The first to be discussed was the aside in 7:39 (during the Feast of Tabernacles). Jesus makes a call for all who are thirsty to come to him and those who believe in him to drink (from him). The narrator explains, through an aside, that Jesus "*said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit.*"

The aside was described as performative in the sense that it appeals to the implied reader to stay closer to the narrator, since the narrator has knowledge and the ability to interpret the words of Jesus. In this manner, the aside enforces a relationship between the narrator and the implied reader. The implied reader should rely on the narrator's help as they continue reading the text. It was argued that this goes beyond the relationship between the narrator and the implied reader. In fact, it functions to persuade the implied reader to accept the ideological position of the narrator, which, in essence, cannot be disassociated from that of the Protagonist (Jesus) in the story. Consequently, the implied reader is drawn to believe in Jesus or encouraged to remain believing in Jesus.

Similar conclusions were drawn concerning the three asides found in 12:33 (where Jesus speaks about his death), 21:19 (where Jesus speaks about the kind of death with which Peter would glorify God), and 19:28 (the "sixth sayings" of Jesus on the cross). These asides were identified as performative because they persuade the implied reader to rely on the narrator's explanation of the meaning of the utterances done in the text.

The aside that functions to explain actions.

The analysis in this category of asides commenced with the aside in 7:5 (the Jewish feast of Tabernacles is said to be near). Jesus did not wish to go to Judea to attend the festival.

His own brothers, in a derogatory way, urge him to go. This surprising response from his siblings raises eyebrows for the implied reader, as one would generally expect brothers to be supportive of each other. The narrator, in a revealing manner, informs the implied reader that their speech and attitude stem from a lack of belief in Jesus: “they did not believe in him.”

The aside has been described as performative since it eases the tension and surprise of the implied reader. The text, through this aside, assists the implied reader to understand why Jesus’ brothers spoke in the manner they did. The aside has power to persuade the implied reader to sympathise with Jesus, and this, consequently, draws the implied reader towards Jesus. The aside further assists the implied reader to understand the nature and severity of difficulties/oppositions that Jesus went through in his ministry.

With regard to the aside in 20:9, which pertains to the resurrection of Jesus, the narrative describes Mary reporting the discovery of the empty tomb to Simon Peter and the other disciple. Upon witnessing the empty tomb themselves, the text reports that “*and they saw and they believed.*” However, this confirmation leaves the implied reader with questions. The confirmative speech that has been established has the power to raise suspense (wondering) in the mind of the implied reader. However, the aside (20:9) helps the implied reader to understand why their beliefs are only confirmed now. On the cognitive level, the aside empowers the implied reader. The aside extends an invitation to the implied reader to become an active participant in witnessing Jesus’ resurrection.

Finally, the aside in 19:35 was thoroughly examined (Jesus’ crucifixion, particularly when his side is pierced). The narrator reports that he is an eyewitness to this event of the piercing of Jesus on the cross. By presenting himself as an eyewitness, the narrator lends credibility and authority to the account, instilling a sense of trust in the implied reader. This eyewitness’ testimony holds significant weight in reinforcing the authenticity of the events surrounding Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection. Furthermore, the narrator underscores that this event of Jesus’ side being pierced is a fulfilment of Scripture (19:36-37). The study judged this aside as performative, in that it forces the implied reader to respond or make a choice. The implied reader has to make a decision either to reject or accept the testimony. If they accept and believe the testimony, they (themselves) become witnesses of the death of Christ and gain eternal life.

Repetition

The second major part of the chapter focused on the investigation of the performative nature of repetition in the Fourth Gospel. The illustration was divided into two categories, namely: word-repetition and phrase-repetition.

With regard to word repetition, the study of Van der Watt (2009) was utilised as an example. He analysed the repetitive manner in which the implied author uses the word ζωή in the Fourth Gospel.

It was observed, based on the number of occurrences of the word ζωή and its strategic placement within the text, that the implied author purposely employed this term to emphasise the idea and revelation that Jesus is the giver (or source) of eternal life – without whom there is no life. This was revealed in its frequent use in chapters 3-6, where the idea of eternal life and Jesus as the giver of life is developed. Even though the frequency of its use drops in the second part of the Gospel (chapters 13-21), it was pointed out that its use stays semantically significant.

The emphasis serves to remind the implied reader that the concept of ζωήν αἰώνιον cannot be understood apart from the person and work of Jesus. This kind of emphasis is not neutral in its performative power. Apart from just knowing it, this kind of repetition forces the implied reader to begin to make some considerations about believing in Jesus.

By word repetition, the text makes it difficult for the implied reader to ignore it. In fact, the text makes it easy for the implied reader to remember the concept, its meaning, and implication. Firstly, it was asserted that it is highly probable that the implied author's strategy could be to emphasise the position of Jesus and his ideological stance against that of the Jewish opponents. By virtue of repetition, this emphasis is audible in the ears of the implied reader.

Secondly, it was suggested that word repetition is actually a persuasive strategy. As the word is used repetitively and constantly, it persuades the implied reader to change their views regarding the propositions that are made in the text. In the study of the word ζωήν (in its various forms and occurrences), repetition persuades the implied reader to believe in Jesus so that he/she may have eternal life. Jesus makes this call explicitly in 14:1: “*You believe in God; believe also in me*” (πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν θεὸν καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ πιστεύετε). In essence, repetition serves as a strong invitation to the implied reader. The primary purpose of the Gospel itself distinguishes it as a persuasive text, seeking to encourage the reader to believe in Jesus for the attainment of eternal life. Consequently, the frequent usage of such a word as ζωή holds inherent persuasive power for the implied reader.

Repetition can also be viewed as the implied author's strategy to reinforce remembrance in the implied reader's mind. Repetition aids the implied reader to remember (or make it difficult for the reader to forget) what Jesus' ideology in the text is.

Regarding phrase repetition, the study attempted to illustrate its performative nature by using chapter 16:1-38. The exploration focused on the phrase: "*I am going to the one who sent me*" (*ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με*). Generally, similar conclusions as those of word repetition were made.

The occurrence is thought to have been used strategically by the implied author to emphasise the origin and identity of Jesus Christ in the Fourth Gospel. The significance of this phrase lies in its frequent repetition, particularly in the section of the Gospel that recounts Jesus' public ministry. Strategically, his opponents are told, time and again, that Jesus is the Messiah, and he came from God the Father (or was sent by the Father), and he will depart back to the Father. Therefore, the implied reader is persuaded to look at their rejection of Jesus as baseless and out of their ignorance (9:29). The repetition of this phrase makes it easy for the implied reader to get this message. As was also established in the "word repetition," the repetitive use of a phrase is also performative. On the cognitive level, it makes it difficult for the implied reader to ignore such a phrase, as they read the text. It was asserted that phrase repetition forces the implied reader to see Jesus for who he really is, as someone who came from the Father.

The study also made an important observation regarding the performative nature of phrase repetition. The strategic repetition of certain phrases in the Gospel serves as a persuasive tool, aiming to prevent the reader from overlooking or dismissing the significance and implications associated with those repeated phrases. As the phrase is repeatedly employed to persuade the Jewish opponents regarding the origin, identity, and destiny of Jesus, the implied reader is similarly persuaded, but also cautioned against falling into the same trap as the Jewish opponents. By heeding the warnings (repeated phrase), the implied reader can change his/her view about Jesus and begin to respond positively to the propositions or invitations he makes in the text.

In this manner, the implied reader accepts the ideological propositions that Jesus represents in the text. The implied reader is eventually persuaded to believe in Jesus. Again, it was emphasised that this is what the Gospel's central purpose wants to achieve in the life of the reader (real or implied).

Finally, it was also suggested that phrase repetition can serve to reinforce remembrance. The strategic repetition of a particular phrase has the power to create a rhythmic pattern within the

text, making it easier for the implied reader to remember. In this way the reader (real or implied) is aided to remember the propositions of Jesus with ease. This cognitive component is described as performative, in that, as the phrase is repeated in the text, the implied reader can make the links or connections of meaning as the idea is developed to the end of the narrative. Subsequently, the reader (real and implied) remains close to the story as it challenges them to make choices or decisions about Jesus.

The following chapter will discuss the performative nature of focalisation in the Fourth Gospel.

Chapter 6 Focalisation and its Performative Function/Nature in the Fourth Gospel

6.1 INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL SURVEY AND RESEARCH GAP

The main contribution of this chapter is to analyse specific narratives in the Fourth Gospel using focalisation as an analytical tool. By employing this approach, the chapter aims to delve further into the performative dynamics present in the Gospel. While the methodology differs from that of Chapters 2-5, the overarching goal remains consistent – to showcase the performative nature of the text through the lens of focalisation.

As previously noted, the central purpose of the Fourth Gospel, as explicitly stated in John 20:30-31, is to persuade the implied reader to have faith in Jesus Christ, leading to the attainment of eternal life. Throughout the study, it has been argued and demonstrated in the previous chapters that the Gospel presents itself as performative in nature, aiming to achieve a transformative impact in the life of the reader (cf. Van der Watt, 2007:10). Thus far, this study has explored various literary devices that function to reinforce the performative nature of the Gospel (see Chapters 2–5).

The current chapter is the continuation of a similar exploration, utilising a different methodology. The impetus behind the current chapter emanates from a general observation, that since the Gospel is written with such an explicit purpose, the narration of the Gospel, on the one hand, will be biased (perhaps the word ‘focused’ may be appropriate here) towards the character of Jesus and the values he represents in the text. On the other hand, it can generally be expected that the reporting will work against the Jewish opponents and their religious views (as already seen in the previous chapters). Their religious propagations are not desirable/encouraged and are therefore rejected by the implied author. Therefore, the task in this chapter is to explore the way in which the implied author selects narrative information to encourage the implied reader to do something about what they read. As can be expected, and already alluded to, the selection of narrative information will heavily be focused on ensuring that the purpose of the Gospel is achievable in the life of the implied reader.

This phenomenon of narrative criticism is called focalisation. Simply defined, according to Genette (1988:34; cf. Tolmie, 1991:276), focalisation is “a selection of narrative information.” For a

narrative to achieve what the implied author intends with it, there must a deliberate way in which information is supplied to the implied reader.⁴¹¹

The concept of “focalisation” has received favourable attention from various scholars since its inception in the early 1980s.⁴¹² Throughout the historical survey and research developments on the phenomenon, scholarly contributions have mainly focused on its definition and how it should be described so that it caters for all the narratives (Dembinski, 1979:208-221; cf. Chatman; 1986:189-204). However, despite the existing scholarly exploration, there remains an open and compelling need for a renewed examination of how focalisation, along with its facets, actively engages the reader of the Fourth Gospel. For the sake of clarity, this chapter will, a little later on, provide an outline of this methodology and how it will be applied to the narratives of the Fourth Gospel to achieve the stated purpose of the study.

In addition to the study of focalisation, this chapter will also borrow some aspects of the speech act theory, particularly on the performative nature of utterances in its discussion of the facets of focalisation. Therefore, the chapter concedes that it will utilise multiple approaches to analyse the narratives of the Fourth Gospel.⁴¹³ Having indicated this, it can be stated that the approach here is problem-oriented.

⁴¹¹ Tolmie (1991:273, 277) says, “[T]he concept 'focalisation' was introduced by Gerard Genette (1980) in an attempt to distinguish it from what has traditionally become known as the 'point of view' of a narrative text (also known as 'vision', 'field' or 'perspective'). When Genette's *Narrative Discourse* was published, the analysis of point of view as one of the facets of a narrative text had been part of the traditional approach to texts for decades.”

⁴¹² Scholars such as Martin (1986:145-147). See also: Edminston (1989:730-735); Fowler (1982:213); Dembinski (1979:208-221); Kablitz (1988:237-255); Bronzwaer (1981:193-201); Chatman (1986:189-204).

⁴¹³ While commenting on the use of a multiple approach of analysis in his problem-oriented study of Mathew, Viljoen (2018:12) helpfully asserts that “the interpretation of a text involves many aspects, and this necessitates a multi-faceted process. It could be detrimental to stick to only one method. Depending on the questions asked, various methods can complement and reinforce one another (Brueggemann, 1997:58; Du Toit, 2009a; Perrin, 1972:5-18).” In a problem-oriented approach, the challenges and issues presented by the text suggest which method should be used (Egger, 1996:8). Viljoen (2018:12) continues to indicate that “While a set of methods are available, the researcher uses methods according to the requirements of the text and the questions to be answered. Each perspective on a text has its limitations, but with a plurality of methods the methods can strengthen each other to arrive at a richer and more integrated grasp of the meaning (cf. Foster, 2004:6; Nel, 2014:270; Barton, 1999:18; Catchpole, 1997:187). For this reason, a problem-oriented approach is followed in this chapter. Viljoen (2018:12) concludes by saying “The ideal is that insights from both approaches are made available for mutual correction and enrichment in a complementary manner. In using problem-orientated approach to the text, the study employs both diachronic and synchronic perspectives as required to address certain problems.

In exploring the performative nature of focalisation in the Fourth Gospel, this chapter will follow Rimmon-Kenan's approach to focalisation, which was also employed by Tolmie (1991) in his analysis of John 13-17. Rimmon-Kenan's approach builds on Genette's approach but expands the concept of focalisation to incorporate a cognitive, emotive, and ideological orientation – facets of 'point of view' as distinguished by Uspensky (cf. Tolmie, 1991:277; cf. Hobyane, 2022:1-3). To summarise this analytical tool, Rimmon-Kenan (1983:71) defines focalisation as follows,

The story is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'prism', 'perspective', 'angle of vision' verbalised by the narrator though not necessarily his.⁴¹⁴

Following Rimmon-Kenan (1983:74-82; cf. Tolmie, 1991:278), the analysis in this chapter adopts two key aspects of focalisation as the framework: type of focalisation and facets of focalisation. For the sake of clarity, these concepts are described below.

6.2 TYPES OF FOCALISATION

Focalisation may be either external or internal to the story. Regarding external focalisation, the locus of focalisation is outside the represented events, for example, in the case of a 'narrator-focaliser' (Tolmie, 1991:278; cf. Bal, 1977:37). From the perspective of the speech act theory, this study has always acknowledged the role of the narrator in this regard. The narrator-focaliser is the voice that explains/reports the events that a camera is showing the reader in the text. As already noted in the previous chapters, he/she is the producer of *informative speech acts*.

Regarding internal focalisation, the locus of focalisation is inside the represented events (Tolmie, 1991:278; ; cf. Resseguie, 2001:21).⁴¹⁵ In simple terms, unlike in the external focalisation where the camera cannot access the minds and feelings of the characters in the story, in internal focalisation the narrator-focaliser proves to have access to the minds and feelings of characters and reports that to the reader in the form of notes or asides.

⁴¹⁴ In addition to Genette's definition (already provided above), Genette (1988:34) continues to say that "the instrument of this possible selection is a *situated focus*, a sort of information conveying pipe that allows passage only of information that is authorised by the situation." See also Tolmie (1991:276).

⁴¹⁵ Tolmie (1991:278) further states that "the contrast external/internal also applies to the focalised object. The focalised object may be presented either externally or internally. A further important aspect of focalisation is the degree of persistence, as focalisation may either remain fixed throughout the narrative or it may alternate between two predominant focalisers."

6.2.1 Facets of Focalisation

As already mentioned, the exploration of facets of focalisation and their performative nature in the selected narratives of the Fourth Gospel will follow the schema of Rimmon-Kenan (1983:77-82). She distinguishes the following three facets of focalisation:

- **Perceptual facet:** In this facet, the space and time of the narrative are important. In spatial terms, the focaliser's position may vary from a panoramic view to that of a limited observer. With regard to the temporal/time facet, the focaliser may have at his/her disposal all the temporal dimensions of the story (past, present, and future), or it may be limited to the present and past experiences of the characters (cf. Tolmie, 1991:278).
- **Psychological facet:** The psychological facet concerns the cognitive and emotive components of focalisation: The cognitive component refers to the contrast between restricted and unrestricted knowledge of the focaliser. For example, whereas the narrator-focaliser knows everything about the narrated world, the internal focaliser is restricted in his/her knowledge. In the case of the emotive component, the contrast between objective/neutral versus subjective/involved focalisation is important (cf. Tolmie, 1991:278).
- **Ideological facet:** This facet refers to the way in which the characters and events of the story are evaluated. The ideological facet may be presented through a single dominant perspective, or it may be that a plurality of ideological positions exists, striving amongst each other to become the dominant perspective (Tolmie, 1991:278; cf. Lotman, 1975:339-352).

This study is convinced that focalisation is yet another analytical literary tool that can be utilised to explore or demonstrate the peculiar way in which the Fourth Gospel's message can persuade or force the reader to act on what they are reading in the text. Therefore, as highlighted above, the study of focalisation will be supplemented by a cursory demonstration of the performative nature of the narrator's utterances involved in all the facets discussed. Therefore, the objective here is not only to identify and analyse aspects of focalisation but also to attempt to demonstrate its performative function to the implied reader of the Fourth Gospel (cf. Tolmie, 1991:273).

6.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

By using focalisation as an analytical tool, the reader and/or the interpreter of the Fourth Gospel can demonstrate the performative nature of the Gospel. The observation here is that when applying focalisation and its facets, the text of the Fourth Gospel proves to have the power to invite or persuade the implied reader and/or the interpreter to adopt the narrator's point of view. It should be borne in mind that this is what the implied author desires to achieve with the message

of the Fourth Gospel in the life of the implied reader (20:30-31). Through the application of focalisation and its facets, it can be demonstrated that the implied reader is compelled to decide about Christ in the text.

As already observed in the previous four chapters, it seems logical to argue that the implied author of the Fourth Gospel employs persuasive means in his communication of the Gospel's message so that he may impact the life of the implied reader. It can therefore be indicated that any kind of reading of the Gospel that does not acknowledge the existence and the role of these literary devices, will prove to be superficial in its approach.

As highlighted above, this chapter will pursue to demonstrate the performative nature of focalisation by analysing three selected narratives of the Fourth Gospel: 3:1-21 (Jesus and Nicodemus); 4:1-42 (Jesus and the Samaritan woman); and 6:1-14 and 22-71 (Jesus feeds five thousand people). These three narratives are chosen without any set criteria. The main goal is to demonstrate the performative nature of the text as stated. Therefore, the following section will proceed with the analysis of the text, i.e., the three narratives as pointed out above.

6.4 FOCALISATION AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 3:1-21

6.4.1 Summary of the Story

The setting of the story of Jesus and Nicodemus was discussed in Chapter 2, which focused on misunderstanding. In addition to the discussion in chapter 1 of the Gospel, Van der Watt (2007:13) summarises that chapters 3-4 form a narrative that reveals that "eternal life is available for everybody." The intriguing aspect lies in the identity of the people Jesus encounters in this narrative section (as mentioned in chapter 2, this story falls within a section that deals with Jesus' public ministry, spanning from 1:19 to 12:50). First, is Nicodemus, the extremely important Jewish leader who is a Pharisee, a teacher, and a prominent leader of the Jews. In this member of the Sanhedrin, sincerity, and timidity are seen struggling together (Jamieson *et al.* 1997:130). From a narrative point of view, the story is presented through various levels of communication. Initially, the narrator provides a report (*informative speech act*, e.g., vv. 1-2a). Here the narrator-focaliser provides the reader with necessary information regarding the space, time, and the statuses of the characters involved. Subsequently, the story unfolds through dialogue between the characters. The narrator-focaliser points the camera to the characters, i.e., Jesus and Nicodemus, and allows an opportunity for the reader to enjoy their interaction through a dialogue (questions and response speech acts, e.g., vv. 3-21). The characters here exchange ideas regarding the pressing issue of the salvation discourse in the narrative. It is noted, as the story unfolds, that even though the implied reader realises that there is an occurrence of misunderstanding during the dialogue, the

narrator opts to be silent in describing it to the implied reader. The narrator does not provide an aside as the reader would expect. This aspect will be discussed a little later under the mentioned facets of focalisation.

The following section will continue with the analysis of focalisation (its types and facets and their performative nature).

6.4.2 Types of Focalisation in John 3:1-21

When determining the type of focalisation in John 3, it is essential to bear in mind that the Fourth Gospel represents the theological/thematic interpretation of its author, John. The Gospel is composed with a clear and focused purpose – to lead the reader to have faith in Jesus Christ. From this consideration, it can be asserted that, generally, the type of focalisation found in the entire Gospel will be external focalisation. Accordingly, chapter 3 of the Fourth Gospel is no exception to this general observation. The narrator is external, but of course not excluded, to the unfolding of the story. As already indicated above, the narrator is described as a narrator-focaliser (Tolmie, 1991:278; cf. Bal, 1977:37). The narrator-focaliser proves to have reliable insights about the story. In this story, she/he assists the implied reader with information about Nicodemus and his role/status in the community. Specifically, the narrator reveals that Nicodemus holds the esteemed positions of being a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews. The narrator-focaliser proves to have some knowledge about this character (3:1). The report sounds emphatic, trustworthy, and reliable. This is commendable since the implied reader relies on the narrator-focaliser's information to understand the story. The implied reader is encouraged to stay close to the narrator-focaliser and trust the lenses through which the story is externally focalised. Consequently, a relationship of trust is built between the implied reader and the narrator-focaliser. This already is viewed as performative because it invites the implied reader to stay close to the narrator-focaliser to witness the story's unfolding. The narrator-focaliser is the eyes through which the implied reader can perceive the narrative's development. In this performative dynamic, the implied reader's ability to act or make decisions within the narrative is contingent upon following the unfolding story.

In reference to the internal focalisation in John 3, it may be asserted that the narrator-focaliser's view is limited. All she/he could manage is to entrust the responsibility of sharing information (sharing of theological truths) to the characters as they enter the dialogue. The narrator-focaliser neither reveals it to the implied reader, nor mentions if ever Jesus (the Protagonist) knew about this visit and its purpose beforehand. First, Nicodemus comes to Jesus with a sure knowledge that Jesus is the Rabbi who comes from God – judging by the nature of signs he performs. Jesus is focalised, introducing the object of quest in the narrative, that is, being born again (*γεννηθῆ*

ἄνωθεν) and its ensuing benefit (being able to see the kingdom of God – *ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ*). On the one hand, the character, Jesus in particular, proves to know everything about the topic. Nicodemus, on the other hand, proved to know nothing about the subject of being born again. Jesus exposes him in the opening words in his *responsive speech act* in verse 10 when he says:

σὺ εἶ ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ταῦτα οὐ γινώσκεις; (You are the teacher of Israel and you do not know this?)

Although Nicodemus is introduced as a teacher of Israel and a ruler of the Jews, he is focalised as someone who possesses no knowledge of the focalised object (the subject of being born again), and therefore cannot be trusted by the implied reader. It is noted that the encounter between these two characters rapidly changes from a dialogue to a monologue, where Jesus shares a lot of information about the introduced subject. The prism through which the narrative information is conveyed or processed is heavily bias toward Jesus. This is judged as a deliberate act by the narrator-focaliser, as arranged by the implied author, to touch the reader. This way of focalising the story does have power to persuade the implied reader to associate themselves with Jesus. The implied reader is encouraged to act on Jesus' point of view, as focalised by the narrator-focaliser in the story. The focalisation of the story suggests that the implied reader has nothing to learn from Nicodemus, since he knows nothing about being born again.

6.5 FACETS OF FOCALISATION AND THEIR PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 3:1-21

6.5.1 Perceptual Facet

In discussing the perceptual facet, the focus is on the aspect of space and time in the story.

In reference to the space, it seems that the narrator-focaliser is limited or fixed. However, he proves to have a full view of the proceedings between the two characters in the dialogue, starting from Nicodemus' movement into the space where Jesus is. In verse 1, the narrator-focaliser reports that Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night (*οὗτος ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτὸν νυκτὸς*) – this is a noteworthy point. The mentioning of the word “night” (*νυκτὸς*) holds significant implications for the implied reader. Night is associated with darkness, and therefore not associated with the person of Jesus (see 1:7-9). In this statement, the movement of Nicodemus from the dark night towards the focalised space where the dialogue takes place (where Jesus is) has some symbolic connotation. Symbolically, Nicodemus' visit to Jesus can be interpreted as a movement from the dark state of life to the light (life in Christ). The implied reader by now knows and associates Jesus with the Light that has come into the world (1:7). The movement towards the focalised space should be credited to Nicodemus as a wise movement since he comes to seek knowledge

regarding being born again. The perceptual facet, in this regard, is performative in the sense that it encourages the implied reader to also approach Jesus in the text to seek for such kind of knowledge.

Regarding the temporal dimension, it cannot be proven from the text that the narrator-focaliser has all the temporal dimensions of the story. For example, the narrator-focaliser does not prove to know any previous events other than the present. It can therefore be suggested that his temporal dimension was limited to present focalised experiences of the characters. Although he provides information about Nicodemus' background, that is, he is a ruler of the Jews, this is all she/he reports to the reader. Apart from this information, the implied reader remains unaware of any background or past events in the life of Nicodemus. Later in the narrative, the implied reader learns that Nicodemus holds the position of teacher of Israel (3:10). This study acknowledges the humorous nature of the perceptual facet presented to the implied reader. Disappointingly, the implied reader discovers that the ruler of the Jews and the teacher of Israel knows nothing about the new birth (or to be born again). The story, in this sense, is focalised in the manner that the implied reader is persuaded to engage in self-evaluation as well. Through the unfolding dialogue the Protagonist is focalised, informing the implied reader about the past events concerning himself. He reports that he comes from heaven (*ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*). He also hints about the future, that is, to the cross (*οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*). This temporal dimension by the Protagonist should be encouraging and persuading to the believing reader. At the same time, it is an invitation to the unbelieving reader to make some considerations about believing in Jesus Christ.

6.5.2 Psychological Facet

As already established in the discussion of the type of focalisation, the narrator-focaliser is an “onlooker” but not excluded from the events or the unfolding of the story. The text does not provide enough information to enable the implied reader to determine the cognitive and emotive components of focalisation in reference to the narrator-focaliser. The text does not portray the narrator-focaliser as possessing specific knowledge about the narrated world, especially concerning the content of the Protagonist's teachings. However, it should be noted that this is not the case in some other Johannine narratives, such as 13:2-5 (see the analysis by Tolmie, 1991:282). In those instances, the narrator-focaliser may have a more comprehensive and unrestricted knowledge of the focalised object compared to the disciples. Referring specifically to the passage in 3:1-21, the narrator-focaliser is limited in the information provided to the implied reader. The focaliser can only offer details about Nicodemus' identity and his role as a Jewish

leader. The implied reader is not privy to any additional insights into the teachings or thoughts of the Protagonist (Jesus) beyond what transpires in the dialogue with Nicodemus.

From the textual evidence at our disposal, it seems justifiable to suggest that the narrator-focaliser's cognitive component is restricted. The same applies to his emotive component. It can be described as neutral or uninvolved.

However, the narrator-focaliser focalises Jesus conveying the necessary knowledge (theological truths) to Nicodemus and to the implied reader. As observed earlier, the study sees this type of focalisation as performative, since it has the power to persuade the implied reader to soberly focus their attention on the Protagonist and the knowledge he is sharing. This has the potential to bring the implied reader to the point of having faith in Jesus.

Regarding the distribution of this knowledge (or the expansion of theological truths) in the narrative, few examples can be cited in the text.

- Nicodemus expresses confusion about the concept of being born again, especially when one is already old. In response, the Protagonist explains that to enter the kingdom of God, one must be born of water and spirit (*ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἔξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος*), which entails a thorough spiritual purification by the operation of the Holy Ghost (Jamieson *et al.* 1997:131). This theological truth not only applies to Nicodemus but is also performative in nature, extending an invitation to the implied reader as well. In essence, this entails having faith in Jesus Christ so that they may have eternal life (20:30-31). This invitation is loud and clear to the reader.
- The Protagonist reveals to Nicodemus the whole salvation plan of God for humankind in 3:16, explaining that God's love is not limited to a few or to one group of people, but His gift is for the whole world, and his love was expressed in the giving of His most priceless gift – His unique Son (Blum, 1994:282). Again, from a performative point of view, this announcement or proclamation is both encouraging to the believing reader and inviting to the unbeliever.

Regarding the emotive facet in 3:1-21, it is virtually impossible to detect any emotional involvement of the Protagonist. While the narrative does not reveal whether Nicodemus was ever perplexed or if Jesus was indignant during their dialogue, it becomes evident that the Protagonist is focalised as calm and composed throughout the story. He confidently and authoritatively explains the salvation plan of God to Nicodemus. In this context, the emotional facet of focalisation can be described as 'neutral' or 'uninvolved' (cf. Tolmie, 1991:282).

6.5.3 Ideological Facet

When doing an analysis of the ideological facet of John 13-17, Tolmie (1991:283) makes an invaluable observation regarding the ideology of the entire Fourth Gospel. He helpfully points out that,

The ideological orientation of the Gospel as a whole is largely related to the question of Jesus' identity. The narrative is focalised in such a way that it becomes clear that the protagonist is to be viewed as a unique character. As the Son of God, he is sent by the Father to the κόσμος where he reveals his δόξα to mankind through various signs. The revelation of his δόξα comes to a climax during his 'hour', that is his crucifixion and resurrection. Furthermore, it is stressed throughout the Gospel that mankind's reaction to the protagonist is twofold: On the one hand there are those who accept his identity (this process is described as belief, knowledge or sight) and receive eternal life. On the other hand, there are those who reject his identity and deliberately choose to remain a part of the κόσμος.

From the evidence gathered from the text, it can be argued that the ideological facet of John 3:1-21 aligns with the entire Gospel, as also observed by Tolmie. The narrative is carefully crafted to introduce the implied reader to Jesus and his ideological stance. He is introduced here as follows:

- The Son of Man who came down from heaven (v. 13).
- The Son of Man who will be lifted up – reference to his death on the cross and resurrection (v. 14).
- The only begotten Son (τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ) given by God the Father to the world (vv. 16-18), so that by believing in him the world may be saved and have eternal life. His coming into the world is also described as the coming of light (τὸ φῶς – see also 1:9) into the world (vv. 19-20).

The above-mentioned points highlight the ideological facet of the passage, effectively conveying its message to Nicodemus. Nicodemus, a representative of the unbelieving ruling and teaching class among the Jewish opponents, serves as an essential figure in the narrative. The ideological facet is not limited to Nicodemus alone but extends to the reader, both real and implied. As already pointed out earlier, another observation concerns the textual space given to the Protagonist to convey this message to Nicodemus. The character Nicodemus only came in to ask a few questions about being born again and thereafter becomes a mute character. The implied reader never heard from him again in this narrative. Through a dominant monologue, the text focused only on the ideology of Jesus. In other words, the text is biased towards Jesus and the values he represents and advocates. This study views this type of focalisation as performative toward the

implied reader since it does not give room for the implied reader to listen to any other view except that of Jesus. In the Jesus' entire *responsive speech act* (vv. 10-21), there is a notable absence of interruptions from Nicodemus in the narrative. This intentional omission suggests that the author had a deliberate plan to convey the message without any potential interruptions. The author wants the reader to relate to Jesus and all that he represents.

Furthermore, in reference to Tolmie's observation above, it is not immediately clear how Nicodemus received and responded to the message regarding the identity of Jesus and his ideology in this text. The implied reader does not immediately get to know whether he believed or rejected the message. Not until the reader has read the Gospel up to 7:50-51 and 19:39-40.⁴¹⁶ This choice of presenting a character and ending the story or dialogue is not neutral in its persuasive intent. It is observed that the selection and presentation of the narrative material leaves the reader with no choice but to consider the propositions of Jesus, which is precisely what the author desires to achieve with the message of the Fourth Gospel (20:30-31).

6.6 FOCALISATION AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 4:1-42

6.6.1 Summary of the Story

After the profound encounter with Nicodemus (3:1-21), Jesus embarks on another significant meeting, this time with a Samaritan woman (4:1-42). The implied reader cannot overlook the importance of this encounter and the individual's identity whom Jesus engages with. As mentioned previously in Chapter 2 of this study, the setting of this story has been discussed, and it is not the study's intention to reiterate the entire discussion regarding this character and the context of the story. However, for the sake of clarity in this section, a few more points are worth considering about the Samaritan woman. When discussing the role of this character in the Fourth Gospel, Van der Watt (2007:14) describes her introduction as follows:

Then there is the problem woman. She is a nameless Samaritan woman who was married five times and is not married to the man she currently lives with. She is also at the well at the wrong time of the day, which implies that she did not come with the other women, for obvious reasons, not much of a letter of recommendation.

⁴¹⁶ The study observes that even from these references, it is not explicitly stated whether Nicodemus believed in Jesus or not. The reader still does not get to know about Nicodemus' position in relation to Christ. In both instances, e.g., 7:50-51, Nicodemus still represents the interpreters of the Law, and in 19:39-40, he is just performing a Jewish burial custom.

This summary, of course drawn from the text itself, speaks volumes about the Samaritan woman's credentials. Other characters introduced in the story are Jesus and his disciples. It is noted that both the temporal (*ὥρα ἧν ὡς ἕκτη [it was about the sixth hour]*) and spatial aspects (in a Samaritan city, Sychar – at the well of Jacob) are explicitly mentioned in the story. The story is reported by the narrator-focaliser (vv. 1, 3-6); he/she makes use of asides (v. 2) to assist the reader and/interpreter and does allow the reader to experience the exchange/dialogue between characters (e.g., vv. 7-26ff). Similar to the story of Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman is also in need of one thing: eternal life, and Jesus offers her just exactly that. Jesus shows no partiality – the life he brings is for everybody (Van der Watt, 2007:14).

6.6.2 Types of Focalisation

The type of focalisation noted in this narrative is both external and internal. As far as the external focalisation is concerned, the story is clearly a report given by the narrator (narrator-focaliser), reporting to the implied reader about the events taking place during Jesus' journey from Judaea to Galilee through Samaria.

In terms of internal focalisation, the narrator-focaliser's view is not completely restricted. She/he possesses the ability to delve into the characters' internal worlds, accessing their thoughts and emotions, and subsequently conveying this insight to the reader. By doing so, the narrator-focaliser provides a deeper understanding of the characters' viewpoints and experiences. For example, she/he reports on Jesus' foreknowledge (*ἔγνων*) of how the Pharisees perceive the growth of his ministry (vv. 1-6).⁴¹⁷ This demonstrates the narrator-focaliser's proficiency in conveying what Jesus himself knew, providing insights into his awareness and understanding of the situation. As a result, the implied reader learns that this is the reason why Jesus left Judea and departed to Galilee, through Samaria. Furthermore, the study notes that there might be another occurrence of internal focalisation in verse 27 (regarding the feelings of the disciples) when they returned and found Jesus talking to a woman. The narrator-focaliser reports that “*ἔθαύμαζον*” (they marvelled – yet none of them said anything). This description is more of what they felt about the situation than just reporting the occurrence of the event. Yet another internal

⁴¹⁷ When discussing focalisation on John 13, Tolmie (1991:280) arrives at this conclusion “The question which should be asked is whether the change from external focalisation of the focalised to internal focalisation of the focalised serves any purpose. To my mind, this procedure is effective as it serves to convey an ideological orientation to the intended readers. By giving the intended readers a 'glimpse into' the protagonist's mind, information is passed on to them which would help them to come to the same ideological perspective on Jesus. In other words, the use of internal focalisation of the focalised in this case serves to communicate the ideological perspective to the intended readers.”

focalisation occurs in verse 41. The narrator-focaliser gives us a glimpse into the minds of the Samaritans.

Nonetheless, it is noted that external focalisation dominates the narrative, and it is mainly the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus is focalised, beginning the dialogue in verse 4 by asking for water from the Samaritan woman. In verse 10, he fuels the dialogue by indicating to the woman that:

εἰ ᾔδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων σοι· δός μοι πεῖν, σὺ ἂν ᾔτησας αὐτὸν καὶ ἔδωκεν ἅν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν (If you knew the gift and who it is who says to you, 'Give me a drink' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water).

The above-quoted verse is an introductory utterance by Jesus to the woman. The dialogue is about the woman's need for salvation. The nature of the focalisation is that of letting the characters interact. The implied reader receives new information from the characters as they were focalised. External focalisation, in this regard, allows the implied reader to be exposed to the direct speeches of the characters. This manner of focalisation is vivid and appealing to the implied reader. In verses 13-14, for an example, the Protagonist continues to elaborate on the meaning and implication of drinking or having living water in one's life. This address/invitation is also directed to the implied reader.

In brief, the narrative of John 4:1-42 is both focalised by an "onlooker" who reports the events from the outside (external focalisation), and he is also able to focalise the characters internally (i.e., leading the implied reader into the thoughts and feelings of the characters).

6.6.3 Facets of Focalisation and their Performative Nature

6.6.3.1 Perceptual facet

Tolmie (1991:281) makes yet another invaluable observation regarding the perceptual facet of focalisation in the Fourth Gospel. He remarks that,

In the Gospel of John, the spatial facet of focalisation is located in the typical position of a narrator-focaliser, capable of yielding 'simultaneous' focalisation of events happening at different places. For example, in John 4:27-42 the focalisation alternates between events happening in the town and events between Jesus and his disciples. (See also Culpepper 1983:26-8).

As Tolmie astutely observed, the perceptual facet of focalisation in this story allows the narrator-focaliser to simultaneously focus on events occurring at the well (between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, 4:7-27) and the events unfolding in the town (4:28-30). It seems that the

narrator-focaliser is not restricted in this regard. This focalisation of the spatial dynamics of the story proves to be highly advantageous for the implied reader, as it creates an engaging and appealing narrative that captures their undivided attention. The text puts the implied reader in a viewing position where they can keep up with the developments of the story both at the well and in the city. They are not left out in any of the scenes of the story. Unless the implied reader is engaged in this way, the Gospel won't achieve its overall purpose. Therefore, the focalisation of the spatial dynamic is somewhat performative in nature. It keeps the implied reader engaged and up to date with the development of the story in all the scenes, leading them to the point where they can decide as they continue reading the story.

Regarding the temporal facet, the narrator-focaliser seems to have all the temporal dimensions of the story. The mentioning of the time (ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη [it was about the sixth hour]) at which the woman comes to the well is crucial in this regard. This temporal dimension is somewhat surprising to the implied reader who has some knowledge of Jewish cultural dynamics. After Jesus' conversation with the woman regarding her marital life, the implied reader gets to understand why the woman is at the well at an unusual time (the hottest hour of the day) and not with other women (cf. Van der Watt, 2007:14; Schnackenburg, 1968:424). It is noted also here that the ability of the narrator-focaliser to simultaneously move from one event at the well to the event in the city (and their respective times) shows that his perceptual facet, in terms of time, is not restricted.

It is argued, therefore, that the overall perceptual facet of focalisation is to the advantage of the implied reader, and therefore performative. The story is skilfully focalised in a manner that allows the implied reader to textually witness the unfolding of the story with remarkable ease, both in terms of scenes and the times involved. As the implied reader reflects on the profound conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well, the narrator-focaliser delivers a positive report from the city. It becomes evident that the people are genuinely intrigued and eager to come and see this person who has been identified as possibly the Christ, based on the woman's testimony. The narrator-focaliser reports as follows in 4:30,

Ἐξῆλθον ἐκ τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἦρχοντο πρὸς αὐτόν (Then they went out of the city and came to him).

This report of the people's movement towards Jesus serves as a persuasive element for the implied reader. It not only piques the curiosity of the unbelieving reader but also encourages them to consider following suit and approaching Jesus. The narrator-focaliser further reports that many of the Samaritans in the city believed in Jesus due to the compelling testimony of the woman, as reported in 4:39:

Ἐκ δὲ τῆς πόλεως ἐκείνης πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν τῶν Σαμαριτῶν διὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς γυναικὸς μαρτυροῦσης ὅτι εἶπέν μοι πάντα ἃ ἐποίησα (And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in him because of the word of the woman who testified, 'He told me all that I ever did').

As noted above, the positive interest of the people in seeing the man who could potentially be the Christ, coupled with their belief in Jesus, is a positive and an encouraging story to the implied reader. Through an unrestricted perceptual focalisation, the reader's interest is sensitised towards the person of Jesus. This reported response by the people is an invitation to an unbelieving reader and at the same time an encouraging story to the believer. By this, it can be asserted that the perceptual facet of focalisation is able to engage the implied reader to participate in the text, by either rejecting Jesus or accepting him like the Samaritan woman and her community members who believed.

6.6.3.2 Psychological facet

As highlighted above, the psychological facet concerns the cognitive and the emotive components of focalisation. Regarding the cognitive facet, it appears that the narrator-focaliser possesses a limited knowledge of the characters, particularly the protagonist. The passage, excluding 4:1-4, lacks any asides or notes that would suggest that the narrator-focaliser is aware of the underlying reasons behind certain utterances and actions in the story. In addition to having limited knowledge, the narrator-focaliser's understanding is also restricted when compared to that of the disciples. He does not possess any superior knowledge beyond what the disciples themselves know about the unfolding events.

On the contrary, in some of the Fourth Gospel's narratives, his knowledge is not restricted. The immediate example of this is 18:9. Here the narrator-focaliser knows why Jesus responds to those who came to arrest him the way he responded (cf. 18:32). In this example, the narrator-focaliser takes the implied reader by hand and guides him/her through the narrative, providing descriptions of why statements are uttered in a particular way. This is not the case in the narrative of John 4.

The narrator-focaliser only proved to have knowledge regarding the reason why Jesus moved from Judaea to Galilee (4:1) and the fact that he needed to go through Samaria (4:4). He also knows that Jesus never baptised new converts, but his disciples did (4:2). Furthermore, he gives a cursory comment on why the woman is surprised at Jesus' request for water in 4:9. There he mentions that *“οὐ γὰρ συγχρῶνται Ἰουδαῖοι Σαμαρίταις”* (for Jews have no dealings with Samaritans). It must be indicated that this comment brings tension and anticipation of drama to the implied reader.

The narrator-focaliser focalises the Protagonist as he takes the lead in the salvation discourse during the dialogue. Remarkably, the Protagonist exhibits an intimate knowledge of the woman's deep marital secrets (4:17-18). From a performative point of view, as will also be argued in the next section, Jesus' profound knowledge about salvation and His ability to discern hidden truths in people's lives challenge the reader's neutrality. The implied reader is highly likely to associate themselves with the character who has knowledge and demonstrates power over people's lives. This is arguably what the implied author intended with the text, i.e., that the implied reader meets Christ and has a relationship with him.

Regarding the emotional facet of focalisation, the protagonist is revealed as calm and taking his time to teach and explain everything to the woman. Perhaps the study, in this regard, should make an exception of 4:6 where it is reported that Jesus was tired (*κεκοπιακῶς*) because of the journey. Otherwise, Jesus is focalised as completely calm and in charge.

It can, therefore, be concluded that the psychological facet of focalisation is presented in such a way that the implied reader sees and experiences the Protagonist's dominance, in terms of knowledge, in the story. This serves to persuade the implied reader to rely on his teaching as they continue reading the text. Regarding the other characters, particularly the Samaritan woman, she does not possess any essential elements to sway or persuade the reader towards her own ideological stance. It can be pointed out that the identity of Jesus is accentuated in the narrative. From the performative point of view, the story is focalised in such a way that the implied reader is persuaded to remain close to the Protagonist. Thus, the role of the narrator-focaliser can be appreciated in that he keeps his focus on the Protagonist to whom the implied reader is persuaded to have faith.

6.6.3.3 Ideological facet

The ideological facet of focalisation concerns the manner in which the characters and events of the story are evaluated. As suggested above, regarding the ideological orientation of the entire Fourth Gospel, the ideological facet of 4:1-42 presents a single dominant perspective, which is that of the Protagonist. It is noted that the Samaritan woman attempted to bring two of her own ideologies in the dialogue, but they did not succeed. Firstly, in verse 9 she is focalised as holding to the system of social segregation between the Jews and the Samaritans, when she says,

πῶς σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὢν παρ' ἐμοῦ πρῆν αἰτεῖς γυναικὸς Σαμαρίτιδος οὔσης; οὐ γὰρ συγχρῶνται Ἰουδαῖοι Σαμαρίταις (How is it that you, being a Jew, ask a drink from me a Samaritan woman, because Jews have no dealings with Samaritans?)

Jesus responds to this, by indicating that she is still holding to this ideology because she does not know about the gift of God. The phrase “*εἰ ἤδεις τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ*” (*if you knew the gift of God*) shows that had the woman known the gift of God, she would not be holding to this ideology anymore. By this response the implied reader is duly warned to also distance themselves from such an ideological stance.

Secondly, the woman reveals that she knows no one, including Jesus, who is greater than her venerated father Jacob who gave her and her people the well (τὸ φρέαρ) to drink from. Jesus continues to neutralise and/or dismiss her ideology by highlighting the limitations of what Jacob had provided. He makes it clear that the water from Jacob's well can only provide temporary relief for thirst. In contrast, the waters he offers have the power to quench thirst permanently. Here, the reader should take note of Jesus' spiritual language versus the woman's earthly understanding. This invitation is also extended to the implied reader for consideration. Additionally, the woman's adherence to a system of worship, as highlighted by the Protagonist (Jesus), is portrayed as outdated and transient. Jesus suggests that the current system of worship is either losing its relevance or will soon fade away (4:20). On the contrary, the ideological facet of focalisation emphasises the dominance of Jesus' teachings. His identity and the essence of his teachings in this narrative align significantly with the Gospel as a whole, as observed earlier. Few examples can be drawn from the passage.

- In his *responsive speech act* in 4:10, Jesus reveals himself as the gift of God.⁴¹⁸ The revelation of the identity of Jesus begins to come out explicitly in the story. The phrase “...δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων σοι” (the gift of God and who it is who says to you), clearly emphasises the identity of Jesus in the passage. He is the very gift that comes from God who is talking to the Samaritan woman and the implied reader (through reading the text).
- In 4:26, Jesus explicitly introduces himself to the Samaritan woman as the Messiah, when he says: “ἐγὼ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι” (I who speak to you am he). In the Fourth Gospel, the expression “ἐγὼ εἰμι” (*I am*) is always declarative and emphatic and has a special reference to the deity of Christ (cf. Barrett, 1978:239).
- In 4:34, Jesus further identifies himself as “the one who has been sent” (τοῦ πέμπαντός) to come and finish the work of the one who sent him. And therefore, to do the will of the one who

⁴¹⁸ Bruce (1983:103; Schnackenburg, 1968:426) helpfully points out that “Jesus does not pursue the subject of the Jewish-Samaritan cleavage which she had introduced but lifts the topic of conversation to another plane.”

sent him, is his food (Schnackenburg, 1968:444; Barrett, 1978:240).⁴¹⁹ In this Jesus also reveals the transcendent nature of his origin (cf. 1:1-18). He was with God the Father from the beginning (1:1).

- John 4:42 is perhaps the most explicit and dominant ideological facet of Jesus in the passage. The Samaritans play a crucial role as evaluators of the Protagonist and his actions in the story. They assert their belief by saying to the woman: “οὐκέτι διὰ τὴν σὴν λαλίαν πιστεύομεν, αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀκηκόαμεν καὶ οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου” (*Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world*). In this utterance, the implied reader gets to realise that the narrative is focalised in such a way that the Protagonist is to be viewed as a unique character, different from what the woman knew, e.g., her venerated Father Jacob (cf. Schnackenburg, 1968:456-457).

From a performative point of view, it can be indicated from the above outlined ideological dimensions, that this type of focalisation has the potential to persuade the implied reader to focus only on the Protagonist and his ideology or teachings. This is fundamentally what the entire Gospel strives to do in the life of the implied reader. It seeks to introduce the implied reader to Christ and make an invitation to him/her to have faith in him so that he/she may have eternal life.

6.7 FOCALISATION AND ITS PERFORMATIVE NATURE IN JOHN 6:1-14 AND 22-71

6.7.1 Summary of the Story

John 6:1-14 and 22-71 is the narration of yet another⁴²⁰ miraculous sign performed by Jesus, namely: the feeding of a crowd of about 5,000 men (besides women and children) with five loaves and two fish (Barry *et al.* 2016). Keener (1993:278) notes that after speaking about Moses (5:45-47), Jesus goes on to perform a sign that might be expected of a new prophet like Moses (Deut

⁴¹⁹ Bruce (1983:113-114; cf. Lindars, 1972:194) says: “Part of the work which the Father gave him to do was to communicate his blessing to the woman of Synchar and through her to the other inhabitants of the place; the satisfaction which he now experienced through doing the Father’s will in this respect was greater than any satisfaction which bread could give.”

⁴²⁰ In 4:43-5:14, the text reports two miracles: the restoration of a child near death, and the other is the restoration of a long-term invalid to full health. These lead directly into one of Christ’s sermons on the source of life (Richards & Richards, 1987:720).

18:15), that is, providing manna to the people.⁴²¹ The signs performed by Jesus in the Gospel of John serve a specific purpose. Each sign is intended to direct the audience's attention to a profound teaching about Jesus as the Son of God or the Messiah. As aptly pointed out by Guthrie (1994:1037): "John calls them signs because they led people to seek for Jesus."⁴²² This sign happens during Jesus' public ministry, as evidenced by the large crowds that gathered around him.⁴²³

According to Guthrie (1994:1037-1038), this miracle is the only one which is recorded in all four Gospels (Matt 14:13-21; Mk 6:32-44; Lk 9:10-17). For this reason, only the special features of John's account will be mentioned here. John refers here to the *Sea of Tiberias*⁴²⁴ (v. 1), a name which was probably not used to describe the Sea of Galilee as early as the time of Jesus but was familiar at the time of writing (Guthrie, 1994:1037-1038). The characters involved are Jesus, his disciples, and the crowds who came looking for him because they saw the signs which he performed on those who were diseased (v. 2). The story is presented, generally, through the voice of the narrator (e.g., vv. 1-5, etc.); dialogues (e.g., vv. 7-10, etc.) and asides (v. 6).

⁴²¹ Bruce (1983:139; Lindars, 1972:234-235) opines, "The testimonies of Moses and Jesus are so closely interrelated that to believe one is to believe the other; to refuse one is to refuse the other."

⁴²² Richards and Richards (1987:720) comment, "John 6 tells first of the miracle of a few loaves and fishes multiplied to feed a great crowd. This miracle too leads directly to another major discourse: Jesus' sermon on the Bread of Life."

⁴²³ Keener (1993:278) highlights, "Those thought to be wonderworkers drew large followings in the ancient world, but most wonderworkers in this period did not emphasize teaching over miracles, in contrast to Jesus." He continues to point out, in reference to 6:15, that "Some other first-century leaders gathered large followings in the wilderness who believed that they could perform signs like Moses or Joshua and overthrow the Romans; see comment on 6:14. The crowds wanted a worker of earthly miracles and an earthly leader like Moses (some Jewish traditions—Philo, the rabbis, etc.—viewed Moses as a king; cf. Deut. 33:4–5); but this was not Jesus' mission (6:63). Perhaps threatened by the earthly emperor's claims to authority (see the introduction to Revelation), John's readers may have taken warning from this passage."

⁴²⁴ Barry *et al.* (2016) mention, "This alternative name for the Sea of Galilee also was the name of a city on its western shore. Tiberias was the largest and most important city in Galilee and was the regional capital for Herod Antipas." Keener (1993:278) adds: "Tiberias was a large, culturally Greek-oriented, city on the lake of Galilee, named for the emperor Tiberius and built by Herod Antipas on the site of a graveyard. This site effectively kept the most religious Jews out of the city and allowed Herod to dole out favours to allies without interference from other powerful Jews. It does not appear in the New Testament record apart from this mention and, like Sepphoris, the other large city of Galilee (also very Hellenized), does not seem to have been frequented by Jesus."

6.7.2 Types of Focalisation

From the reading and listening to the narrating voice in the passage, it can be asserted that the type of focalisation found in John 6:1-14 and 22-71 may be described as both external and internal. Regarding external focalisation, the focaliser is external to the story. He is an “onlooker” outside the space where the events are taking place but very close to the vehicle of focalisation (Tolmie, 1991:279). This type of focalisation may be described as narrator-focalisation. With regard to internal focalisation, the focaliser seems to have the ability to access the minds of the characters. Few scenarios can be cited here:

- In 6:2, the focaliser knows the reason why the crowd followed Jesus, i.e., “because they saw his signs which he performed on those who were diseased” (ὅτι ἐθεώρουν τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίει ἐπὶ τῶν ἀσθενούντων). Through internal focalisation, the implied reader has access to the minds of the crowd.
- In 6:5-6, the implied reader is assisted to gain access to Jesus’ mind through internal focalisation. The text reports as follows: “But this he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do” (τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγεν πειράζων αὐτόν· αὐτὸς γὰρ ᾔδει τί ἔμελλεν ποιεῖν). The implied reader gets to know that Jesus was only testing Phillip since Jesus knew what he would do in terms of feeding the crowd.
- In 6:15, the narrator-focaliser leads the implied reader into Jesus’ mind again. He knows the reason why Jesus departed to the mountain, i.e., “Therefore, when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he departed again to the mountain by himself alone” (Ἰησοῦς οὖν γνοὺς ὅτι μέλλουσιν ἔρχεσθαι καὶ ἀρπάζειν αὐτὸν ἵνα ποιήσωσιν βασιλέα, ἀνεχώρησεν πάλιν εἰς τὸ ὄρος αὐτὸς μόνος).
- In 6:61, the implied reader is led to the mind of Jesus again. The text reports that “When Jesus knew in himself that His disciples complained about this, he said to them: “Does this offend you?” (εἰδὼς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν ἑαυτῷ ὅτι γογγύζουσιν περὶ τούτου οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τοῦτο ὑμᾶς σκανδαλίζει). The narrator-focaliser assists the implied reader with the reason why Jesus confronted his disciples with a question regarding his teaching because the disciples were complaining about it.
- Lastly, in 6:64, the narrator-focaliser accesses Jesus’ mind and divine knowledge regarding the person who did not believe and would eventually betray him. The narrator-focaliser reports as follows, “For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him” (ᾔδει γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τίνες εἰσὶν οἱ μὴ πιστεύοντες καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ

παραδώσων αὐτόν). As already suggested and pointed out in the observations above, it may be concluded that this narrative is both externally and internally focalised. Besides being an “onlooker” to the story, the narrator-focaliser also has an ability to focalise the characters internally.

This type of focalisation has the potential to persuade the implied reader. The implied reader is challenged to rely on the narrator-focaliser since he proves that his focalisation is not restricted.

6.7.2.1 Facets of focalisation and their performative nature

6.7.2.1.1 The perceptual facet

The spatial facet of focalisation can be characterised as fixed or limited to specific scenes of miracles and the subsequent movements of the Protagonist, as well as the places of his teachings. For example, on the mountainside (6:1-15), in the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias (6:16-21), and the Synagogue in Capernaum (6:24). The implied reader does not get to be treated with a simultaneous type of focalisation of events in the story. When Jesus retreats to the mountainside (6:15), the narrator-focaliser remains with the disciples (6:16-19) until Jesus rejoins them in 6:20. When Jesus and the disciples are already in Capernaum (6:22-24), no activity is reported taking place there until the crowds find him (6:25) and begin to engage with him. This type of focalisation is notably different from the implied reader’s experience in 4:1-42. In this narrative, the narrator-focaliser remained exclusively with Jesus and his disciples and the message they were spreading to the crowds.

From a performative point of view, it can be indicated that the narrative is focalised in such a way that the implied reader’s view of the Protagonist and his ideological stance is not distracted by any other events happening elsewhere. This may serve to underscore how critically important the ideological facet of the Protagonist is valued in the narrative. Therefore, the ideology of the Protagonist is focalised and conveyed to the implied reader without any interruptions, and this is performative in its intent. The implied reader is invited and actually persuaded to focus on no other events than to fix their eyes and thoughts on the Protagonist.

The temporal dimension of focalisation is to a large extent similar to the spatial facet here. The temporal dimension of the narrator-focaliser is generally restricted to the present events. However, at least two exceptions perhaps can be cited. Firstly, as highlighted earlier, the narrator-focaliser shows that he knows about the miracle that is about to happen (6:6) before it actually happens. Here, the narrator-focaliser demonstrates that he has some knowledge about the “near future events” which the disciples are not aware of. Only he and the Protagonist know about it.

This aside spares the implied reader from tension and assists her/him to understand and follow the narrative without difficulties. In doing so, the narrator-focaliser ensures that the implied reader stays close to the narrative and ideology of Jesus in the text, since this is the main purpose of the Fourth Gospel.

Secondly, the narrator-focaliser knows about Judas and what he is going to do to the Lord in the future (6:64, 71). Again, only he and the Protagonist have this knowledge of the future events. This is of great assistance to the implied reader. The implied reader is already informed about the future, thus spared from surprises.

In summary, the temporal dimension of focalisation, in this regard, is performative in nature. As already highlighted above, the indication by the narrator-focaliser in 6:6 that Jesus *“said (this) to test him, for he knew what he was about to do”* (ἔλεγεν πειράζων αὐτόν· αὐτὸς γὰρ ᾔδει τί ἔμελλεν ποιεῖν), is an aside that is very helpful to the implied reader. Similarly, the aside regarding Judas in 6:64, 71, stating that *“for Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe and who would betray him”* (ᾔδει γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τίνες εἰσὶν οἱ μὴ πιστεύοντες καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ παραδώσων αὐτόν), holds critical importance in shaping the implied reader’s understanding of the content of Jesus’ utterance and the future events.

Through internal focalisation, the narrator-focaliser exhibits a caring and guiding presence towards the implied reader, aiming to ensure a proper understanding of the unfolding narrative. The implied reader benefits from this assistance, being placed in a position even more insightful than that of Philip or the other disciples themselves. With the narrator-focaliser’s detailed descriptions and insider knowledge of the characters, the implied reader reads the story of Jesus with heightened interest and clarity. As the implied reader is well taken care of in this process of reading, they may find themselves making personal decisions and forming a deeper engagement with the story. This may lead the implied reader to the point of making decisions as they read the story. This aligns with the Gospel’s overarching purpose (20:30-31) and is thus performative in nature.

6.7.2.1.2 Psychological facet

The cognitive component of focalisation can be described as both restricted and unrestricted knowledge of the narrator-focaliser. In the first place, it is restricted in the sense that the narrator-focaliser does not, at all times, possess the knowledge of why some utterances and actions are done in the manner they are done. However, it is noticed, on the other hand, that the narrator-focaliser does prove to have the ability to access the minds of the characters, as discussed above. Furthermore, it is noted that a large amount of information is conveyed by the Protagonist (Jesus),

as he responds to the Jewish opponents (6:43-51, 53-58, and 61-63, etc.). Here, Jesus is focalised as one who possesses extensive knowledge about his oneness with the Father and its implication for those who believe in him. The cognitive component of the narrator-focaliser is restricted to this knowledge. The Protagonist takes a responsibility to convey it himself to the implied reader. This has the potential to draw the attention of the implied reader to Jesus, as Jesus, himself, addresses her/him and ensures that the invitation to believe in him is clear. The implied reader gets a sense of a direct invitation to begin to build or strengthen her/his relationship with Jesus. The presentation of the ideological component of the Protagonist is, to the view of this study, so clear and direct that it does not leave the implied reader on a neutral ground but to have to make a choice. The result of the address can be noted in 6:66 (many left him and walked with him no more) but some, like Peter, remained, confessing that *“κύριε, πρὸς τίνα ἀπελευσόμεθα; ῥήματα ζωῆς αἰωνίου ἔχεις”* (*Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life*).

It can also be demonstrated, as alluded to in the discussion of the perceptual facet above, that the cognitive component is also unrestricted in some parts of the narrative. It has been indicated that the narrator-focaliser seems to possess some knowledge about the miracle itself (6:6) and the future of Judas Iscariot (6:64, 71).

The performative nature of the psychological facet is similar to that of the perceptual facet discussed above. In this regard, the narrator-focaliser takes some opportunity to build a relationship of trust between himself and the implied reader. This relationship is key since it has the potential to keep the implied reader's interest in the text and the revelation of who Jesus is, and what he expects the implied reader to do with what they are reading.

The emotive component of the Protagonist is focalised as neutral. The implied reader would expect the Protagonist to show a possible emotional change on three occasions, but this is not the case. Firstly, in the actual event of multiplying the bread and feeding the five thousand people in 6:5-14, Jesus reveals no emotion of joy or satisfaction. The Protagonist is focalised as “neutral” in showing emotions, but very much in control of the situation. This is encouraging and persuading to the implied reader. Jesus was more focused on the purpose, meaning, and implication of the sign than the sign itself.

Secondly, the Protagonist shows no emotions when talking about Judas as the one who did not believe and would subsequently betray him (6:64, 71). The Protagonist is focalised as calm in this emotion-provoking situation to the implied reader. Lastly, the great multitude of his disciples (probably the new converts) leave him, complaining that his teachings are hard. In a normal situation or the world of both the implied and real reader, this would be a huge setback and a

distressing moment to any leader of a ministry. However, Jesus remains emotionally calm. Instead of mourning about it, he further asks the remaining twelve if they also intend to go away.

Perhaps, it can be illustrated here that the calmness of the Protagonist is mainly based on his teaching in 6:65, that those who left never belonged to him, as the text reports,

διὰ τοῦτο εἶρηκα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με ἐὰν μὴ ἦ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς (therefore I have said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by my Father).

The Protagonist, in this regard, is focalised as totally in control of the situation and emotionally calm. Unless the interpreter of the text chooses to ingenuously ignore this textual evidence, the demonstration of Jesus' power and control over the situation is performative towards the implied reader. It openly invites/persuades him/her to believe in Jesus. The implied reader gets to experience a sober or calm handling of a situation, as he/she gets an opportunity to connect more and more with the Protagonist's teachings.

6.7.2.1.3 Ideological facet

The ideological facet in the narrative is presented through a single dominant perspective, that of Jesus Christ, the Protagonist. However, it is important to note that this perspective becomes especially prominent when the crowds ask questions seeking clarity and understanding (6:30-31). These questions are questions that seek clarity, not necessarily another ideology competing for recognition or dominance in the story. The miracle is focalised in such a way that the implied reader is confronted with the teaching or ideology of the Protagonist. Jesus is focalised as in charge of the proceedings and demonstrates his power from the beginning to the end of the narrative. Keener (1993:279; cf. Lindars, 1972:244) makes a critical ideological observation when he says that the story reveals Jesus as "the New Passover, New Manna and one greater than Moses." This observation is invaluable since it recognises that everything that is happening in the narrative points to Jesus and his sovereignty.

Few examples may be cited from the passage to elucidate this point,

- In 6:5-6, Jesus and his disciples face a challenging situation as a great multitude follows him, and there appears to be insufficient food to feed them, at least from the disciples' perspective. However, Jesus demonstrates his divine power by performing a miracle and miraculously feeds the entire crowd. By this miracle, he provides a "new manna" to Israel and demonstrates that he is greater than Moses. In this miracle, the ideology he propagates complements or fulfils that of Moses. Therefore, there is no need to still adhere to what God the Father has

done through Moses, if he is doing an even bigger fulfilment in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ (cf. Morris, 1971:363-364).

- In 6:20, when Jesus reunites with the disciples after they saw him walking on the water, he assures them that it is he, saying: “ἐγὼ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε” (*It is I or I am, do not be afraid*). Barry *et al.* (2016) comments in reference to the phrase ἐγὼ εἰμι, that the Greek phrase used here, literally rendered as “I am,” evokes the motif of Jesus’ “I am” sayings (cf. 4:26).⁴²⁵
- In 6:23, at least from the textual evidence at our disposal, the narrator-focaliser calls the Protagonist “the Lord,” revealing his own submission to the Lordship (κυρίως) of Jesus Christ in the text.
- In 6:29, Jesus explicitly calls people to believe in him whom God the Father has sent *into the world*.
- In 6:32, 38 and 41, Jesus reveals himself as the bread that came down from heaven. This was an immediate and more pragmatic application of the miracle he had just performed. The Protagonist shifts the focus from the physical bread which he has just provided to them, to his physical body that will be pierced for the sins of the world.⁴²⁶
- In 6:40, 44, Jesus confronts the audience by affirming that he has come from heaven, sent by the Father. This affirmation is a direct response to their earthly understanding of Jesus when they said, “οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ, οὗ ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα; πῶς νῦν λέγει ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβέβηκα” (*Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he says, ‘I have come down from heaven’?*). The implied reader should be in a better position to evaluate their misunderstanding since

⁴²⁵ Keener (1993:279) holds a similar view, saying: “It is ‘I’ (ἐγὼ εἰμι v. 20), is literally ‘I am.’ ‘It is I’ is a legitimate way to translate the phrase, and no doubt how Jesus intends the disciples to understand it; but given the context of Jesus walking on water, the nuance of deity in “I am” (Ex 3:14; Is. 41:4; 43:10, 13) is probably present. Several pagan miracle workers claimed to be able to walk on water, but these were not part of Palestinian Jewish tradition. In the Old Testament, Moses, Joshua, Elijah and Elisha all parted bodies of water, but only God trod upon the water (Job 9:8; cf. Ps 77:20).” However, Guthrie (1994:1038) cautions that “The words *It is I. Don’t be afraid* (20) are not to be invested with the aura which other great ‘I am’ sayings in John convey. The message here is that fear was banished in the presence of Jesus.”

⁴²⁶ Jamieson *et al.* (1997:138) comments, “[T]his verse is perhaps best left in its own transparent grandeur—holding up the Bread Itself as *divine, spiritual, and eternal*.”

they have already read the prologue of the Gospel.⁴²⁷ Jesus is focalised as the one who came from heaven to fulfil the Father's will.

- In 6:27, 53 and 62, the Protagonist explicitly calls himself the Son of Man⁴²⁸ upon whom God the Father has placed his seal.⁴²⁹
- Lastly, in 6:32, 39 and 65, Jesus speaks of God the Father as "my Father" (ὁ πατήρ μου), thereby sharply contrasting the phrase "οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν" (*your fathers*) in reference to the Jewish opponents in the narrative (cf. 6:58) and distinguishing himself as unique and having a special relationship with God the Father (cf. Lindars, 1972:258).

From the above citations, it is clear that Jesus is focalised throughout the narrative as a central figure, confident in his power to perform signs that call or persuade people (the implied reader included) to believe in him. He is not moved by the fact that one of his disciples will betray him, nor when many of his disciples left him. He is completely in control. This revelation is laid bare before the eyes of the implied reader.

From the performative point of view, it can be indicated that the ideological facet of focalisation is so clear and dominating that the implied reader cannot miss it while reading the text. The implied reader is persuaded to accept the Protagonist (Jesus) as the Son of God who came to redeem him/her. Tolmie (1991:284) points out that in accepting this ideological facet of the focalisation, the intended reader will receive eternal life.

⁴²⁷ See also Painter (2007:328) on similar argumentation commenting that "the appearance of Jesus is portrayed in various terms: as the coming of the light into the world of darkness (1:9, 3:19); the sending of the Son by the Father (3:16-17); and the incarnation of the Word (1:14)." See also Malina and Rohrbaugh (1998:34), who state, "The narrative of the prologue moves from the celestial realm of the God of Israel to the people of Israel, among whom the Word is embodied, and then back to the realm." Culpepper (1998:116; cf. Culpepper, 2016:3) also notes that "the most important function of the prologue is to prepare readers for reading the rest of the Gospel. In the prologue the narrator speaks, introducing the reader to the protagonist (Jesus), clarifying his origin and identity, and foreshadowing the plot and themes of the story that is about to be told."

⁴²⁸ Painter (1986:34) highlights that "The understanding of the Son of Man as a figure to be worshipped is distinctively Johannine."

⁴²⁹ In reference to the phrase "sealed by God the Father," Freeman and Chadwick (1998:514) indicate that "Herodotus gives an account of the ceremonies among the ancient Egyptians accompanying the selection of an animal for sacrifice. If, after careful search, the animal was found without blemish, the priest bound a label to his horns, applied wax to the label, and sealed it with his ring. This set it apart for sacrifice, and no animal could be offered unless it bore this seal."

With regard to Jesus' disciples, they are focalised differently from the Protagonist. They are the objects, and he is the subject. The narrator-focaliser focalises the disciples as completely dependent on Jesus' provisions, e.g., food (6:6), security (6:20), eternal life (6:68), etc. This type of focalisation is an intentional invitation to the implied reader as well. In one way or another, readers (implied or real) are aware of these social needs in their lives. The revelation that they can depend on Jesus for these needs is enticing to them.

6.8 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The main objective of this chapter was to conduct an analysis of three selected narratives of the Fourth Gospel using focalisation as an analytical tool. The aim was to demonstrate how the Fourth Gospel can be understood or treated as a performative text, captivating and influencing the implied reader through this methodological approach.

The study began by providing a concise summary of each selected narrative, outlining its unique setting and context. In this examination of the setting, the study delved into various aspects, such as space (where?), time (when?), the characters involved (who?), the central theme or plot (what?), and the manner in which the story is presented or focalised (how?).

6.8.1 The Narrative of Jesus and Nicodemus

In this narrative, the focalisation was described as external, indicating that the narrator is positioned outside the story. The narrator was described as a narrator-focaliser since he/she is close to the events of the story. He/she also had reliable insights into the story, and as a result, the implied reader can trust the perspective and information provided by the narrator. The analysis suggests that the role of the narrator-focaliser is commendable and does have the potential to encourage the implied reader to continue reading the story.

Regarding the three facets of focalisation, it was initially established that the perceptual facet, particularly in reference to the spatial dimension, is fixed or limited. The study observed, in reference to the spatial dimension, that Nicodemus' movement in the night (*νυκτὸς*) towards the Protagonist (Jesus who is already known to be the "true light") is rich with imagery of light and darkness, creating intrigue for the implied reader and therefore demonstrating a performative nature. The movement towards the focalised space (in the presence of Jesus – the true light), serves as an inviting aspect for the implied reader. As the reader engages with the story, this invitation beckons them to approach and encounter the transformative power represented by Jesus, the true light. The perceptual facet, regarding space, in this regard is judged as performative.

Regarding the temporal dimension of the narrator's focaliser, it was established that his temporal dimension was limited to the present experiences of the characters. However, the study suggested that the narrator-focaliser possessed some background knowledge of Nicodemus, namely, that he is a ruler of the Jews and is addressed as the teacher of Israel by the Protagonist. This information was noted as both surprising and disappointing to the implied reader, since Nicodemus was found lacking in terms of knowledge about the new birth. The implied reader would expect such a prominent religious figure in the community to have some knowledge about the matter. The essence of the performative nature of this revelation lies not only in its invitation for the implied reader to engage in a self-evaluation regarding their own knowledge of the new birth in Christ but also in its call to judge Nicodemus for his ignorance/cluelessness.

The psychological facet of focalisation of the narrator-focaliser was described as having a restricted cognitive component and a neutral emotive component. The text does not reveal him/her as possessing some knowledge about the narrated world, particularly the theme of new birth, which the Protagonist presents. It was also observed that this is not the case with regard to the Protagonist's cognitive component. The Protagonist proves to have extensive knowledge (theological truths) about the theme of new birth. The study concluded that this is performative since it invites and compels the implied reader to focus their attention on the Protagonist's teachings in the narrative. This eventually brings the implied reader to a position of decision-making about Jesus in the text.

The third facet of focalisation focused on the ideological perspective of the story. The study suggests, based on the evidence gathered from this text, that the ideological facet of John 3:1-21 aligns with that of the entire Fourth Gospel. The story is carefully formulated and presented in a way that highlights the dominance and allure of the Protagonist's ideology. Nicodemus only came to ask a few questions (two, to be precise – 3:4 and 9), which merely serve as a catalyst for Jesus' monologue (in terms of textual space).

The study views this biasness as intentional and performative towards the implied reader, since it does not give room for them to listen or to focus on any other religious ideology, e.g., that of Nicodemus – a Pharisee and a teacher of Israel. The story is focalised in such a manner that the implied reader is protected from any other harmful or wrong teaching (at least from the perspective of Jesus).

Such a choice of formulating and concluding the story or dialogue is performative in its intent. The implied reader is left to make their own decision about Christ.

6.8.2 The Narrative of Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

The type of focalisation of the story was described as both external and internal. In as far as its external nature is concerned, it was observed that the story is presented through a report given by the narrator (narrator-focaliser) to the implied reader. This type of focalisation has been viewed as having the potential to strengthen the relationship between the narrator-focaliser and the implied reader and is thus performative in nature.

Regarding the internal focalisation of the story, the narrator-focaliser focalises the characters, the Protagonist, the disciples, and the Samaritans in particular, internally (e.g., 4:1, 4:2). By adopting this internal focalisation, the narrator-focaliser leads the implied reader into the mind of the characters. This has been viewed as having the potential to persuade the implied reader to make decisions about what they are being informed about. The study has previously explored this phenomenon in the chapter dealing with asides.

In the discussion of the three facets of focalisation, it was established, first, that the perceptual facet of focalisation in this story is such, that the narrator-focaliser is not limited to one view but can focus simultaneously on events at the well (between Jesus and the woman, 4:7-27) and the events happening in the city (4:28-30). This type of focalisation allows the implied reader to have a full textual view of how people are responding to the call of the Protagonist to believe in him. This is deemed as performative since it also persuades the implied reader to make a decision or to respond to the call of Jesus to believe in him or strengthen their relationship with him.

The temporal dimension of the narrative reveals that the narrator-focaliser is not restricted to describing the present and past events of Jesus and his disciples but is restricted to future events. Concerning the past and present, the narrator-focaliser knows about the Jewish opponents' complaint about Jesus making and baptising more disciples than John, and that is the reason why Jesus leaves Judaea (internal focalisation). The knowledge of the narrator-focaliser about the past and present events of Jesus and his disciples is performative in that it is informative to the implied reader. Background notes are essential to the implied reader. They assist the implied reader to have a broader view or information about the character. This information is important as the implied reader cannot make any decision or choice without it.

The psychological facet revealed that the narrator-focaliser seems to have a limited knowledge of the Protagonist. The narrative, with the exception of 4:1-4, does not provide any asides or notes to prove that the narrator-focaliser possesses additional insight into the reasons behind certain utterances or their specific manner. His knowledge is also not superior to that of the disciples, as his knowledge is restricted in this regard.

It was observed that this is not the case in some narratives of the Fourth Gospel, e.g., 18:9 and 18:32. In these two examples, the narrator-focaliser provides notes to help the implied reader to understand why utterances are produced in the way they are produced. It was asserted that whenever the narrator-focaliser's knowledge is restricted, the narrative enters into dialogue mode between the Protagonist and other characters. The Protagonist is focalised as the producer and distributor of knowledge about his ideological position. Jesus possesses all knowledge about salvation. He invites people to believe in him. He also has the power to reveal the personal secrets of the Samaritan woman. This was rendered as performative since it does not leave the implied reader in a neutral position. The implied reader is invited to decide to either associate him/herself with the Protagonist or reject him.

With respect to the emotional facet of focalisation, it was established that Jesus is focalised as calm, except in 4:6 where the text reports that Jesus was tired because of the journey. Throughout the rest of the story, the Protagonist remains calm, taking his time to teach and elaborate on matters of salvation to the Samaritan woman. Jesus is focalised as calm and in total control of the dialogue proceedings. The implied reader is invited to experience this calm approach by Jesus. This has the potential to persuade the implied reader to make decisions as he/she participates in the dialogue by listening as they read the story.

From a performative point of view, the narrative is focalised in such a way that the implied reader is persuaded to associate themselves with the teachings of the Protagonist. The fact that he is calm and has everything under control is both encouraging and enticing to the implied reader.

The ideological facet of focalisation emphasises the dominance of the Protagonist's ideological position and teachings. The matter of Jesus' identity, for example, holds significant prominence in the dialogue, as he seeks to persuade the woman to believe in him.

The dominance of Jesus' ideological teachings proves that the story is focalised with the aim to invite the implied reader to focus only on the Protagonist and what he represents. It leaves the implied reader with little or no choice but to decide either to accept or reject him.

6.8.3 The Miracle of the Feeding of Five Thousand

The type of focalisation in this story has been described as both external and internal. From the reading of the story, the implied reader clearly hears the voice of the narrator in the passage. External focalisation assists the implied reader with information-sharing and is important to the implied reader. It equips the implied reader with essential knowledge, enabling them to make informed decisions as they delve further into the story about Jesus.

It was also established, based on the observations in the story, that certain parts of the narrative can be described as internally focalised. As previously mentioned, in this type of focalisation, the Protagonist or a character is focalised internally, with notes or asides that provide insight into their thoughts and/or feelings (6:6).

Another critical aspect of the external focalisation of the narrative is the dialogue between the characters. The Protagonist seizes the opportunity to advance his ideological facet in the story (6:32-33, 35-40). This type of focalisation directly addresses the implied reader, with the potential to persuade him/her to make decisions – either to accept or reject Jesus. It is worth emphasising that the believing reader is consistently encouraged in their faith through this focalisation.

The spatial facet of focalisation was identified as fixed or limited to the specific scene of the miracle and the subsequent movements and teachings of the Protagonist, such as those occurring in the Synagogue in Capernaum (6:24). The implied reader does not have the opportunity to experience simultaneous focalisation, for instance, when Jesus retreated to the mountainside (6:15) or walked on the waters as he rejoined his disciples. When Jesus and the disciples are already in Capernaum (6:22-24), no activity is reported as taking place there, until the crowds found him (6:25) and began to engage with him. In this narrative, the narrator-focaliser remained exclusively focused on Jesus (and his disciples) and his teachings. The implied reader's view is also limited to the space where the Protagonist is. The implied reader is not distracted by any other events happening elsewhere. This type of focalisation keeps the reader's thoughts focused on the identity and the work of the Protagonist and the values he represents in the story. The implied reader is persuaded to accept Jesus as he moves from one place to the other teaching and calling people to believe in him.

The temporal dimension of focalisation is to a large extent similar to the spatial facet here. The temporal dimension of the narrator-focaliser is generally restricted to the present events, again emphasising the seriousness with which the implied reader is encouraged to view the present events of the characters, particularly the Protagonist. It can be argued that the temporal dimension of focalisation, in this regard, is also performative in nature. It clearly wants to connect the implied reader with Jesus.

Regarding the psychological facet, specifically the cognitive component, the study regarded it as encompassing both restricted and unrestricted knowledge of the focaliser. It is restricted in the sense that the narrative does not use the narrator-focaliser to convey all the new information. It is noticed, however, that some critical information is internally focalised through the ability of the narrator-focaliser to access the minds of the characters in the story, e.g., 6:2, 6:5-6, 6:15, and 6:61 and 64.

The ideological facet in the narrative is presented through a single dominant perspective in favour of the Protagonist. The miracle is focalised in a way that the implied reader realises that Jesus is in charge of everything from the beginning to the end of the narrative.

based on the textual citations, a convincing argument was presented that Jesus is focalised as a central figure, displaying unwavering confidence in his power to perform miracles, and remaining unfazed by the prospect of betrayal by one of his disciples or the departure of many others. The ideological facet of focalisation was aptly described as performative, as its primary aim is to persuade the implied reader to accept Jesus, the Protagonist, as the son of God.

With regard to Jesus' disciples, the study suggested that they are focalised as completely dependent on Jesus, e.g., regarding food (6:6), security (6:20), and eternal life (6:68). This type of focalisation was described as performative since it entices the reader (implied or real) to believe in Jesus so that he/she may also be assured to have their needs taken care of in their lives.

The summary provided above aligns, to a significant extent, with the central theoretical argument of this chapter, which is that focalisation plays a crucial role in assisting the interpreter or the implied reader of the Fourth Gospel to recognise its performative nature. The three narratives analysed here were used as examples to demonstrate this phenomenon. Focalisation does have the potential to persuade the implied reader to focus on the Protagonist's ideological stance and subsequently entice the implied reader to make decisions as they read the text. It was also demonstrated that all the aspects of the settings of the narratives, including space, time, characters, content of the dialogue, and how the narrative is presented, synergistically contribute to enhancing and/or reinforcing the achievement of the central purpose of the Fourth Gospel, as stated in 20:30-31.

Chapter 7

Summary & Contribution of the Research

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The goal of this study was to conduct a literary analysis of the Fourth Gospel, focusing on its various literary devices to showcase their performative nature towards the implied reader. Through the analysis, it became evident that the performative nature of the text not only impacts the implied reader but also extends its influence on the real reader who 'identifies' with the implied reader's perspective. Chapters 2 to 5 were examined using a speech act interpretive approach, as outlined in Chapter 1 during the discussion of the methodology. The analysis in Chapter 6 was carried out using focalisation as an analytical tool. The primary objective, likewise, was to demonstrate the extent to which focalisation (the selection of narrative information by the implied author) invites the implied reader to participate in the text, i.e., its performative nature.

The following section provides a summary of the findings which, in essence, is the contribution of the study.

7.2 CHAPTER 1 (INTRODUCTION)

This chapter served as an introduction to the entire study. It solely discussed the layout of the entire research. The chapter presented the definitions of concepts used in this research, the problem statement, the general central theoretical argument, and its motivation, all pertaining to the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. The chapter further stated the aim and objectives of the study, followed by the discussion of the methodological approaches that would be applied to investigate the stated research questions in each chapter of the study. Additionally, a brief overview of some recent research related to the study of literary devices and their performative nature in the Fourth Gospel was also discussed.

7.3 CHAPTER 2 (MISUNDERSTANDING)

The primary goal of this chapter was to conduct a literary analysis of the text of the Fourth Gospel, investigating the performative nature of misunderstanding as a literary device. As stated in Chapter 1, the analysis was done from the speech act interpretive angle. It is emphasised that the methodology was limited to only establishing the kind of utterances in the narratives of the Fourth Gospel and how these utterances create misunderstanding between the characters, particularly the hearers of Jesus. The process of analysis involved reading the text and identifying passages or narrative units where misunderstandings occurred. Additionally, a brief discussion was conducted on the setting within which the utterances were made.

The analysis confirmed that misunderstanding can be perceived as an intentional communicative strategy in the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, it revealed that the implied author utilises this literary device to influence the implied reader. The subsequent result of this communicative strategy is such that the implied reader is exposed to the misunderstanding occurring in the text but is never a victim of it. The implied reader is effectively spared from being a victim of misunderstanding by the author's comments (asides).

The text is composed or narrated in a manner that grants the implied reader full knowledge of the meaning and possible intention behind particular statements or actions. As a result, the implied reader is spared from aligning with the "outsiders" (characters) who misunderstand Jesus in the story. This aspect holds great significance for the implied reader. It clearly demonstrates that the author is constantly mindful of engaging the implied reader through his communication strategy, thereby making the text inherently performative in nature. This intentional engagement of the implied reader was highlighted in the analysis of texts like 2:19-21 (the narrative of the cleansing of the temple); 7:35, 8:21, 11:11-13 (the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead); and 13:33 (the misunderstanding that arose from Jesus's assertive: "*ὑπάγω*" (*I depart*)).

The study further established that through misunderstanding, some characters are made to sound and appear less intelligent to attract the implied reader than others. Consequently, the implied reader is persuaded to disassociate themselves from such characters in the story. In this way, the implied reader feels cognitively elevated above such characters, since they appear to know less while the implied reader is provided with all the information by the narrator. Therefore, the implied reader feels superior (in knowledge) over a less intelligent character and can also cast judgmental shadows over them. Examples of these are the account of Nicodemus' visit to Jesus (3:3, 7), the healing of the man born blind (9:39, 40 and 41), and the washing of the disciples' feet (13:1-8, 34-35). The implied reader is thus persuaded to make decisions to associate her/himself with the "insider" – Jesus Christ – who proves to have the necessary knowledge about the topic under discussion in the story.

The analysis further established that on some occasions the characters who misunderstand are the very disciples of Jesus (e.g., 13:1-8 – the washing of the disciples' feet, and 11:11 – the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead). They subsequently assume the status of "outsiders" since they do not represent, at that moment, the ideology and values that the author desires to promote in relation to Jesus – the Protagonist in the story.

The study also suggested that another performative element to the implied reader occurs when the text is presented in a manner that it does not only persuade them to associate themselves with the "perfect characters" or the "insider" in the story but also associate themselves with

characters who have made mistakes and later changed. The appropriate example in this case would be the Samaritan woman's story (4:1-54). Misunderstanding in this narrative differs from that of Nicodemus in that the implied reader gets to know instantly how her life was transformed. The implied reader is persuaded to admire such kind of character development. A woman who initially showed no willingness to assist Jesus due to possible cultural and religious prejudices is now transformed to become a herald of the good news about the Messiah in her own community.

Contrary to this character development, the Nicodemus narrative is an open-ended dialogue (mainly a monologue of Jesus). The implied reader doesn't immediately get to know whether Nicodemus' life was transformed or not, well, not until 7:50 and 19:39.

Reading and analysing the Fourth Gospel in this way proved to be yet another insightful way of looking at how the implied author uses this literary device to invite participation from the implied reader. It can, therefore, be confidently asserted that the occurrence and prevalence of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel is not accidental but rather an intentional communicative strategy employed by the author. This deliberate strategy serves a performative intent, aimed at impacting the implied reader as they engage with the text. This manner of formulating the text is indicative of the implied author's intention to achieve something in the life of the implied reader. The chapter asserts that the occurrence and role of misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel is consistent with its overall purpose as mentioned in 20:30-31.

7.4 CHAPTER 3 (IRONY)

The primary objective of this chapter was to conduct a literary analysis of selected narratives to demonstrate that irony, as a literary device, assists the implied reader to notice that the Fourth Gospel can function as a performative text. From the stated methodology, the chapter hypothesised that irony contributes to the performative nature of the Gospel.

The chapter acknowledged the abundance of ironic utterances in the Fourth Gospel; thus, it is essential to note that discussing every instance of irony in the Gospel would exceed the scope of the chapter. Consequently, the analysis involved identifying and selecting the passages or narrative units where irony occurs, briefly discussing the setting of the story, and elaborating on the type of utterance (illocutions). The chapter also considered the performative nature of irony, the final analysis of which is discussed under the perlocutionary acts of the utterance.

Based on the analysis of 2:16-20 (Jesus cleanses the temple), it was observed that some utterances in the Fourth Gospel portray characters as victims of irony, but this is not the case for the implied reader. The study found that the narrator, through asides, ensures that the implied

reader comprehends the intended meaning. Through this use of irony, the implied author effectively impacts the implied reader and achieves his/her goal in this/her life.

With reference to the irony discussed in 4:12, the study noted that irony can be caused by false assumptions. The Samaritan woman assumes that Jacob is greater than Jesus. As discussed, the woman's failure to see and acknowledge the superiority of Jesus constitutes the irony, since this is not the case in the implied reader's superior knowledge. These kinds of ironic utterances are deemed performative since they sensitise the implied reader's interest to seek the truth in the text.

Another type of irony that was discussed (7:42) is that of false claim to knowledge (Duke, 1985:64). The Jews rejected Jesus because of his origin (the one that they know), without conducting a proper investigation of the matter. The essence of this irony is based on their ignorance. Again, the irony appeals to the implied reader's superior knowledge about Jesus' origin. The irony is performative since it cognitively engages and persuades the implied reader to participate in the text by associating him/herself with the implied author's point of view. Both the implied author and the implied reader know the true origin of Jesus.

The chapter further discussed the irony in 9:29. Again, the Jewish opponents are perceived as victims of irony. According to their claim, Moses came from God because God spoke to him, but Jesus came from nowhere, definitely not from God, because no one knows Jesus' origin nor identity. The irony is again based on their ignorance of Jesus' origin. However, the implied reader recognises the irony in this claim. He/she knows that Jesus is "from God" (1:1-18; 9:33). The analysis in 11:50 is classified under extended irony by Duke (Unconscious prophecy and testimony). Caiaphas' utterance is judged as ironic to the implied reader. However, the narrator ensures that the implied reader does not miss it through his aside or comment in 11:51. The high priest says that it would be better to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed (11:50). Jesus did die to save the nation. The high priest does not realise the truth of his words and obviously he did not intend it the way it turned out. By means of an aside, the implied author winks and smiles to sensitise the implied reader's interest in the truth that Caiaphas has declared unknowingly. Subsequently, the implied reader is coaxed into sharing the implied author's point of view about the sacrificial death of Jesus. In this way, the implied author manages to get this message across to the implied reader so that they may believe in Jesus Christ.

The irony in 12:4-6 was based on the character of Judas Iscariot whom the narrator has already described as the one who will betray Jesus (6:71; 12:4). With this superior knowledge about Judas, the implied reader meets Judas expressing his disapproval of Mary's kind action towards

Jesus. The narrator informs the implied reader (by means of an aside in 12:6) that Judas is lying. Judas' intention is to sell the fragrant so that he can steal the money. The two levels of communication are noted as both surprising and amusing to the implied reader (who already know who Judas is). The irony is a warning to the implied reader not to associate themselves with such characters in the text. Through irony, the implied reader is persuaded to denounce the hypocritical ways of Judas and be associated with Christ who gives eternal life to those who believe in Him.

The irony in 19:19 and 22 was about an unconscious prophecy and testimony by Pilate. This irony is similar to that of 11:50. The chief priest and the Jewish opponents are displeased with the title written on the cross of Jesus. The chief priest submits an alternative phrase to clarify that this is not a title but a claim made by Jesus, but Pilate dismisses their request. In his response, he confirms that he has made up his mind; the title shall be: "Jesus King of the Jews." Based on the superior knowledge of the implied reader, Pilate's decision is true. Both the implied author and the implied reader watch with amusement as Pilate prophesies unknowingly. In this way, the irony persuades the implied reader to see and accept Jesus as the king to whom they must also submit.

Lastly, the performative nature of irony was explored in the question asked by the two angels and the resurrected Christ: "Γύναι, τί κλαίεις" (Woman, why are you weeping?) in 20:13, 15. As Mary wept and walked around the garden, the implied reader already knows what is going on in the text. Cognitively and emotionally, the irony influences the implied reader to continue reading the text eagerly anticipating witnessing the end of Mary's search of the resurrected Christ. By virtue of irony, the author successfully invites the implied reader to adopt his point of view regarding the resurrection of Christ.

The analysis of the performative nature of irony confirmed that this literary device contributes to the implied author's intent to impact the life of the implied reader. The study provided evidence to support that irony, as used in the Fourth Gospel, was intentionally employed to achieve a performative effect on the implied reader, influencing their understanding, perception, and response to the narrative. It is part of the author's communicative strategy aimed at stimulating the implied reader's interest, and subsequently, bringing him/her to faith in Jesus Christ, as pointed out in the overall purpose of the Gospel in 20:30-31.

7.5 CHAPTER 4 (FORENSIC DIALOGUES)

The goal of this chapter was to conduct an analysis of the text of the Fourth Gospel to demonstrate the performative nature of the forensic dialogues in the text. The exploration was undertaken from the speech act interpretive angle, and it involved identifying the passages or narrative units where forensic dialogue occurred. The chapter briefly discussed the setting within which the utterances

were made and proceeded with the analysis of both the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, in its quest to demonstrate the performative nature of this literary device. The findings and contribution of the study are summarised below.

The analysis of 5:1-47 is the story of the healing of an impotent man at the pool of Bethzatha in Jerusalem (5:1-8). In this forensic dialogue, Jesus is the accused, and the Jewish opponents are the accusers and judges. The first charge, as highlighted in 5:16, is breaking the Sabbath law. The Jewish opponents condemn Jesus for performing a miracle on the Sabbath day. For this charge, the Jewish opponents persecute Jesus.

In his defence, Jesus asserts that what he does is no different from what the Father (whom the accusers claim to believe in) has been doing since the inception of the creation. The Father has been working, and so does Jesus. In this trial, God the Father is consequently presented as the witness of Jesus. Through question-response speech acts, the implied reader is invited to take part in the dialogue by listening to both sides and weighing the (defence) arguments of both parties in order to make their own judgement. The implied reader learns that the Jewish opponents make accusations based on their lack of knowledge of who Jesus is and how he is related to the Father. Cognitively, the unfolding of the trial invites the implied reader to judge the Jewish opponents since they make baseless accusations because of their lack of knowledge. The study notes a dramatic change of roles in the narrative. The judges and accusers (Jewish opponents) are themselves accused and judged by the implied reader. In this manner, the forensic dialogue proves to function performatively, in that the implied reader is subsequently drawn into the text and becomes a participating character.

The trial continues with the Jewish opponents levelling the second charge against Jesus, that is, Jesus did not only break the Sabbath law, but he claims that God is his Father, making himself equal with God (blasphemy). To this charge, the accusers and judges want to kill Jesus. Therefore, the sentence for Jesus' act of blasphemy is death.

In 5:19-45, Jesus eloquently defends the second accusation, providing a robust defence of what he does (5:1-15) and says (5:17). The implied reader is also invited to listen and evaluate this defence argument. Jesus confirms that he is equal to the Father in power and authority. To the first defence, he confirms that the Father has shown him everything he does (because of his love for the son), e.g., the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, and this forms the basis of why he does the same. Furthermore, he asserts in 5:22-30 that he is equal with the Father in authority to execute judgement. The irony imbedded in this *assertive* speech is noted. The implied reader, on the one hand, learns that the Jewish opponents charge Jesus for breaking the Sabbath law and blasphemy, and subsequently persecute him and seek to put him to death. The implied

reader, on the other hand, realises/knows that Jesus (the accused) is actually the righteous Judge, and not the Jewish opponents.

As the trial continues, Jesus brings four witnesses to back his defence in this forensic proceeding viz. John the Baptist (5:32-33), the “works” God the Father gave Jesus to do (5:36), God the Father Himself (5:37-38), the Scriptures (5:39), and Moses (5:46-47). The study noted that all these witnesses are also submitted to the implied reader to cross-examine them (as he/she goes back to read more about them in the text and relevant supplementary sources). The implied reader is therefore provided with sufficient evidence and witnesses to make his/her own judgement in this trial. In this manner, the forensic dialogue functions as a performative element to the implied reader.

The chapter continued with the analysis of the story of the healing of the man born blind (9:13-34). In this narrative, Jesus is again the accused, and the Jewish opponents are both accusers and judges in the trial. The parents of the man born blind and the blind man (now healed) himself are identified as witnesses of Jesus. Jesus is accused of breaking the Sabbath law since he healed the man born blind on a Sabbath. It is noted that Jesus does not participate directly in many of the dialogues between the Jewish opponents and both the parents and the man born blind. However, the Jewish opponents look for a way to find him guilty of breaking the Sabbath law through interrogating the people.

Since Jesus healed the man born blind on the Sabbath, the Jewish opponents pronounce that Jesus is not from God. However, the study indicates that contrary to this pronouncement, the implied reader of the Gospel is cognitively aware that Jesus comes from God (1:1-14). Consequently, the text invites the implied reader to make their own judgement in accordance with their knowledge about the origin of Jesus. The implied reader is expected to either endorse the “accusers or judges” or “the accused” in the trial. It is also noted that the trial (*noted as juridical procedure 2*) ends with the Jewish opponents divided amongst themselves. The analysis notes that the nature of the text is performative in that it does not leave the implied reader on a neutral ground but forces them to choose a side.

The study further suggested that the nature of the text is such that the implied reader, who believes in Christ, should also be prepared to participate in the text as a witness of Jesus Christ in this trial, since he/she already knows and believes in Jesus.

The analysis of 10:22-39 discussed the performative nature of forensic dialogue during the exchange between Jesus and the Jewish opponents at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem. The exchange is reported as taking place in the temple in the Porch of Solomon. The Jewish

opponents are interested in ascertaining whether Jesus is the Christ or not. The analysis established that this investigation is rather amusing to the implied reader. The implied reader who has read the Gospel is fully aware that Jesus is indeed the Christ (4:24; 10:17; 10:25), while the Jewish opponents cannot see this obvious truth before them. Jesus in verses 25-30 implicitly accepts that he is the Christ, and that only those who believe his words and works can perceive this. In this, Jesus defends himself by telling the Jewish opponents that his works are proof that he is the Christ. Subsequently, the Jewish opponents accuse Jesus of blasphemy (v. 33).

The study noted that the Jewish opponents' downfall is their own lack of knowledge of who Jesus is and, of course, their disbelief. Jesus' defence in this regard is deemed performative since it brings assurance and persuades the implied reader to believe in him. The implied reader is enabled to realise that the Jewish opponents' accusations are not true and therefore they are comforted to hear this defence from Jesus. It is asserted that this defence has the power to invite the implied reader to judge the Jewish opponents.

The Jewish opponents find Jesus guilty of blasphemy and attempt to stone him. Even though they appreciate his good works, they still do not believe that he is from God. The study, however, finds the sentence unfair and unjust, since the implied reader's knowledge of Christ is better than that of the Jewish opponents in the text. It is asserted that the judges and accusers in the text should, in fact, be the ones to be accused and judged for rejecting the Christ who comes from God.

Section 18:12–19:16 covers the narrative of Jesus' trial. The analysis first focuses on section 18:12-23, which is the story of the trial before Annas. The narrative covers the event of Jesus' arrest, Peter's first denial of Jesus, and Jesus' first interrogation by Annas. Jesus is accompanied by two of his disciples in this trial, that is, Simon Peter and another disciple whose name is not mentioned. The introduction of these two disciples is noted as having the potential to create expectations in the mind of the reader. The implied reader anticipates that the two disciples will support Jesus and act as witnesses during the trial. However, this expectation is shattered when they, especially Peter, end up denying Jesus instead of being faithful witnesses. This dramatic turn of the events is surprising to the implied reader. The story engages the implied reader to remain close to the story of Jesus in this trial. In this way the text serves to call the implied reader to have faith in Jesus.

Jesus' interrogation in verse 19 is about his disciples and his doctrine (*περι τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περι τῆς διδασχῆς αὐτοῦ*). It is not immediately clear what exactly Annas wanted to know regarding these two aspects about Jesus. Considering the context of the trial and the accusations being made, it is argued that Annas seeks to determine whether Jesus is a revolutionary and whether His teachings go against the Law and Moses. To this possible allegation, Jesus (vv. 20-

21) defends himself. He further reveals that he has many witnesses who listened to (the Jewish opponents and the implied reader included) and believed his teachings. The implied reader is also prompted to be prepared to give an account of what they read and learn from the text about Jesus. Despite Jesus' defence, there is no response from the Jewish opponents, except for the blow from the officer. In this manner, Jesus has the final say in the trial, and it concludes in his favour. The implied reader is persuaded to judge the Jewish opponents, since they do not find Jesus guilty of anything. The story encourages the implied reader to remain engaged in the trial proceedings as it has just commenced, inviting them to witness how the trial unfolds and concludes.

The trial before Caiaphas (18:24-27) revolves around Jesus, but it is not primarily focused on him; rather, the spotlight is on Simon Peter. The implied reader is informed that Jesus is still bound when he is sent to Caiaphas. The implied reader is left with the picture of the humiliation Jesus is suffering at the hands of the Jewish opponents. The trial immediately shifts its focus to the interrogation of Simon Peter regarding Jesus. It concludes with the confirmation that Peter did indeed deny Jesus three times, just as predicted, right after the rooster crowed. It is asserted that, on the one hand, Peter's denial of Jesus is not only surprising but shocking to the implied reader. The implied reader would expect a character of Peter's stature to stand in support of Jesus. However, this is not the case. On the other hand, it confirms the fulfilment of Jesus' prediction to the implied reader. The conclusion has the power to first challenge the implied reader's loyalty to Jesus. As Peter denies Jesus, the implied reader is prompted to engage in self-introspection concerning their own relationship with Jesus. The conclusion appeals to the implied reader to place trust in the promises and predictions of Jesus. The text portrays Jesus as someone who can be relied upon and trusted by the implied reader. The study notes that the text challenges the implied reader to take serious cognisance of the fact that while Jesus endures humiliation in defence of his disciples and his teachings, two of his own disciples are doing the opposite, namely Judas (18:3) and Peter (18:17, 24-26). The text has the potential to persuade the implied reader to reassess their commitment to Jesus. Accordingly, the faith of the implied reader is not left unchallenged by this forensic proceeding.

The analysis of the first Roman trial (18:28-38) takes place in the Praetorium, where the Jewish opponents did not enter because they fear that they will become ceremonially unclean before the Passover. The study noted that the first trial before Pilate is not short of drama and irony. First, the Jewish opponents fear to be defiled but do not fear to commit murder of an innocent person (Jesus). Pilate first interrogates the Jewish opponents. He asks them the reason for bringing Jesus to him. He wants to establish the accusations they have against him. The Jewish opponents allege that Jesus is an evildoer, and this is the reason why they bring him to Pilate. The text, in

this regard, is performative, in that it persuades the implied reader to continue seeing the Jewish opponents as mere accusers without concrete evidence to put Jesus to death. Consequently, the text invites the reader to continue judging/condemning the Jewish opponents. In this way, the reader continues to participate in the trial as a judge as they read the story.

Since Pilate is not able to establish any wrongdoing from the side of Jesus, he tells the Jewish opponents to take Jesus and judge him according to their (Jewish) law. The Jewish opponents tell Pilate that it is not lawful for them to put anyone to death, thus making them not only accusers but also protesters. The text continues to portray the Jewish opponents in a negative way, and this has a performative element in it. The more the text portrays them in a negative way, the more the reader wants to disassociate him/herself from them and consequently choose the side of Jesus.

In the Praetorium, Pilate interrogates Jesus regarding his kingship. The question about Jesus' kingship is easily connected by the reader based on their gathered knowledge about Jesus. The interrogation is inviting and amusing to the implied reader, who already perceives Jesus as King and comprehends the nature of his kingship. The text has the potential to persuade the reader to take Jesus' side, as it consistently presents him as innocent and faultless.

Following this, Jesus imparts a lecture to Pilate about the unique nature of his kingdom (v. 36). This teaching has been recognised as encouraging to the faith of the reader. The debate regarding the nature of Jesus' kingship and kingdom stands in stark contrast to that of the world, and it proves persuasive to the reader. The reader is presented with a challenge to make a decisive choice between the two kingdoms, making the text inherently performative in nature. The narrative does not allow the reader to remain neutral but compels them to take a stand and make a choice.

Finally, Pilate hands down the verdict, pronouncing Jesus not guilty of any wrongdoing. The reader must accept the judgement and remain encouraged in their faith in Jesus.

The second Roman trial before Pilate (18:39–19:16) is mainly a dialogue between Pilate and the Jewish opponents. The setting of the dialogue is outside the Praetorium and once inside the Praetorium (vv. 10-11). In this forensic procedure, Pilate continues to pronounce that Jesus is not guilty of any wrongdoing. However, the Jewish opponents persist with their accusation and are desperately determined to crucify Jesus. The study shows that this development is ironic in that the Jewish opponents are willing to let Barabbas, a robber, walk free, while Jesus (the blameless Lamb of God) continues to suffer even when pronounced not guilty by Pilate (v. 5a). The reader realises this ironic situation, which is also performative in nature. Since the reader realises what

is happening, he/she is drawn towards the character of Jesus and encouraged to have faith in him.

In 19:7, the reader learns that the Jewish opponents continue with their desperation to crucify Jesus. In verse 7, they charge Jesus with blasphemy, and consequently, the sentence is death. This study considers their new formulation of the charge as dramatic and surprising, to say the least, indicating its performative nature. It encourages the reader to view the Jewish opponents as desperate accusers with no basis for their accusations. Thus, the reader is persuaded to judge them.

In the dialogue between Jesus and Pilate (v. 10), Pilate claims to possess power to either crucify or to release Jesus. In this claim, the study notes the irony created. The reader is aware that Jesus, not Pilate, holds ultimate control. While Pilate brags about his earthly authority, the reader understands that Jesus is the Son of God (1:29-34) and that his dominion transcends this worldly realm, being of heavenly origin. Thus, it is Jesus who is truly in control. Pilate subsequently hands Jesus over to be crucified (v. 16). This act persuades the reader to accept the final verdict with comfort in heart, accepting that this is the fulfilment of God's plan for the salvation of those who believe in his Son.

The presence of literary devices, such as misunderstanding and irony, has already been established in the Fourth Gospel. Additionally, the use of forensic language serves as more than just a textual decoration; it is, in fact, an intentional communicative strategy employed by the implied author to reinforce the central purpose of the Gospel. The trial motifs/forensic dialogues in the Fourth Gospel have a performative intent toward the reader.

7.6 CHAPTER 5 (ASIDES AND REPETITION)

The goal of this chapter was to analyse the use of asides and repetition, acknowledged as prominent literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. The primary aim was to demonstrate how these elements possess a performative nature, influencing the overall presentation of the Gospel's narrative. This chapter consisted of two major parts, namely: the study of the performative nature of asides, and secondly, the study of repetition and its performative nature in the Fourth Gospel.

In the analysis of asides, the study utilised Thatcher's (1994) pre-established categories of asides in the Fourth Gospel. The intention was not to debate or discuss Thatcher's approach to categorising asides, but rather to use the existing categorisation to illustrate and emphasise the performative nature of these asides within the Gospel.

7.6.1 Asides

In the first place, the analysis focused on the asides that function to stage an event. Regarding 2:13, it was established that asides can create tension in the mind of the implied reader. It was also noted that an aside can be used to resolve the tension that another aside created in the text. An aside does this, by updating (providing new information) the implied reader about new developments in the story (2:23).

Under this category, the study observed that asides can create an ironic situation in the text. In this case, asides can also function as a silent communication between the implied author and the implied reader (19:14). Consequently, the implied reader is left to realise the bigger picture of the unfolding drama in the story, and this is performative in nature.

Secondly, the analysis focused on the asides that function to define or specify something. The study established that asides that seek to specify something by providing a translation (e.g., the word Gabbatha – 19:13, and Golgotha – 19:17) can be viewed as performative in nature. This type of aside shows the implied reader that the narrator is mindful of him/her, in that they explain whatever the implied reader might not understand. They provide information and are educative in nature. They have the potential to challenge the implied reader to do some further study about the mentioned word, thus the reader gains relevant knowledge of what the story is all about.

Still, in this category of asides, the chapter discussed the asides that are used to specify/define something or someone. Two examples were used in this case, i.e., the man who had been sick for 38 years (5:5) and the man born blind (9:1). The results of the analysis revealed that these asides have the potential to create suspense in the mind of the implied reader. Furthermore, it was indicated that as the implied reader continues to read the text, he/she soon finds out that Jesus does heal the men, regardless of their specified number of years of suffering. The suspense and a possible hopeless scenario that might have been created in the mind of the implied reader get resolved. The reader is thus persuaded to trust in Jesus who demonstrates having power over such ailments.

The analysis further focused on asides that specify or label characters in the text. Again, two examples were used to demonstrate their performative nature, i.e., asides in 3:1 (about Nicodemus), and in 19:39 (about Joseph of Arimathea). It is argued that these asides are performative since they have the potential to take the implied reader back to the story of that particular character, e.g., Nicodemus' visit to Jesus in the night and their dialogue in John 3. In addition to serving as reminders that update the reader on the possible development of characters

as the story unfolds, these asides also present a thought-provoking challenge to the implied reader, encouraging them to revisit and reread the narrative.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that these asides can serve the purpose of introducing a character with a positive story, such as Joseph of Arimathea, thereby offering encouragement to the implied reader. However, it is essential to acknowledge that these types of asides can also potentially diminish surprises and suspense for the implied reader, as they affirm the conduct of certain characters in the narrative, as seen with Judas Iscariot. When Judas Iscariot's conduct aligns with the portrayal given in the text, the implied reader is not surprised. This behaviour was anticipated and expected, having been previously mentioned. This has the potential to entice the implied reader to the story since the narrator is able to meet the expectation created about that particular character. It is like a promise or a warning that has been made by the narrator to the implied reader getting fulfilled. In this sense, the relationship between the narrator and the implied reader is strengthened. This is the implied author's intention to keep the implied reader hooked to the story of Jesus and eventually leads him/her to believing in him.

Thirdly, the analysis focused on asides that explain a discourse. Under this analysis, the study looked at the aside in 7:13 (about the public's fear of the religious leaders). The study suggested that the aside has the potential to enable the implied reader to thoroughly understand the amount of tension and anger from the side of Jesus' opponents. Through this aside, the reader is invited to experience this tension as well. The Jewish opponents are plotting to kill Jesus, and Jesus, after showing no interest to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, eventually attends the festival. The text creates a situation where the implied reader must expect some drama to happen. Therefore, the implied reader is encouraged to continue reading the story of Jesus to find out how the tension is going to be resolved. Subsequently, nothing bad happens to Jesus, even when the Jewish authorities attempted to arrest him.

The aside in 7:30 gives the implied reader a sense of confidence in Jesus. It has the potential to invite the implied reader to have faith in Jesus. It functions to assure the implied reader that Jesus is in control. Nothing will happen to him unless it is the assigned time for it.

The analysis of the aside in 20:14 and 20:15 (Jesus' first appearance to Mary Magdalene), that Mary "*οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν*" (*did not know it was Jesus*), was also viewed as performative in nature. The aside prepares the implied reader for some possible dramatic and humorous statements to follow. The use of the aside in this context serves as an appeal to the implied reader, urging them not to judge or blame Mary for her words or actions, as she remains unaware that the person she is conversing with is, in fact, Jesus. In any case, this dramatic situation keeps the reader sensitised toward the story of Jesus' resurrection. The dramatic nature and hilarity of

the story may serve to assist the implied reader to retell the story of Jesus' resurrection with ease to other people. In this way, the implied reader is also persuaded to be a witness of Jesus' resurrection.

Furthermore, the study paid attention to the asides that function to state the significance of the discourse. A number of these asides are a commentary on Jesus' enigmatic statements. These asides are viewed as performative since they spare the reader from misunderstanding the words of Jesus.

The first that was discussed is in 7:39 (during the Feast of Tabernacles). Jesus makes a call for all who are thirsty to come to him and drink. The narrator provides an aside, explaining that Jesus said this "about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit."

The aside appeals to the implied reader to stay close to the narrator, since the narrator has proven to have knowledge and the ability to interpret the words of Jesus. This is a deliberate act by the implied author to keep the implied reader closer to the narrator for help as he/she continues reading text. The implied reader is persuaded to accept the ideological position of the narrator, which cannot be detached from that of the implied author and the Protagonist (Jesus) in the story. In this way, the reader (real or implied) is persuaded to believe or remain believing in Jesus.

The analysis found similar inferences to the three asides in 12:33 (Jesus speaks about his death), 21:19 (Jesus speaks about the kind of death with which Peter would glorify God), and 19:28 (the "sixth sayings" of Jesus on the cross). These asides were also viewed as performative since they have the potential to persuade the implied reader to rely on the narrator's explanation of the meaning of utterances made in the narration.

Fourth and lastly, the study focused on the asides that function to explain actions. In this category, the exploration began with the aside in 7:5 (the Jewish feast of Tabernacles is said to be near). Jesus did not show interest to go to Judea to attend the festival but, in a derogatory way, his brothers urged him to go. Their derogatory attitude toward Jesus is viewed as having the potential to surprise the implied reader, since they are Jesus' brothers. The narrator informs the reader that they spoke like this because they did not believe in him. The aside functions to ease the surprise in the implied reader's mind. The implied reader gets to understand why Jesus' brothers speak in this manner. The aside has the potential to persuade the implied reader to sympathise with Jesus and thus persuades him/her to believe in him.

Regarding the aside in 20:9 (resurrection of Jesus), Mary reports to Simon Peter and the other disciple about the empty tomb. After confirming this report, the narrator mentions that "εἶδεν και

ἐπίστευσεν” (*and he saw, and he believed*). This confirmation is not neutral in its rhetorical intent. The confirmative speech has the potential to raise suspense (wondering) in the mind of the implied reader. The aside assists the implied reader to understand why the disciples’ belief is only confirmed now. Cognitively, it empowers the implied reader with some necessary knowledge and development in the lives of the disciples in relation to Jesus’ resurrection. The confirmation is also an invitation to the implied reader to believe in the resurrection and to be a participant (as a witness) thereof.

The study finally focused on the aside in 19:35 (Jesus’ crucifixion, particularly when his side is pierced). The narrator reports that he is an eyewitness of the event of the piercing of Jesus on the cross. He reports to the implied reader that this was done to fulfil the Scriptures (19:36-37). The aside is emphatic and has the potential to invite the implied reader to respond or make a decision either to reject or accept the testimony. If the reader accepts and believes the testimony, he/she becomes a witness of the death of Christ.

7.6.2 Repetition

The second major part of the chapter contributed to the study of repetition as a literary device and demonstrated its performative nature in the Fourth Gospel. The investigation is divided into two categories, namely: *word repetition* and *phrase repetition*.

In the first place, the analysis of word repetition in the Fourth Gospel observed that the implied author makes use of this literary technique to serve the purpose of emphasising an idea or a particular theme in the Gospel. The study noted that repetition of certain words in key places in the book, e.g., ζῶῃ, is strategic in nature. This is viewed as a deliberate act by the implied author to make an emphasis on the idea that Jesus is the source of eternal life. The analysis further noticed the frequent use of the word ζῶῃ in chapters 3-6, where the ideas of eternal life and Jesus as the giver of life are developed. It was also suggested that even though the repetitive use of this word in the second part of the Gospel (chapters 13-21) is not prevalent, its use stays semantically significant to the reader of the Fourth Gospel.

The study of repetition in this regard serves to emphasise and remind the implied reader that the concept of ζῶῃ αἰώνιος cannot be understood apart from the person and work of Jesus. Repetition, in this case, has the potential to persuade the reader (real or implied) to make some considerations about believing in Jesus, as the narrator keeps repeating the word in the text.

Cognitively, word repetition makes it difficult for the reader to ignore the repeated word/concept. The study suggests that this literary strategy is intended to emphasise the position of Jesus and his ideological stance in the Fourth Gospel.

Furthermore, the study put forward the idea that word repetition serves as a deliberate literary strategy designed to persuade the reader. Its purpose is to prevent the reader from overlooking or forgetting the emphasised word or concept. Instead, the repetition encourages the reader to embrace and carefully contemplate the significance of the word, as well as the propositions presented about it within the text. In the examination of the word "ζωή" (life), the study highlighted an explicit proposition about Jesus as the bestower of life to those who place their faith in him. This proposition holds the potential to persuade the reader to believe in Jesus, as doing so offers the promise of attaining eternal life. The study makes a significant contribution by proposing that the frequent or repetitive usage of words like "ζωή" (life) holds a persuasive power over the reader. Through this intentional repetition, the text becomes performative in nature, as it actively influences the reader's perception and understanding of the concept.

Therefore, repetition can be viewed as the implied author's strategy to reinforce remembrance of Jesus' ideology in the mind of the implied reader.

In addition to exploring the persuasive power of word repetition, the study also delved into the performative nature of phrase repetition within the Fourth Gospel. Specifically, the analysis focused on chapter 16:1-38 to exemplify how phrase repetition serves as a performative element in the text. The exploration focused, as an example, on the phrase "*ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με*" (*I am going to the one who sent me*). The repeated accounts of the phrase make it hard for the reader to ignore/forget it in the text. The study suggested that this kind of repetition is employed strategically to emphasise the origin and identity of Jesus Christ in the Fourth Gospel. The study highlighted the significance of the phrase, as it serves to emphasise that Jesus is the promised Messiah, sent by God (the Father), and will ultimately return to the Father. The repetition is aimed at clearly getting this message across to both his disciples and the Jewish opponents. In this case, by virtue of repetition, the implied reader is also aided to remember it with ease and does serve to persuade him/her to condemn those who baselessly reject Jesus (9:29). Consequently, phrase repetition is aimed at enabling the implied reader to see Jesus for who he really is, that is, the Messiah, who comes from God. As is the case with word repetition, phrase repetition, in this case, is also performative in nature. The repetition of the phrase renders it difficult for the implied reader to ignore such a phrase, as they read the text.

As the phrase is repeated constantly, the implied reader is indirectly persuaded or warned not to fall into the same trap as the opponents of Jesus in the text. As the implied reader heeds these warnings (repeated phrase), he/she is challenged to change his/her view of or about Jesus.

The significant contribution of the study in this section was the finding that phrase repetition (just like word repetition) can also reinforce remembrance on the side of the reader. The repeated phrase has the potential to create a rhythm within a sentence or a thought unit. This enables the reader to easily remember the communicated message and act upon what he/she has heard repeated several times. This cognitive component is critical and is viewed as performative in nature, in that it enables and persuades the reader to make the links or connections of meaning as the story unfolds. The reader (real and implied) is aided to remember the story as it continues to persuade and/or challenge him/her to decide regarding Jesus' propositions in the text.

7.7 CHAPTER 6 (FOCALISATION)

The main contribution of this chapter was the analysis of selected narratives in the Fourth Gospel using focalisation as an analytical tool or approach. The purpose was to demonstrate its performative nature to the reader. The overarching question behind this analysis was: how does focalisation invite or challenge the reader (real or implied) to participate in the text?

In each analysis, the chapter first provided a summary of each selected narrative to outline the context of the story. In this study of the context, the chapter briefly looked at aspects such as space (where?), time (when?), characters involved (who?), what the story is all about (what?), and the way the story is presented (how?).

Firstly, the analysis focused on the narrative of Jesus and Nicodemus in chapter 3. In this story, the type of focalisation is described as external. The narrator is outside of the story but of course not uninvolved. He is also viewed as reliable in terms of having the necessary insights of the story. In this sense, the study suggested that the narrator-focaliser can be trusted by the reader. This type of focalisation is viewed as performative because the style of narration has the potential to invite and encourage the reader to trust the narrator and continue relying on him/her to focalise the story. The story is crafted to be read in a way that fosters faith in Christ within the reader. Therefore, it becomes paramount to keep the implied reader engaged in the story. The type of focalisation established here precisely serves this purpose.

Regarding the three facets of focalisation, the analysis established that the perceptual facet of focalisation is fixed or limited, in reference to the spatial dimension. The study suggests, in reference to the spatial dimension, that Nicodemus' movement in the night (*νυκτὸς*) towards the

Protagonist (Jesus who is already known as the “true light”) is filled with imagery of light and darkness. The movement has more than meets the eye. It has the potential to persuade the implied reader to do the same (move towards Jesus in terms of faith) as they read the story. Therefore, the perceptual facet, in terms of space, in this regard is viewed as performative in nature.

The analysis continued with the study of the temporal dimension of focalisation. It was suggested that the temporal dimension of the narrator focaliser was limited to the present experiences of the characters. The study, however, held the view that the narrator-focaliser proved to have a limited knowledge about Nicodemus, i.e., he is a ruler of the Jews. Jesus addressed him as the teacher of Israel. This information is viewed as critical and performative to the reader, since it has the potential to enable the reader to realise how the ruler and teacher of Israel is clueless about the concept of the new birth (to be born again). This is disappointing to the implied reader. The essence of its performative nature lies in the fact that the implied reader is challenged to do a self-evaluation of his/her own knowledge of the new birth in Christ.

The analysis of the psychological facet of focalisation of the narrator-focaliser was described as restricted and neutral, respectively, concerning the cognitive and emotive components. The text does not provide evidence that the narrator-focaliser possesses knowledge about the narrated world, especially concerning the theme of the new birth. However, it is noteworthy that the narrator-focaliser focalises on the Protagonist by providing information through his dialogue with Nicodemus. He proves to have extensive knowledge about the theme of new birth. As noted in Chapter 2, misunderstanding gives Jesus an opportunity to provide theological truths to the implied reader. The study is of the view that this might be intentional from the narrator-focaliser and performative in intent. It invites and persuades the reader to focus their attention on the Protagonist as he expands the much-needed theological truths in the narrative. The sharing of theological truths does have potential to bring the implied reader to a point of decision-making about Jesus’ propositions in the text.

The third facet of focalisation focused on the ideological perspective of the story. The results of the analysis, based on the evidence gathered from this narrative, indicated that the ideological aspect of John 3:1-21 aligned with that of the entire Fourth Gospel. Specifically, the story was formulated in a way that emphasised the dominance of the Protagonist's ideology. The reader cannot miss the fact that Nicodemus came in only to ask a few questions (two, to be precise – 3:4 and 9) just to trigger the monologue of Jesus. The study viewed the monologue as performative, since it did not afford the reader time to listen or focus on any other religious

ideology (e.g., that of Nicodemus, the Pharisee) except that of Jesus. The story is focalised in a manner that safeguards the implied reader from potential misleading teachings.

Such a choice of presenting a story or dialogue is viewed as performative in nature. The implied reader is guided to only listen to Jesus and therefore left with no choice but to make decisions about him.

The second analysis focused on the narrative of Jesus and the Samaritan woman in John 4. In this story, the type of focalisation is described as both external and internal. Regarding the external focalisation, it is observed that the story is presented by a narrator-focaliser. This type of focalisation has been described as performative in that it strengthens the relationship between the narrator-focaliser and the implied reader. The implied reader is persuaded to rely on the narrator-focaliser for information to be kept enticed by the story.

Regarding the internal focalisation of the story, the narrator-focaliser proves to know what the Protagonist (Jesus) knew (4:1) about the Pharisees' attitude towards him. This type of focalisation assists the implied reader to understand why the protagonist and other characters act in a particular way in the story.

The analysis proceeded with the discussion of the three facets of focalisation. Regarding the perceptual facet of focalisation, it was established that the narrator-focaliser is not limited to one view and/or angle of focalising the story but has the ability to focus on events simultaneously, i.e., the dialogue between Jesus and the woman (4:7-27) at the well, and the events happening in the city (4:28-30). This ability is viewed as performative in that it allows the implied reader to have a full view of how people are responding to the call of the Protagonist to believe in him. The implied reader is thus challenged to make considerations about the call of Jesus to believe in him.

The analysis of the temporal dimension revealed that the narrator-focaliser is not restricted as far as the present and past events are concerned but is restricted to the future events. With regard to the past and present, the narrator-focaliser proves to know about the dissatisfaction of the Jewish opponents about the growth of Jesus' ministry. Cognitively, the reader is also empowered. He/she understands the reason why Jesus leaves Judea to Galilee. The text enables the reader to track and follow Jesus as the story unfolds.

The contribution of the analysis of the psychological facet rested on the fact that the narrator-focaliser seems to have a restricted knowledge. With the exception of 4:1-4, the narrator focaliser does not provide any asides or commentary to prove that he/she has some knowledge why some

utterances are made in a particular manner or why characters behave in a certain way. His/her knowledge is restricted in this regard.

It is asserted that whenever the narrator-focaliser's knowledge is restricted, the implied reader is indirectly persuaded to focus on the Protagonist as the producer and distributor of knowledge regarding his religious position. He openly invites people to believe in him. The implied reader is never left in a neutral position and is invited to have faith in him.

The discussion of the emotional facet of focalisation suggested that Jesus is focalised as calm, except in 4:6 where the narrator-focaliser reports that Jesus was tired because of the journey. Other than this report, the Protagonist is focalised as calm and taking his time to teach and elaborate on matters of salvation to the woman (and the reader).

Lastly, the ideological facet of focalisation points to the dominance of the Protagonist's ideological and religious position. The question of identity and origin of Jesus is dominating the dialogue, as he sought to invite the Samaritan woman to believe in him. This literary artistry was viewed as performative in nature. It does have a potential to invite the implied reader to also make considerations about Jesus' propositions. It challenges the implied reader to focus only on the Protagonist and his propositions. It does not give the reader room to ignore the propositions of Jesus but to act on them by either accepting or rejecting him.

Thirdly, the analysis looked at the narrative that presents the miracle of the feeding of five thousand in John 6. The type of focalisation in this story is described as both external and internal. Regarding external focalisation, from the reading of the story, the reader clearly hears the voice of the narrator-focaliser narrating the story. It was previously suggested that external focalisation empowers the reader with information and is thus of critical importance. This type of focalisation enforces the relationship between the reader and narrator-focaliser. With regard to internal focalisation, the narrator-focaliser proves to have the ability to take the reader into the mind and thoughts of the characters. For example, the narrator-focaliser knows that Jesus uttered the statement in 6:6 to test Philip since the Protagonist himself knew what he would do to feed the crowd. This type of focalisation has the potential to inspire confidence in the mind of the reader towards Jesus. It also sets the reader in suspense, anticipating what Jesus would do as they read the story. The reader is thus persuaded to follow Jesus' actions and propositions in the story.

In this analysis, the spatial facet of focalisation was described as fixed or limited to the scene of the miracle and the subsequent movements and teachings of Jesus, e.g., in the Synagogue in Capernaum. In this context, focalisation is not simultaneous as seen in certain narratives (4:28-30). During the instances when Jesus retreated to the mountainside (6:15) and when he walked

on the waters, no details are reported from those scenes. The study observed that the narrator-focaliser shows significant interest in Jesus and the disciples engaging with the people, but apart from that, he/she refrains from reporting anything else (6:22-24). It seems that the narrator-focaliser remained exclusively focused on Jesus (and his disciples) engaging the people with his teachings. It suffices to argue that the spatial facet of focalisation intentionally restricts the reader's view to spaces where the Protagonist is. This allows the reader to enjoy textual time with Jesus and his teachings without being distracted by other events elsewhere. In this sense, the reader's focus is on Jesus' identity and the values he represents in the story. Unless the interpreter of the Fourth Gospel opts to ignore this evidence, it should be plausible to argue that the reader is persuaded to accept the teachings of Jesus and to believe in him.

The contribution of the study concerning the analysis of the temporal dimension of focalisation was to a large extent like the spatial facet of focalisation. The temporal dimension of the narrator-focaliser is generally restricted to the present events. This is viewed as the narrator focaliser's intention to keep the reader focused on the present activities of Jesus. In this sense, this possible intent by the narrator-focaliser is judged as performative. It persuades the reader to focus on what Jesus (and his disciples) are currently teaching or performing. In this way, the reader is constantly invited to accept the teachings of Jesus.

The discussion of the psychological facet, particularly the cognitive component, is viewed as both restricted and unrestricted. The narrator-focaliser's knowledge is delimited (restricted). The type of focalisation does not use the narrator-focaliser to convey the new information, but he/she focalises the Protagonist providing critical information to the reader, e.g., 6:43-51, 53-58 and 61-63, etc. In this, Jesus explains his oneness with God the Father and its significance to those who believe in him. It is noted that the cognitive component of the narrator-focaliser is restricted to this knowledge. Therefore, the narrative is crafted in such a way that the reader is directly addressed (taught) by Jesus himself. Through skilful storytelling, Jesus' invitation to the reader is vivid and difficult to ignore.

Finally, the analysis of the ideological facet is presented through a single dominant perspective of the Protagonist. In the performance of the miracle/sign, the implied reader is persuaded to view Jesus as the one in charge of all the proceedings from the beginning to the end.

Jesus is focalised as a central figure, who is confident in his power to perform signs. He is not deterred by the fact that one of his disciples will betray him (as mentioned in 6:64) nor the fact that many of his disciples left him (6:66). The ideological facet of focalisation is thus performative since it seeks to persuade the implied reader to accept Jesus as the son of God. This is in line with the purpose of the Fourth Gospel.

Regarding the disciples of Jesus, the analysis indicated that they are focalised as completely dependent on Jesus in terms of food (6:6), security (6:20), and eternal life (6:68). This type of focalisation is also not neutral in its rhetorical intent. Furthermore, the implied reader is encouraged to believe in Jesus who meets the needs of those who believe in him.

7.8 A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION OF THE OVERALL STUDY

This chapter summarised the findings and thereby highlighted the contribution of the study. The aim of the study was to demonstrate and prove the performative nature of literary devices in the Fourth Gospel. This was achieved by employing some borrowed components from the speech act theory and focalisation as analytical tools or interpretive angles.

Based on the analysis of the literary devices, including misunderstanding, irony, forensic dialogues, asides, repetition, and the study of focalisation, it can be asserted that these devices enforce the performative nature of the Fourth Gospel. They play a significant role in inviting and persuading the reader to participate in the text. In this respect, the use of these literary devices is not a coincidence or a baseless theory of modern scholarship, but can, in fact, be viewed as an intentional literary strategy by the implied author of the Fourth Gospel. Furthermore, it suffices to conclude that these literary devices are intentionally employed to enhance the overall purpose of the Gospel as stated in 20:30-31. The results, in this regard, are convincing.

Therefore, the study concludes that indeed the Fourth Gospel is formulated in performative terms. This is evident in how the implied author makes use of the literary devices to enhance participation from the implied reader.

The study's findings support the hypothesis, as formulated in the introductory chapter, that the Fourth Gospel is a performative text. Through an examination of the nature and role of all the discussed literary devices, the study provides compelling evidence for this hypothesis. It is, therefore, asserted that any effort to study the Fourth Gospel without recognising the performative role played by these literary devices will be grossly unfair and biased towards the text.

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APPENDICE A: DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING



PROOF-READING

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21 August 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: LANGUAGE EDITING

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited the thesis titled:

**The performative nature of literary devices
in the Fourth Gospel**

By
RS Hobyane

(This certificate does not cover any alterations made subsequent to the editing process).

Please feel free to contact me if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lee-Anne Roux