International Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Culture, LLC

September 2020

European Scientific Institute, ESI

The content is peer-reviewed

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Beugre Zouankouan Stéphane
University of Pelefero Gon Coulibaly, Côte d'Ivoire

Abstract

This paper aims to study the existentialist philosophical concept developed by Ralph Ellison in the prologue of his novel *INVISIBLE MAN* and which characterizes black people invisibility and existence since long time. It also analyzes how this philosophical concept sustains and permeates the overall relationships between white people and black people in the white American society and at large, in today's blacks and whites relationships. Indeed when transcending the surface meaning of the prologue of the novel, one can realize with a thorough reading of the notion of invisibility that Ralph Ellison develops an existentialist philosophical concept about black people invisibility and existence which is quite different from the well known existentialist concept about human beings existence developed long time ago by the French philosopher René Descartes. In a metaphorical and symbolic language and with an ironic description of black Americans' reality, he reveals the reasons why black people are invisible in the white American society and by the same way, he reveals the philosophical concept sustaining or linked to black people invisibility. Finally, one can observe how two existentialist philosophical concepts are opposed in scrutinizing closely the notion of invisibility developed in the prologue of *INVISIBLE MAN*.

1

Introduction

Beginning with the sentence "I AM an invisible man" (Ellison, 1952:7), the notion of "Invisibility" is one of the major themes developed in the prologue[1] of the novel *INVISIBLE MAN*[2]. Through this motif, Ralph Ellison evokes the question of African-Americans existence in the white American society and at large, he evokes the question of black people existence in a world controlled and dominated by white people. Indeed, the problem of African-Americans existence and the problem of black people existence is their invisibility in a world controlled and dominated by white people. The perception that white people have about black people due to black people's "*blackness*" creates a real, constant and topical problem of invisibility for black people in the society. Such a perception and the invisibility constructed create as a result a real topical problem of existence for black people as revealed by Ralph Ellison in this novel.

[T]he Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (Lyne, 1992:319)

In fact, people may observe in Ralph Ellison's *INVISIBLE MAN* that the motif of invisibility is not only a very important one among many others but it is central[3] to the novel. This notion is central to the novel because first of all the word "invisible" is part of the title[4]. Secondly, the word "invisible" is part of the name of the protagonist "Invisible Man"[5]. Thirdly, the word

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1 The Prologue set at the end of the action introduces most of the major themes and images and it also, as a lucid introduction, starts open the notion of invisibility and introduces us with this notion of invisibility which involved many images and dualities such as light/darkness, light/power, image of electricity, etc.

2 The title of the novel will be written in this style in this paper so that we can make a difference between it and the name of the protagonist-narrator and major character which is also "Invisible Man".

3 This notion is central simply because the words "invisible", "invisibility", and the expressions "I am an invisible man", "I am invisible", "my invisibility", "invisible man", "that invisibility", "an invisible man" appear several times in the prologue and control the sense and orientation of the narration in the prologue.

4 The title of the novel is *INVISIBLE MAN* so since the title of the novel, the author tries to focus our attention and reflection on this relevant notion of invisibility that he deals with.

5 "Invisible Man" is the name of the protagonist-narrator and the major character in the novel *INVISIBLE MAN*. So all the actions related to the major character are involved with the notion of invisibility that surrounds the entire novel as the main character evolves.

"invisibility" is the main concern at the beginning of the novel through the "prologue"[6] and its first sentence "I AM an invisible man", as a fundamental sentence. And fourthly, there are several metaphorical and symbolical meanings linked to the expression "Invisible Man" both in the title of the novel and in the name of the main character.

You might think of the Prologue as a personal introduction. "I am an invisible man," is the first sentence of the novel. It establishes immediately the fact that this is to be a first-person narrative and that the theme of invisibility- which gives the novel its title- is extremely important. The nameless narrator explains that this invisibility is not literal but metaphorical or symbolic. (Abbott, 1985: 51)

This focus and insistence made by the author on the motif of invisibility with all its metaphorical and symbolical aspects oblige the readers to go beyond the word "Invisible", the expression "Invisible Man", and the notion of "Invisibility" itself to deal with the "hidden" existentialist philosophical concept linked to the theme of invisibility surrounding the novel.

To be concise and precise, through the key terms "Invisible", "Invisible Man", and "Invisibility", Ralph Ellison develops metaphorically a philosophical concept of existence[7] linked to African-Americans in the United States of America and at a larger point, a philosophical concept of existence linked to all black people through the character of "Invisible Man". One may also observe that this philosophical concept developed by Ralph Ellison at least is in contrast or contradictory to the philosophical concept of existence developed normally in favor of any human being existence by René Descartes[8].

Indeed, the philosophical concept of existence developed metaphorically by Ellison is seen through the combination of the words in the expression "Invisible Man" or is better seen when confronting the two words "Invisible" and "Man", both in the title of the novel and in the name of the protagonist[9]. Because there is automatically a kind of nonsense which arouses and then begins our misunderstanding[10] of such juxtaposition of words or

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6 This particular novel is divided in parts as follow: a prologue, 25 chapters and an epilogue, a kind of division which focuses our attention on the prologue as a major constituent of the novel and an important one.

7 "Call me, since I have a theory and a concept, a "thinker-tinker."" in *INVISIBLE MAN*, p.10.

8 The thesis developed by René Descartes in *Discourse on the Method* (1637): when stating: "je pense donc je suis" (I think, therefore I am).

9 Both the novel and the protagonist share the same "name" (name considered as the title of the novel and name considered as the name of the major character).

10 A failure to understand or interpret something correctly and in this case it is the expression "Invisible Man".

contradiction of meanings thanks to the metaphor and symbolism used by the author in the expression "Invisible Man".

That is why the central problematic in this paper is therefore to know how black people invisibility betrays a new existentialist philosophical concept which is developed metaphorically by Ralph Ellison in the prologue of his novel. This central problematic in order to be solved will revolve around two important questions that will constitute the blueprint of this analysis.

First of all, what is the existentialist philosophical concept about any human being existence developed by Descartes and how it functions to be in contradiction with the notion of black people invisibility developed in the prologue?

Secondly, what is the new existentialist philosophical concept linked to black people invisibility and existence and developed metaphorically by Ralph Ellison and also how it functions to be in contradiction with black people visibility or again how it functions to be against black people visibility?

The theoretical background that will be used in responding to those questions related to black people invisibility will be theories such as African American criticism, Stylistics and as approach; it will be a hermeneutics analysis or the critical interpretation of the prologue of the novel *INVISIBLE MAN*.

Still, in terms of theoretical background, it is important to precise that stylistics is really important here because Ralph Ellison in the prologue uses metaphors, irony, symbols, images and contradiction, and also a specific typography to describe black people invisibility. African American criticism is useful in this study because of race relations, racism, also because of the first concerned who are African-Americans through their invisibility and experience. And also due to the fact that Ellison places the notion of black people invisibility first in the American society and namely in blacks and whites relationships.

This study will revolve around three parts. It is important first of all to talk about the presence of philosophical concepts in the notion of invisibility in Ralph Ellison's *INVISIBLE MAN*. Secondly, it will be useful to present and study Descartes' existentialist philosophical concept and show how it reinforces the reflection made by Ellison about black people invisibility. The last part will present and analyze Ralph Ellison's metaphorical existentialist philosophical concept about black people invisibility.

Philosophical Concepts in The Notion of Invisibility in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*

Considered as the real conclusion of this novel, one may observe through a thorough analysis that the prologue introduces us to a very fundamental philosophical concept about black people existence and namely about black Americans existence as well as it also does for other blacks' fundamental instructions and information[11] about their lives in white America. Indeed, in a very ironic[12], metaphorical[13], and symbolic[14] way, the prologue develops in a brief but relevant thesis ("I AM an invisible man") a notion of invisibility linked to the protagonist-narrator (major character) of the novel who is a black man. The invisibility which characterizes the major character is due in fact to his "*blackness*" as a black man and to the perception that white people have about him due to this "*blackness*". In accordance with such invisibility, he identifies himself henceforth as "Invisible Man[15] and therefore this name reinforces symbolically the meaning and suitability of the title of the novel as clarified here by Harold Bloom (2008: 19-64):

The **Invisible Man** is the rhetorically flamboyant unnamed narrator of Ellison's novel. He is invisible not because he is a "spook"—literally unseen—but because he is a black man living in the racist atmosphere of America in the 1920s and 1930s, unrecognized because of his skin color…In the Prologue to Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, the narrator explicates the novel's central metaphor by telling us that he is invisible because "[white] people refuse to see [him]." The narrator proceeds to illustrate this assertion with a story about a violent confrontation that took place between himself and a white man.

In fact, set up in the context of the American society, one realizes that this notion of invisibility linked to "Invisible Man", not only foreshadows the relationships between white people and black people in terms of superiority and inferiority. But moreover, it really describes, denounces the existentialist philosophical concept which characterizes the major character who is a black man and, by the same way reveals the existentialist philosophical concept

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11 As an example we may refer to the passage about music (Blues) and its importance for black people: "when I have music I want to *feel* its vibration, not only with my ear but with my whole body. I'd like to hear five recordings of Louis Armstrong playing and singing "What Did I Do to Be so Black and Blue" -- all at the same time." in *INVISIBLE MAN*, pp.10-11.

12 The story of his encounter with a man one night: "One night I accidentally bumped into a man, and perhaps because of the near darkness he saw me and called me an insulting name … a man almost killed by a phantom".

13 The main metaphor of his invisibility resides in the sentence "I AM an invisible man".

14 Many symbols pertain the prologue (invisibility, visibility, light, darkness, blackness, power etc.)

15 "Invisible Man" is the name of the protagonist and the major character in the novel *INVISIBLE MAN*.

which characterizes all the black people around the world. Indeed, what defines *INVISIBLE MAN* as an existentialist novel, Cevik (2012:6) maintains "is how Ellison narrates his protagonist's life experiences at which point the narrator realizes that he must assert an identity".

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison introduces the major themes that define the novel. The motifs of invisibility and blindness allow for an examination of the effects of racism on the victim and the perpetrator. The novel also places itself within larger literary and philosophical contexts. Especially apparent is the influence of existentialism. At the time of Invisible Man's publication in 1952, existentialism had reached the height of its popularity; Ellison's book proposes to undertake a similar examination of the meaning of individual existence, but through the lens of race relations in postwar America. (Cevik, 2012:5)

To go further in our explanation, the perception that white people have about black people in the society creates a kind of invisibility of black people and such a perception with the invisibility resulting permit us to detect the philosophical concept of black people existence which is metaphorically stated by Ellison. It is quite clear that this new and other existentialist philosophical concept, theory or thesis is opposed to that of René Descartes which normally should apply to any human being. And it appears clearly that the distance between superior white and inferior black is quite explicit when we compare the two theses because we realize at last (thanks to the perception that white people have about black people) that they (white people) are defined by their own existential philosophical concept which is different from that defining black people existence; the one revealed metaphorically in the prologue by Ralph Ellison.

"I am an invisible man," he tells you in the first sentence of the novel. When he calls himself invisible, he means that other people don't see him, that no one recognizes him as a person, as an individual. A helpful way to understand the Invisible Man as a character is to use the ideas of the noted twentieth-century Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber. Buber distinguishes between I-Thou relationships and I-It relationships. When we love someone, there is an I-Thou relationship, one between two individuals who truly care for one another as persons. In an I-It relationship we use others as things. We like people for what we can get out of them. If you apply this idea to Ellison's central character, you may conclude that he is invisible because people always see him as an "It," never as a "Thou." (Abbott, 1985:21)

By developing the problem of African-Americans invisibility and existence in the white American society, and concerning the context of this study (the prologue), Ralph Ellison, as a visionary writer, has revealed a new fundamental existentialist philosophical concept related to black people

themselves and to their existence in the world due to the fact that their "*blackness*" creates their invisibility.

James is most concerned with the rarefied aesthetic task of endowing the coarse material of life with "the high attributes of a Subject" (48), while Ellison works with the more socially and ideologically saturated contradiction of the disregarded African American's "high visibility". (Lyne, 1992: 323)

In the first point, we will study how generally speaking human being (and namely in this context a white man) is considered to have a true existence and a visibility referring to Descartes' existentialist philosophical concept. And in the second point, we will study how especially black people and a black man (here the protagonist-narrator) is seen or considered most of the time to be inexistent [16] and to be invisible by analyzing Ellison's metaphorical existentialist philosophical concept.

Descartes' Existentialist Philosophical Concept Which Reinforces the Notion of Black People Invisibility Developed by Ralph Ellison

The phrase *je pense*, *donc je suis*, usually translated into English as "I think, therefore I am" and in <u>Latin</u> as *Cogito ergo sum,* originally appeared (in French) in Descartes' <u>Discourse on the Method</u> (1637) in the first paragraph of its fourth part:

Mais aussitôt après je pris garde que, pendant que je voulais ainsi penser que tout était faux, il fallait nécessairement que moi qui le pensais fusse quelque chose; Et remarquant que cette vérité, *je pense, donc je suis*, était si ferme et si assurée, que toutes les plus extravagantes suppositions des Sceptiques n'étaient pas capables de l'ébranler, je jugeai que je pouvais la recevoir sans scrupule pour le premier principe de la Philosophie que je cherchais.

(translation into English) But immediately upon this I observed that, whilst I thus wished to think that all was false, it was absolutely necessary that I, who thus thought, should be something; And as I observed that this truth, *I think, therefore I am*, was so certain and of such evidence that no ground of doubt, however extravagant, could be alleged by the Sceptics capable of shaking it, I concluded that I might, without scruple, accept it as the <u>first principle</u> of the philosophy of which I was in search.

When one considers the thesis "I think, therefore I am" stated by the French philosopher René Descartes, one may observe and state that any human being is characterized by such a philosophical concept of existence. And this philosophical concept of existence "I think, therefore I am" in its first aspect

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16 Or to be denied a true existence or to live in "a country which treats him as a non-being" <u>https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/256/25629/invisible-man/9780241970560.html</u> consulted on January 10th, 2020.

"I think"[17] illustrates and classifies quite clearly any human being as first a person of thinking, a person of consciousness, a person of brain, a person of mind and a person of reason or rationality. Then, in its second aspect "I am"[18], this philosophical concept of existence illustrates and classifies quite clearly any human being later or after as a person being or a person existing[19] (or a person in existence) through the body, the flesh, the blood, the physical existence and the presence "in the real world"[20].

René Descartes (1596–1650) was a French philosopher and mathematician, credited as a foundational thinker in the development of Western notions of reason and science. His philosophy was built on the idea of radical doubt, in which nothing that is perceived or sensed is necessarily true. ***The only thing that remains true that there is a mind or consciousness doing the doubting and believing its perceptions, hence the famous formulation, 'I think therefore I am', or in Latin, the cogito— 'Cogito ergo sum'. Descartes also proposed that the mind and body were two separate and distinct entities,*** *but even the body was not so certain a thing as the mind, because, like everything else in the world, the body could only be sensed because there was a mind to sense it. In 1663, Descartes' writings were placed on a list of prohibited books by the Pope, because of the central place Descartes gave to reason and mind, rather than God, in his philosophy.*[21]

So the relationship between those two distinct entities "I think" and "I am" established by the connecting word "therefore"[22] due (first) to its meaning and (then) to its contextual role between those two entities ("I think" and "I am") is not simple. This relationship shows clearly that the fact to think (cogitate) comes first and the fact to be or to exist comes later (or after) as far as human beings are concerned. It also shows clearly that the fact to think justifies the fact to be (exist) because it (this adverb) correlates them (the two

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17 "I think" means first I am characterized by my cogitation, my capacity of reflection, my thinking, my consciousness, my brain.

18 "I am" means first I exist as human being, I am a body, I am a flesh.

19 The phrase "I think, therefore I am" first appears in *Discourse on the Method* (1637). But Descartes changes the wording to "I am, I exist" in his most famous (1641) work, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (called the *Meditations* for short). https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2018/11/26/descartes-i-think-therefore-i-am/ consulted on January 10th, 2020.

20 Ralph Ellison, *INVISIBLE MAN*, Penguin Modern Classics, USA, 1952, p. 7.

21 https://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-7/descartes-i-think-therefore-i-am consulted on January 10th, 2020.

22 An adverb meaning: and so, or because of that --- accordingly, or to that purpose ---- Therefore and thus are both fairly formal words that introduce a statement that is a consequence of the previous statement. They should not be used as empty connectors when what follows them does not derive from what precedes them. Microsoft® Encarta® 2009. © 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation. Tous droits réservés.

entities "I think" and "I am") as a cause and effect relationship[23]: "I think" [because of that] "I am".

> and as I observed that this truth, I think, therefore I am (cogito ergo sum), was so certain and … **I thence concluded that I was a substance whose whole essence or nature consists only in thinking,** and which, that it may exist, has need of no place, nor is dependent on any material thing; so that 'I', that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body, and is even more easily known than the latter …I considered myself as having a face, hands, arms, and all that system of members composed on bones and flesh as seen in a corpse which I designated by the name of body …[24]

According to the thesis "I think, therefore I am", the first important aspect of any human being is to "think" first, meaning the first *visible* ("easily known") thing or aspect in any human being is "thinking". The faculty of being able to use one's mind, brain, consciousness characterizes oneself as human being first: "and as I observed that this truth, I think, therefore I am (cogito ergo sum), was so certain and … I thence concluded that I was a substance whose whole essence or nature consists only in thinking". Then the faculty of "to be" or "to exist" in the expression "I am" characterizes oneself as human being as an object (body, flesh, physical aspect) "I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids" (Ellison, 1952:7)

I THINK ⟹ THEREFORE ⟹ I AM

Another analysis that people can draw from such a thesis is that if [I don't think], it means that [I am not]: [I don't think therefore I am not] because if "I am", it is because "I think" first. So if I think, I am and if I don't think, I am not. And if I am not because I don't think, it means that I cannot be "seen", I cannot be "visible", I will be "unseen" for thanks to this thesis[25] we realize that my "thinking" (brain, mind, consciousness, reason) as human being is prior and more *visible* than my "being" (existence or physical existence) as human being (body, flesh, physical aspect):

> … **I thence concluded that I was a substance whose whole essence or nature consists only in thinking,** and which, that it may exist, has need of no place, nor is dependent on any material thing; **so that 'I',**

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23 "So, the "I think" element in the Cogito implies the direct, immediate, certain knowledge of one's own existence. Thought requires a thinker and this is known *with certainty*." https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2018/11/26/descartes-i-think-therefore-i-am/ consulted on January 10th, 2020.
24 https://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-7/descartes-i-think-therefore-i-am consulted on January 10th, 2020.
25 "I think, therefore I am".

that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body, **and is even more easily known than the latter**

So through the thesis **"**I THINK, THEREFORE I AM"**,** we have in terms of cause and effect relationship the following reflections:

1- FIRST TO THINK----THEREFORE----TO BE
2- FIRST TO THINK---- THEREFORE ----TO EXIST
3- FIRST SHOULD THINK----THEN---- WILL BE
4- FIRST SHOULD THINK----THEN----WILL EXIST

The result is the following equations that the cause and effect relationship may give us:

5- IF I THINK I AM-------- IF I DON'T THINK I AM NOT
6- IF I THINK I EXIST-------IF I DON'T THINK I DON'T EXIST

Through these different relationships between the two components or entities of the thesis "I think, therefore I am" we may observe that the link between "I think" and "I am" is not a simple one because the other analysis possible and reliable is that if "I don't think" therefore "I am not". The relationship between these two entities is therefore so intrinsic, so reliable that you may not say "I am therefore I think" in displacement or in replacement of "I think, therefore I am" because the contextual link and meaning even the logical consequence between them (the two components or entities) are involved not as a literary play[26]. That is why the contrary "I am therefore I think" is not possible so one cannot say "I am therefore I think" in displacement of "I think, therefore I am".

In conclusion, I exist; I am; because I think first and my physical existence (body, flesh, blood, vein, substance or everything you may conceive as body) is proved and determined only by my brain, my mind that is why the two following theses "I think, therefore I am" and "I don't think therefore I am not" are clearly justified. The first being the product of the second, the second being the result and logical consequence of the first one.

Ralph Ellison's Metaphorical Existentialist Philosophical Concept About Black People Invisibility and Existence

In the prologue at the first paragraph, the author deals with the philosophical concept of existence of the protagonist-narrator an African-American (or a black man) related to the notion of invisibility through the metaphorical sentence "I AM an invisible man" (Ellison, 1952:7). And we may observe that this philosophical concept of existence of black people that he develops is quite different from that of any human being existence drawn from Descartes' perspective developed above.

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26 Play on words

Indeed, the basic contrast between the philosophical concept of existence of any human being (namely white people) and the philosophical concept of existence of black people and namely his major character resides in the fact that while for Descartes the "whole essence or nature" of any human being "consists only in thinking" ("… I thence concluded that I was a substance whose whole essence or nature consists only in thinking,") so that he may say "I think, therefore I am". Ellison presents bluntly the existentialist philosophical concept which characterizes black people both through the metaphorical sentence "I AM an invisible man" (Ellison, 1952:7) and the ironic sentence "– and I might even be said to possess a mind"[27] resulting in the following complete sentence: "I AM an invisible man– and I might even be said to possess a mind". These two rhetorically flamboyant sentences through the use of metaphor and irony are the best way for Ellison to better identify and characterize black people and namely the protagonist-narrator in this racist environment because beyond showing:

that story is an integral part of the African American and Native American rhetorical traditions as they are depicted in Ellison's and Momaday's novels … these novels also move beyond the depiction of rhetorical action to consider the relationship between rhetoric and culture, and in particular the relationship between repressed and dominant rhetorical traditions, an issue pursued by a number of contemporary rhetoricians. (Dadey, 2006: 4-5)

Through such a theory or concept "I AM an invisible man– and I might even be said to possess a mind", and through especially such rhetorical devices involved in the construction of the theory, he is proposing the end (second component) of Descartes' concept "I am" as the beginning or opening of his theory or concept. And later, he is proposing the core/fundamental interest (first component) of Descartes' concept which is "I think" to the judgment or appreciation of other persons; and also as the end and second component of his theory or concept.

The end of Descartes' concept "I am" is therefore the beginning/opening of Ellison's concept "I AM" and the beginning/opening of Descartes' concept "I think" is therefore the end of Ellison's concept "– and I might even be said to possess a mind" but here stipulated in a metaphorical and ironic way and that is the most striking aspect in his theory because Bruce Dadey (2006: 6) maintains that:

Glenn, Asante, and Berlin all propose that a system of rhetoric seems to be a neutral, catalytic medium for ideological action only from within the social or political system that produces it. When alternative systems of

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27 "I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids -- and I might even be said to possess a mind." in *INVISIBLE MAN*, first paragraph, p 7.

rhetoric, whose patterns of expression reflect other conceptions of social or political relations (or of the relationship between language and reality), clash with the dominant system of rhetoric, the status of rhetoric as "always already ideological" becomes apparent, and rhetoric itself becomes a site through which social struggles are enacted.

And to begin with, the fact to write the first aspect of Descartes' concept which is the "whole essence or nature" of human being in an ironic way ("– and I might even be said to possess a mind") is not a joke on the part of Ellison for it is here that resides exactly the existentialist philosophical concept related to the notion of invisibility which characterizes black people existence. Descartes' existentialist philosophical concept which should normally be attributed to any human being is "I think, therefore I am". Ellison's existentialist philosophical concept about his major character (or black people) invisibility and existence is "I AM an invisible man –and I might even be said to possess a mind" which synthetically gives the theory: "I AM– and I might even be said to possess a mind".

In clear, Ellison's existentialist philosophical concept about black people invisibility and existence is stipulated such a way simply because according to Yildiray Cevik (2012:13) "the predominant white society ignores the individuality and humanity of the blacks and views them as stereotypes of slaves. As a result of this approach, the blacks are exploited and their needs are disregarded rendering them down to invisibility in a 'blind' society."

The motif of invisibility treats a black man's situation in the United States. For a long time an Afro-American's individuality was ignored by the society, and the narrator in *Invisible Man* faces the same problem. For centuries blacks were oppressed by the whites and treated as inferior creatures, a cheap workforce, and 'a *flock of invisible people'* (Juozapaitytė, 2001). Afro-Americans were considered as people of lower social and intellectual status: they were not allowed the same possibilities as the white people, like receiving education, participating in public events, even deciding upon their future. They were simply deprived of their individuality (Juozapaitytė, 2001).[28]

In terms of style, typography or form, Ellison uses capital letters (or capitalization) for the expression "I AM" of his major character and normal letters (small) for the expression "an invisible man". A way of writing (style) which sheds a strong and excessive emphasis on the expression "I AM" of his character, an expression which is both physically (appearance and different from the other words) and typographically (capital letters) remarkable than the expression "– and I might even be said to possess a mind". The fact to use this

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28 Yildiray Cevik, "The Motifs of Blindness and Invisibility within the Influence of Postwar Existentialism as Reflected in *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison" Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: LIT2012-0278. (2012), p. 8.

literary form[29] (capital letters) to say: "I AM"[30] in "I AM an invisible man" at the beginning of the prologue, is a way for the author to shed light on the basic contrast between the philosophical concept of existence of any human being[31] and the philosophical concept of existence characterizing the protagonist-narrator, the African-Americans and black people in general because they have black skin color.

The White writer has invented and perpetuated a stereotype of the African which depicted him as physically unattractive, intellectually incompetent and spiritually degraded. Africans, according to the Whites are barbarians, born slaves, great singers, loyal servants, hard workers and true Christians. Only very low and inferior roles are assigned to the Blacks. The African is considered to be a conglomeration of mere arms and limbs, bones and eyes and as meaningless as his forests, rivers and silence.[32]

Indeed, while for Descartes the "whole essence or nature" of any human being "consists only in thinking", here the major character is not sure he "thinks" and he tells it clearly "– and I might even be said to possess a mind". But he is sure that he exists when he says "I AM" and he even uses capital letters to affirm this existence in the sentence "I AM an invisible man". Whereas for Descartes the expression and entity "I am" is a "latter" thing and less *visible* than the expression and entity "I think" ("so that 'I', that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body, and is even more easily known than the latter"). The major character presents his "I AM" as the most visible thing using in terms of style, typography and form some capital letters to show it. Because for the protagonist-narrator, it is the first thing he is sure of, and the way he affirms this aspect (capital letters) is very clear both in the form and in the content.

People better understand the use of capital letters "I AM" here in "I AM an invisible man" because both in the form and in the content, Ralph Ellison wants to tell us that the "whole essence or nature" of his major character "Invisible Man" resides in his being, in his existence, in his physical existence "I AM" which consists only in "a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids".

He is invisible, he tells you, because people don't see him. They see only "my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination." One reason for this is racial. The narrator is a black man, invisible because white people in America refuse to see black people **as human beings, as individuals**

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29 Looking at the larger form and appearance of printed words on the page through capitalization.

30 Those capital letters "I AM" are quite visible than the smaller letters "an invisible man".

31 "I think, therefore I am" as stated and developed by René Descartes.

32 https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/64079/7/07_chapter%201.pdf / CHAPTER ONE / ASSERTIVE BLACK POETS/ consulted on January 10th, 2020.

(Abbott, 1985:51)…The most natural theme to begin with is that of invisibility. What is an invisible man? How is the kind of invisibility Ellison writes about different from the physical invisibility of the English writer H. G. Wells' famous book The Invisible Man? A reading of Ellison's novel suggests that the theme of invisibility has different dimensions: (a) Invisibility suggests the unwillingness of others to see the individual as a person. The narrator is invisible because people see in him only what they want to see, not what he really is. Invisibility, in this sense, has a strong sense of racial prejudice. White people often do not see black people as individual human beings. (Abbott, 1985: 45)

Due to the fact that he is only sure of this physical aspect (the aspect of being or being existent), he insists on this aspect even using capitalization to affirm this existence and due to the fact that he is not sure of the other aspect "I think", he lets other persons (white people) determine whether he thinks or not "– and I might even be said to possess a mind".

In fact, the larger form of the letters used in "I AM" is quite meaningful and has a meaning that reinforces the meaning of the sentence "I AM an invisible man" as opposed to the sentence "I think, therefore I am". Through the larger form and the meaning of the letters "I AM", it is clear that the major character exists or does exist and moreover, he is so sure of his existence that he uses a literary style (capital letters) which is the larger form of the letters "I AM", as the meaningful image of his physical existence. This larger form "I AM" is also a metaphorical and symbolical aspect and representation of his existence in terms of physical existence because the shape of "I AM" is constructed in a way that anyone cannot deny his existence.[33]

As well as in his words and in his way of writing, the protagonist-narrator is sure of something "I AM an invisible man" and the larger form of the letters "I AM" is in fact a meaningful image of his physical existence (or physical aspect) meaning: "I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids." (Ellison, 1952:7) This physical aspect is only related to the form, to the shape; a merely physical existence like the larger form of the letter "I AM" avoids confusion and comparison to "spook", "ghost" or "Hollywood movie ectoplasms" (Ellison, 1952:7): "I AM an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood-movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids" (Ellison, 1952:7)

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33 It is put in capital letters at the beginning of the novel in a way that anyone can see it, and can observe the difference of form between the letters concerned: "I AM" and the other ones "an invisible man" of the same sentence or the difference between those concerned letters "I AM" and other ones such as "spook", "ghost", "Hollywood movie ectoplasm" used in the same prologue to characterize the protagonist in *INVISIBLE MAN*, p.7.

In clear, when referring to the philosophical statement "I think, therefore I am" which puts together two inter-related entities "I think" and "I am", it is observed that the protagonist-narrator claims and emphasizes only one entity which is "I AM": that notion of physical existence (flesh, body, fiber etc.) to which Descartes refers to as "the body" or "the latter":

so that 'I', that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body, and is even more easily known than the latter …I considered myself as having a face, hands, arms, and all that system of members composed on bones and flesh as seen in a corpse which I designated by the name of body … By the body I understand all that which can be defined by a certain figure: something which can be confined in a certain place, and which can fill a given space in such a way that every other body will be excluded from it; which can be perceived either by touch, or by sight, or by hearing, or by taste, or by smell …[34]

And, if one puts in relationship the first part of the sentence which is "I AM" and the second part which is "an invisible man" and if one comes back to the philosophical concept of existence developed by Descartes "I think, therefore I am"; one can realize that the protagonist-narrator's sentence "I AM an invisible man" means simply "I AM" BUT "an invisible man". Such a conclusion shows that there is a big contrast or ambiguity because when people take the expression "I AM", it means that the author exits and does exist. So how does it come that a person, who exists, becomes automatically invisible or "an invisible man"?

It is through this question that Ralph Ellison really sheds light metaphorically on the existentialist philosophical concept characterizing the protagonist "Invisible Man" existence and to a larger extent, the existentialist philosophical concept which characterizes all black people existence. And here resides the real philosophical concept of existence linked to the protagonist invisibility, to African Americans invisibility and at a larger point, to black people invisibility in general.

The African American (the major character) exists but at the same time, he is not visible, he is "unseen" while commonly speaking when we exist or when we "ARE" (in "I AM"), it means that we are visible or we should be visible. [35] The relationship therefore shows clearly here that there is an important entity (or important value) of any human being that is denied to him (the major character) or that is absent (missing) in the common philosophical

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34 https://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-7/descartes-i-think-therefore-i-am consulted on January 10th, 2020.

35 "Ellison at this point implies that if a man is invisible, it is possible that his surroundings are invisible, too" in "The Motifs of Blindness and Invisibility within the Influence of Postwar Existentialism as Reflected in *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison" by Yildiray Cevik, Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: LIT2012-0278, (2012), p.9.

concept of existence stated by Descartes. In fact, the "whole essence or nature" of any human being which "consists only in thinking" is absent, missing or is denied to the African American (the major character) that is why using irony, he says later "– and I might even be said to possess a mind" simply because this entity of "thinking" is not attributed or is denied to him and at a larger sphere, is denied to all black people by white people.

The *Introduction to the Science of Sociology,* Park and Burgess's standard textbook for college sociology classes in the 1930s, offers this definition: "The Negro is, by natural disposition, neither an intellectual nor an idealist, like the Jew; nor a brooding introspective, like the East Indian; nor a pioneer and frontiersman, like the Anglo-Saxon. He is primarily an artist, loving life for its own sake. His métier is expression rather than action. He is, so to speak, the lady among the races" (Bloom, 2008: 14).

And it is here that one may see through the notion of invisibility and the rhetoric implied in it how two existentialist philosophical concepts are opposed:

Descartes' philosophical concept of human being existence:

1- I think, therefore I am

2- I think, therefore I am and I am a visible man because I think ("so that 'I', that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body, and is even more easily known than the latter")

Ellison's philosophical concept of African American existence and black people existence:

1- I AM an invisible man– and I might even be said to possess a mind

2- I AM BUT an invisible man because it is not sure I possess a mind

3- I AM BUT I don't think so I AM an invisible man

4- I don't think BUT I AM so I AM an invisible man

5- Because I don't think I AM an invisible man

More recently the discussion of the relation between ideology and rhetoric has taken a new turn. Ideology is here foregrounded and problematized in a way that situates rhetoric within ideology, rather than ideology within rhetoric. In other words, instead of rhetoric acting as the transcendental recorder or arbiter of competing ideological claims, rhetoric is regarded as always already ideological. This position means that any examination of a rhetoric must first consider the ways its very discursive structure can be read so as to favor one version of economic, social, and political arrangement over other versions…. A rhetoric can never be innocent, can never be a disinterested arbiter of the ideological claims of others because it is always already serving certain ideological claims. (Dadey, 2006: 5-6)

At this step of the analysis, one can also argue that or interpret the expression "I AM" of the major character and namely the way it is written as a fact to claim his existence. The way he writes the "I AM" seems to be a way

of shouting aloud his existence to the world. He is proving his existence to the world by using the capital letters "I AM" because it may be possible that he does not "really exist" and therefore he is really "an invisible man", not to himself but to other people[36] namely to white people. Because he (the major character) is the one who tries to prove his own existence to the world, or to the society in which he lives:

> I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me… When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination -- indeed, everything and anything except me… you often doubt if you really exist. You wonder whether you aren't simply a phantom in other people's minds. Say, a figure in a nightmare which the sleeper tries with all his strength to destroy. It's when you feel like this that, out of resentment, you begin to bump people back. And, let me confess, you feel that way most of the time. You ache with the need to convince yourself that you do exist in the real world, that you're a part of all the sound and anguish, and you strike out with your fists, you curse and you swear to make them recognize you. And, alas, it's seldom successful. (Ellison, 1952:7)

When referring to Descartes and to all the demonstrations and arguments which surround his famous thesis "I think, therefore I am", we can, at this step of the analysis also deduce through a cause and effect relationship the fact that:

No thinking = No existence = invisible = (so invisibility for black people)

And this new equation may be possible for the major character who clearly says: "I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids -- and I might even be said to possess a mind" (Ellison, 1952:7) because in his statement the characteristic (entity) of "thinking" (to possess a mind) is written in the infinitive form. In clear, the verb is written in the infinitive form[37] and not at the first personal pronoun of the simple present tense like in the statement "I AM". So in conclusion, one can retain concerning the protagonist-narrator the following equation:

I AM[38]{BUT} an invisible man[39] = because NO THINKING[40]

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36 "You often doubt if you really exist. You wonder whether you aren't simply a phantom in other people's mind" in *INVISIBLE MAN*, P.7.

37 basic form of verb: a form of a verb with no reference to a specific tense, person, or subject.

38 "I AM" (so part of existence-physical existence).

39 "an invisible man" (so not part of visible men-not considered as an individual in/of the society).

40 Because NO THINKING (so not human being as well as the other human beings when referring to Descartes' philosophy).

What about the first entity or the important value ("I think") of human being evoked by Descartes and what is the relationship between this important entity and the other one ("I AM") mentioned by the narrator? To respond to this question, he says: "I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids -- and I might even be said to possess a mind."

The fact to claim his existence through the words "I AM" and to say later the contrary in the same sentence through the words "an invisible man" is not due to the fact that he does not exist. But rather, it is due to the fact that for white people, his existence is merely an invisible existence[41]. And this fact automatically lets him be "an invisible man". He becomes "an invisible man" because the first important quality which makes him a human being or a human existing and visible: the quality "I think" (thinking) in the sentence "I think, therefore I am" seems not to be part of our protagonist-narrator (or part of black people) as for white people conception or perception about him "I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me"… "When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except me." (Ellison, 1952:7)

That is why, when asked after this particular and important entity or value, he says clearly: "—and I might even be said to possess a mind" but not "I possess a mind"[42] as he used to claim or say clearly "I AM" both in the typography[43] and in the meaning.[44]

The literary construction (syntax and semantics) that he uses to refer to that other entity of human being which is "thinking" and which is the most important in Descartes philosophical concept shows confusion and an ambiguous idea. In one case, he is sure of something but in the other case he is not sure, or at least, he leaves this other important value to the appreciation of other people and namely to the appreciation of white people. He prefers that other people claim it for him, or state it for him as if there is a kind of irresponsibility and a kind of doubt or uncertainty.

Ellison and Momaday explore how different rhetorics produce distinct, often conflicting realities, and how alternative rhetorical traditions might assist marginalized people to redefine their identities and reconfigure the social and political contexts in which they live. At the same time, the novels, written and published during periods of increasing racial tension in the United States, are themselves rhetorical products that influence their readers.(Dadey, 2006: 6-7)

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41 "I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me" in *INVISIBLE MAN*, P.7.

42The value which determines the thinking (or the use of thinking), the value which permits any Human being to think, to reflect, to create, etc.

43 Look at the printed matter: the appearance of printed words on the page.

44 State his existence, state his physical existence.

Quite different from the conventional philosophical concept of human being existence in Descartes' analysis, Ralph Ellison gives us another philosophical concept of black human being existence through the protagonist-narrator "Invisible Man" which is:

"I AM"   and   "I might even be said to possess a mind"
or rather
"I AM"   so   "I might even be said to possess a mind"
or rather
"I AM"   then   "I might even be said to possess a mind"

The characteristic of mind, the most important for human beings according to Descartes' concept and through which a person is an existing person who is considered, seen, taken into account among people in his society (or in the society) as an equal human being is not seen in our protagonist-narrator "Invisible Man" and in African American. That is why he says: "when they approach me they see only my surroundings—indeed, everything and anything except me".

Conclusion

By definition, the prologue means the introduction but also the beginning. And in the novel *INVISIBLE MAN* by using the prologue to introduce us to the central and important notion of invisibility and namely by introducing us to black people invisibility, Ralph Ellison wants metaphorically speaking to tell us that the very beginning of all the problems of black people or the prologue of the plight of black people in their existence is their invisibility ("my invisibility"[45]). That invisibility they have through the perception or the *inner* eyes of white people.[46] So the prologue of their problems in their existence is really the problem of their invisibility. All people are visible or normally speaking all people should be visible because they are endowed and characterized by the thesis "I think, therefore I am" or "I think, therefore I am/exist". But as far as black people are concerned, and in the perception of white people, they are endowed and characterized by the thesis "I AM / EXIST" – "and I might even be said to possess a mind" or "I AM a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids -- and I might even be said to possess a mind." (Ellison, 1952:7) On the basis of such a thesis, white people consider black people as invisible because for white people "they are" [black people are], "they do exist" [black people exist], but they don't possess

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45 Expression used by the protagonist-narrator at the first line of the second paragraph in the prologue.
46 "That invisibility to which I refer occurs because of a peculiar disposition of the eyes of those with whom I come in contact. A matter of the construction of their *inner* eyes, those eyes with which they look through their physical eyes upon reality." in *INVISIBLE MAN*, p.7.

"a mind", they don't possess "thinking". And due to the fact that for white people the entity "I think" or "I mind" is prior to the entity "I am/exist" so black people are not visible, they are rather invisible[47]. That is why Ralph Ellison introduces his novel by the sentence "I AM an invisible man" meaning "I AM [BUT] an invisible man" meaning "I exist [BUT] an invisible man" meaning "I don't think", "I don't possess a mind" according to white people. Thanks to such a prejudice it is easy to determine the existentialist philosophical concept which characterizes black people invisibility through the *inner* eyes of white people. That is why this new concept which foreshadows the invisibility of black people is the contrary of the universal concept promoted by Descartes through his thesis "I think, therefore, I am".

One final point: The narrator is an Afro-American. Part of the reason he's invisible is that Ellison feels white people do not see black people. Much of what he suffers comes at the hands of white people and those blacks who work for white people. From this point of view the narrator may be interpreted as a symbol for the black person in America. (Abbott, 1985: 24)

Due to the relevance of the theme of invisibility debated and regarding the stylistic aspects mentioned (typography), this review at the end puts in question the revision of the sentence "I AM an invisible man"[48] into the sentence "I am an invisible man"[49] and its usefulness. When we observe through this analysis that the written form of the sentence "I AM an invisible man"[50] of the old and first edition better fits both in the form and in the content the notion of invisibility linked to black people existence that Ellison is taking about.

At some levels, we can admit that the written form of the sentence "I AM an invisible man"[51] is suitable to convey the message the author wants to convey through the notion of invisibility which characterizes black people in the white American society while they do exist. Even if the analysis is the same in terms of value and message conveying about the notion of invisibility, it is important to precise that the written form or the typography of the sentence "I AM an invisible man" conveys better the existentialist philosophical concept about black people invisibility both in terms of form (capital letters)

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[47] "I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me…When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination -- indeed, everything and anything except me." in *INVISIBLE MAN*, p.7.

[48] An old Edition of the corpus we used for our paper published by Penguin Modern Classics, Penguin Books Ltd, First published in the USA 1952, published in Penguin Books 1965, Reprinted 1969-1984, Copyright-1947-1948-1952 by Ralph Ellison.

[49] A very recent Edition of the same corpus (the Second Vintage International Edition of March 1995, Copyright renewed 1980 by The Ralph and Fanny Ellison Charitable Trust or on that of Vintage Book Edition).

[50] The Edition of the corpus we used for our paper.

[51] The Edition of the corpus we used for our paper.

and in terms of semantics. That is why we may question the revision of the sentence "I AM an invisible man" into the sentence "I am an invisible man" here at the end of our analysis.

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A Socio-Pragmatic Study of the Nigerian National Anthem

Idowu O. Odebode, PhD, MA, BA. ED, PGD
Redeemer's University, Nigeria

Abstract

This study aims at unearthing the language of the Nigerian national anthem (Arise O compatriots) from a socio-pragmatic perspective. The research is grounded on three theoretical frameworks namely, Austin's (1962) speech act theory because words perform actions in different socio-cultural contexts; Giles, Coupland and Coupland's (1991) accommodation theory because communication is a matter of convergence and divergence in the socio-cultural milieu and Halliday's (2004) systemic functional grammar because words are arranged systematically to make meanings. They possess ideational, interpersonal and textual capabilities. The study, which is born out of the dearth of linguistic research on the Nigerian national anthem, indicates that the (new) Nigerian national anthem is not just designed as an ordinary political song. It is intended for praying and informing; hence, its major illocutionary acts. The writer/composer also deploys asserting, summoning, and admonishing as the song's minor illocutionary acts, to advise the citizens on their historical antecedents and declare their duties to the nation. A further classification of the textual verbs according to Austin's paradigm indicated that the song is inundated with behavitive, excersitive and verdictive speech acts.

Keywords: Nigeria, National Anthem, Pragmatic Act, Socio-pragmatics.

Introduction

Like a country's motto, flag, or crest, a national anthem symbolizes the essence of a nation. It is also blessed with subtle and coded historiography of the country. The song is sung daily in schools, on radio/television and at official functions in which the head of government or his representative is present. It is regarded as a means of patriotism to one's nationality. Based on the above, Faniyan (2012) submits as follows:

A national anthem is a solemn patriotic song adopted as an expression of national identity. It is a tool to endear the idea of a fatherland to the hearts

of citizens. A device to make the country a part of the people that are named after it…. a creed to inspire virtues such as loyalty, service, and a sense of belonging to one's country. It inspires love, unity and courage in the face of unfavourable circumstance (Faniyan, 2012:1).

One unique characteristic of national anthems is that they are carefully constructed in a "semantico-syntactic sense to manifest specific meanings" (Oyeleye 1985, p.138). Therefore, our preoccupation in the present study is to analyse the (new) Nigerian national anthem from a socio-pragmatic perspective. This is with a view to unravel its (sociolinguistic as well as pragmatic) imports via the principle of speech act, accommodation theory and aspect of systemic functional grammar. Studies on Nigerian national anthem have not enjoyed quantitative attention from linguistic scholars. But for Faniyan (2012) and Oyeyemi (2018), most research works (e.g. Mohammed and Ayeni, 2018) on this important linguistic domain have approached it from the socio-political point of view. The present study is an attempt at filling this gap.

The Nigerian National Anthem:

"Arise O Compatriots" is the national anthem of Nigeria, a former colony of the British and the most populous country in Africa, seventh in the world. It has an estimated population of over 200 million people, with 90 million of its population under the age of eighteen. This makes the country to have the third-largest youth population in the world, after India and China. (see https://www.google.com/search?client=firefoxd&q=nigeria+the+most+populous+country+in+africa). The country has about 450 ethno-linguistic groups. Among these, the trio of Hausa (North), Igbo (East) and Yoruba (West) stand out. Politically, the song brings about unity among the heterogeneous communities/languages in Nigeria. That is why it is largely sung in English, the official language (cum lingua franca) of the country. At the inception, it was translated to only the three dominant languages (Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo) locally. But unlike English, the languages cannot sustain cohesion in the diverse situations. The song, therefore, is one of the cords that bind Nigeria together as a nation, hence its importance to the present study.

Before independence in 1960, the patriotic song of Nigeria was the British "God save the Queen". When the Union Jack was lowered and Nigeria became independent on October 1, 1960, the country changed its anthem to "Nigeria we hail Thee" (1960-1978). It was composed by a Briton, Miss Frances Benda. In the quest to reclaim its identity, Nigeria changed to a new anthem, "Arise O Compatriots." It was produced by a native Police Officer, Benedict Odiase and adopted in 1978 to replace the previous song.

Literature Review:

Several studies have been carried out on political discourse. One of them is Adegbite (2009) does an expose on politics and political discourse. Citing Chilton (2004:4), he views politics as a struggle for power between the intending rulers who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who are opposed to such move on one hand. On the other hand, politics is considered as "co-operation in the sense of practices and institutions that a society has for resolving clashes of interest over money, influence, liberty and the like." (Adegbite 2009:10). However, language is crucial to power negotiation and the sustainability of cooperation among social institutions. Therefore, political language should, first of all, be considered as discourse before being viewed as politics. The work is related to the present study because our focus is on the Nigerian national anthem as a (political) discourse. It should be noted that "Arise O compatriots" is a Nigerian national anthem which was designed in the post-independence era as an instrument of cooperation among the citizens. It also serves as a means of reclaiming identity and rejecting colonial mentality (enshrined in the previous anthem composed by the British).

One of the pioneering works on the Nigerian national anthem is Faniyan (2012). The author takes a stylistic approach to study both the Nigerian national anthem and pledge simultaneously. He discovers that graphologically, the author uses 118 words for the national anthem for ease of remembrance. But at the level of grammar, the composer of the national anthem and pledge subvert the syntactic rule by not sticking to the traditional SVOCA rule throughout the composition. He maintains that the word "arise" is a call to action lexically and contextually.

The work updates our knowledge of the Nigerian national anthem from another perspective, i.e., stylistics. Its combination with the pledge makes the analysis inadequate and less rigorous. Moreover, because of the nature of the approach, i.e., stylistics, the author dwells more on syntactic and graphological analysis. The present study takes care of these shortcomings, and it takes a socio-pragmatic approach to the study of the national anthem without combining it with the pledge such that the analysis can be thorough.

In a related research, Mohammed and Ayeni (2018) take a critical look at the challenges before past, present and future Nigerian political leadership using the national anthem and national pledge as their symbol and corpus for analysis. They discover that mismanagement of resources coupled with protracted military intervention has affected the vision of the founding fathers of the country. This really negates the oaths sworn to by the rulers and the wordings of the song "to serve our fatherland with love and strength and faith." The study views Nigeria's problems from the political perspective while using the national anthem and the pledge as a corpus. It is thus related to the present

study in data but differs in approaches. While the current study uses the linguistic approach, Ayeni and Mohammed's (2018) work uses a political approach.

Besides, Odebode and Okunlola (2018) consider Goodluck Jonathan's inaugural speech from a pragmatic perspective. The speech act theory by Austin (1962) is invoked and tested on the data. The analysis indicates that informing has the highest illocutionary frequency. This is followed by acknowledging, thanking and motivating, respectively. The work is similar to the present in theoretical framework because speech act theory is one of the theoretical preliminaries adopted for benchmarking the present study. However, the study differs from the present in data. While it analyses the speech of the former president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan, the present study has Nigerian national anthem as its corpus.

Furthermore, Ogunsiji (2018) studies the power and politics of language. He submits that in Nigeria, English is a language of power because it is the language of administration. He further posits that as a system of symbols, language is a powerful weapon employed by its users to manage strategic interactions in a multilingual society like Nigeria. He maintains that the poor management of linguistic diversity in Nigeria is a curse rather than a blessing. Consequently, he dissects language into micro and macro levels. These two have a symbiotic relationship in that the linguistic power possessed by an individual (micro-level) does affect the operation of language at the larger society (macro-level). Linguistic exchanges, therefore, become the instrument of power relations and negotiations in the human sphere. At this juncture, this study argues that the composer of the Nigerian national anthem has deployed language at the micro-level such that the song's messages affect the larger society at the macro level. Therefore, the writer/composer, through the song (Arise O compatriots), has succeeded in wrestling the power (of composing anthem) from the colonial masters who gave the country her initial anthem (Nigeria we hail thee); hence the relationship of the work to the present study.

Moreover, Oyeyemi (2018) does a text linguistic exploration of the Nigerian national anthem. Using an Integrated Theory of Text Linguistic (ITTL), he discovers that there is a paradigm shift in the structure and text of the anthem. The work emphasizes the principles of grouping, prominence and cohesion, and views the anthem as a genre of poetry which is characterized by few words but expresses inexhaustible meanings. The study is similar to the present research in data but different in theory and approach.

Theoretical Approaches:

Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday, in the development of systemic functional grammar (SFG), postulates that language is a system of putting words together to make meanings. Thus language users have to make choices within the available linguistic options (form) such that meaning can be generated based on the context of discourse. Halliday (1970, 2004) ascribes three main functions to language viz ideational, interpersonal and textual. Meanwhile, Giles et al. (1991) posit that language functions as an instrument of identity and solidarity "with or dissociation from a conversational partner reciprocally and dynamically." (Giles et al., 1991, p.2). This is what they developed into the theory of accommodation, which "strategies can characterize wholesale realignment of patterns of code of language selection, although again related to constellations of underlying beliefs, attitudes and socio-cultural conditions." (Giles et al., 1991, p.2). Accommodation theory stresses that the encoder adjusts his/her speech to accommodate the decoder, which may eventually result in convergence or divergence. Convergence occurs when speeches are moved closer to the addressee while divergence moves speech styles far apart, although the latter rarely occurs.

In the same vein, Austin (1962) submits that words do not happen in isolation. Instead, they are used to perform specific actions in a given context. This is the basis of the theory of speech acts within which Austin identifies the act of saying (locutionary act), the function of saying (illocutionary act) and the effect of saying something on the listener (perlocutionary act). Initially, Austin made a distinction between constative and performative verbs. Constative verbs are used in making statements and describing events among others while performative verbs spell out the illocutionary force of the performative clauses which are used in performing a present action. The import of this is that while certain sentences can be used in communicative encounters to report states of affairs, the utterance of some sentences should be seen as the performance of an act (Osisanwo, 2003:56). Austin (1962) finally gives a taxonomy of five speech acts summarisable in Malmkjaer (2002:490) as: verdictives (e.g. giving of a verdict), excersitives (exercising of powers as in voting, advising, warning), commissives (promising or undertaking), behavitives (social attitudes like apologizing, commending) and expositives (metalinguistic use of language as in *I exemplify*).

Austin's pupil, J.R. Searle (1969) digresses slightly from Austin's trifurcated speech acts (of locution, illocution and perlocution). He proposes four things a speaker does with his utterance. These are: utterance act (uttering words, morphemes and sentences), propositional act (referring and predicating), illocutionary act (questioning, ordering, stating), perlocutionary act (persuading, encouraging). Searle further introduced the condition necessary for guaranteeing the speech act, otherwise felicity conditions.

Finally, he criticized Austin's classification on the basis of too much overlapping. Searle (1969) thus comes up with the following five categories of speech acts: assertive (affirm, allege), directives (requestives, questions), commissives (promises, offers), expressive and declaratives (effectives, verdictives).

The theories are relevant to the present study because one of the significant means through which the tripartite functions of language by Halliday, are realised is the national anthem. The anthem is inundated with ideational, interpersonal and textual functions, as will be demonstrated shortly in this analysis. Furthermore, because a national anthem is an expression of national identity (Faniyan, 2012), Nigerians believed that they needed to dispense with the old national anthem (see Appendix 2), which symbolizes colonial identity. Therefore, they embraced the new anthem (see Appendix 1) composed by a fellow Nigerian, as a means of solidarity. This affirms the words of Giles et al. (1991, p.2) that the theory of accommodation functions "… to index and achieve solidarity with or dissociation from a conversational partner reciprocally and dynamically." Moreover, the wordings of the song perform certain functions in the context of Nigerian history and socio-political landscape; hence, the relevance of the speech act theory.

Data Analysis:
At this juncture, this study attempts a line-by-line pragmatic analysis of the anthem. The first locutionary act is: **Arise O compatriots, Nigeria's call obey**. Contextually, the word "compatriots" presupposes that the writer/composer is a fellow citizen to the listeners (i.e. Nigerians). The addressee in this context summons his kinsmen to arise and obey the call of the country. This, therefore, attests to the words of Giles et al., (1991) that a kind of convergence occurs when speeches are moved closer to the addressee. Similarly, it corroborates the emphasis of the audience design theory which views a speaker as adjusting his/her words to suit the addressees in order to express solidarity or intimacy with them (Bell, 1984). The second clause presupposes that there is a state called Nigeria, and there is a duty for the Nigerian citizens (compatriots) to obey the call.

Furthermore, by the words "arise" and "obey," this study may infer that the writer is subtly ordering his comrades to get up and obey the country's call. Socially, the perlocutionary act of the utterance hangs on the fact that the song is sung while standing up, hence the need to arise for a purpose (i.e., to obey Nigeria's call). This also affirms the writer/composer's profession as a police officer because it is in the (para) military profession that the use of lexemes such as arise and obey is in vogue. Based on the above, this research may infer that the illocutionary act of the statement is summoning cum commanding.

The second illocutionary act is: **To serve our fatherland.** By this statement, the writer/composer tries to justify the reason for summoning his fellow citizens in the first stanza. However, the use of the words "our" and "serve" are also significant in this context. The addresser uses the possessive pronoun/adjective to indicate that he belongs to the group of the addressees. This is the convergence strategy in communicative accommodation theory (CAT), where individuals adapt to each other's communicative conducts to lessen social distances. Similarly, the lexeme fatherland presupposes ownership and right, i.e., not a strange land. This is in contrast to the old National Anthem, where the last sentence of the first stanza says, "Nigerians all are proud to serve our sovereign **motherland**" (see https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Nigeria_We_Hail_Thee emphasis mine). This is another means of domesticating the song by the composer who is trying to shy away from the old anthem composed by the White. Thus he carefully chooses his words (e.g. fatherland) to contrast the old song as a means of reclaiming his identity. Notice that the word "sovereign" in the old song also suggests a sense of servitude and invokes a history of colonialism.

Socially, the word "serve" in the new anthem is also indicative of military jargon in which soldiers and policemen are referred to as servicemen, hence the enactment of the writer/composer's profession in the anthem. The whole lot presupposes that there is a fatherland which should be served and the purpose of calling the addressee to arise is to serve that fatherland. The illocutionary act of the statement is thus informing.

The third datum is "with love and strength and faith." This expression is contextually grounded on the previous. It is describing how the addresser and the addressees should serve their fatherland. It can also be said to be grammatically modifying the word "serve" in the previous line. Thus, the extent of the interlocutors' service should be with love, strength and faith. The illocutionary act is, therefore, describing/informing.

A couple of lines four and five serve as our next locutionary act. The writer/composer declares that "The labour of our heroes past; shall never be in vain." This utterance invokes the listener/readers' sense of history. It presupposes that there were leaders in Nigeria; the leaders wrought exploits (by the term "labour"); hence they were heroes. The inference from the word "past" is that the said heroes have died. The heroes in this context can be assumed to be the nationalist leaders who fought for the country's independence. These include Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo and Ahmadu Bello, among others. These men, who have died, were the first president, prime minister, premier (Western Region) and premier (Northern Region), respectively, in Nigeria. The writer/composer is thus appealing to the reader/listener's sense of history. He is simultaneously asserting that they (addresser/addressees) will serve their country such that the labours of their

past heroes will not be in vain. The illocutionary act, therefore, is reminiscing/asserting.

Meanwhile, the addresser in line six of stanza one says, "To serve with heart and might." This statement suggests a question if taken together with line one [Arise O compatriots]. The pertinent question that comes to mind is "why should the listeners arise?" The apt answer is "to serve with heart and might." Therefore, the writer/composer is admonishing Nigerians to serve their country wholeheartedly on the one hand. On the other, he is adducing reason(s) for calling on them to arise in line one. The illocutionary act is thus admonition/justification.

The last line of stanza one is: "One nation bound in freedom, peace and unity." The word "bound" in this context presupposes a nation that is enslaved or yoked together. It further suggests that Nigeria is a heterogeneous community which is bound [brought together by force] in "freedom, peace and unity." Finally, the line indicates the first motto of Nigeria before 1978, which was "peace, unity, freedom." It also sheds light on why the almost 450 ethnic groups in the colony came together for independence i.e. for freedom, peace and unity. Hence, the illocutionary act of a nation that is bound in freedom, peace and unity is asserting/informing.

From the foregoing, if the whole of stanza one is taken together, this study may conclude that the illocutionary act is summoning/commanding. This is so because all other words in the stanza are justifying the first word i.e. arise which is a clarion call as well as a directive to the natives.

Similarly, the first line of the second stanza is: "Oh God of creation, direct our noble cause." Graphologically, the writer, tactically divided the line into two separate segments with a comma. The illocutionary act of the first part is summoning (God). This fraction is significant to all other aspects of the stanza. It serves as a springboard or an ellipted element, not only to the second segment of the line, but also the rest of the stanza. As a result, this paper can conclude that the writer/composer is praying through the stanza. Thus, the study has "Oh God of creation, direct our…" (line 1), "guide our…" (line 2), "help our…" (line 3). However, it is insightful to note that each line of stanza two also communicates different pragmatic imports. Thus, "…direct our noble cause" (line 1) presupposes the existence of a new or dignified foundation/beginning, which requires divine direction; the absence of the latter can spell doom for the nascent nation. This further suggests that the efforts of the compatriots (summoned in stanza one) are not adequate in governing the burgeoning nation. So, the assistance of the Supreme Being has to be sought in the form of prayer for the collective good of everyone involved in "our noble cause."

In the same vein, "guide our leader's right" (line 2) presupposes the existence of a budding leader (s) who has the tendency to go the wrong

direction; hence, he needs divine guidance to do what is right. The writer/composer concentrates on the leadership of the nation in line 2, having prayed for every citizen and the country in the previous line. He is requesting God to guide their leader right, hence the illocutionary act of praying or requesting. Meanwhile, line 3 is requesting that God should grant the youths the right knowledge. The words "help our youths the truth to know" presuppose that the youths have been thriving in falsity before. Socially, the clause suggests that as the independent nation is striving to come out of its shell of colonial mentality, the youths need to understand certain truths and social values.

Lines 4 and 5 clarify the truth and social values being raised in line 3 by the addresser. The youth should know that it is in love and honesty that they can grow, as well as by living just and true. These words presuppose a situation where love, honesty and truth are needed. It should be noted that by the time this anthem was composed, Nigeria has experienced one civil war (Biafra War of 1967-1970) and four military coup d'etats. These are Major Kaduna Nzeogwu Coup (January, 1966), General Yakubu Gowon's Counter Coup (July 1966), Generals Murtala/Obasanjo Coup (July, 1975) and Lt Col. Buka Dimka's aborted Coup (February 13, 1976). As of 1978, when this song was composed, General Olusegun Obasanjo was the Head of State. He took over the mantle of leadership after his boss, General Murtala Mohammed was assassinated by Lieutenant Colonel B.S. Dimka on 13th February, 1976. The above situations in the country could generate tension and disaffections, hence the composer's clamour for love, justice and truth. Notwithstanding, rather than telling the people directly, the composer turns his request to prayer before God, thus the illocutionary act of praying.

Finally, the addresser uses the wordings of lines 5 and 7 to intercede for his audience that they should attain great lofty heights such that they would be able to build a nation where peace and justice shall reign. These words suggest that Nigeria has not yet fully developed as a nation. Being a developing country, she needs to grow into an enviable (great lofty) height while simultaneously addressing the issues of injustice, civil unrest and war in order to maintain a peaceful nation. The above locutions are, therefore, subtly introduced into the songs in the form of prayer in stanza 2, hence, the illocutionary act of praying.

The overall perlocutionary act of the anthem is significant. Largely, Nigerians welcome the anthem and they are fond of it more than the former. For instance, when "Nigeria we hail thee" was first introduced, it was greeted with criticism. The protest was reportedly intense that a native newspaper, the *Daily Service*, which was owned by the Yoruba socio-cultural group *Egbe Omo Oduduwa* "started a rebellious campaign against the national anthem which led to a committee being established to collect signatures as a petition."

(see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria,_We_Hail_Thee Accessed June 4, 2020). But the effect of "Arise O compatriots" is overwhelming. The natives who believed that the former anthem was composed by a Briton saw a ray of hope in the new anthem because it "highlighted their differences…Though tribes and tongues may differ…" (*Media Nigeria.com*, 2018). Furthermore, the anthem was celebrated because it glorifies the rich culture and heritage of the country. Religiously, the people embraced it so much that it is being sung in churches and mosques, particularly the second stanza which is a prayer. Specifically, it put an end to the Muslim/Christian dichotomy during opening/closing prayers in public places. *Media Nigeria.com* (2018:1) captures the situation succinctly as follows:

As a matter of fact, the federal executive council in 2012
decided that the second stanza should be the official
national prayer and was to replace the separate Christian
and Muslim prayers often offered at official gatherings
and events. Overall, the Nigerian anthem... is indeed
the dream of every citizen of this great nation.

From the analysis so far, we may establish that the writer/composer is praying preponderantly in (stanza two of) the anthem such that we have "Oh God of creation, direct our… (line 1), guide our…(line 2), help our…(line 3)." Socially, this is the system in Africa where prayer either precedes or ends an endeavour. It further bolsters the biblical saying, "work and pray." The writer/composer, therefore, summons his compatriots (humanity) to arise in stanza one before calling on God, the creator (divinity) to guide, direct and help the people as well as the country in the second stanza.

Statistical Analysis:

The analysis above is captured in table 1 below.

Table 1: Speech acts distribution in the anthem

Locutionary Act	Illocutionary Act
*Arise, O compatriots, Nigeria's call obey	Summoning/commanding
To serve our fatherland	Informing
With love and strength and faith	Describing/informing

The labour of our heroes past; shall never be in vain	Reminiscing/asserting
To serve with heart and might	Admonishing/justifying
One nation bound in freedom, peace and unity	Asserting/informing
**Oh God of creation, direct our noble cause	Summoning/praying
guide our leader's right	Praying/requesting
Help our youth the truth to know	Praying
In love and honesty to grow, and living just and true	Praying
Great lofty heights attain	Praying
To build a nation where peace and justice shall reign.	Praying

In table 1 the single asterisk (*) indicates the commencement of stanza one and double asterisks (**) stand for the beginning of the second stanza. Thus, the table indicates the two stanzas of the anthem, each having six lines, based on the present analysis. This translates to a total of twelve lines. Each line signifies the locutionary act(s) and its attendant illocutionary act(s). The illocutionary acts frequency(ies) and percentage(s) are represented in table 2 as follows:

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of illocutionary acts

S/N	Illocutionary Act(s)	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Summoning	2	16.66
2.	Informing	3	25
3.	Asserting	1	8.33
4.	Admonishing	1	8.33
5.	Praying	5	41.66
	Total	12	100

Table 2 indicates that five different illocutionary acts are deployed. Although we have situations in which one datum showcases two illocutionary acts as indicated in table 1, we pick on the dominant illocutionary act in such a situation. For example, summoning is considered the major illocutionary act in the first line(s) of each of the two stanzas. Therefore, we may submit that among the illocutionary acts deployed, praying has the highest frequency of five (41.66%). It is followed by informing which has three as its frequency (25%). Summoning appears twice (16.66%) while both asserting and admonishing have one frequency each, hence 8.33% respectively. This situation is represented with a line chart in Fig.1 as follows:
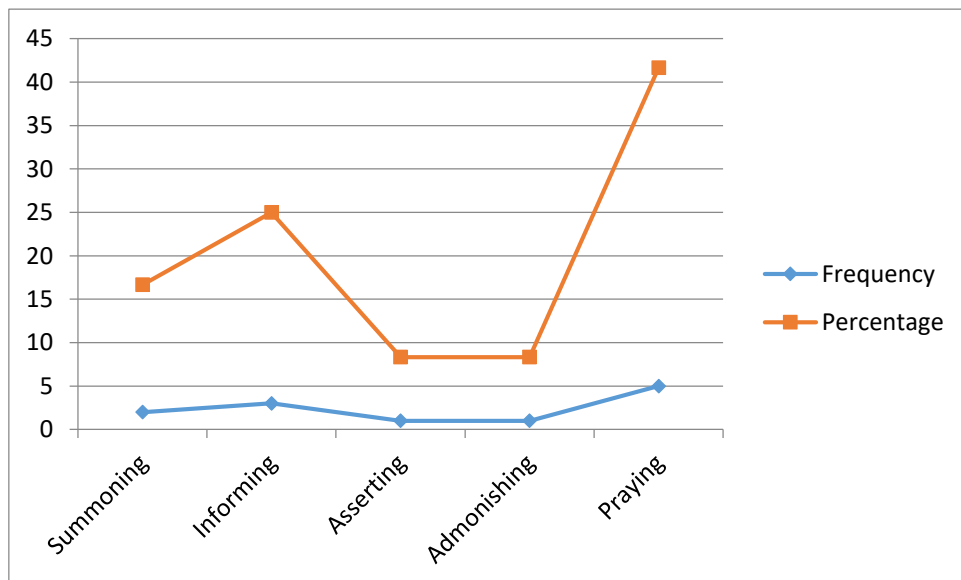

Fig. 1: A line chart indicating the frequency and percentage of illocutionary acts in the anthem

A further dissection of the above indicates that virtually all the verbs in the text are constatives. Based on Austin's taxonomy, the verbs can be classified as follows:

Table 3 (a and b): Austin's Classification of Verbs in the Anthem
(a.)   Stanza One:

Line	Verb (Locution)	Speech Act
1.	Arise…	Excersitive
1.	…obey	Excersitive
2.	To serve	Behavitive
5.	Shall never	Verdictive
6.	To serve	Behavitive

In stanza one, two verbs (arise and obey) are foregrounded in the first line. These, by Austin's classification, have the illocutionary undertone of excersitives, because they are both ordering or commanding. Searle (1969) classifies such verbs as directives. Line 2 features "to serve" which is behavitives. The verb in line 5 is "shall..be.." and it is a future tense asserting that the labour of the past heroes shall never be in vain; hence, it is assertive according to Austin's taxonomy. However, such a verb is classified by Searle as declarative. The last constative verb in stanza one is found in line 6. It is a non-finite verb "to serve." Since it predicts a kind of social attitude/behavior among the participants, it is considered a behavitive.

(b)   Stanza Two

Line	Verb (Locution)	Speech Act
1.	(O God) …**direct**	Excersitive
2.	Guide	Excersitive
3.	Help…	Excersitive
4.	To grow	Behavitive
5.	And **living**	Behavitive
6.	…attain	Behavitive
7.	To build	Behavitives
7.	*…shall reign	Behavitives/ Verdictive (*predictive, Allan, 1986)

In the same vein, stanza 2, lines 1, 2 and 3 feature excersitives. These are direct (line 1), guide (line 2) and help (line 3) respectively. Following the triad is a quatrain of lines 4 to 7 which feature behavitives thus: the infinitival verbs "to grow" (line 4) and "living" (line 5), "attain" (line 6) and the infinitive "to build" (line 7). The last verb (shall reign) in line 7 is a future tense. Based on Austin's classification, we may argue that it is both verdictive and behavitive. It is verdictive because it is giving a verdict or an appraisal on the hereafter. Thus, after the addressees have carried out everything said by the addresser, justice shall reign. Alternatively it is behavitive because it predicts an action, a social behavior and attitude of the addressees. This is what Allan (1986) calls a predictive speech act.

Table 4: Summary of Austin's Classificatory Paradigm

Speech Act Typology	Frequency	Percentage
Behavitives	6	46.1
Excersitives	5	38.4
Verdictive	2	15.3
Total	13	100

Table 4 gives the summary of Austin's speech act classification as applicable to the verbs our text. Three major acts are deployed, namely behavitives, excersitives and verdictives. Behavitives have six frequency (46.1%) Excersitives have five (38.4%) and verdictives, two (15.3%). This is represented by a bar chart in fig. 2.
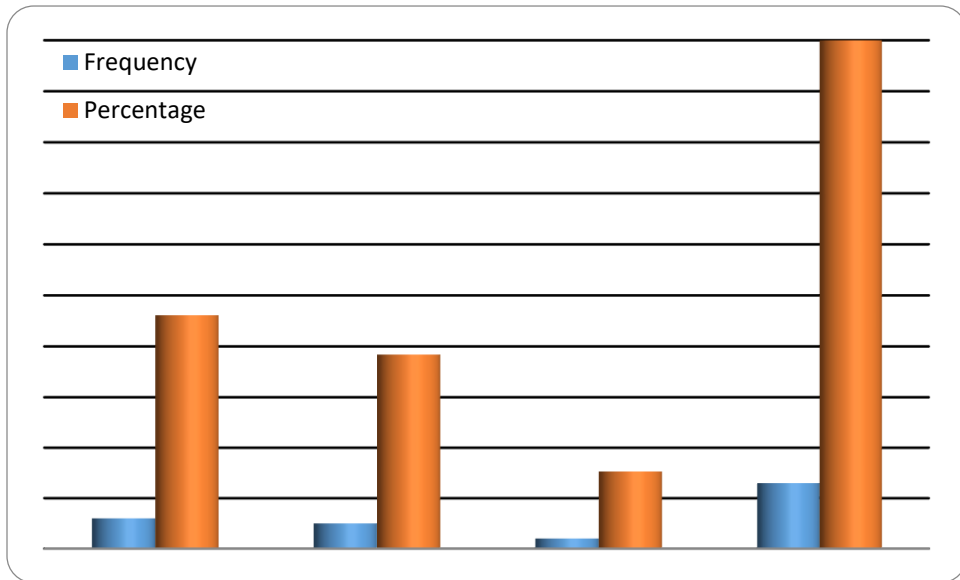
Fig.2: Bar chart indicating frequency and percentage of Austin's speech acts

Conclusion

The analysis above indicates that the (new) Nigerian national anthem is not just designed as an ordinary political song. Pragmatically, it is intended for praying and informing the Nigerian populace. The writer/composer also uses the medium to summon and admonish the citizens on their historical past as well as the need to arise to duties for the betterment of the nation. Stylistically, stanza one is addressed to men while stanza two is addressed to God. Politically, the song brings about cohesion in the Nigerian nation which has about 450 heterogeneous communities and languages. That is why it is largely sung in English, the official language (cum lingua franca) of the country, despite its translation to only three dominant languages (Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo),

A further distribution of the verbs in the text based on Austin's (1962) taxonomy indicates a preponderance of behavitives and excersitives with just few verdictives. Ideationally, the text presents the worldview of Nigeria as an independent nation. Interpersonally, the song serves as a means of sustaining social cohesion and interaction in the country. Finally, the anthem functions textually as a means of constructing 'texts' that are coherent and situationally relevant in socio-political discourse (Halliday 1973, p.41).

Thus, we may conclude that the writer/composer is praying preponderantly in the anthem such that we have "Oh God of creation, direct our… (line 1), guide our…(line 2), help our…(line 3)." Socially, this is the system in Africa where prayer either precedes or ends an endeavour. It further buttresses the biblical saying, "work and pray." Thus, the writer/composer

summons his compatriots (humanity) to arise in stanza one before calling on God, the creator (divinity) to guide, direct and help the people as well as the country in the second stanza.

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Appendix One
Nigerian National Anthem

1. Arise, O compatriots, Nigeria's call obey
   To serve our fatherland
   With love and strength and faith
   The labour of our heroes past
   Shall never be in vain
   To serve with heart and might
   One nation bound in freedom, peace and unity.
2. Oh God of creation, direct our noble cause
   Guide our leader's right
   Help our youth the truth to know
   In love and honesty to grow
   And living just and true
   Great lofty heights attain
   To build a nation where peace and justice shall reign.

Appendix Two
Nigeria We Hail Thee (Old National Anthem)

1. Nigeria, we hail thee,
   Our own dear native land,
   Though tribe and tongue may differ,
   In brotherhood we stand,
   Nigerians all, are proud to serve
   our sovereign motherland.
2. Our flag shall be a symbol,
   That truth and justice reign,
   In peace or battle honoured,
   And this we count as gain
   To hand on to our children
   A banner without stain
3. O Lord of all creation,
   Grant this our one request
   Help us to build a nation
   Where no man is oppressed
   And so, with peace and plenty,
   Nigeria may be blessed